

India, Japan Deepen Maritime Ties Amid China's Military Muscle-Flexing

India and Japan on Thursday deepened their maritime security and defence cooperation, signing a pact to strengthen naval ties and vowing to work together to realise a free and open Indo-Pacific amid growing Chinese military muscle-flexing in the region.

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh and his Japanese counterpart Shinjiro Koizumi, during their talks, expressed strong opposition to unilateral actions that impede freedom and safety of navigation and overflight, as well as attempts to alter the status quo through force or coercion.

Though China was not directly named in their joint statement, the remarks come amid growing concerns in New Delhi and Tokyo over Beijing's increasingly assertive military posture in the South and East China Seas.

Singh and Koizumi signed a Memorandum of Arrangement on maritime security cooperation, providing a framework for further expanding collaboration between the Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force and the Indian Navy.

The agreement envisages greater information sharing on maritime domain awareness and enhanced cooperation in areas such as search and rescue.

The ministers also agreed to move swiftly towards concrete maritime security cooperation, including maximising synergies in mine counter-measures capabilities and exploring the possibility of joint development in naval shipbuilding and design.

Japan's technological expertise and India's production capabilities will be leveraged for deeper cooperation in the



sector.

The two sides agreed to explore greater use of India's production capabilities under the Make in India initiative, particularly in defence shipbuilding and related areas.

They also agreed to advance reciprocal access to ship repair facilities and work towards concluding a ship repair arrangement in the near future.

Singh welcomed Japan's recent review of its framework for the transfer of defence equipment and technology and called for further deepening of the defence and technology partnership.

The two ministers also discussed the shipborne UNICORN integrated communications antenna system, which is being pursued as the first defence equipment transfer project between the two countries. They committed to work-

ing towards its early realisation.

Strengthening Naval Coordination

India and Japan agreed to strengthen coordination to protect sea lines of communication through mutual visits by naval ships and units, joint exercises, personnel exchanges and logistical support, including access to ports and maintenance and repair facilities.

The ministers also agreed to promote exchanges between their special operations forces and pursue cooperation with India's integrated theatre commands after their establishment.

The joint statement said enhanced cooperation was important not only for India and Japan but also for regional and international security.

The latest push comes as both countries seek to strengthen security partnerships in the Indo-Pacific, where China's expanding military capabilities and assertive maritime activities have emerged as major strategic concerns.

Naidu Seeks Closer Ties Among South States At Zonal Meet

Mahabalipuram: Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu on Thursday called for greater cooperation among southern states and urged them to emerge as a key economic force in building Viksit Bharat.

Speaking at the Southern Zonal Council meeting chaired by Union Home Minister Amit Shah in Mahabalipuram, Naidu highlighted the development of Andhra Pradesh and other southern states. Chief Ministers of Telangana, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Kerala and Puducherry also attended the meeting. Naidu stressed that stronger coordination between the Centre and southern states would help in faster development and addressing common challenges.

He proposed a bullet train corridor connecting Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka and Tamil Nadu and suggested running the bullet train through Kuppam and called for a transport network connecting Amaravati, Bengaluru and Chennai.

He also suggested setting up a common logistics



network and dry ports across southern states and called for linking the southern power grid with the national grid.

Speaking further, he suggested a joint consortium of universities and skilling institutions from southern states and setting up a Mutual Aid Force for inter-state cooperation during disasters.

Chandrababu Naidu called for a common spiritual tourism circuit connecting Tirupati with Kashi, Ayodhya and Char Dham. He also pitched for a \$10 trillion southern economy by 2047, saying the region must emerge as a key economic force in building a Viksit Bharat.

Naidu said southern states currently contribute around 31% to India's GDP and that development of

the region is possible only through coordination.

Highlighting Andhra Pradesh's priorities, the CM said projects like Polavaram, the South Coast Railway Zone and the capital Amaravati are taking shape with the Centre's support. He added that Amaravati has secured its legal status as the capital. Naidu urged the Centre to expedite approvals for the Dugarajapatnam Port and refinery proposals, and to give clearance for Visakhapatnam and Vijayawada Metro Rail projects and the Kadapa JSW railway link.

Naidu raised long-pending bifurcation issues, stating that institutions under Schedule IX and X of the AP

Reorganisation Act remain unresolved even after 12 years. He appealed to the Centre to expedite resolution of these matters along with the resource deficit and issues related to Section 56.

On water, the CM proposed diversion of over 500 TMC of water through the Godavari-Cauvery river-linking project, saying it could provide a permanent solution to Tamil Nadu's water problems. He called for coordinated efforts by Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Karnataka and Tamil Nadu on river-water issues and sought a long-term national plan for Ganga-Cauvery linking with time-bound DPRs and approvals.

The CM's address drew appreciation from other southern leaders. Karnataka CM D.K. Shivakumar lauded Naidu for speaking about the development of all states with a broad vision as a senior leader. Other Chief Ministers also praised his vision for the comprehensive development of southern states. Naidu concluded by wishing success to the 31st Southern Zonal Council meeting.

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CM Revanth Arrives In London For First Leg Of Two-Nation Tour

As Preferred Source London: Telangana Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy has kicked off a 10-day tour of the UK and US after arriving in London on Thursday. In the UK, Reddy is scheduled to visit the Blavatnik School of Government at the University of Oxford and the Emirates Stadium for an EPL Football presentation, according to the state government. Interactions and events are also planned with the University of Cambridge, University of London and London Business School (LBS) during the first leg of his two-nation tour.

The Telangana CM will then head to the US next



week, where he is set to visit the campuses of Harvard University and Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT). He is also scheduled to interact with a team from Virginia Tech University in Boston on August 25. Besides some official discussions, a meet-and-greet diaspora event organised by the US chapter of the Indian Overseas Congress (IOC) in New York is also on the agenda. Earlier, Congress MP Mallu Ravi and the state government's advisor on protocol affairs, Harkara Venugopal, saw him off at the New Delhi airport in the early hours of Thursday. Reddy was in New Delhi to attend the Congress Working Committee (CWC) meeting on Wednesday.

Gongidi Sunitha demands Revanth Reddy's resignation over law and order situation in Telangana

Hyderabad: Former MLA Gongidi Sunitha said the Congress government had failed to maintain law and order in Telangana, particularly in ensuring the safety of women and children. She demanded Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy's resignation, alleging that he had failed as Chief Minister, Home Minister and Education Minister.

Addressing a press conference at Telangana Bhavan on Thursday, Sunitha cited recent murders, including the killing of six women in Shahbad, and alleged that the government was indifferent to crimes against women. She demanded a probe into the murder of principal Rupa Reddy at Kondamallepally, including the alleged role of a drug mafia and possible conspiracy.

Sunitha raised concern over



increasing drug and ganja abuse among youth, citing hundreds of crores worth of drugs being seized in the State by police from neighbouring States like Maharashtra. She questioned the effectiveness of the EAGLE Force and accused the government of restricting its anti-drug efforts to statements.

Former ZP chairperson Tula Uma said teachers were also facing threats from students and alleged that online obscenity and mobile-phone addiction were affecting children. She demanded strict action against those committing crimes against women and stronger measures to curb drugs and alcohol.

TPCC notice to Konda Surekha triggers differences within Telangana Congress

Hyderabad: The Telangana Congress move to serve a showcause notice on Forest Minister Konda Surekha over her daughter Konda Sushmitha's outburst against Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy has triggered different opinions within the party. The episode is now taking a different turn, with several leaders questioning the transparency of the disciplinary process and alleging discrimination.

A section of the party has strongly objected to the TPCC Disciplinary Committee serving the notice on the Forest Minister. Several senior leaders are of the opinion that Konda Sushmitha is a major and should have been served the notice instead of her mother. "This is nonsense. Is Konda Sushmitha even a member of the Congress party? If so, she should be served a notice and asked for an explanation. Even if she is not a Congress member, how can a notice be issued to her mother?" asked a senior leader from Gandhi Bhavan.

A few leaders also questioned the transparency of the Disciplinary Committee. Munugode MLA Komatireddy Rajgopal Reddy has also been making critical comments against the government and the party. "In that case, why has he not been served a notice so far?" wondered another senior



leader. "Why is a BC Minister's family being specifically targeted? Why are upper caste leaders being spared from action?" the leader questioned. Another argument being raised is about the TPCC justification for serving the notice on the Forest Minister. "Like in the case of Konda Surekha, will the TPCC serve a notice on Roads and Buildings Minister Komatireddy for the comments made by his brother Rajgopal Reddy?" the leader asked.

Meanwhile, TPCC president Mahesh Kumar Goud found fault with both the Chief Minister and Konda Sushmitha over their comments. Speaking to media persons at Nizamabad on Thursday, he said a procedure was followed in the Congress party for allotting MLA tickets. "The CWC takes the final decision. No one can claim their candidature from a constituency or announce candidates on the party's behalf. Individuals cannot take such decisions," Goud stressed.

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Anita Directs Intensified Search for Missing Fisherman in Vizag



Hyderabad: Home Minister Vangalapudi Anita has instructed officials to intensify search operations to trace the missing fisherman, Appanna after a boat incident from 12 nautical miles off the Visakhapatnam coast.

The Minister advised to carry out extensive search operation through coordinated action of the Fisheries Department, Marine Police, and Coast Guard. She inquired with officials to gather details regarding the incident.

Out of eight fishermen who went to sea on August 16, one went missing. The Minister also inquired about the well-being of the remaining fishermen. "All available resources must be utilized to safely locate the missing Appanna and reunite him with his family," she said.

"Greater vigilance must be maintained regarding the safety of fishermen venturing into the sea," the Minister said, adding that the State government stands by the affected fisherman's family. The administration is continuously monitoring the search operations on a real-time basis.

Amaravati to Get New, Multiple Road Links From Various Directions

Vijayawada: Andhra Pradesh government is fast-tracking the development of additional road links to Amaravati to provide smoother and quicker access to the capital region from different parts of the state, Municipal Administration and Urban Development minister P. Narayana said on Thursday.

With Seed Access Road already operational, the state government is now focusing on strengthening alternative connectivity to Amaravati. It is preparing a comprehensive road network to meet the growing traffic and transport requirements, as the development of the capital gathers pace.

In this regard, Narayana reviewed the progress of E13, E15, E1 and E3 road projects at a meeting attended by CRDA commissioner Vijayarama Raju, additional commissioner Karthik, Guntur district collector Saikanth Varma and senior engineers and officials.

The minister sought a detailed status of the road projects, pending clearances, land-related issues, and railway permissions. Officials informed him that most of the required railway and other clearances will be received shortly.

The E15 road directly connecting Mangalagiri with Amaravati is progressing rapidly, officials told Narayana. Once completed, this road will provide a direct and convenient route for vehicles approaching Amaravati from the Mangalagiri side.

The E13 road from NH-16 via AIIMS to Amaravati is also expected to become a key link to the capital. The minister directed officials to expedite its construction and commis-



sion it at the earliest.

Further, Narayana reviewed the next phase of the Seed Access Road (E3). He directed officials to speed up work on the proposed elevated corridor from the Steel Bridge to Manipal Hospital. The corridor is expected to improve connectivity to several key locations in the capital region.

The E1 road will run parallel to the Seed Access Road with widening of the Karakatta road up to Prakasam Barrage. This will be an alternative and easier route between Vijayawada and Amaravati.

The minister said the objective is to ensure that Amaravati is not dependent on a single road. Motorists must be able to enter the capital through multiple routes from different directions. He directed all departments and officials to work in coordination and complete the projects within the stipulated time.

Narayana asked the Guntur collector to take necessary measures to remove any hurdle in construction of the roads.

JAGAN REDDY WANTS CM TO ORDER CBI PROBE IN DSC, GROUP-1 EXAMS

Vijayawada:YSR Congress president YS Jagan Mohan Reddy has challenged chief minister Chandrababu Naidu to order a CBI probe into the alleged irregularities in both DSC-2025 and the APPSC Group-1 examinations.

Addressing the media here on Thursday, the former chief minister said the YSRC was ready for a probe into Group-1 and asked whether the alliance government was also ready for the same with DSC-2025.

He said the APPSC Group-1 (2018) exams were held in a transparent manner with no room for any misappropriation, and as per the court directive. On the contrary, the DSC was shady from the setting of the question paper to the conduct of the test involving the same institution that was "involved in corruption and paper leakage."

Jagan Reddy observed that it was for this reason that the outsourcing employee Naveen got access to the question paper and topped the marks



list while his name was deleted in the second merit list. "This resulted in him moving the court stating that his details were deleted."

Referring to the sports quota, Jagan Reddy said that the government had issued two GOs exempting the job aspirants from writing the DSC exam. After the favoured people were taken in, two more GOs were issued negating the earlier ones, he said, and observed that in this process, 372 persons got jobs.

The government, he said, had to put up a meek defence by stating that their government had given a job to PV Sindhu and the same norms applied to others also in sports quota.

Assembly Nod to Implement Water Pollution Control Amendment Act in AP

Vijayawada:The Andhra Pradesh Assembly on Thursday unanimously passed a resolution to implement the Centre's Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Amendment Act, 2024, in the state.

The resolution was moved by civil supplies minister Nadendla Manohar on behalf of Deputy Chief Minister K. Pawan Kalyan. All members supported the resolution. Manohar said the Centre had notified the amended legislation on February 15, 2024. The Act was initially framed for Himachal Pradesh, Rajasthan and Union Territories. Other states can adopt it by passing a resolution in their respective Legislative Assemblies and, wherever applicable, the legislative councils. The amendment comes into force in a state from the date on which such a resolution is passed.



The minister said the key objective of the amendment was to make the pollution-control regime more efficient and simplify regulatory procedures while retaining safeguards necessary for environmental protection. One of its major provisions is the replacement of imprisonment with monetary penalties for certain violations.

The amendment also seeks to simplify the process for appointing chairpersons of state pollution control boards. It provides for the appointment of an adjudicating officer to inquire into violations under the law and impose penalties.

Manohar said implementation of the amended act would strengthen transparency, efficiency and accountable governance in the pollution-control system while providing simpler and more industry- and business-friendly regulatory procedures.

Wall Posters Related to Financial Literacy Centre Unveiled

Land Survey Must Be Conducted Meticulously: District Collector Bhavesh Mishra



Nirmal District : District Collector Bhavesh Mishra directed officials to conduct the land survey process in a meticulous and transparent manner.

On Thursday night, the District Collector held a meeting with officials on the ongoing land survey in the district at the Collectorate conference hall.

During the meeting, he reviewed the details of the land surveys completed so far and the surveys yet to be completed. He directed officials to complete the survey within the stipulated time to address the difficulties faced by villages that do not have revenue maps. He emphasized that the survey process should be conducted with complete transparency.

The Collector instructed all concerned officials to participate in the survey at the field level and senior officials to closely monitor the process. He said that the use of advanced equipment would make the survey process easier and more accurate. He directed officials to complete the survey as per the planned schedule.

The Collector also distributed new laptops to officials for conducting the survey.

Earlier, the Collector, along with District Lead Bank Manager Ramgopal, unveiled wall posters related to financial literacy awareness, assistance, and the Financial Literacy Centre, along with DEO Bhojanna, DPRO Vishnuvardhan, and other officials.

Additional Collector (Revenue) Kishore Kumar, RDO Devi Das, AD Land Survey and Records Narasimha Murthy, other officials, and staff participated in the meeting.

Timely Treatment Must Be Provided to Every Patient

Nagarkurnool : District Collector Hemanta Keshav Patil conducted a surprise inspection of Urban and Basti Dawakhana functioning in Srinagar Colony in Ward No. 18 and Deshitikyala in Ward No. 3 of Nagarkurnool town on Thursday.

The Collector reviewed the medical services being provided at the facilities and enquired about staff attendance, maintenance, treatment being provided to patients and availability of medicines. He also sought details about the daily number of patients visiting the hospitals, utilisation of services by local residents and the availability of necessary medical tests and medicines.

Collector Hemanta Keshav Patil interacted directly with patients and enquired about their health problems and the services being provided. He sought their feedback on the availability of doctors and medicines and asked whether they were facing any difficulties in receiving treatment.

The Collector directed the medical staff to ensure that every patient receives timely and quality treatment. He stressed that the Basti Dawakhana, established to provide accessible healthcare close to people's homes, should be properly maintained and monitored regularly. He also instructed staff to remain available on time, patiently listen to patients' health concerns, provide necessary medical tests and treatment, and offer appropriate health advice. He emphasised that there should be no negligence in the functioning of the facilities and that quality primary healthcare and essential medicines should be readily available to local residents.



Make Minister Ponguleti Srinivasa Reddy's visit to Jagityal district a success

State Social Welfare Minister Adluri Laxman Kumar

Jagtiala, August 20 Today Freedom : Congress government is a government of the poor and middle class people and the main objective of the Congress government is to stand by them, said State Social Welfare Minister Adluri Laxman Kumar. On Thursday, Minister Laxman Kumar inspected the double bedroom houses in Nookapalle of Jagtiala district along with Jagtiala MLA Dr. Sanjay Kumar, District Collector Satya Prasad and Rashtra Velanu Sankshema Sangam Corporation Chairman Juvvadi Narasingha Rao. Speaking on the occasion, Minister Adduri said that Jagtiala MLA Dr. Sanjay Kumar had sent a proposal for the creation of basic facilities after noticing the difficulties faced by the poor in the double bedroom houses built in Nookapalle of Jagtiala district. The minister explained that the state government has allocated Rs. 62 crores as per the MLA's recommendation. The minister said that funds have been released to provide facilities to the children of Nookapalle double bedroom houses as they are poor and middle class. The Minister said that despite the financial burden on the government, the state government is not backing down for the welfare of the poor. Make the Minister's visit a success.

Telangana State Revenue, Housing and Information and Public Relations Minister



Ponguleti Srinivas Reddy will visit Jagtial district on Friday, Minister Adluri said. After completing his tour of Nizamabad district, he will reach Jagtial district at 12 noon and lay the foundation stone for the newly sanctioned Jagtial and Metpally Revenue Divisional Offices, Bhimaram and Endapally Mandal Tehsildar Offices, Mallya and Metpally Sub-Registrar Offices in Jagtial district at Dharur Camp, Minister Adluri said. Later, the Minister explained that he will inspect the Nuka Palli Double Bedroom at 1 pm and talk to the beneficiaries. Later, the Minister will hold an interview program with the beneficiaries of Indiramma Houses at the Padmanaika Function Hall in Jagtial. The Minister explained that the Jagityal District Collectorate will hold a review meeting on housing construction and revenue issues with the joint Karimnagar District Collectors at 4:30 pm. The Minister advised Jagityal District Collector Satya Prasad to coordinate with the officials of the relevant departments during the Minister's visit.

Traffic problems should be solved in a coordinated manner

Coordination between relevant departments is mandatory
Warangal Police Commissioner N. Swetha IPS
CP reviews traffic problems with GWMC Commissioner Venkanna

Hanumakonda ; Warangal Police Commissioner N. Swetha suggested that officials of relevant departments should work in coordination to solve traffic problems and prevent road accidents within the Warangal Tricity.

A special traffic management meeting was held under the auspices of the Police Commissioner on Thursday to discuss the measures to be taken to prevent traffic problems and accidents within the Tricity. GWMC Commissioner T. Venkanna, NHAI PD Bharadwaj along with officials of R&B, Municipal, Traffic and Police departments participated in the meeting.

In the meeting, the traffic police identified black spots where road accidents frequently occur in the city and explained the steps to be taken to prevent accidents through a PowerPoint presentation. The functioning of the existing traffic signals, junctions where new signals should be installed in Warangal, Hanumakonda and Kazipet areas, encroachments on roads, telephone and electricity poles to be removed, provision of parking spaces, road repairs, solar blinkers at U-turn areas, identification of suitable areas for auto stands, etc. were discussed in detail.

Speaking on the occasion, CP Shwetha instructed the officials to give equal priority to traffic control along with maintaining law and order.



He said that 159 areas have been identified within the Tricity area where there is insufficient lighting at night. It was suggested that the relevant departments should take immediate steps to install street lights in those areas.

The officials were instructed to identify dangerous areas, main intersections, road turns and unauthorized parking areas and take necessary measures, and to take precautionary measures in areas where accidents are likely to occur.

GWMC Commissioner T. Venkanna said that special attention will be paid to the issues suggested by the police officers for traffic control in the city. He said that if the police and municipal department officials jointly visit the field level and work in coordination to identify and solve the

problems, traffic problems can be solved more effectively.

The officials decided to implement road development, improvement of the signaling system, parking facilities, removal of encroachments and road safety measures in a coordinated manner to provide a permanent solution to traffic problems.

Central Zone DCP Dara Kavitha, Hanumakonda ACP Narasimha Rao, Traffic ACP Satyanarayana, traffic department officials, inspectors of police stations within the tricity, IT Core, TTI Inspectors, municipal and R&B department officials participated in this meeting.

Rajiv Gandhi's Services to the Nation Will Always Be Remembered: Nirmala Jaggareddy

Sangareddy, Correspondent : August 20, 2026: DCC President Nirmala Jaggareddy paid floral tributes to former Prime Minister and Bharat Ratna Rajiv Gandhi on his birth anniversary at the newly installed Rajiv Gandhi statue at IB Chaurasta in Sangareddy town. She recalled his significant contributions to the nation and his vision for India's development.

Speaking on the occasion, Nirmala Jaggareddy said Rajiv Gandhi played a crucial role in taking India forward through modern technology and scientific advancement. She said his emphasis on youth and the foundations he laid for the growth of the information technology sector contributed significantly to the country's progress.

She recalled that Rajiv Gandhi's initiatives for the expansion of the telecommunications and computer sectors paved the way for building a modern India. His efforts to strengthen the Panchayati Raj system and provide voting rights to young people further strengthened democracy in the country, she added.

Nirmala Jaggareddy said Rajiv Gandhi's commitment to national unity, integrity and development continues to inspire the younger generation. Taking forward his ideals and vision would be the true tribute to the former Prime Minister,



she said.

She further stated that the Congress party would continue to work for the development of the country, public welfare and a better future for the youth.

TPCC General Secretary Topaji Ananth Kishan, Municipal Chairperson Kuna Vanitha Santhosh, Vice-Chairman Hafez Shaik Shafi, Sangareddy Town Congress President Kiran Goud, leaders Kuna Santhosh, Salauddin (Babubu) Minority Town President Syed Arif, Mohd Taher, councillors Gaddam Raju, Ramesh and Vamsi, among others, were present.



Friday 21, August, 2026

MODI’S OUTREACH TO YOUTH

The Prime Minister's Independence Day address reflects the flavour of the season, but the larger question is whether youth discontent will be viewed merely as an issue of jobs, education and technology, or whether the government is willing to understand it as a deeper demand for accountability and responsiveness

Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s focus on the youth in his Independence Day address reflects the flavour of the season. It acknowledges the growing restlessness of Gen Z, but it remains to be seen whether the government will walk the talk on the big promises made from the ramparts of the Red Fort. Symbolic gestures and grand announcements would mean nothing if not followed by concrete, measurable action plans. The long-pending reforms in the education sector will help the youth prepare for jobs in emerging technology and innovation economies. Modi’s outreach to the youth included a promise to offer free online coaching for competitive exams and AI skilling programmes in an attempt to address post-globalisation anxieties. The big shift in the Prime Minister’s political messaging came days after Gen Z-led protests over exam paper leaks, and unemployment forced the resignation of Dharmendra Pradhan as Education Minister. Addressing the challenges facing the youth, from employment worries to the incursion of artificial intelligence in everyday life, Modi promised that more than one crore youth would be provided AI skills in a “mission mode” drive over the coming year and the country’s digital public infrastructure would be used to provide free online coaching to students wishing to take various competitive exams. Also, there will be a nationwide sports talent hunt among children between five and 15 years of age ahead of the 2036 Olympic Games. The problem is that these themes have appeared repeatedly in election manifestos, government budgets and policy promises across states.

Employment, education infrastructure, online learning and, increasingly, AI have become recurring features of political messaging. The real question is not what is being promised, but how much of it is actually being implemented. The larger question is whether youth discontent will be viewed merely as an issue of jobs, education and technology, or whether the government is willing to understand it as a deeper demand for accountability and responsiveness. The Mood of the Nation tracker has been highlighting that inflation and unemployment are major concerns and need to be resolved. The youth would account for a third of voters in the 2029 general elections. Since they are bound to influence the outcome of the polls, the issues that concern them—education reforms being one of them—must be addressed on a mission mode. The biggest structural weakness of India’s education system begins much before competitive examinations. It has traditionally rewarded memorisation rather than understanding; marks rather than competence; examination performance rather than creativity; conformity rather than questioning; coaching rather than independent learning. The irony is that India can produce millions of students who obtain degrees while many do not acquire adequate communication, quantitative reasoning, problem-solving, digital or workplace skills. The multi-crore coaching industry has become a parallel education system and is particularly powerful because the formal education system does not adequately prepare students for high-stakes examinations.

Amit Shah Chairs 31st Southern Zonal Council Meeting in Chennai; Bhatti Attends

Hyderabad: Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Thursday chaired the 31st meeting of the Southern Zonal Council in Kovalam in Chengalpet District. Telangana Deputy Chief Minister Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka, Tamil Nadu Chief Minister Joseph Vijay, Karnataka CM DK Shivakumar, Andhra Pradesh CM Chandrababu Naidu, and Kerala CM VD Satheesan were present during the meeting.

The Southern Zonal Council comprises the states of Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala, Tamil Nadu and Telangana, and the Union Territories of Puducherry, Andaman and Nicobar Islands and Lakshadweep.

Tamil Nadu Chief Minister C Joseph Vijay felicitated Shah on the occasion. The meeting of the chief ministers of southern states will deliberate important inter-state and national issues at a seaside resort in the city's outskirts.

Key issues include inter-state water disputes, Centre-state coordination, law and order and regional development.

What is the Southern Zonal Council?

Under Sections 15 to 22 of the States Reorganisation Act, 1956, five Zonal Councils, including the Southern Zonal Council, have been established. Amit Shah is the Chairman of the Southern Zonal Council, and Tamil Nadu Chief Minister C Joseph Vijay is Vice-Chairman. The Chief Ministers of the member states serve as the Vice-Chairman of the Council by rotation, according to a release from the Ministry of Home Affairs.

The 31st meeting is being organised by the Inter-State Council Secretariat, Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India, with the Government of Tamil Nadu as the host. It will be attended by the Chief Ministers/Lieutenant Governors/Administrators of the member states and Union Territories of the Southern region, along with two senior ministers from each state. The Chief Secretaries/Advisors and other senior officers of the State Governments, as well as senior officers of the Central Government, will also participate in the meeting, the release said.

The Zonal Council has also constituted a



standing committee at the level of Chief Secretaries. Issues proposed by the states are submitted for discussion before the Zonal Council's standing committee and after deliberation there, the remaining issues are placed before the Zonal Council meeting for consideration. Prime Minister Narendra Modi has envisioned 'TEAM BHARAT' for the nation, on the basis of cooperative federalism, and the Zonal Councils are making significant contributions in this direction. These councils function on the conviction that strong states build a strong nation.

They provide a structured mechanism for dialogue and discussion on issues affecting two or more states—or the Centre and the states—thereby serving as a platform to foster mutual cooperation. Under the leadership of PM Modi, Zonal Council meetings have evolved into a powerful platform for finding solutions through dialogue, the release said. The role of the Zonal Councils is advisory in nature. However, over the past few years, these Councils have proved to be an important factor in fostering a healthy bond of mutual understanding

and cooperation across various regions.

With the cooperation of all State Governments, Central Ministries and Departments, a total of 69 meetings of the various Zonal Councils and their Standing Committees have been held in the last approximately 12 years, from June 2014 till now.

As per the release, the Zonal Councils provide an excellent forum for resolving issues and disputes and making progress on them between the Centre and the member States/Union Territories, among the member States/Union Territories, and within the region.

These Councils also discuss broad issues of national importance, which include the implementation of Fast Track Special Courts (FTSCs) for the speedy investigation and early disposal of cases of rape against women and children, as well as issues related to education, among others. In addition, various issues of common interest at the regional level are covered, such as issues related to the Andhra Pradesh Reorganisation Act, issues concerning important projects related to water sharing, the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (Gramin), issues related to civil aviation, and several other issues.

GHMC gears up for Ganesh Chaturthi, idol immersion arrangements in Hyderabad

Hyderabad: The GHMC is gearing up for the smooth conduct of ensuing Vinayaka Chaturthi festivities in the city. The Ganesh Chaturthi festival is on September 14 and idols immersion will be on September 25 on the conclusion of the 10-day festivities.

On Thursday, GHMC Commissioner, RV Karnan held a special meeting with line departments and discussed arrangements. Following the trifurcation of the erstwhile GHMC, the civic body is handling the Vinayaka Chaturthi festivities for the first time in newly added circles, zones and recently merged areas.

According to a press release, discussions at the meeting focused on procession routes and needed arrangements for the occasion. In association with festival committees, police and other government departments, an action plan will be drafted and a dedicated coordination mechanism set up to address issues related to roads, barri-



cading, cranes, electricity, water supply, sanitation and emergency services.

A control room will be set up at Tank Bund and another control room will be opened for real-time coordination, monitoring and rapid response during idols immersion. The deployments include round-the-clock sanitation, fogging teams, cranes, boats, swimmers, lifesaving equipment, ambulances and paramedical staff.

Road repair works along procession routes are to be taken up and completed by September 13, the press release said.

Tough Rules Set For Rahul Gandhi’s Pune Event, 30 Conditions Imposed

Police have granted permission for Congress leader Rahul Gandhi's August 22 'Chhatron Ki Goonj' event in Pune with 30 conditions, prohibiting "objectionable" banners or images and directing organisers to avoid hurting religious sentiments. The 'Chhatron Ki Goonj' (voice of students) event is specifically dedicated to female students to discuss issues like education, safety, equality, competitive exams, and career opportunities.

The programme is scheduled to be held from 4.30 pm to 9.30 pm at the SSPMS College ground near RTO Chowk in the city, where 8,000 to 10,000 people are likely to gather, as per the permission order issued on Wednesday. Among 30 conditions set by the police, the organisers have been directed not to put up any objectionable images, pictures or banners, and they will be responsible if any untoward incident occurs and leads to a law-and-order situation there, the order said.

"No one's religious sentiments should be hurt during the programme and responsibility for ensuring this will be on the organisers," it stated. Maharashtra Congress vice president Mohan Joshi said the police have granted permission for the programme and the



organisers will comply with all the conditions laid down by them. There are a total of 30 conditions set by the police while granting the permission, he informed.

The police have also asked the organisers to ensure adequate security, separate arrangements for men and women, sufficient entry and exit gates, drinking water, toilets, fire-safety equipment and parking facilities. They have directed the organisers to deploy private security personnel, including women guards, and make extensive use of volunteers, particularly women. CCTV cameras covering the entire venue are also required to remain operational during the day and night.

The organisers have been instructed to comply with Supreme Court directions on permissible noise levels and provisions of the Noise Pollution (Regulation and Control) Rules, 2000, and the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986. The police have also prohibited the use of drones for photography at the venue and directed the organisers to ensure that emergency access remains available for police, medical and fire services.

BRS backs polytechnic students' stir against GO 97



Hyderabad: The BRS extended support to the statewide agitation by polytechnic students against GO 97, assuring them that the party would pressure the Congress government to withdraw the order.

A delegation of polytechnic students met BRS general secretary RS Praveen Kumar and former corporation chairman Chirumalla Rakesh Kumar at Telangana Bhavan on Thursday, and apprised them of their concerns. The students said the government had failed to respond to their protests and sought the BRS's support.

Speaking on the occasion, Praveen Kumar said students who should be in classrooms were being forced onto the streets to protest against GO 97. He alleged that thousands of polytechnic students across Telangana were protesting but the Congress government was not willing to listen to their grievances.

He demanded the suspension of Mahabubabad CI Raghupathi Reddy, alleging that he had attempted to choke a student during a protest in the district. He also wanted Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy to immediately withdraw GO 97 after hearing the students' grievances.

Questioning the rationale behind the proposed changes, the BRS leader said students completing polytechnic courses could pursue engineering through ECET or obtain jobs. He asked why such opportunities should be curtailed. He suspected that the Young India Skill University was an even bigger conspiracy to boost the real estate value of lands purchased by the Chief Minister's family within the vicinity of the proposed Fourth City project.

Rakesh Kumar alleged that the government was attempting to destroy the polytechnic education system and claim valuable land attached to polytechnic colleges. He alleged that GO 97 would reduce polytechnic students to workers instead of enabling them to become engineers. Rakesh Kumar also questioned the proposed PPP (Public-Private Partnership) model for polytechnic education and alleged that the move would benefit private interests.

Proud actions to protect the rights of SCs and STs

The district administration should strive to make the district problem-free
Special focus should be placed on atrocity cases
State SC and ST Commission Chairman Bakki Venkataiah



Warangal, Bureau : State SC and ST Commission Chairman Bakki Venkataiah has ordered the authorities to take dignified steps to resolve the land issues, ROR and atrocity cases of SCs and STs expeditiously and ensure justice for them. He warned that the SC and ST sub-plan funds should be used only for the housing, welfare and development of the respective communities and that strict action will be taken if the funds are diverted.

On Thursday, State SC and ST Commission Chairman Bakki Venkataiah, Commission members Reniguntla Praveen, Zilla Shankar, Konkati Lakshminarayana, Rambabu Nayak, Kusuma Neeladevi, along with District Collector Dr. Satya Sarada, CP Swetha, DCP Ankit Kumar, ITDA PO Lenin Vatsal Toppo, Additional Collector Revenue G. Sandhyarani, Additional Collector Local Body Y.V. Ganesh and other officials held a review at the Warangal District Collectorate.

They reviewed the progress of SC and ST land issues, ROR, employee promotions, roster reservations, utilization of sub-plan funds, welfare, protection of rights, implementation of government schemes, and cases registered under the SC and ST Prevention of Atrocities Act.

Speaking on the occasion, Bakki Venkataiah said that Dr. B.R. Taking the message of “Unify..Teach..” given by Ambedkar as inspiration, he said that SCs and STs should be made aware of their rights. He suggested that the officials should work responsibly so that the rights, protections and benefits of government welfare schemes provided by the Constitution are available to everyone who is eligible.

He said that people’s problems should be solved by visiting the field level and not limiting it to offices. He asked that officials and public representatives should work in coordination for the protection, welfare and development of the rights of SCs and STs.

Special focus on atrocity cases

The Chairman suggested that the police, revenue and other departments should work in coordination in cases related to atrocities against SCs and STs. He reviewed the progress of cases registered under the SCs and STs Prevention of Atrocities Act in the district. He said that there should be no delay in investigating the cases, providing justice and compensation to the victims. He ordered that pending cases should be resolved expeditiously as per the rules.

*Roster reservation is mandatory in promotions

Bakki Venkataiah clarified that the roster reservation rules should be strictly implemented while making appointments and promotions to SC and ST employees in government departments. He advised that the implementation of reservation should not be neglected and that the officials should take precautions so that the constitutional rights of the employees are not violated.



Rehabilitation along with compensation for victims

He said that special attention should be paid to rehabilitation of the families of SC and ST victims of serious crimes like murder and rape, instead of leaving them with just compensation. He ordered that steps should be taken to ensure that the eligible ones are provided with compensation as per the rules and also get employment, outsourcing jobs, housing and rehabilitation assistance as per the need.

Civil Rights Day in Every Village

The Chairman ordered that the Civil Rights Day organized at the village level every month should be organized effectively. Tahsildars, SIs and officials of the concerned departments were advised to attend and educate the public about the rights of SCs and STs, legal protections, welfare schemes and grievance redressal system.

Speaking on the occasion, District Collector Dr. Satya Sharada said that as per the recommendations of the Commission, officials will participate on Civil Rights Day and take steps to educate the public about the laws. He said that the officials will be directed to organize a joint meal on the occasion of Civil Rights Day.

Continuous monitoring of welfare schemes

The Chairman suggested that the district officials should continuously monitor the implementation of welfare and development schemes implemented by the government for SCs and STs. He said that steps should be taken to ensure that everyone who is eligible gets the benefits of the schemes by maintaining transparency in the selection of beneficiaries.

The SC Development Officer was instructed to submit a report on pending details regarding foreign education, compensation to victims and incentive payments for inter-caste marriages.

Better results with coordination

Bakki Venkataiah said that the welfare of SCs and STs is not the responsibility of a single department, but the government’s goal can be achieved only when all departments work in coordination. He suggested strengthening co-ordination between officials at the district level and monitoring the implementation of schemes at the field level.

Later, the Commission Chairman Bakki Venkataiah received grievances from the people. Later, the District Collector handed over memoranda to the Commission Chairman and members. DRO Vijayalakshmi, DBCDO, In-charge DSCDO Pushpalatha, ZP CEO Ram Reddy, concerned district officials, Tahsildars of various mandals, MPDOs, SC and ST Vigilance Monitoring Committee members Bhukya Hussain Nayak, Palakurthi Vijay Kumar, Birru Mahender, Mahankali Yadagiri, farmer Ramesh Kumar, Vasam Sambaiah, Rajender, Namidla Chinnaswamy, Kallepu Shobharani, Ramchander and others participated in this program.

BRS Protest Against Withdrawal of Kalyana Lakshmi and Shaadi Mubarak Schemes

Nagarkurnool : BRS leaders and activists, led by former MLA Marri Janardhan Reddy, staged a protest in Nagarkurnool opposing the withdrawal of the Kalyana Lakshmi and Shaadi Mubarak schemes. Later, they staged a road blockade on the Mahabubnagar–Srisaillam main road, leading to brief tension in the area.

After the road blockade, BRS leaders and activists attempted to proceed to the RDO office to submit a memorandum. Police stopped them, resulting in a brief scuffle and pushing between the police and BRS workers.



The BRS leaders demanded that the Kalyana Lakshmi and Shaadi Mubarak schemes be continued and that financial assistance be provided to eligible poor families. They later submitted a memorandum containing their demands to the officials.

Those who have changed parties in a hurry have no right to criticize the Congress

Inappropriate comments on CM Revanth Reddy will not be tolerated
It is not right to make comments that will damage the party
Warangal DCC President Ayub

Warangal, Bureau; Warangal District Congress Party President Mohammed Ayub said that those who have changed parties in a hurry have no moral right to criticize the Congress party. Speaking to the media at the MGM Center on Thursday, he made several key comments on the Konda family.

What is the recognition of those who carried the Congress flag

Ayub questioned the activists who stood by the Congress party in the Warangal East constituency during the ten years of BRS rule and carried the party flag during difficult times. He said that it should be clarified whether they have been given opportunities for those who worked hard for the Congress.. or those who were categorized as Achcha Congress and Green Congress.

Ayub questioned how the Warangal District Library Chairman



could continue on the same platform when some people were insulting the state Chief Minister Revanth Reddy and making inappropriate comments at will. He warned that the Congress party would not stand idly by if inappropriate comments were made against the Chief Minister who is constantly working for the welfare of the people.

Questioning how reasonable it was to say that we made five people win, Ayub commented that if those who contested from the Congress party in Parakala constituency in 2018 had contested from Parakala in 2023 as well, the situation would have been different.

Many opportunities for the Congress party

He reminded that the Congress party had given Konda Surekha several opportunities as an MLA, twice as a minister, and also given Konda Murali an opportunity as an MLC. He said that the Congress party has always provided political opportunities to its leaders and workers.

Mohammad Ayub said that there is a policy within the party for those who are seeking tickets and expressing their opinions, and that making comments that damage the party on public platforms is not the right approach.

Warangal District Congress Party President Mohammad Ayub said that such comments could cause serious damage to the party, and urged the Congress party leadership to respond immediately and take an appropriate decision on this issue, as well as stand by the leaders and activists who are working hard for the party.

Peace Rally Organized Under the Leadership of Krishnaveni Group of Schools

Concern over attacks on teachers.. Peace rally held in protest against Roopa Reddy’s murder

Peddapalli Correspondant, August 20: Expressing concern over the increasing incidents of attacks and humiliation faced by teachers, the Krishnaveni Group of Schools organized a peace rally in Ramagiri Mandal on Thursday in protest against the murder of Roopa Reddy, who was working as the principal of Nagarjuna School in Nalgonda district. The participants said that teachers carry the great responsibility of guiding society and shaping future citizens of the country. The incident in which Roopa Reddy was allegedly attacked and killed by Class 10 students of the same school after she reprimanded them while teaching discipline and education was deeply shocking and disturbing, they said. They emphasized that parents should educate their children



about the importance and dignity of teachers and help inculcate respect and discipline among students. They appealed to everyone to condemn such incidents and ensure that similar tragedies do not occur in the future. The peace rally was conducted under the leadership of Krishnaveni Group of Schools Correspondent Chandupatla Tirupati Reddy, Principal Barl Srinivas, Directors Sridhar Babu and Ranjith Reddy, along with teachers and other staff members. As a mark of protest against the murder of Roopa Reddy, the school management also announced a holiday for the school on Friday.

PM Modi to address UNGA high-level meet in New York in September

United Nations: Prime Minister Narendra Modi is slated to address world leaders at the high-level meeting of the General Assembly in September, according to a preliminary schedule.

His address is set for the afternoon session on September 25 that runs from 3 p.m. to 9 p.m. in New York, corresponding to 12:30 a.m. to 6:30 a.m. the next day in India.

The timing of his address is likely to be adjusted when the schedule is finalised to an hour that is convenient for audiences in India.

PM Modi has attended six high-level UN sessions, starting in 2014 soon after his election.

The 81st session of the General Assembly will be presided over by Bangladesh Foreign Minister Khalilur Rahman, who was elected president in June.

‘Restoring trust, managing transformation: A United Nations that delivers for all’ is the theme he has set for the session.

Away from the General Assembly’s podium where presidents, kings, prime ministers, princes and ministers will deliver their formal addresses, real work

gets done on the sidelines.

The leaders will hold several hundred formal and informal meetings among themselves, many away from the public glare.

The high-level week will open on September 22, and by tradition Brazil’s President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva will be the first speaker, and will be followed by US President Donald Trump.

Politics (Right)

According to UN protocol, the heads of state (presidents and monarchs) speak first, followed by heads of government (prime ministers) and then the others

(deputy prime ministers, ministers and heads of missions).

Two key world leaders, Presidents Xi Jinping of China and Vladimir Putin of Russia, will not be at the meeting, according to the schedule.

Xi is reported to be skipping the UN meeting and going to Washington for a summit with Trump that week.

With attention focused on the conflict in the Strait of Hormuz, Iran’s President Masoud Pezeshkian is scheduled to speak on September 23.

Modi Tops Ministers’ Social Media Ranking



New Delhi: Prime Minister Narendra Modi ranked at the top of the Central government’s internal assessment of the social media performance of Union ministers, the results of which were presented at the Cabinet meeting chaired by him on Wednesday, according to sources.

The assessment covered the social media activity of ministers between May 1 and August 15 and examined their performance across Instagram, X and Facebook. Modi emerged at the top of the ranking based on the traction generated by social media content.

The exercise was not based merely on the number of followers ministers had. Their digital outreach, engagement and the reach of their posts were among the factors considered in evaluating their performance.

During the Cabinet meeting, ministers were briefed on their respective social media performance and the reach generated by their posts. The review comes amid the government’s increased emphasis on improving its digital communication, particularly with younger audiences.

The social media assessment is part of a broader push by the government to strengthen its engagement with Gen Z. Modi had earlier urged his ministerial colleagues to increase their presence on Instagram and use formats such as reels to connect more effectively with youngsters.

CWC TO TAKE PAPER LEAKS, ‘CHANDA CHORI’ TO GRASSROOTS

New Delhi: The Congress Working Committee (CWC) on Wednesday decided to take issues including paper leaks and alleged "chanda chori" at the Ram Temple in Ayodhya to the grassroots and demanded a Supreme Court-monitored probe and audit into the alleged donation theft.

The CWC also discussed alleged Chinese incursions in Arunachal Pradesh and accused the government of following a "surrender policy". It raised concerns over agricultural and energy security and E20 fuel.

The meeting discussed the singing of Vande Mataram and said the party would sing only two stanzas of the song in accordance with the 1937 resolution, which had the concurrence of senior leaders including Gandhi, Nehru, Patel, Subhash Chandra Bose and Tagore.

Addressing a press conference after the



meeting, Congress general secretary K.C. Venugopal said 88 leaders attended the CWC meeting and 33 spoke.

"We are focused on three-four issues. Number one is paper leaks. The agitation done by the people of the country and the way the government dealt with that agitation was discussed. The CWC noted that the Monsoon Session of Parliament was successful for the Opposition and the government was on the back foot," he said.

Venugopal said Rahul Gandhi's 'Chhatron ki Goonj' would continue with more such gatherings in 800 cities, some of which would be headed by the former Congress president.

Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge asked the party's chief ministers to work with education experts to prepare a roadmap to overhaul the education and examination system and submit a report to him, Venugopal said.

"'Chanda Chori' is a

serious area of concern among people of this country. It is an issue associated with the sentiments of people. Those who used Ram Mandir for polarising people now stand exposed," Venugopal said.

"We will take this issue to the grassroots level. We directed PCCs to take it up at the village and panchayat level," he said.

Venugopal said the alleged "Chinese incursion" in Arunachal Pradesh was also discussed.

The CWC reiterated its

demand that women's reservation be implemented within the current strength of 543 Lok Sabha seats. Venugopal said the party wanted the number of seats capped at 543 for the next 25 years, with one-third reserved for women and implemented immediately.

Congress general secretary Jairam Ramesh said Prime Minister Narendra Modi should apologise to the country over the "shudhikaran" in Uttarakhand after Kharge's programme there.

Addressing the CWC, Kharge said, "In Parliament, too, we strove for a comprehensive deliberation on issues concerning education and examinations-seeking a discussion on the injustices faced by students and demanding accountability. However, (Prime Minister Narendra) Modi ji and (Home Minister) Amit Shah ji evaded questions throughout the Monsoon Session. Now that they have started speaking, they are prioritising non-issues over the questions raised by the youth,"

CM Revanth Urges US Ambassador To Simplify H-1B Visa Processing, Stamping Procedures

New Delhi: Telangana Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy on Wednesday met US Ambassador to India Sergio Gor and requested him to simplify the H-1B visa processing, renewal and stamping procedures to avoid delays. During the 30-minute meeting, the chief minister also requested an increase in the number of visas for students from Telangana travelling to the USA for higher education and sought assistance in ensuring timely visa appointments.

The CM also urged for an increase in visa interview slots and the expediting of visa application processing, while appealing to the Ambassador to provide the information in advance regarding any changes in the visa regulations. In the meeting, the CM brought to the Ambassador's attention the issues faced by professionals from Telangana working in various sectors in America, an official statement said.



They also discussed the safety and welfare of students from Telangana studying in the USA. Highlighting the investment prospects

for US companies in Telangana, the CM said the state government is ready to join as partners with US companies in IT, artificial intelligence, life sciences, pharmaceuticals, startups, research, and modern technology. He requested the ambassador to facilitate collaborations between US universities and educational institutions in Telangana.

The CM stressed that student exchange, research, innovation, and skill development programs be expanded between America and Telangana. He also emphasised the need to strengthen cooperation in sectors such as education, employment, investments, technology, and research within Telangana. The Ambassador assured full cooperation in further expanding trade, investments, cultural exchanges, and people-to-people ties between Telangana and the United States.

The CWC meeting was held at Indira Bhawan and chaired by Kharge. Former Congress presidents Sonia Gandhi and Rahul Gandhi, AICC general secretaries Priyanka Gandhi Vadra, Jairam Ramesh and K.C. Venugopal and senior leaders Ambika Soni, Mukul Wasnik and P. Chidambaram were among those who attended.

Group-1 Exam Irregularities Unprecedented, Says Naidu

Vijayawada: Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu on Wednesday alleged that unprecedented irregularities took place in the conduct and evaluation of APPSC Group-1 examinations during the YSRC government's term.

This, he said, seriously compromised the credibility of the recruitment process for senior state officials.

Participating in a special discussion in the assembly, Naidu said procedures were flouted at several stages, with answer scripts allegedly being evaluated by electricians, drivers, plumbers, security guards, homemakers, unemployed persons,

sales executives and laboratory technicians instead of qualified university professors and heads of department.

He said 1.14 lakh candidates had applied for the Group-1 notification issued in 2018 and 325 were shortlisted. Despite the importance of the examination, answer scripts were handled without adequate security. He contrasted this with the Class 10 examination scripts, which are transported under police escort.

Naidu alleged that after the high court directed a manual evaluation instead of a digital evaluation, affidavits were filed in a manner that misled the court. Instead of correcting the process, orders worth ` 1.19 crore were issued to facilitate evaluation at the Hai-Land resort, he claimed.

Interviews and appointments were also conducted while court



orders were in force. The HC later constituted a three-member committee headed by a retired judge to inquire into the matter.

According to Naidu, a panel of 158 persons was selected for evaluation, of whom 72 were assigned duties, while 25 were allegedly appointed unofficially. Another 66 unofficial evaluators were involved. Evaluation material was allegedly sent to private laptops and answer-script PDFs were shared through private email accounts, Google Drive and WhatsApp.

Scripts were moved from the APPSC strong room without authorisation and kept at Hai-Land for 84 days. About ` 1.14 crore was spent on logistics.

Naidu said that after Gautam Sawang became APPSC chairman, orders were issued for manual evaluation and 49,000 duplicate OMR slips were printed. Alterations, overwriting and differences in handwriting were detected. Of 734 OMR slips examined, 718 contained alterations, while 21 had no signatures.

The CM said a candidate who appeared for the Group-1 examination was allegedly appointed as an evaluator for the same examination. Examiner lists were circulated through WhatsApp and Telegram groups. CCTV cameras were allegedly unavailable in the evaluation hall for 17 days, while mobile phones were allowed inside. Though AP PSC rules prohibit whitener, forensic reports reportedly detected its use on OMR slips.

Naidu said institutions were meant to serve the future of the youth and warned that wrongdoing must

attract stringent punishment. He challenged the Opposition to answer the people in the assembly instead of resorting to conspiracies and counter-attacks. He said the assembly was the proper forum for accountability and those responsible must explain the lapses.

Naidu said the government would comprehensively analyse the irregularities and overhaul APPSC, introducing transparent evaluation procedures and stronger security standards. Reforms, he added, would be undertaken after obtaining suggestions from the public and intellectuals to ensure such incidents do not recur.

Treesa-Gayatri credit home crowd after reaching BWF World Championships quarterfinals

Indian women’s doubles pair Treesa Jolly and Gayatri Gopichand credited the home crowd for inspiring their win over Japan’s seventh seeds Rin Iwanaga and Kie Nakanishi at the BWF World Championships. The duo is now one victory away from securing a medal

New Delhi: Treesa Jolly and Gayatri Gopichand are refusing to let the prospect of a World Championships medal alter their approach after the Indian women’s doubles pair reached the quarter-finals on Thursday, with the duo crediting the home crowd for helping them overcome seventh seeds Rin Iwanaga and Kie Nakanishi of Japan at the Indira Gandhi Indoor Stadium.

The 21-16, 21-12 victory moved the 39th-ranked Indians to within one win of a guaranteed medal. But for Gayatri, the pressure of playing a seeded opponent in front of a packed home crowd is one she would rather embrace than avoid.

“I think getting on court, definitely there’s a little pressure, but it’s the kind of pressure you enjoy because you’re playing in Delhi. So I think yeah, even in the first set we were down 13-16, but then we got some tips from our coaches, and I think after that we’ve implemented it pretty well, so yeah, I think I’m super happy. Even in the second game there were a few, it was pretty tricky, neck-to-neck, but then yeah, I’m glad we could stay calm and pull the game off,” Gayatri told reporters after the win.

The support from the stands became particularly important when the Indians found themselves under pressure. Gayatri felt the crowd’s energy helped them stay in the contest and eventually take control.

“At one point we



were under pressure; the crowd was carrying us, so I just want to thank them, and I just want them to keep believing in us, and I hope to give them more reasons to celebrate,” Gayatri added.

Treesa echoed her partner’s sentiment, saying the atmosphere inside the stadium gave the pair an additional lift even when the scoreboard was against them.

“The crowd is so amazing; I think even when we are in the first game, when we are down also, the crowd really carried us, and I think when it’s happening at home, we just need to show our powerful matches and everything that they can see,” Treesa said.

The Indians’ next challenge is expected to be another stern examination. They know the quarter-final stage leaves little room for lapses, but Treesa wants the pair to concentrate on the contest rather than its significance.

“I think it’s not going to be easy. I think they are playing at the top level and every point matters to us, I think we just need to believe in ourselves be calm and just be present in that moment,” Treesa added.

Gayatri, meanwhile, has no intention of looking beyond recovery before turning their attention to tactics.

“Not yet, but I think we should just go back, eat, stretch, get a good night’s sleep, and then we’ll work on our tactics and see what happens tomorrow,” she said.

The Indians have also found a formula that is producing results: constant rotation combined with sustained attacking pressure.

“It’s working really great, that rotation and that attacking; we just need to keep on doing that,” she added.

Their partnership was particularly effective when Treesa was given the opportunity to unleash her powerful smash. The pair said the shots leading into those finishing blows have been just as important.

“I think yeah, that’s very important that in that crucial situation where Gayatri just charged and just gave me chances, and that made us get that continuous 3-4 points consistently,” Treesa stated.

Gayatri added, “I just want to set up for her because she has a huge smash, so I know if she’s going to kill, it’s going to be it.”

The possibility of a medal is now impossible to ignore, but Gayatri insists they will not allow it to dominate their thinking.

“Obviously it will be in our mind, but we just need to be present at this moment, like we need to enjoy this victory and just take good recovery and just prepare for the next match,” Gayatri mentioned.

For a pair returning from a three-month injury layoff and rebuilding their rhythm only recently, the run has already provided a significant lift.

“It’s definitely a huge boost of confidence because they’ve also fought really well; it wasn’t easy to beat any of the pairs we’ve played and we’re just looking forward to the next match,” she said.

And with New Delhi providing the stage, Treesa is determined that the pair enjoy every part of the experience.

“I think yeah, it’s so great that playing here in the home soil and the crowd support and everyone is seeing us, how we are playing and we just want to really focus and we just need to enjoy this moment,” Treesa said.

Venus Williams Receives US Open 2026 Wildcard

Two-time U.S. Open singles champion Venus Williams has received a wildcard entry into this year’s tournament, organisers said on Tuesday. Seven-time Grand Slam winner Williams, 46, was eliminated in the first round at Flushing Meadows last year after falling to Czech Karolina Muchova. She and sister Serena also returned to doubles action for the first time since 2022 on Monday, suffering an opening round defeat at the Cincinnati Open. Sloane Stephens, the 2017 U.S. Open winner, was also among those granted a wildcard on Monday. The 33-year-old is trying to make a comeback after a foot injury



derailed her 2025 season. Organisers said one women’s singles wildcard spot is still to be announced. On the men’s side, Frenchman Gael Monfils was among those who got a wildcard into the main draw earlier this month. The former world number six previously announced that he would retire at the end of the season. Monfils and spouse Elina Svitolina were also given wildcards into the U.S. Open mixed doubles tournament on Monday.



India Beat Pakistan 5-3 in Men's Hockey World Cup

Amstelveen: Skipper Harmanpreet Singh and Abhishek scored a brace each to help India beat arch-rivals Pakistan 5-3 in their final Pool D match of the FIH Men’s Hockey World Cup here on Wednesday. Harmanpreet struck twice from two penalty corners in the fifth and 21st minutes, while Abhishek’s two fine field goals came in the 11th and 24th minutes. Vice-captain Hardik Singh also scored



from a penalty stroke in the 35th minute. Pakistan scored through Hannan Shahid (22nd, 46th) and Sufyan Khan (24th) to reduce the margin.

BWF World Championships: Sindhu's Hopes of Sixth Medal End With Quarterfinal Loss



New Delhi: Two-time Olympic medallist PV Sindhu’s hopes of winning an unprecedented sixth World Championships medal came to an end after she suffered a gruelling 11-21 21-15 17-21 defeat to China’s world No. 3 Wang Zhi Yi in the women’s singles quarterfinals here on Thursday. Sindhu, a two-time world champion, made a strong fightback after losing the open-

ing game but could not sustain the momentum in the decider. Wang kept her composure in the closing stages to seal a hard-fought victory and advance to the semifinals. The Indian had been chasing a sixth medal at the prestigious championships, having previously won gold in 2019, silver in 2017 and 2018, and bronze in 2013 and 2014. Her exit also brings an end to India’s hopes of a women’s singles medal at the championships.

State Swimmers Dazzle At Junior National Event



Bhubaneswar: Telangana swimmers Suhas Preetham Mylari, Sri Nithya Sagi and Annika Deborah came up with impressive performances at the 52nd Junior National Aquatic Championship being held in Bhubaneswar.

The State swimmers won four medals — a gold, silver and two bronzes. Suhas won the men’s 100 metres Backstroke while recording a new Personal Best (PB) while Sri Nithya Sagi bagged a silver in Individual Medley and bronze in the girls 100 metres backstroke. Annika bagged a bronze in the girls 50 metre Freestyle category.

The Results

Boys 100 metres Backstroke: 1. Suhas Preetham Mylari (Telangana) 57:33 seconds, 2. Aman Abhijit Sungar (Karnataka) 58:35, 3. Samarth Pranav Joshi (Kerala) 59:86.

Girls 400 metres Medley: 1. Arnav Ramdas Kadu (Maharashtra) 4 minutes

34.81 seconds, 2. M. S. Nitheesh (Tamil Nadu) 4:36:34, 3. Subrahmanya Jeevamsh (Karnataka) 4:43:84.

Girls 100 metres Backstroke: 1. Vihitha Nayana Loganathan (Karnataka) 1 minute 6.50 seconds, 2. Priyanshi Misra (Karnataka) 1:07:60, 3. Sri Nithya Sagi (Telangana) 1:08:37.

Girls 50 metres Freestyle: 1. Charita Phanindranath (Karnataka) 26:04 seconds, 2. Tisya Sonar (Karnataka) 27:86, 3. Annika Deborah Paripooranam Ananth (Telangana) 28:02.



Soori's high-octane sports drama 'Mandaadi' cleared for release

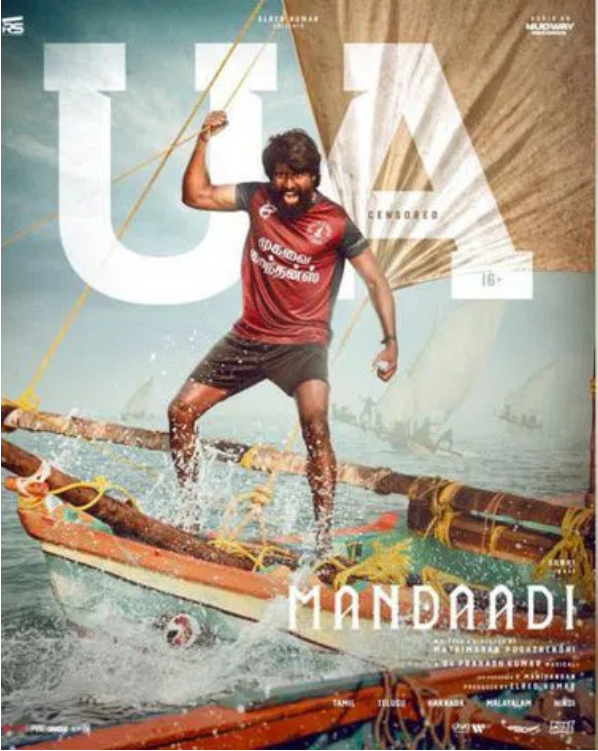
Soori-starrer sports action drama 'Mandaadi' has received a U/A 16+ certificate from the CBFC. Directed by Mathimaran Pugazhendi, the film features high-risk sea-based stunts performed by Soori and is set for a pan-Indian release in Tamil, Telugu and HindiHistory

Chennai: The Central Board of Film Certification (CBFC) has now cleared director M a t h i m a r a n Pugazhendi's much-anticipated upcoming sports action drama 'Mandaadi', featuring actor Soori and Mahima Nambiar in the lead, for release with a U/A 16+ certificate.

Taking to its X timeline, R S Infotainment, the production house producing the film, wrote, "#Mandaadi is U/A 16+ Certified! #Mandaadi in cinemas worldwide on September 10, 2026. @sooriofficial #Suhas #sathyaraj @Mahima_Nambiar 'Mandaadi' will mark the Tamil debut of Telugu actor Suhas, who plays a pivotal role alongside Soori. Apart from Soori, Mahima Nambiar and Suhas, the film will also feature actors Sathyaraj, Ravindra Vijay, Mithun, and Balasaravanan in important roles.

For the unaware, the title 'Mandaadi' is inspired by the rich maritime culture of Tamil Nadu's coastal belt and embodies the spirit of individuals who possess exceptional skill, determination, and leadership in navigating the challenges of the sea.History

Shooting for the film had been wrapped in April this year. A video that the makers had released while announcing that shooting for the film



had been wrapped up showed how the cast and the crew had suffered injuries while making the film that has been predominantly shot at sea.

The film has triggered huge interest among fans and film buffs as Soori has performed all the high risk stunts that were shot on sea for the film himself.

The film is expected to emerge as a significant milestone in Soori's career as it stands as the biggest and most ambitious project he has undertaken to date. Sources point out that one of the film's major strengths lies in Soori's extraordinary physical commitment.

The actor has personally performed all the high-risk action sequences set in the sea, without the use of body doubles.

Sources in the know had told IANS that for the extensive sailboat racing portions, Soori underwent rigorous training and hands-on preparation over several months, mastering the physical and technical demands of the sport. This dedication, they said, had added authenticity and emotional weight to the film, significantly enhancing its realism and cinematic impact.

Shot extensively across the coastal regions of Tamil Nadu, particularly in the Ramanathapuram belt, 'Mandaadi', the sources claim, has large-scale action blocks, emotionally charged sequences, and ambitious sailboat racing portions. The production team they point out has worked tirelessly across challenging terrains and weather conditions to ensure authenticity and visual richness.

'Mandaadi' is being positioned as a pan-Indian release, slated to hit screens in Tamil, Telugu, and Hindi.

Rashi Singh's Colourful Saree Look Wins Hearts

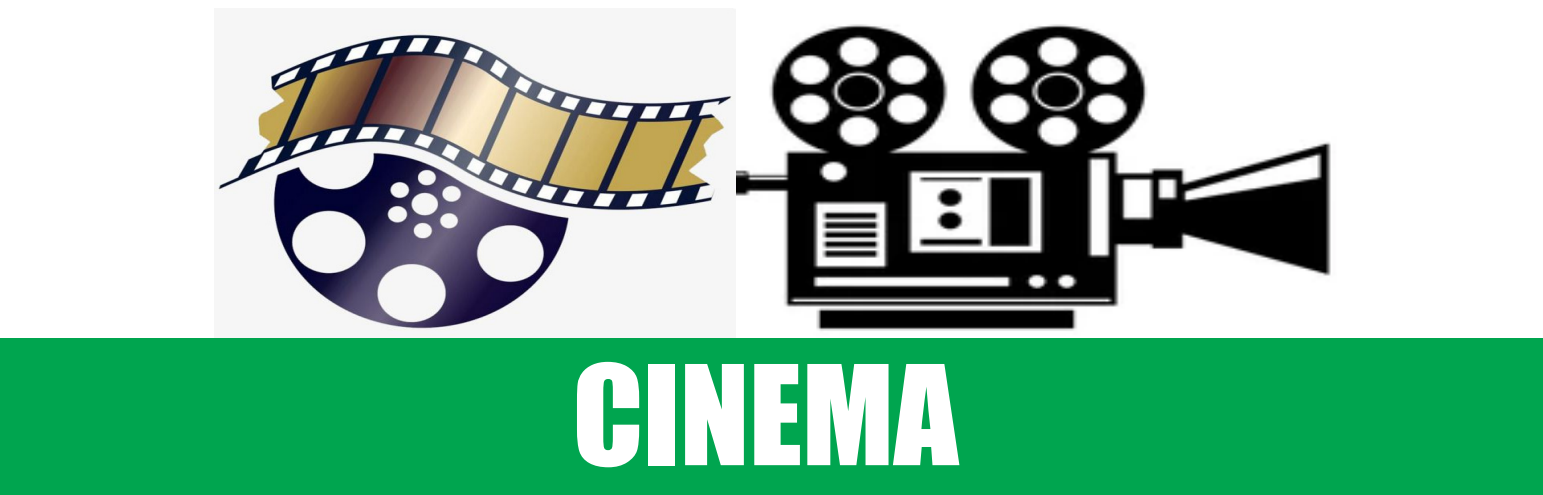
Rashi Singh smiles warmly in a vibrant multi-coloured saree paired with traditional gold and pearl jewellery. Her glowing expression and effortless poise capture the fresh, approachable charm that has made her a rising face in Telugu cinema.

Born in Bhilai, Chhattisgarh, Rashi briefly worked as an air hostess before deciding to pursue acting full-time. She made her Telugu film debut in 2021 with the romantic drama Sashi, playing Sunitha opposite Aadi Saikumar.



She steadily built her presence with roles in Prem Kumar (2023) as Netra, followed by the mystery thriller Bhoothaddam Bhaskar Narayana (2024) as Lakshmi and the critically noted Prasanna Vadanam (2024), where she portrayed ACP Vaidehi. These performances showcased her ability to handle both emotional and authoritative characters.

With a growing slate of diverse roles, Rashi continues to establish herself as a versatile talent in Tollywood.



Anil Ravipudi Trolled for His Title; Producer Says, "Netizens May Have Their Views"

"Anil Ravipudi knows the pulse of the audience very well. He has once again assured that this will be a comic caper with family drama, so a funny and unconventional title could work. But netizens naturally have a different opinion," says a producer.

Twitter has been one of the most influential platforms for Telugu cinema over the past decade. However, in recent years, social media has also become a space where paid campaigns and manufactured perceptions are increasingly used to influence the conversation around films.

Amid this, Anil Ravipudi stands out as a filmmaker who has consistently faced criticism from Telugu Twitter, yet appears largely unfazed by it. The director has a clear understanding of his strengths and, more importantly, the pulse of the family audience. Rather than trying to please social-media circles, he continues to make films aimed at families and the masses.

His career has repeatedly demonstrated that Twitter sentiment does not necessarily determine a film's box-office fate. Films that are heavily trolled online can still find a strong theatrical audience if they connect with families and the masses. Conversely, a film that enjoys tremendous social-media hype does not automatically translate that buzz into ticket sales.



Anil seems to understand this distinction better than most. He has rarely allowed Twitter criticism to dictate his promotional strategy or filmmaking choices. In fact, with his latest announcement, it appears he may even be turning the trolling into part of the game.

The announcement video of January 12 Vidudala, his upcoming film with Venkatesh and Nandamuri Kalyanram, has already triggered a mixed response on social media. Several Telugu Twitter users have described the video as "cringe", particularly questioning its quirky presentation and title.

But Anil would hardly have been unaware of that possibility. Given his experience with social media, he would have known that the announcement was likely to generate memes and trolling. Yet, he went ahead with it anyway.

And that may actually be the strategy. In today's social-media ecosystem, negative publicity often travels faster than positive publicity. A title or promo that triggers debate can generate far more organic conversation than a conventional announcement that receives polite appreciation and disappears from the timeline within hours.

For Anil Ravipudi, this could be another example of knowing his audience — and knowing which audience really matters. Telugu Twitter may have its own opinion, but the filmmaker continues to focus on the people who ultimately buy the tickets.

If the latest announcement is any indication, Anil may have reached a stage where he is not merely ignoring Telugu Twitter's trolling, but perhaps even using it to his advantage.

Ameer Log, Not Just Restricted To Nizam

For the director, the premiere response was another important validation, as it indicated that the film had managed to communicate the vision behind its making.

The countdown has begun for Ameer Log, the upcoming film that marks the production debut of Madhavi Reddy Soma. Made under Awwal Number Productions, the film is written and directed by Ramana Reddy Soma, with Manohar Reddy Manchuri coming on board as co-producer. The film features MC Hari, Manoj, Vedha Jalandhar and Sashidhar in lead roles.

The film's team sounded highly confident during a press meet. Director Ramana Reddy Soma revealed that the makers have gone through the film several times and each viewing reinforced their belief that they had created a winner. He maintained that Ameer Log does not follow a familiar template and claimed that audiences have not seen a film of this nature before.



For the director, the premiere response was another important validation, as it indicated that the film had managed to communicate the vision behind its making.

Ramana Reddy Soma also used the occasion to discuss the evolution of Telugu cinema. He noted that Malayalam films are often praised for attempting stories that are different from con-

ventional commercial cinema. In his view, Hyderabad is now ready to establish its own identity in this space. He expects the August 21 release to be the beginning of a larger journey for Ameer Log, with the response in Nizam potentially spreading to other regions. "This film is not just restricted to Nizam, and will equally appeal to the audiences in other

regions." Producer Madhavi Reddy Soma, meanwhile, expressed gratitude towards Ramana for his unwavering support. She said he guided her throughout the production and personally handled the film's writing, direction and production responsibilities. She described Ameer Log as a care-

fully created work that resembles a beautiful painting. More than simply entertaining viewers, she believes the film will make them feel something deeply personal, with every audience member taking away an emotion of their own.

Spirit Media, the banner led by Rana Daggubati, is releasing the film in Telugu on August 21.