



Should excel with job opportunity Jobs with Centurion University Appointment letters handed over Minister Kondapalli Srinivas

Vizianagaram, August 27: State Minister for MSME, Rural Poverty Eradication and NRI Empowerment Relations Kondapalli Srinivas said youth who got job opportunity should excel. Appointment letters were handed over on Thursday at minister camp office to students selected in job mela interviews held recently near Gajapathi nagaram party office. Speaking on occasion, Minister Kondapalli Srinivas said it is difficult to get job in present times and

getting job in first attempt itself is luck as well as proof of their talent. He said today's small job will give experience in future. He said this small job experience will be useful for big job and youth should know that qualification will be achieved only if there is experience. He said Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu and youth leader Lokesh are establishing industries to solve unemployment problem. He thanked Centurion

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Flawless electoral rolls with transparent duties

Quality gets top priority at every stage of SIR process
Andhra Pradesh's initiative in this regard is commendable
Move forward with collective effort till
publication of final list on October 3
Proper coordination and spirit of cooperation
from top level to BLO is key

ECI Senior Deputy Election Commissioner Dr Pawan Kumar Sharma with District Collectors, Election Officials



Vijayawada: August 27: Collective effort is necessary to prepare flawless electoral rolls without scope for errors by giving utmost priority to quality at every stage in Special Intensive Revision (SIR) process of electoral rolls and initiative shown so far in Andhra Pradesh in this

regard is commendable, said Senior Deputy Election Commissioner of Election Commission of India Dr Pawan Kumar Sharma. Senior Deputy Election Commissioner of ECI Dr Pawan Kumar Sharma conducted review and interactive

AP steps up efforts to trace stranded Telugu pilgrims

Amaravati: The Andhra Pradesh government has intensified efforts to trace, assist and facilitate the evacuation of Telugu pilgrims and residents stranded in flood-affected areas of Nepal, following directions from Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu. Under the guidance of Minister for Real Time Governance and IT Nara Lokesh, the Real Time Governance



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RTGS Minister Nara Lokesh Leads Rescue Efforts to Bring Back Stranded Andhra Pradesh People from Nepal

Amaravati: Minister Nara Lokesh is personally leading and coordinating rescue efforts to ensure the safe return of all Andhra Pradesh residents stranded or missing in flood-affected areas of Nepal. Seven people from Andhra Pradesh have so far been identified as missing or stranded. Four have been traced safe but remain stranded, while efforts are underway to locate the remaining three missing persons. Three persons currently missing: 1. Bala Subramanyam from Kuppam has been reported missing. 2. Sasi Kumar, travelling with Isha Foundation

Group S3, was last seen at the Gyirong Embassy in China. 3. Rajyalakshmi Nimmagadda, also a member of Isha Foundation Group S3, is currently missing. Four traced safe, remain stranded: Bhaskar Shastri and three others from Adoni and Kurnool have been confirmed safe but remain stranded. They were part of a 156-member group travelling to Kailash Mansarovar. AP Bhavan and concerned departments have identified and are closely monitoring the cases of all seven AP residents. RTGS Minister Lokesh is coordinating rescue efforts across agencies Minis-



ter Nara Lokesh is coordinating with agencies across the board to trace the missing persons and facilitate the safe evacuation of those stranded. AP Bhavan is in constant coor-

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Nepal floods: Three from Andhra Pradesh missing, four stranded



Amaravati: Three persons from Andhra Pradesh are reported missing after devastating floods in Nepal, the state government officials said on Thursday. Four have been traced safe but remain stranded, while efforts are underway to locate the three missing persons, they said. Two

of those reported missing were members of Isha Foundation Group. Bala Subramanyam from Kuppam has been reported missing. Sasi Kumar, travelling with Isha Foundation Group S3, was last seen at the Gyirong Embassy in China. Rajyalakshmi Nimmagadda,

also a member of Isha Foundation Group S3, is also missing. Bhaskar Shastri and three others from Adoni and Kurnool have been confirmed safe but remain stranded. They were part of a 156-member group travelling to Kailash Mansarovar. Andhra Pradesh Bhavan and concerned departments have identified and are closely monitoring the cases of all seven Andhra Pradesh residents. AP Bhavan is in constant coordination with the Indian Embassy, Chinese Embassy, Nepalese Embassy, Gyirong Immigration Centre, Isha Foundation, RTGS Centre and Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) to ascertain the whereabouts and safety of

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AP Govt takes special mea- sures for Kharif cultivation de- spite El Nino

Amaravati: Minister for Agriculture and Fisheries Kinjarapu Atchannaidu stated that despite severe drought conditions in the State, the government has proactively initiated all necessary measures to ensure Kharif cultivation remains unhindered. He noted that while the government is working continuously to support farmers, former Chief

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Naidu orders evacuation of Andhra residents stranded in flood-hit Nepal



Amaravati: Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu on Thursday directed officials to identify people from the state who are stranded in Nepal following floods and take steps to move them to safe locations. The government is tracking affected residents and

maintaining close contact with the Centre. "Officials have been directed to identify Andhra Pradesh residents who may be stranded in Nepal following the floods and take all necessary steps to move them to safe locations," said Naidu in an offi-

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A Supreme Court judge sounds alarm but no one reacts

The deeper problem is structural, not personal to any judge. India’s higher judiciary appoints itself through the Collegium, transfers itself, and disciplines itself, all through processes that are opaque by design and defended, ironically, in the name of judicial independence. Independence from the executive is a constitutional value worth protecting fiercely; India’s history of committed judges and midnight transfers during the Emergency is proof enough of why Aserving Supreme Court judge’s extraordinary letters against a High Court’s acting chief justice have exposed, once again, how little machinery exists to hold India’s higher judiciary accountable — and how much the system depends on judges policing themselves in the dark. Every few years, Indian democracy is reminded that its most powerful institution is also its least accountable. The reminder this time comes not from a litigant, not from an activist, not from the press — but from within the system itself. Supreme Court judge Justice Sandeep Mehta has, in a series of letters written to Chief Justice of India Surya Kant between August 2 and August 17, levelled an extraordinary set of allegations against Justice Sanjeev Prakash (“S.P.”) Sharma, the acting Chief Justice of the Rajasthan High Court. He has asked that Justice Sharma be replaced “with immediate effect” and transferred out of the state.

The allegations, as reported, are wide-ranging: manipulation of case rosters and listings to favour particular lawyers and litigants; threats of retributive transfers against fellow judges; an “unpardonable” hold-up of the inauguration of a fully-built Jodhpur court complex; vindictive conduct towards a senior district judiciary officer who happens to be a colleague-judge’s wife; and nepotism in appointments to permanent lok adalats, including one appointment allegedly going to a person with familial ties to Justice Sharma. Justice Mehta has also questioned why the Collegium, having declined to repatriate Justice Sharma to Rajasthan in 2023 citing his past conduct, reversed itself in May 2026 and gave him, in Mehta’s words, “a long rope.” None of this has been adjudicated. These are allegations, contained in letters, forwarded to the Collegium and the President — not findings of any inquiry, in-house or otherwise. Fairness demands that be said plainly and repeated often. Justice Sharma has not, as of this writing, been reported to have responded publicly, and he is entitled to a full opportunity to answer each charge before any conclusion is drawn about his conduct. This column takes no view of his guilt or innocence. What it does take a view on is the system that allows such an episode to unfold entirely outside public scrutiny, governed by no statute, no published procedure, and no timeline.

That system is the “in-house procedure,” a mechanism the Supreme Court itself invented in 1995 in C. Ravichandran Iyer v. Justice A.M. Bhattacharjee, precisely because impeachment — the only constitutional remedy for removing a High Court or Supreme Court judge — was recognised as too blunt and too rare an instrument for anything short of the gravest misconduct. The in-house mechanism was meant to fill the gap between “do nothing” and “impeach.”

Should excel with job opportunity

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University for giving opportunity to unemployed youth of constituency.He handed over appointment letters to 27 persons. He said it is welcome development that Centurion University is providing accommodation facility along with salary to them. Centurion University representatives and party presidents of four mandals participated in programme.

Flawless electoral rolls with transparent duties

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programme on SIR progress in State at Sri AVS Reddy Hall in NTR district collectorate on Thursday. AP CEO Vivek Yadav, Additional CEO S Dilli Rao along with NTR District Collector Dr G Lakshmisha, Guntur Collector C M Saikant Varma, Palnadu Collector Dr Krithika Shukla, East Godavari Collector Keerthi Chekuri, West Godavari Collector Chadalavada Nagarani, Eluru Collector K Vetriselvi, Bapatla Collector Dr V Vinod Kumar and EROs of respective districts attended directly while Collectors of various districts participated virtually.In backdrop of process of issuance of notices, inquiry, disposal of claims and complaints currently underway, Senior Deputy Election Commissioner Dr Pawan Kumar reviewed district wise progress. Across State so far 43,71,397 notices have been distributed and inquiry has been completed at field level on 16,23,774 notices. In this backdrop, while congratulating districts which are in forefront in distribution and inquiry process of notices, he gave directions to take process forward smoothly in remaining districts also in line with spirit of SIR qualitatively, quickly and transparently. He congratulated Collector of Kurnool district which currently has lowest pendency of only 15.18 percent with regard to inquiry on notices.Coordination and cooperation among EROs, AEROs, BLOs, BLAs and political parties is key to take process forward successfully and it is important to clear doubts of anyone and take steps for problem solving from time to time, he said. Pawan Kumar Sharma suggested everyone should work to provide satisfactory assistance to voters.During meeting, problems being faced in districts at present stage were ascertained and actions to be taken for their solution and proper course of action as per rules were also discussed. In case of inability to attend inquiry due to various reasons like old age, ill health etc, ERO/AERO should coordinate with BLO and provide assistance to voters through home visit and various means. Similarly after inquiry on notices, AEROs who are quasi-judicial officers should understand problem and take fair final decision.During meeting, Dr Pawan Kumar Sharma also examined aspects like special campaign programmes, meetings with representatives of recognized political parties, rationalization of polling stations, receipt and disposal of Form-6, Form-7, Form-8 etc.

RTGS Minister Nara Lokesh Leads Rescue Efforts to Bring Back Stranded Andhra Pradesh People from Nepal

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dination with the Indian Embassy, Chinese Embassy, Nepalese Embassy, Gyrong Immigration Centre, Isha Foundation, RTGS Centre and Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) to ascertain the whereabouts and safety of those affected. Flood Situation remains fluid: The areas of Syapru Besi, BC and Timure, key transit and acclimatisation points for Kailash Mansarovar pilgrims, have been severely affected by the floods. Initial reports indicate that the sudden flooding may have been triggered by an ice-rock avalanche in the Lhende River, rather than rainfall. The Nepal Army, Nepal Police and paramilitary forces are carrying out rescue operations. Advisory for stranded persons and families: All stranded persons are advised to remain in safe locations and maintain contact with their respective embassies. Families looking for missing persons may contact Nepal Tourism Police at 1144. Contact details: AP Bhavan provides information details and the person's last known location. — New Delhi 1. 011-23384016 2. Whatsapp: 9059824101

AP steps up efforts to trace stranded pilgrims

Society (RTGS) is the clock monitoring the clock continuously tracking the safety and whereabouts of Andhra Pradesh residents affected by the floods. Minister has directed the officials to maintain close coordination with the concerned people to Telugu people. In line with these instructions, the information-gathering teams to remain on duty, track developments closely and regarding the stranded pilgrims. The RTGS

AP Govt takes special measures for Kharif cultivation despite El Nino

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Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy’s political criticisms ignoring ground realities are inappropriate. The Minister revealed that between the first week of June 2026 and August 25, the State recorded 192.8 mm of rainfall against normal average of 393.7 mm—a 51% deficit. Despite this shortfall, pulses cultivation grew by 23.6%, increasing from 2.16 lakh hectares last year to 2.66 lakh hectares this year. He detailed the current cultivation metrics, including red gram (2.30 lakh hectares), paddy (10.37 lakh hectares) and cotton (3.97 lakh hectares). Alert On El Niño Since February The Minister highlighted that the government had been conducting reviews and taking input from agricultural scientists since the Centre issued an El Niño alert in February 2026. District-wise drought mitigation and crisis management plans were drafted, and the state-wide program ‘Raithanna Meekosam – El Niño Effect Mitigation Plan – Kharif 2026’ was launched on August 7, 2026. YSRCP administration, Atchannaidu stated that under Jagan’s five-year tenure, not a single rupee in crop insurance compensation was awarded for any Rabi season, as the government failed to clear its share of the premium for three out of five Kharif seasons and multiple Rabi seasons. He clarified that the coalition government is not forcing farmers to pay heavy premiums; under the voluntary crop insurance policy, farmers pay only 2% of the premium (e.g., Rs 76/acre for paddy, Rs 36/acre for red gram), while the Central and State governments split the remaining cost. Consequently, insurance applications jumped from 19.5 lakh in Kharif 2025 to 35.1 lakh in Kharif 2026, bringing coverage to 15.1 lakh hectares worth Rs 13,983 crore. The Minister noted that the current government has submitted a clear roadmap to the Centre to clear Rs 2,000 crore in pending crop insurance dues left by the previous regime, scheduling phased payments through 2028–29. He reaffirmed that the coalition government’s policy is not to burden farmers, but to provide them with complete security and reassurance.

Naidu orders evacuation of Andhra residents stranded in flood-hit Nepal

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cial press release.The CM has assigned the Real Time Governance System (RTGS) to continuously monitor the ground situation and provide assistance to pilgrims affected by the floods.Meanwhile, a dedicated control room has been set up at AP Bhavan in Delhi to coordinate information and assistance related to people from Andhra Pradesh affected by the situation in Nepal.People can reach the AP Bhavan control room through landline no. 011-23384016 and 011-23387089. The Whatsapp number is 9059824101, the government said.

Nepal floods: Three from Andhra Pradesh missing, four stranded

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those affected. State Minister for Information Technology and Real Time Governance, Nara Lokesh, is personally leading and coordinating rescue efforts to ensure the safe return of all Andhra Pradesh residents stranded or missing in flood-affected areas of Nepal.He is coordinating with agencies across the board to trace the missing persons and facilitate the safe evacuation of those stranded.According to Andhra Pradesh Bhavan, the areas of Syapru Besi, BC and Timure, key transit and acclimatisation points for Kailash Mansarovar pilgrims, have been severely affected by the floods. Initial reports indicate that the sudden flooding may have been triggered by an ice-rock avalanche in the Lhende River, rather than rainfall.The Nepal Army, Nepal Police and paramilitary forces are carrying out rescue operations. All stranded persons have been advised to remain in safe locations and maintain contact with their respective embassies. Missing persons may contact Nepal Tourism Police at 1144. Contact details: AP Bhavan provides information details and the person's last known location. — New Delhi 1. 011-23384016 2. Whatsapp: 9059824101

the ground and share information with Andhra Pradesh Bhavan in New Delhi. The state government is taking action for assistance. RTGS is particularly monitoring the situation along the flood-affected Nepal-Tibet border. Manasarovar pilgrims. Officials are coordinating closely with AP Bhavan and other agencies to gather information while maintaining coordination with the Ministry of External Affairs, the Indian Embassy, Nepalese authorities and other agencies involved in rescue operations. The state government has set up a dedicated control room at AP Bhavan to coordinate assistance and facilitate communication with stranded Andhra Pradesh residents.

If you overcome stress.. performance will be excellent!

**Employees should manage stress effectively and improve performance:
Collector Dr G Lakshmisha, DCP KGV Saritha**



Vizianagaram, August 27: District Collector Dr G Lakshmisha said with aim of reducing mental stress among employees and further improving their performance and efficiency, stress management classes are being conducted every Thursday. She said 15 sessions have been completed successfully so far and this programme which is useful for employees will be continued in future also. Speaking at Stress Management programme held at District Collector Camp Office on Thursday, Collector said such programmes help a lot in improving mental health and work efficiency of employees. She said by identifying stress faced in duties and managing it effectively, performance can be further improved. Speaking as chief guest, DCP KGV Saritha said work stress is natural in professional life, but if it is not managed properly, it may affect mental peace. To explain stress, she cited example of 250 grams water bottle. She explained that though it is easy to hold it in hand for short time, if same weight is carried for long time it becomes difficult,

similarly if problems are constantly carried in mind, stress increases. Therefore she suggested to solve problems from time to time and give adequate rest to mind. DCP Saritha suggested to prepare To-Do List every day without postponing works. She said priority should be given to important and urgent works and completed first. She said by completing works before deadline, stress arising at last minute can be reduced. She suggested employees should also learn to delegate works to colleagues when necessary, as well as to say No at appropriate time to works beyond their scope or unnecessary works. DCP Saritha suggested to do exercise, walk, meditation and breathing exercises daily for mental peace. She said 6 to 7 hours of quality sleep per day is very much needed for physical and mental health. Psychologist Dr TS Rao chaired programme. Dr Garre Shankar Rao, Harita, Sripati Jagadish, Psychologist Navita, Psychologist Venugopal, Psychologist Kavita, Nodal Officer G Jyothi and others participated in programme.

Special grievance programme at Jaggayyapet on 28th of this month

**Jaggayyapet constituency people should bring problems to notice of officials:
District Collector Dr G Lakshmisha**

Vijayawada: August 27: District Collector Dr G Lakshmisha said as part of One Month - One Constituency - Four Visits programme, special Public Grievance Redressal System (PGRS) programme will be organized at Jaggayyapet constituency level on Friday, August 28. She said special grievance programme will be or-



ganized at SVS Kalyana Mandapam, Jaggayyapet from 10.00 am. She said officials will receive petitions from people under Jaggayyapet constituency. Collector said district level officials will participate in this programme, receive petitions related to problems from people and take necessary steps for their solution. District Collector Dr G Lakshmisha requested people of Jaggayyapet constituency to utilize this special grievance programme and bring their problems to notice of officials.

NTR Patta is legal right of land owners

**Benefit for those who have old pattas but could not get proper rights
Rights should be given to eligible persons after survey of lands and verification of records
Benefit to about 20,000 land owners in district
District Collector Dr G Lakshmisha**

Vijayawada, August 27: District Collector Dr G Lakshmisha directed concerned officials to take comprehensive steps to provide legal right to land owners who have old pattas but are facing difficulties without getting full legal rights on land. On Thursday, from District Collector Camp Office, she held video conference with concerned officials on implementation of NTR Patta scheme and process of providing legal right to eligible land owners. On this occasion, District Collector said officials should work in coordination to show permanent solution to problems of land owners who could not get full rights on land despite having old pattas. She said about 20,000 persons in district got NTR pattas in past but could not get full legal rights. She directed to expedite process of giving rights to such land owners. Comprehensive survey of lands should be conducted. As part of process of giving right to NTR patta lands, Collector directed concerned officials to first conduct field level survey of lands. Details of land mentioned in old patta and land physically present at present should be examined and extent, boundaries, survey number etc should be ascertained. She suggested to involve concerned land owners during survey of lands and examine old pattas and documents related to land rights available with them. Where necessary, boundaries of land should be identified and physical conditions should be compared with details in records. Revenue records should be verified. Collector suggested to comprehensively verify old pattas, revenue records, survey records, extent of land, survey numbers etc. She said if there are any discrepancies in records, they should be ascertained



through field level verification and steps should be taken to resolve as per rules. She directed officials to also examine whether land owner actually possesses land, whether details in patta match field level conditions and whether there are other objections or disputes related to land. Collector directed to prepare list of eligible land owners after survey and verification of records. Process of providing legal right through NTR patta to eligible persons should be completed as per rules. Officials should pay special attention to ensure transparency, accuracy and compliance with rules at every stage from survey of lands to issuance of NTR patta. Collector directed to collect details of land owners who need to get benefit through NTR patta mandal wise, identify lands where survey is to be completed and prepare action plan in phased manner. She said concerned revenue and survey officials should work in mutual coordination and expedite process. District Collector Dr G Lakshmisha said main objective is to show solution to NTR patta holders who have been waiting for solution for long time and provide legal right on their land to eligible land owners. District Joint Collector S Ilakkiya, RDOs Vennela Srinu, G Anil Kumar, Tahsildars belonging to district, VMC officials participated in video conference.

**Speed in SIR.. Transparency in inquiry.. Accuracy in voters list
ECI Senior Deputy Election Commissioner
Dr Pawan Kumar Sharma reviews SIR progress in NTR, Krishna districts
Congratulates officials of two districts on progress in issuance of notices and inquiry process**

Vijayawada: August 27, 2026: Senior Deputy Election Commissioner of Election Commission of India Dr Pawan Kumar Sharma held special review meeting regarding NTR district and Krishna district on Special Intensive Revision (SIR) process of electoral rolls at Sri Pingali Venkayya Meeting Hall in NTR district collectorate on Thursday. AP CEO Vivek Yadav, NTR District Collector Dr G Lakshmisha, Krishna Collector Dr DK Balaji, Joint Collector M Naveen, Vijayawada Municipal Commissioner Dhyanchandra HM and others participated in this meeting. Similarly, 14 EROs belonging to two districts and four Booth Level Officers from each assembly constituency attended. Dr Pawan Kumar Sharma discussed problems being faced in present phase of SIR process and their solutions. He congratulated officials of two districts for working with special focus and achieving significant results in matters like unmapped voters, unavailable voters, voters permanently migrated, deceased voters and voters having names in more than one list. Similarly, he discussed progress achieved in matter of is-



suance of notices, inquiry phase and problems faced and their solutions. In NTR district 1,93,574 and in Krishna district 1,09,902 notices were issued. In NTR district so far 90,588 and in Krishna district 49,277 notices have been inquired with voters. Reception and disposal of Form 6, 7, 8 are also moving in direction of progress. District election officials said disposal of claims and objections will be completed with utmost transparency and accuracy within specific deadline. They explained process is being taken forward with collective effort so that every eligible voter is in list and to ensure assurance of vote security.

NOTICE

He suggested that the districts lagging behind in inquiry of notices — Sri Sathya Sai, Tirupati, Visakhapatnam, Bapatla and Markapuram — along with constituencies including Visakhapatnam West, Pendurthi, Nellore City, Kadiri, Hindupur, Udayagiri, Penukonda, Yerragondapalem, Tirupati and Sarvepalli, should focus on achieving progress with a proper action plan by the time of the special video conference review to be held on September 5.

Review on Juvenile Justice Act (2015)



Vijayawada, August 27: State Women Development and Child Welfare Department Principal Secretary Smt A Surya Kumari conducted review on Juvenile Justice Act being implemented by Juvenile Welfare Department. On occasion of completion of 10 years of this Act, review was conducted today with Education Department, Health Department, Police Department, District Child Protection Units, Child Welfare Committee, Juvenile Justice Board and various departments for State Level Juvenile Justice Committee Meeting to be held on September 5. Programmes being implemented under

Act in these 10 years were explained department wise. Similarly, suggestions and advices were taken from all departments for effective implementation. She suggested all departments should work in coordination. State Women Development and Child Welfare Department Director Sri M Venugopal Reddy, Juvenile Welfare Director Smt Vasantha Bala, Mission Vatsalya Joint Director Smt Sirisha, ACP Daiva Prasad, UNICEF representatives, DPOs, DCPOs, Child Welfare Committee Chairpersons and officials of various departments participated in programme.

Visakha AP Chambers Business Expo – 2026 Invitation to Minister Kondapalli Srinivas



Amaravati, August 27: Representatives of AP Chamber of Commerce and Industry invited State Minister for Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises, Rural Poverty Alleviation and Pravasi Empowerment Relations Kondapalli Srinivas to attend inaugural function of "AP Chambers Business Expo – 2026" to be held in Visakhapatnam on September 11. AP Chambers of Commerce and Industry President Potluri Bhaskar Rao and representative Lakshminarayana met Minister at his office in Secretariat on Thursday and handed over official invitation. On this oc-

casion, AP Chambers representatives explained Expo details to Minister. They said three-day Business Expo is being organized with aim of making Andhra Pradesh a world-class hub for IT, port-based development, fintech and international investments. They said more than 500 MSMEs, more than 60 startups and more than 180 exhibitors belonging to key sectors like green energy, engineering, food processing, tourism, healthcare will showcase their products and services in this exhibition and it is estimated that more than 40,000 visitors will attend three-day Expo.

Harish Rao arrested in Hanamkonda during TNGOs’ protest

Hyderabad: BRSLP deputy leader T Harish Rao was arrested by police in Hanamkonda on Thursday after he attended a protest by Telangana Non-Gazetted Officers (TNGOs) at the district Collectorate and extended his support to their demands. Harish Rao reached the protest camp and assured the employees of his full support, while demanding that the government immediately resolve the problems faced by its employees. He was arrested while returning from the protest. Police took him into custody and shifted him to the Subedari police station on foot, triggering protests by BRS workers. The activists objected to the police’s rude treatment of the former Minister and alleged that he was not even allowed to board a vehicle. Tension prevailed at the



Collectorate as BRS workers and police personnel were involved in pushing and jostling. BRS workers raised slogans against the government and attempted to prevent police from taking Harish Rao away. The arrest came amid heightened security in Warangal and Hanamkonda over Harish Rao’s proposed visit to the government polytechnic college.

Government attaches highest priority to rural development - Sithakka

WARANGAL: State Panchayat Raj, Rural Development, Rural Water Supply and Women & Child Welfare Minister Dhanasari Anasuya Sithakka said the public government gives highest priority to comprehensive development of villages. On Wednesday, the minister inaugurated and laid foundation stones for various development works worth a total of Rs. 4.46 crore in Tadwai and Eturunagaram mandals. In Tadwai, Seethakka laid the foundation for several improvement works at the Tadwai Agricultural Market Yard estimated at Rs. 83 lakh. Using CRR–Plain 2025–26 funds, the minister inaugurated internal CC (cement concrete) roads and CC drains built at Shivapur village in Aturunagaram mandal at a cost of Rs. 80 lakh. She also opened for public use an internal CC road in Gogupalli, within Shivapur gram panchayat limits, constructed at a cost



of Rs. 55 lakh. At the Eturunagaram mandal centre, Sithakka laid the foundation for various development works at the agricultural market yard to be funded by the Market Committee, amounting to Rs. 2.28 crore. Speaking on the occasion, the minister said the government is continuously working to improve basic infrastructure in remote villages and provide necessary amenities to people. She said funds are being released for construction of roads, storm-water drains and facilities required by farmers at agricultural market yards.

‘Change the development model’: Nepal’s ‘River Man’ Megh Ale after deadly floods

Kathmandu: Nepal must urgently change its development model and reconsider its rapid expansion of hydropower projects in the face of a worsening climate crisis, conservationist and social entrepreneur Megh Ale has said, warning that the devastating Bhote Koshi River floods are a sign of a much larger threat facing the Himalayas. Speaking to IANS, Ale, widely known as Nepal’s “River Man”, said that the country’s lawmakers must move away from what he described as a pursuit of “hydrodollars” and place greater emphasis on protecting rivers and adapting development to changing climatic conditions. “Change the development model. Don’t think of hydrodollars. Also, India must not encourage our business people and government to build all those dams,” Ale said, outlining his message to Nepal’s political leadership following the latest flash-flood disaster. The death toll from the devastating floods in the Bhote Koshi River had risen to 177 by Thursday, according to Nepal Police. More than 800 people remained out of contact. Police said the bodies had been recovered by 10 a.m. from several areas affected by the flooding.

The massive flood originated in the Tibetan region of China before sweeping through the transboundary Bhote Koshi River system. The disaster caused widespread destruction downstream, with bodies recovered from riverbanks in Rasuwa, Nuwakot, Dhading, Chitwan, Gorkha, Tanahun, Nawalparasi East and Nawalparasi West. Chitwan accounted for the highest number of recovered bodies. Addressing questions regarding whether the tragedy could have been anticipated, Ale explained that scientific investigations are ongoing to determine the specific triggers of the ice and rock collapse high in the mountains. “In terms of why that rock fell, scientists are yet to figure it out. Obviously, this is ice-rock from the mountain, and researchers are determining whether a glacial lake was involved. It is both a manmade and natural disaster. When the two combined, the impact became huge, triggering a disaster of this scale,” Ale stated. He stressed that a series of under-construction dams exacerbated the catastrophe. “As the flood hit, the destruction of all those infrastructures caused an even bigger problem as debris began floating downstream.” According to Ale, once the flood struck, the destruction of these structures created additional debris and intensified the downstream impact as infrastructure and materials were swept away. The conservationist linked the latest disaster to a series of extreme events witnessed across



the Himalayan region over the past decade. He cited disasters in Uttarakhand and along the Teesta River, as well as flooding along Nepal’s Seti River, as warnings of the changing environmental conditions. “This is a huge warning. This is just the beginning,” Ale cautioned.

“The rivers of the Hindu Kush Himalayas are the lifeline of over 1.5 billion people. All nations in this region really need to wake up and act before it is too late, and in many ways, we already feel it is too late,” he added. He called for governments across the Himalayan region to recognise the risks posed by rapid warming and climate change and to strengthen measures to protect river systems. Ale said Nepal, which has about 6,000 rivers and rivulets, needs to respect the natural behaviour of its waterways while developing infrastructure. He argued that disaster preparedness must be accompanied by a fundamental rethink of how development projects are planned and constructed. “We need to live with it,” he said, referring to the realities of global warming and the climate crisis. He urged Nepal to adapt its development policies to current environmental conditions rather than continuing with projects without adequately accounting for increasing climate risks. Ale also called for greater responsibility from India, given the importance of Nepal’s rivers to the wider Ganges basin. He said a substantial share of the water flowing into the Ganges originates in Nepal and argued that India therefore has a responsibility to support river conservation and management. “If all these disasters happen one after another, what will happen to the Ganges?” he asked, stressing that governments on both sides of the border must work together to protect transboundary rivers. Ale said the latest catastrophe should serve as a warning for Nepal and other Himalayan nations to act quickly on climate adaptation, river conservation and safer development practices before increasingly frequent extreme events cause even greater loss of life and infrastructure.

Rakul Preet Singh explores Surpanakha’s untold side in Ramayana



Mumbai: Actress Rakul Preet Singh, who is awaiting the release of her upcoming epic film ‘Ramayana’, has shared insights into her role of Surpanakha in the film. The actress, who essays the role of Ravana’s sister, has revealed what drew her to the character and the opportunity to explore a side of Surpanakha that goes beyond the conventional portrayal of her as an antagonist. Talking about her part in the film, the actress said, “Every few years, you see a different interpretation and presentation of these characters, while keeping the essence rooted in the original text. As an actor, you only look at a character from that lens, that it’s a character that has layers, that has the possibility and ability to shine through the film. She was apparently the most beautiful

woman of Lanka. She had an ego, but then she was layered. As an actor, it’s fun to explore those layers”. The film also stars Ranbir Kapoor, Sai Pallavi, Ravie Dubey, Yash and Sunny Deol. The role also gave Rakul an opportunity to discover facets of Surpanakha’s life that she had not encountered before. She further mentioned, “There was a lot about her that I didn’t know. When I read the script, there was a lot about her life before and after that incident where her nose is chopped off by Lakshman”. “What happens in Surpanakha’s life and how does she meet, stumble upon Ram—there’s a lot which I didn’t know, which for me was new when I read the script, and which is why I liked it”, she added. ‘Ramayana: Part 1’ is set to arrive in cinemas on November 6, 2026.

Chiranjeevi praises Ravi Teja, Irumudi team after blockbuster success

Hyderabad: Telugu star Chiranjeevi on Thursday wholeheartedly congratulated actor Ravi Teja and his whole team of Irumudi for the film’s blockbuster success even as he termed Ravi Teja’s performance in the film as “phenomenal”. Taking to his X timeline, the Mega Star wrote, “Heartiest congratulations to my dear brother Ravi on the blockbuster success of #Irumudi. Thoroughly enjoyed the film from beginning to end. What a phenomenal performance @RaviTeja_offl, you carried Trinadh character entirely on your shoulders.” The top star from the Telugu film industry also had words of praise for the film’s director Shiva Nirvana and child artiste Nakshathra, who played Ravi Teja’s daughter in the film. He wrote, “Director @ShivaNirvana, you have done a wonderful job presenting the film with such depth and emotion. Blessings to #BabyNakshathra for a very bright future, My warm congratulations to the entire cast and crew, and to producers Naveen Yerneni and Ravi Shankar of @MythriOfficial, on this well-deserved success.” The makers of the film, Mythri Movie Makers, were quick to respond to Chiranjeevi’s congratulatory post. The production house responded, saying, “Thank you so much, Megastar @KChiru Tweets Garu. To get such beautiful appreciation from you means the world to the team of #Irumudi.” For the unaware, Irumudi, which was a film that combined the genres of devotion, family drama and thriller, hit screens worldwide on August 21 this year.

The film, which featured Priya Bhavani Shankar as the female lead, went on to set the cash registers ringing. Irumudi’s collections went past the Rs 100 crore mark on August 25, making it one of the biggest successes in Telugu cinema this year. The film, which happened to be Ravi Teja’s 77th film, was being



tentatively referred to as #RT77 until it was titled ‘Irumudi’. The title ‘Irumudi’ carries deep spiritual significance, as it symbolizes a devotee’s sacred offering and surrender to Lord Ayyappa.

Katrina Kaif trolled after rare public appearance post-pregnancy

Mumbai: Bollywood star Katrina Kaif faced trolling on social media after she made a rare public appearance following the birth of her son in November last year. Katrina, who was seen glowing with her pregnancy gain, was recently seen alongside husband and actor Vicky Kaushal at the funeral of filmmaker Kuku Kohli in Mumbai on August 26. A lot many trolls were seen commenting on her appearance and questioning what had happened to the actor. The couple arrived to pay their last respects to the late filmmaker and were seen meeting members of the bereaved family before leaving the crematorium. For the uninitiated, Kuku Kohli passed away on August 25 at the age of 77 following a cardiac arrest. Pictures and videos from Katrina’s appearance at the crematorium surfaced online, prompting a section of social media users to com-

Preity Zinta relishes her favourite Kadhi Chawal in Paris while down with fever

Mumbai: Actress Preity Zinta recently shared a heartwarming glimpse of a kind gesture that brought some comfort to her while she was unwell in Paris. Taking to Instagram, the ‘Soldier’ actress revealed that she had been down with a fever and was not feeling well. Her friend happened to mention her condition to a neighbour, who went out of her way to send the actress her favourite comfort food — Kadhi Chawal. Sharing her gratitude, Preity gave a shout-out to what she called the “sweetest & kindest family” living in Paris. Preity said the thoughtful gesture not only lifted her spirits during a difficult day but also left a lasting impression on her. Sharing her video, the ‘Kya Kehna’ actress wrote, “A big shout out to the sweetest & kindest family that lives in Paris. I was down with fever & not feeling great at all. My friend mentioned that to her neighbour & Wow! She sent me my favourite Kadi Chawal to brighten me up. This little act of kindness & warmth not only brightened my day but will stay with me forever.” “There is a reason we say Punjabi Hospitality is the best. If you are in Paris check out the goodies folks & thank me later Ting.” The video shows Preity Zinta opening a box containing aloo gobi ki sabzi, followed by a tiffin filled with her favourite Kadhi Chawal. Reacting to the thoughtful gesture, she said, “Oh my God, Kadhi Chawal! This is so sweet. I loved it. When you are ill, you want only comfort food. Thank you.” A few days ago, Preity Zinta visited the Kanapathy Temple in Paris on the last Monday of Sawan and shared glimpses of her spiritual outing on social media. In a video, the ‘Mission Kashmir’ actress documented her



visit to the temple, where she was seen offering prayers, lighting diyas and seeking blessings. Dressed in white, the actress participated in the temple rituals and spent some time in prayer. “Who would have thought that I would end up going to the most beautiful Indian temple in Paris on the last Monday of Sawan. This last Minute plan overwhelmed me cuz I had a feeling that I was always meant to come here. Wow ! The divine and the universe work in unexpected ways. My short trip to Paris has turned out to be extremely sweet after this visit. If you are in Paris do check out the Kanapathy Temple folks. I’m sure you will love it just the way I did. Thank you my darling @shailzaswami for taking me here & for making my trip. I’m smiling ear to ear. Ting ! Har Har Mahadev,” Preity wrote in the caption. On the work front, Preity Zinta recently returned to the silver screen after an eight-year hiatus with Rajkumar Santoshi’s “Batwara 1947.” Released on August 14, the film features Preity alongside Sunny Deol, Shabana Azmi, Ali Fazal and several other actors.

Legendary singer Asha Bhosle’s last track to release on her birth anniversary

Mumbai: Legendary playback singer Asha Bhosle’s final recorded film song will be released on her birth anniversary on September 8 as part of the upcoming drama-comedy “Om Ka Hari”, the makers announced on Thursday. Titled “Ae Meri Zindagi, Tu Chupi Hai Kahan”, the song was recorded in late 2023, when Bhosle was in her 90s, and will feature in filmmaker Harish Vyas’ father-son drama, starring Anshuman Jha, Raghubir Yadav, Soni Razdan and Ayesha Kapur. Bhosle, who ruled Bollywood for over seven decades and recorded over 12,000



songs, including hits like “Dum Maro Dum”, “Piya Tu Ab To Aaja”, “Chura Liya Hai Tumne Jo Dil Ko” and “Yeh Mera Dil”, passed away in April this year at the age of 92. The song is described as a tribute to life, celebrating the joy of living, love and the importance of expressing one’s feelings. Its release on Bhosle’s birth anniversary is intended as a celebration of her enduring musical legacy and contribution to Indian cinema. “Launching the song on her birthday is intended as a celebration of Asha Ji’s timeless voice, her immense legacy and the generations of listeners whose lives her music has touched,” Vyas said in a statement. According to the makers, “Om Ka Hari” explores the generational conflict between a father and son and centres on the emotions that often remain unspoken within families. For Jha, who also stars in and has a connection to the film’s story, Bhosle’s voice adds a deeply personal dimension to the narrative. ““Om Ka Hari” is deeply special to me because, at its heart, it is about the importance of saying ‘I love you’ to your father, something I never got the chance to do.



ment on her changed appearance after motherhood. Some of the comments were particularly unkind, with users writing, “This is terrible, what happened to Katrina?”, “She looks like a rasgulla”» Others wrote, “She got 100% Indianized. Even the walk. Holy crap.”

Dinusha, lower order frustrate India as Sri Lanka extend lead

Colombo: A cramping Sonal Dinusha’s bloody-mindedness blunted Indian bowlers for the second session in a row as a defiant Sri Lanka went to tea at 383 for eight on the fifth day of the second and final Test here on Thursday. Dinusha (98) and Lahiru Kumara (2) were batting at the break with Sri Lanka swelling their lead to 170 runs in the second innings after being asked to follow-on. It was an unimaginable situation once the hosts resumed the day from 229 for six, a mere 16 runs ahead. India were expected to walk through the remaining Lankan batters, but first they hit a road-block against the Dinusha-Keshara Nuwantha (46, 150b) pair. The seventh wicket alliance produced 112 runs but more importantly it consumed 174 minutes and 246 balls. Their effort ensured that Indian bowlers added one more chapter to their eons-old struggles against late order batters. The pacers did try some short-ball and leg-side bowling tactics but they appeared largely flat throughout the session. Spinners — Manav Suthar, Saransh Jain and Ravindra Jadeja — managed to get some turn and bounce on occasions but the ball eluded the bat to the tourists’ dismay. In Sri Lanka’s first innings of 290, the last three wickets had batted 45 overs between them while adding 117 runs. But the numbers only tell half the tale, as Dinusha continued to be a thorn

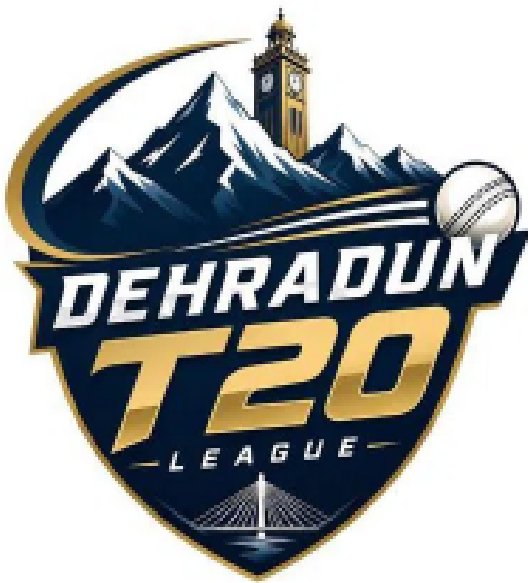


in the flesh, a term used by spin bowling coach Sairaj Bahutule at the end of the fourth day here. The little left-hander produced his fourth 50-plus score in as many innings in this series as Indians might just seriously consider writing a calypso for him — ‘We couldn’t out Dinusha.’ The 25-year-old reached his fifty in 99 balls with a single off Ravindra Jadeja. However, Jadeja eventually broke the stand at the beginning of the post-lunch session, inducing an edge from Nuwantha for Jurel at second slip. But Indians ran into another obdurate Lankan in Lahiru Kumara, who batted out 56 balls for his single digit innings which has as much value as Dinusha’s epic.

Dehradun T20 League aims to fast-track Uttarakhand’s young talent: Mahim Verma

Dehradun: Former BCCI vice-president and former Cricket Association of Uttarakhand secretary Mahim Verma believes the inaugural Dehradun T20 League 2026 will provide a crucial platform for young cricketers in the state, offering them greater exposure and an opportunity to develop in a professional competitive environment. The six-team franchise tournament will be held from September 2 to 9 at the Abhimanyu Cricket Academy in Dehradun, featuring Rishikesh Dragons, Doiwala Kings, Mussoorie Thunder, Herbertpur Knightriders, Vikasnagar Dhamaka and Selaqui Strikers. A total of 18 matches will be played during the competition. Verma said one of the league’s primary objectives was to bridge the gap between grassroots cricket and the professional game by giving promising players an environment in which they could test themselves under pressure. “Our main goal with the Dehradun T20 League is to give our boys the kind of environment that speeds up their growth. Uttarakhand has no shortage of raw talent, but what our young players needed was a high-exposure platform where they could test themselves under pressure, learn professional match standards, and get noticed,” Verma said.

Navneet Mishra, CEO of the Dehradun T20 League, said organisers had focused on creating a professional ecosystem for players through investment in infrastructure, broadcast facilities and player welfare. “We haven’t spared any effort in making sure this league matches the highest professional standards in terms of infrastructure, broadcast, and player facilities. Our focus is to create an ecosystem where young athletes feel valued and inspired to perform at their absolute best. Seeing the enthusiasm from players and franchises alike gives us complete confidence that this league will become a cornerstone for cricket development in the region,”



Mishra stated. According to Verma, one of the key benefits for emerging players will be the opportunity to share dressing rooms and playing environments with experienced domestic cricketers, helping them understand the demands of competing at higher levels. “When an 18 or 19-year-old kid shares a dugout with established domestic names, their entire perspective changes. They learn how to handle big-match pressure, how to prepare mentally, and how to carry themselves as professionals. That exposure is priceless, and it will give them the confidence to perform at higher levels of Indian cricket,” Verma added. All 18 matches, including 15 league fixtures, two semi-finals and the final, will provide the tournament and its players a wider audience. “Having nationwide coverage means these young players aren’t just playing for their franchises; they are putting their names on the radar. I am confident that this inaugural season will mark the beginning of a new era for cricket in Uttarakhand, and we will see many of these boys step up to make the state proud in the coming years,” Verma noted. With the inaugural edition set to get underway next month, the organisers are hoping the Dehradun T20 League will establish a stronger pathway for emerging talent and become a significant platform for the continued development of cricket in Uttarakhand.

Rachin Ravindra reveals admiration for Manchester City

New Delhi: New Zealand all-rounder Rachin Ravindra has revealed his deep admiration for Premier League champions Manchester City, citing their controlling style of play as the main reason for his allegiance to the English football giants. Manchester City will face Crystal Palace in the Premier League Season 2026/27 on August 29. “I’m a Manchester City guy. I’ve followed them for a while. I like the way they play and the style of football they bring. Watching them is always exciting, and I enjoy seeing how they control games,” Ravindra said to JioStar on Wednesday. Recalling his experiences of watching top-tier matches live at the stadium, Ravindra, the attacking left-handed batter who also bowls left-arm orthodox spin, singled out a visit to the Etihad Stadium as the pivotal moment that cemented his support for the club. “I’ve had two incredible



football experiences. One of them made me a Manchester City fan. They hosted me at the Etihad (Stadium) for the first Premier League game of last season against Tottenham. We didn’t win, but it was still a great day. “More recently, I went to the Round of 16 match between Spain and Portugal in Dallas. That was one of the best days of my life. It might have been Ronaldo’s last

international game, which was a bit sad, but it was special to be there,” he added. Asked to identify a fellow international cricketer with exceptional football skills, Wellington-based Ravindra picked former England fast bowler Chris Woakes to captain a key defensive position. “I’d say Chris Woakes. He would make a very solid centre-back. He’s good on the ball, comfortable under pressure, and reads the game well. I think he has the skills to play that role.”

India U17 drawn with Malaysia, Palestine, Singapore, Guam in AFC Qualifiers

Hyderabad: The India Under-17 men’s team have been drawn with Malaysia, Palestine, Singapore, and Guam in Group E of the AFC U17 Asian Cup Uzbekistan 2027 Qualifiers, following the official draw at the AFC House in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, on Thursday, August 27, 2026. The Blue Colts will travel to Malaysia, the hosts for Group E, to compete in a single round-robin league format from November 11 to 20, 2026. India’s campaign will begin with a clash against Singapore on November 11, before taking on Guam on November 14, followed by matches against Palestine on November 17, and hosts Malaysia on November 20. The Qualifiers split up 35 teams into seven groups of five. The group winners will qualify for the AFC U17 Asian Cup 2027, which is scheduled to be held in Uzbekistan from May 12 to 29, 2027. Having qualified for the 2026 tournament in Saudi Arabia, where they were eliminated in the group stage, India will now aim to secure back-to-back



appearances in the AFC U17 Asian Cup and qualify for the tournament for the 11th time in their history. For the Qualifiers draw, the teams were seeded into five pots and an additional hosts’ pot based on a points system derived from their final rankings across the most recent three editions of the Finals. India were seeded in Pot 1. The seven group winners will progress to the AFC U17 Asian Cup Uzbekistan 2027, where they will join the nine AFC representatives from the FIFA U17 World Cup Qatar 2026 who have automatically qualified: Australia, China PR, Japan, Korea Republic, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, and Vietnam.

Aaryavir Sehwal, Anvay Dravid picked in India U-19 squad for series against Australia

New Delhi: Aaryavir Sehwal, son of former India opener Virender Sehwal, and Anvay Dravid, son of former captain and head coach Rahul Dravid, have been named in the India Under-19 squad for the upcoming three-match one-day series against Australia U-19. The Junior Men’s Selection Committee, whose term is ending soon, announced the squads for the home assignment, comprising three 50-over matches in Rajkot on September 18, 21 and 23. This is followed by two red-ball multi-day fixtures to be played from September 27-30 in Rajkot and from October 5-8 at Ahmedabad’s Narendra Modi Stadium ‘B’ Ground. The 50-over side will be led by Uttarakhand batter Lakshya Raichandani, with Madhya Pradesh batter Yashbhardhan Chauhan as his deputy. Chauhan will take over as cap-



tain for the red-ball leg, with Raichandani serving as his vice-captain. While leg-spin all-rounder Aaryavir and wicketkeeper-batter Anvay secured places in the 15-member one-day unit, neither is in the squad selected for the two long-format games. Aaryavir is currently playing for West Delhi Lions in the 2026 Delhi Premier League (DPL) and has played only two games so far.

India's Account Aggregator ecosystem drives Rs 3.82 lakh crore loans in FY26

New Delhi: India's Account Aggregator (AA) ecosystem facilitated an estimated Rs 3.82 lakh crore worth loan disbursements across 3.68 crore loans in FY26 and now accounts for 8.4 per cent of India's retail and MSME lending by value and 11.8 per cent by volume, a report said on Thursday. The report from RBI-recognised Self-Regulatory Organisation (SRO) for AA ecosystem Sahamati said that AA-enabled home loans and loans against property touched 1.09 lakh loans worth Rs 20,777 crore in FY26, marking a 624 per cent year-on-year increase. The report highlighted a significant broadening of AA adoption, with the framework expanding beyond unsecured retail lending into secured credit and seeing increasing participation from banks. The shift is also being driven by growing adoption among mainstream financial institutions. Banks accounted for 47.3 per cent of AA-enabled lending by value in H2 FY26, nearly matching non-bank finance companies, the report added. The report also presented early evidence of the framework's

potential to advance financial inclusion. Among participating institutions, new-to-credit borrowers accounted for 18.2 per cent of AA-enabled loan originations by volume, while women borrowers accounted for 19.8 per cent of loan volumes and 19.1 per cent of disbursed value. These findings point to the potential of consent based financial data to help lenders assess borrowers with limited or evolving formal credit histories. "As more financial information sources come on stream, the framework will help make lending faster, more inclusive and more efficient for both financial institutions and customers," said Shalini Gupta, Chief Policy and Advocacy Officer, Sahamati. The report forecasts the expansion of financial information sources such as GST, CBDT and EPFO is to further strengthen cash flow-based lending and unlock new use cases across retail, MSME and secured credit, accelerating the next phase of the Account Aggregator ecosystem.

Gold futures steady amid muted demand

New Delhi: Gold prices on Thursday remained flat at Rs 1,59,650 per 10 grams in futures trade amid muted spot demand. On the Multi Commodity Exchange, the yellow metal contracts for the October delivery traded at Rs 1,59,650 per 10 grams, down by Rs 13 or 0.01 per cent, in a business turnover of 9,291 lots. Earlier in the session, gold futures dropped as much as Rs 2,971 to a low of Rs 1,56,692 per 10 grams from the previous close of Rs 1,59,663. Analysts attrib-



uted the decline in precious metal prices to weaker spot demand. Globally, gold futures edged up by 0.23 per cent to USD 4,601.64 per ounce in New York.

ChatGPT Ads launched in India on Free, Go tiers

New Delhi: US-based artificial intelligence company OpenAI has announced it is expanding 'ChatGPT Ads' to India, one of its largest markets, to further monetise its popular chatbot ahead of a planned initial public offering (IPO). The rollout will show ads to logged-in adults on the Free and Go tiers — the latter priced at Rs 399 per month in India. The sponsored products or services featured in the ads will appear at the bottom of ChatGPT responses. These advertisements will be clearly labelled and visually separate from ChatGPT's answers, the company said. Paid subscribers on Plus, Pro, Business, Enterprise and Education tiers will continue to enjoy ad-free service. The company said that users' chats, chat history, memories, or personal details are inaccessible to advertisers and that it does not sell user data to advertisers. Advertisers will instead receive aggregate campaign-performance information, such as impressions and clicks. OpenAI also said ads will not be shown to accounts where the user has indicated they are under 18, or where the company determines that the user is a minor. Ads will also not appear alongside sensitive or regulated topics such as health, mental health, or politics. The AI company said over 50



brands were expected to go live with ads this week. The firm also plans to offer self-serve access to ChatGPT Ads Manager in India from September 4, and businesses could sign up for daily budgets starting at Rs 725. ChatGPT crossed the 1 billion weekly global user mark earlier this month and India remains its second-largest market with over 100 million weekly users across students, developers, educators, and enterprises as of February 2026. OpenAI first announced plans to start testing ads within ChatGPT in January 2026, to diversify its revenue streams and drive expansion. The ad pilot began in the United States in February, crossed the \$100 million annualised revenue mark within six weeks of launch and then expanded to Canada, Australia, New Zealand, the United Kingdom, Mexico, Brazil, Japan, and South Korea. OpenAI launched ChatGPT Ads across 31 European countries last week, including Germany, France, Spain, and Italy.

HDFC Bank faces class-action lawsuit in US, shares decline



New Delhi: Top private sector lender HDFC Bank is facing a federal securities class-action lawsuit in New York over allegations that it orchestrated a covert scheme to illegally inflate interest payouts to a state government agency by disguising them as marketing expenses. The complaint, filed in the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of New York by investor Jwalant Natvarlal Soneji, targets the Mumbai-headquartered bank along with Chief Executive Officer Sashidhar Jagdishan and Chief Financial Officer Srinivasan Vaidyanathan. The lawsuit is brought on behalf of all investors who purchased HDFC's American Depositary Shares (ADS) between July 17, 2023, and May 26, 2026. The lawsuit alleges that HDFC promised Maharashtra State Road Development Corporation (MSRDC) a 6.01 per cent interest rate to attract big its deposits, which constituted a hefty 2.51 per cent markup over the standard 3.5 per cent savings rate offered to regular customers in violation of the RBI norms. Since banking regulations explicitly forbid offering negotiated returns to individual depositors, senior management allegedly devised a workaround. Also Read HDFC Bank taps global mkts with \$1.75-bn bond issue Advertisement The lawsuit claims that between 2023 and 2025, HDFC routed approximately 45 crore rupees (\$4.7 million USD) in differential interest to the state firm. Instead of being credited as interest, these funds were allegedly "camouflaged" as marketing spend to sponsor a road safety awareness campaign run by MSRDC, flowing through third-party vendors. An internal vigilance probe reportedly concluded that this manoeuvre violated the RBI's Master Directions, as well as HDFC's internal anti-bribery policies. Consequently, the plaintiffs argue that HDFC's SEC filings throughout the class period were materially false. In its Form 20-F annual reports for fiscal years 2024 and 2025, HDFC management assured investors that its "internal control over financial reporting was effective". The com-

plaint alleges that by burying the interest markup in the marketing budget, HDFC artificially overstated both its operating expenses and its highly scrutinized net interest income. While the bank's filings routinely warned that "significant fraud, system failure or calamities would disrupt our revenue-generating activities" and acknowledged past RBI penalties, the complaint suggests these generic warnings failed to disclose the active, high-level deception allegedly taking place internally. Also Read LIC gets RBI nod to up its stake in HDFC Bank Matters came to a head on March 18, 2026, when HDFC's Chairman, Atanu Chakraborty, abruptly resigned. Chakraborty cited "certain happenings and practices within the bank... that are not in congruence with my personal Values and Ethics" as the reason for his resignation.

The sudden departure spooked investors, sending HDFC's U.S.-traded shares tumbling 7.28 per cent to close at \$26.62 on unusually heavy trading volume. The full scope of the fallout materialised on May 27, 2026, when The Indian Express published an expose, detailing the internal probe into the MSRDC payments. The report revealed that over 10 top officials bore responsibility, including CEO Jagdishan, who allegedly verbally approved the disguised payments during The plaintiffs allege violations of Sections 10(b) and 20(a) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934. They are seeking class certification, unspecified compensatory damages, and a jury trial, claiming the bank's executives acted with reckless disregard for the truth and heavily damaged investors who purchased artificially inflated shares before the regulatory breaches came to light. HDFC Bank, in a statement, has said, "In the United States, these types of shareholder lawsuits are incredibly common after a company experiences a stock drop, and many companies listed in the U.S. routinely defend these lawsuits each year. The Bank believes the lawsuit is without merit and intends to vigorously defend itself".

Fair trade watchdog's probe into Coupang stalls after inspection refusal

Seoul: The fair trade watchdog's probe into the South Korean arm of US-listed Coupang appears to have hit a setback after the e-commerce giant refused investigators' recent attempts to conduct on-site inspections, citing procedural issues, industry sources said on Thursday. According to sources, the Fair Trade Commission (FTC) had planned to conduct on-site inspections of Coupang's South Korean unit from last week through this week over allegations that the company violated the Act on Fair Transactions in Large Retail Business. The allegations center on suspicions that Coupang shifted the costs of discounts onto its suppliers, reports Yonhap news agency. Sources said Coupang declined to cooperate with the investigation, claiming that the company had not been notified of the inspections as stipulated under the Framework Act on Administrative Investigations. "The requirement to provide seven days' advance notice of an on-site inspection is a legal procedure designed to protect the rights and interests of those subject to an investigation," Coupang said in a statement earlier this week. Also



Read South Korean PM vows zero tolerance for mishandling of missing person cases Advertisement Discover more Tracking Executive Branch Policy Changes Bidding On Municipal Government Contracts Subscribing To Digital Newspaper Outlets "Coupang plans to seek a court ruling over the FTC's failure to comply with such procedures," it added. Sources said the FTC attempted to conduct the inspections four times, while Coupang filed a lawsuit seeking to overturn the watchdog's decision to conduct the on-site inspections. The FTC withdrew from the site on Monday after learning of the lawsuit. While the framework act stipulates that the seven-day advance notice requirement does not apply to investigations into violations of eight laws under the FTC's jurisdiction, Coupang argued that the Act on Fair Transactions in Large Retail Business does not fall under the exemption.

Six women among seven killed in Palnadu accident

Amaravati: At least seven people, including six women, were killed and eight others injured when a private travels bus collided with an auto-rickshaw in Palnadu district of Andhra Pradesh in the early hours of Thursday, police said. The accident occurred near Adda Road in Chilakaluripet when the private bus heading to Tirupati from Vijayawada hit the three-wheeler. Out of 15 people travelling in the auto-rickshaw, seven persons were killed. Eight others, including four children, were injured. They have been shifted to Government General Hospital, Guntur and Chilakaluripet Government Hospital. According to police, the victims hailed from Veluru village in Chilakaluripet mandal. They were returning from a birthday party at Kondamanjulus in Prakasam district. While four persons died on the spot, two succumbed at GGH, Guntur and one at Chilakaluripet Government Hospital. The deceased have been identified as Bontu Babu (62), Bontu Manemma (55), Sampurnamma (70), Gangamma (50), Lakshamma (75), Choutupalli Swarthamma (45) and Mariamma (45). Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu expressed deep shock over the horrific road accident. Officials informed the Chief Minister that the deceased belonged to Veluru village in Chilakaluripet mandal. They stated that the critically injured have

been shifted to Guntur General Hospital for treatment. CM Naidu conveyed his deepest condolences to the families of the deceased. He directed officials to ensure the injured receive the best possible medical care and instructed them to constantly monitor the health condition of the injured. Deputy Chief Minister Pawan Kalyan expressed grief over the road accident. He spoke with district officials and directed them to ensure the best medical care for the injured. Meanwhile, state Home Minister Vangalapudi Anitha spoke to Palnadu Additional SP regarding the road accident in Chilakaluripet. She inquired about the severity of the accident, details regarding the deceased and injured, and the status of relief operations. Terming the loss of seven lives as deeply tragic, Home Minister Anitha expressed her heartfelt condolences to the families of the deceased. She issued instructions to police officials to ensure the injured receive the best medical care and to continuously monitor their health condition. The Home Minister directed that an investigation be conducted into all aspects of the incident, including the circumstances leading to the accident, the bus speed, and any negligence by the driver. Home Minister Anitha stated that special attention must be paid to enforcing road safety regulations for private vehicles to prevent such accidents from recurring.

Renigunta railway station marks 164 years of transformation



Tirupati: From steam locomotives and metre-gauge tracks to automatic signalling and modern passenger facilities, Renigunta Railway Station has witnessed 164 years of transformation while emerging as an important railway junction in the region. The station, which was established on August 27, 1862, has reached a significant milestone with its long journey closely linked to the growth of Renigunta as a major transport centre near Tirupati. A major development in the station's early railway history came with the establishment of a Steam Locomotive Shed on July 19, 1892. Over the decades, the junction underwent several changes in infrastructure, technology and railway operations as the network expanded. In its early years, the railway yard had goods lines, metre-gauge lines and platform lines, along with separate goods and operational cabins. With changes in railway technology and operational requirements, the old infrastructure was gradually modernised. The metre-gauge system was eventually removed and additional lines and facilities were developed. A bypass line connecting Mamanduru (MRM) and Yerpedu (YPD) was also provided to reduce train detention and improve the efficiency of railway operations.

The signalling system at the station also evolved over the years. Train movements initially relied on locking point systems before interlocked points and other interlocking systems were introduced. The signalling system subsequently progressed from lower and upper quadrant signals to colour-light and automatic signalling. Renigunta Junction now has five platforms equipped with passenger facilities such as lifts and foot overbridges. The station has waiting halls, retiring rooms, booking and reservation offices, parcel services and refreshment facilities. The junction also handles significant freight and operational activities. Its railway complex includes a goods yard, goods shed, milk siding, coaching yard and OHE Tower Car Shed. Renigunta is also associated with the Milk Duronto service between Renigunta and New Delhi. Its proximity to Tirupati has further enhanced the importance of the junction. It serves as a major transit point for pilgrims travelling to Tirupati and Tirumala and provides connectivity towards Chennai, Mumbai, Vijayawada, Visakhapatnam, Puri, Kolkata, New Delhi and Guntakal. The expansion of railway activities also contributed to the development of a railway community in Renigunta.

Centre approves Rs 2,447.98 cr for AP National Health Mission Plan

Amaravati: The Central government has approved a total outlay of Rs 2,447.98 crore for the implementation of National Health Mission (NHM) programmes in Andhra Pradesh during the 2026-27 financial year, Health Minister Satya Kumar Yadav announced here on Wednesday. Of the approved amount, the Centre's share is Rs 1,468.79 crore, while the State's contribution will be Rs 979.19 crore. The Centre has directed the State to prioritise programmes and implement them within the available resource envelope. The highest allocation of Rs 1,008.50 crore has been made for human resources and salaries of healthcare personnel under the NHM. The Centre will also provide Rs 411.12 crore as commodity grants for medicines, vaccines and reagents required for programmes covering routine immunisation, viral hepatitis, malaria, dengue and tuberculosis. A sum of Rs 116.50 crore has been allocated for tuberculosis control, detection and treatment, while Rs 114.55 crore has been earmarked for providing free diagnostic services to the public.

Routine immunisation will receive Rs 97.65 crore, while Rs 94.22 crore has been allocated for the functioning and activities of Health and Wellness Centres. The 108 ambulance service has been allotted Rs 92.95 crore to strengthen emergency transportation and medical response. Other major allocations include Rs 88.66 crore for Janani Shishu Suraksha Karyakram, Rs 79.82 crore for the National Urban Health Mission, Rs 77.58 crore for Anaemia Mukta Bharat, and Rs 77.52 crore for the free medicines programme. The plan also provides Rs 72.22 crore for community engagement, Rs 70.62 crore for facility-based newborn care, and Rs 69.93 crore for the maintenance of medical equipment. An allocation of Rs 68.28 crore has been made for programmes targeting cancer, diabetes, cardiovascular diseases and stroke. Free dialysis services will receive Rs 67.78 crore, while Rs 62.68 crore has been earmarked for blindness control. The State has also been allotted Rs 51.84 crore for controlling vector-borne diseases, including malaria, dengue and chikungunya. Quality assurance has received Rs 39.82 crore, Hospital Development Societies Rs 35.10 crore, Jan Arogya Samitis Rs 32.97 crore, and Janani Suraksha Yojana Rs



31.75 crore. For 2026-27, the NHM has approved Rs 75.50 crore for five new initiatives aimed at strengthening emergency healthcare and tele-consultation services. This includes Rs 26.60 crore for the procurement and supply of STEMI medicines for heart attack patients, Rs 25.88 crore for setting up care coordination and tele-consultation rooms, and Rs 11.01 crore for desktop computers to support tele-consultation services. A further Rs 7.25 crore has been allocated for emergency trauma care equipment and Rs 4.76 crore for equipment for burn units. The annual plan provides Rs 25.18 crore for the Tribal Reproductive and Child Health programme and Rs 26.28 crore for blood cell services. Allocations have also been made for leprosy elimination, viral hepatitis control and mobile medical units. The mobile medical units, which have been allotted Rs 12.46 crore, are expected to play a key role in extending healthcare services to remote and inaccessible areas. Of the total resource envelope of Rs 2,447.98 crore, Rs 411.12 crore has been earmarked as commodity grants and Rs 120.70 crore for infrastructure maintenance, leaving a net cash availability of Rs 1,916.16 crore for various health programmes.

The value of approved activities exceeds the available resource envelope, making it necessary for the State to prioritise the most essential programmes. So far in 2026-27, a combined amount of Rs 1,175.03 crore from the Central and State governments has been released. Health Minister Satyakumar Yadav said the approved funds would be utilised to directly benefit the people of Andhra Pradesh. He said the government would focus on strengthening emergency medical services, expanding tele-consultation facilities and ensuring the availability of essential medicines, vaccines and medical equipment across the State.

Srisailem hundi collections fetch Rs 5.88 crore over 35 days

Srisailem: The hundi collections of the temple fetched a revenue of Rs.5,88,89,846 during the counting held on Wednesday. The offerings were made by devotees over a period of 35 days from July 22 to August 25, according to temple authorities. Apart from the cash, the hundis yielded 87.2 grams of gold and 4.250 kg of silver. Foreign currencies offered by devotees included 540 US dollars, 1,610 UAE dirhams, 20 Singapore dollars, 140 British pounds, 21 Malaysian ringgits, 10 Saudi riyals, 109 Bahraini dinars, 100 Omani baisa and five Omani riyals, besides other currencies. The counting was conducted amid tight security arrangements and under the surveillance of CCTV cameras. The temple authorities ensured proper monitoring of the process to maintain transparency and security during the counting of the offerings. The counting process was supervised by Board of Trustees Chairman Pothugunta Ramesh Naidu, Executive Officer M Srinivasa Rao and Board member K Kantavardhini. Unit officers, supervisors, temple staff and Siva Sevaks from various departments participated in the counting process.

