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Vijay Deverakonda to Front TG20 League

Hyderabad: The inaugural TG20 League will kick off on June 21, with popular actor Vijay Deverakonda named as the tournament's brand ambassador, the Hyderabad Cricket Association (HCA) announced on Monday. Modelled on the Indian Premier League (IPL), the competition will feature eight franchises competing in 32 matches over 21 days, culminating in the final on July 12. All matches will be broadcast live on JioStar. According to HCA Secretary M. Jeevan Reddy, the league will not adopt the Impact Player rule. He also announced that Sreenidhi University will serve as the title sponsor, while GMR and Telangana Tourism are the co-sponsors. TG20 Governing Council Chairman Agam Rao said that most days will feature two matches, scheduled at 2:15 p.m. and 7:30 p.m.

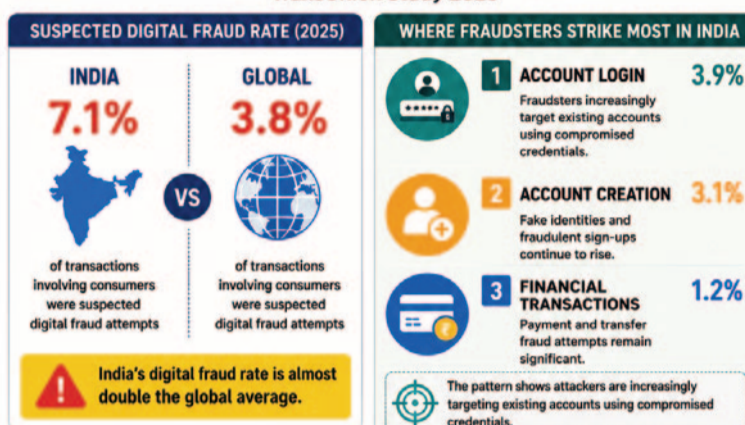
India Sees Surge in Digital Fraud



Mumbai: India recorded a suspected digital fraud rate of 7.1% in 2025, nearly double the global average of 3.8%, highlighting the growing sophistication of cybercriminals, according to a new study by TransUnion. The report found that fraudsters in India are increasingly targeting account logins, which accounted for the highest share of suspected fraud attempts at 3.9%. This was followed by account creation (3.1%) and financial transactions (1.2%), indicating a shift towards compromising legitimate user credentials rather than launching direct financial attacks. According to TransUnion, cybercriminals are exploiting weaknesses in identity verification systems and moving earlier in the digital customer journey to evade conventional fraud detection methods. Sector-wise, the logistics industry reported the highest suspected fraud rate at 16.3%, followed by telecommunications (14.7%) and insurance (11.5%). Experts attribute the elevated risk in these sectors to their high transaction volumes, real-time operations and extensive digital interactions. The findings underscore the growing need for stronger authentication mechanisms, advanced fraud detection technologies and enhanced cybersecurity measures as digital adoption continues to accelerate across India.

INDIA'S DIGITAL FRAUD RATE NEARLY DOUBLE GLOBAL AVERAGE

TransUnion Study 2025



Air India Introduces 'Basic'



New Delhi: Air India has introduced a new 'Basic' Economy fare on select domestic routes to offer cheaper tickets for budget travellers. The fare includes 15 kg checked baggage, 7 kg cabin baggage, and complimentary tea or coffee, but does not include free meals. Passengers can pre-book meals separately, and existing fare options (Value, Classic, Flex) with full meal services remain unchanged. The Basic fare is currently on a trial basis and available only through Air India's direct booking channels. The airline says the move is aimed at offering more flexible and affordable travel choices.

Job Seekers Protest in Hyd

Hyderabad: Tension prevailed in Dilsukhnagar on Tuesday as unemployed youth and government job aspirants staged a flash protest demanding an increase in police recruitment vacancies, leading to traffic disruption and clashes with police. The protesters gathered at the Dilsukhnagar crossroads, raising slogans and beating drums, opposing the government's reported plan to notify only 5,000 police vacancies. They demanded a large-scale recruitment drive with 20,000 posts, citing the high number of aspirants who have been preparing for years. The protest quickly escalated, bringing traffic on the busy stretch to a standstill. Police intervened to disperse the crowd, following which arguments and scuffles reportedly broke out. Several protesters were



taken into custody and shifted to nearby police stations after being removed from the spot. According to participants, repeated delays and limited recruitment notifications have increased frustration among unemployed youth, leading to a series of protests in recent days across Hyderabad. Authorities restored order after dispersing the gathering, while police presence remained in the area to prevent further unrest.

Telegram Pulled from Play Store

New Delhi: Messaging platform Telegram has been removed from the Google Play Store in India following the Centre's temporary restrictions ahead of the NEET (UG) 2026 re-examination, making the app unavailable for new Android downloads. However, it continues to be accessible through the Apple App Store. The move comes after the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY), acting on recommendations from the National Testing Agency (NTA), imposed temporary restrictions on Telegram until June 22 to curb alleged examination-related fraud, misinformation and cheating networks. The government has also directed Telegram to disable its message-editing feature in India until June 30, citing concerns that edited messages and altered attachments could be misused to fabricate evidence of paper leaks while retaining original timestamps.



Prescription Must for Cough Syrups

New Delhi: In a significant move to tighten drug regulation, the Centre has made it mandatory for consumers to obtain a doctor's prescription to purchase cough syrups and other syrup-based medicines, amending the Drugs Rules, 1945. The change, introduced through the Drugs (Fifth Amendment) Rules, 2026, removes "syrups" from the list of exempted drugs under Schedule K, bringing their sale and distribution under stricter regulatory oversight. Earlier, cough syrups could be sold in villages with populations below 1,000 under relaxed licensing provisions. With the latest amendment, that exemption has been withdrawn, meaning such medicines must now be dispensed only through licensed pharmacies in accordance with the Drugs and Cosmetics Act, 1940, Drugs Rules, 1945.

E20 Fuel Won't Affect Insurance

New Delhi: Centre on Tuesday dismissed social media claims that using E20 fuel could invalidate vehicle insurance policies or lead to rejection of insurance claims, calling the reports false and misleading. In a clarification issued through its PIB Fact Check unit, the government stated that the use of E20 fuel has no impact on the validity of motor insurance policies and does not affect claim settlements. The clarification came after several posts on social media alleged that motorists using ethanol-blended fuel might face problems with insurance coverage. Rejecting these claims, the govt urged the public to rely only on official sources for info and avoid spreading misinfo.

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ACB Unearths ₹150 Cr Assets

Hyderabad: The Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB) on Tuesday conducted extensive raids on properties linked to Sunkari Narahari, Deputy Director in the Land and Survey Department, and reportedly unearthed alleged disproportionate assets valued at around ₹150 crore. The searches, carried out under the supervision of ACB officials, covered Narahari's residence in Narayanaguda and 11 other locations across Telangana as part of an investigation into assets disproportionate to his known sources of income. During the operation, investigators reportedly recovered ₹1.2 crore in cash, which was allegedly hidden in bags inside an attic. Officials also seized a substantial quantity of gold ornaments, important documents and other valuables. According to preliminary findings, the assets discovered so far appear to far exceed the officer's



declared income. The ACB is continuing its searches and is expected to inspect several bank lockers linked to the official as part of the ongoing probe. Authorities said a detailed valuation of the seized properties and valuables is underway. Financial records, property documents and investment details recovered during the raids are also being examined to determine the full extent of the alleged disproportionate assets. The investigation remains in progress, and the total value of the assets may be revised as further evidence emerges.



EDITORIAL

Bribes Over Duty

The recurring exposure of corrupt government officials is a sobering reminder that bribery and abuse of power remain deeply entrenched in parts of the public administration. Every few weeks, anti-corruption agencies uncover officials possessing assets far beyond their known sources of income or accepting bribes in exchange for routine services. These are not isolated incidents—they point to systemic weaknesses that demand urgent reform. Corruption is not merely about illegal money changing hands. It delays public services, distorts decision-making, increases the cost of development projects, and erodes citizens' faith in institutions. From land records and construction permits to welfare schemes and public contracts, the burden of corruption is often borne by ordinary people who are forced to pay for services that should be delivered fairly and transparently. What is particularly concerning is that some officials allegedly accumulate enormous wealth while drawing public salaries funded by taxpayers. Such cases raise difficult questions about internal oversight, asset verification, and the effectiveness of vigilance mechanisms. When disproportionate assets continue to grow unchecked for years, accountability systems appear inadequate.

Successive governments have promised zero tolerance for corruption, yet enforcement often seems reactive rather than preventive. Raids and arrests generate headlines, but meaningful deterrence requires swift investigations, time-bound trials, departmental action, confiscation of illicit assets where permitted by law, and institutional reforms that reduce opportunities for graft. Technology can play an important role. Greater digitization of public services, online approvals, transparent procurement systems, and regular audits can reduce discretionary power and make transactions easier to track. Equally important is protecting whistleblowers and encouraging citizens to report wrongdoing without fear of retaliation. Political leadership must also recognize that anti-corruption efforts lose credibility if they are perceived as selective. Accountability should apply uniformly, regardless of rank, influence, or political affiliation. Public confidence is strengthened when institutions act impartially and consistently.

Ultimately, corruption is not a victimless crime. It steals resources from schools, hospitals, roads, and welfare programs while undermining economic growth and social trust. Honest public servants deserve support, and those who misuse their office for personal gain must face effective legal and administrative consequences. Building clean governance is not only about punishing offenders—it is about creating institutions where integrity is rewarded and corruption becomes increasingly difficult to sustain.

Jobless Anger in Hyderabad Reflects Policy Paralysis

The protest by unemployed youth at Dilsukhnagar is not an isolated outburst of frustration; it is a symptom of a deeper governance failure in Telangana's employment ecosystem. Thousands of aspirants who have spent years preparing for government jobs took to the streets demanding an increase in police recruitment vacancies from the reported 5,000 to 20,000 posts. What should have been a routine policy announcement has instead turned into a flashpoint of public anger. At the heart of the issue is a widening gap between aspiration and opportunity. The state government, despite repeated assurances on job creation, has been slow and inconsistent in releasing recruitment notifications across departments. For many candidates, especially those from economically weaker backgrounds, government employment remains the most secure and aspirational pathway. When such expectations are repeatedly deferred, frustration inevitably



spills onto the streets. The Dilsukhnagar incident also highlights the absence of transparent manpower planning. Recruitment numbers appear to be announced in isolation, without a clear public explanation of vacancy mapping, departmental requirements, or long-term employment strategy. This vacuum fuels suspicion among job seekers that opportunities are being artificially limited or delayed, even when adminis-

trative needs may justify larger recruitment drives. Instead of addressing these concerns with clarity and urgency, the state's response has largely been reactive—police deployment, crowd dispersal, and detentions. While maintaining public order is necessary, relying primarily on enforcement without engaging with the underlying grievances only deepens alienation among youth. The sight of aspirants being escorted to police sta-

tions rather than being heard in policy forums sends a troubling message about the state's priorities. What is missing is not merely jobs, but trust. A government that came to power on promises of employment generation must now confront the credibility gap widening in real time. Regular recruitment calendars, transparent vacancy disclosures, and structured dialogue with job aspirant groups are essential steps that cannot be postponed any longer. The Dilsukhnagar protest should serve as a warning rather than a headline to be managed. Ignoring the structural concerns behind such agitations risks turning isolated demonstrations into sustained unrest. Employment policy is not just an administrative exercise—it is a social contract. When that contract weakens, the consequences are visible on the streets.

- B. Vishwakshena,
Hyderabad

Kishan Reddy Slams Revanth Over Metro

New Delhi: Union Coal and Mines Minister G. Kishan Reddy on Tuesday accused Telangana Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy of spreading "false propaganda" over the Hyderabad Metro Rail project, rejecting allegations that he was delaying Central approval for the second phase or blocking financial assistance. Addressing a press conference in New Delhi, Kishan Reddy said the Detailed Project Report (DPR) and technical and financial feasibility studies for Metro Phase-II have not yet been completed, making the Chief Minister's accusations baseless. The Secunderabad MP asserted that the Centre has consistently supported metro projects across the country and would extend similar cooperation to Hyderabad, provided the state government completes the required technical and financial processes. He also dismissed claims that the Centre was preventing the release of ₹13,600 crore from the Indian Railway Finance Corporation (IRFC) for refinancing the first phase of the Metro. According to him, the Union Urban Development



Ministry had advised that revenue generated through ticket sales and advertisements should primarily be used for operations and maintenance before loan repayment. Kishan Reddy alleged that the Telangana government's decision to prioritise loan repayment with Metro revenues could create operational challenges and urged it to revisit its financial strategy. Highlighting the Centre's contribution, he said the Union government had re-

leased ₹1,250 crore for the first phase of the Hyderabad Metro and reiterated its commitment to Telangana's development. The Union Minister also referred to his recent letter to the Chief Minister regarding alleged irregularities in Singareni Collieries, clarifying that it was not a coal scam allegation but a request for clarification following complaints that coal production figures did not match reported output.

Modi Urges Safe Sea Lanes at G7

Evian: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday called for safeguarding global maritime routes and strengthening international cooperation, saying safe sea lanes are vital for global trade and economic stability. Addressing the G7 Summit session on "Forging New Partnerships and Rebuilding International Solidarity," Modi welcomed recent progress in peace efforts in West Asia but expressed concern over the disruption of maritime trade through the Strait of Hormuz, warning that it has adversely affected the global economy. "The safety of seafarers, who connect countries through global maritime trade, is our shared responsibility. We must ensure that sea lanes remain safe and that those working at sea can do so without fear," the Prime Minister said.

Dolls Deployed in Hunt for Missing Girl

Kakinada: More than 10 days after a two-year-old girl went missing from a palm oil plantation in Andhra Pradesh's Kakinada district, search teams have adopted an unusual strategy by placing dolls fitted with meat and iron traps in the area to determine whether wild animals were involved in her disappearance. The dolls, resembling the missing child, have been installed near the plantation and are being monitored through camera



traps by police and forest department officials. Authorities suspect a wild animal attack but have so far found no evidence to confirm the theory. Over 400 personnel, including teams from the National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) and the State Disaster Response Force (SDRF), are participating in the massive search operation to trace Sunkara Ganeswari, who disappeared on June 6 in Tuni mandal. The mystery deepened after the family's pet dog, which had accompanied the child on the day she went missing, died on June 13. Officials had earlier fitted the dog with a GPS tracker after it returned home without the girl, hoping its movements would provide clues. The animal reportedly travelled nearly 80 kilometres before its death, but the effort yielded no breakthrough. Search teams are also using thermal drones, while the district administration has announced a ₹1 lakh reward for information leading to the child's recovery. According to police, Ganeswari had accompanied her parents, who work as caretakers of the plantation. A communication gap between them allegedly resulted in the child being left behind.

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Serena, Venus Get Wimbledon Doubles Wildcard

London: Tennis legends Serena Williams and Venus Williams are set to reunite on the Wimbledon stage after receiving a wildcard entry for the women's doubles competition at the 2026 Championships. The iconic sisters, who have won six Wimbledon doubles titles together, will play at SW19 for the first time since the 2022 US Open. While neither received a singles wildcard, one singles spot remains unallocated. Serena, 44, recently returned to competitive tennis after nearly four years, making her comeback in doubles events at Queen's Club and Berlin. Venus, 45, has competed sparingly this season but continues to remain active on the tour. Speaking about her return, Serena revealed that her daughter Olympia encouraged her to partner with Venus again. She also credited her sister's recent doubles performances for inspiring the comeback. The All England Club also announced several singles wildcards. Three-time Grand Slam champion Stan Wawrinka and Bulgaria's Grigor Dimitrov earned places in the men's draw, while French Open runner-up Maja Chwalinska received a women's singles wildcard. British veteran Dan Evans, who plans to retire after this season, was not granted a singles wildcard but will feature in the doubles draw alongside Henry Searle. Wimbledon 2026 begins on June 29, with the Williams sisters' reunion expected to be one of the tournament's biggest attractions. Their combined legacy includes 30 Grand Slam singles titles and 14 major doubles crowns, cementing their place among the greatest players in tennis history.

India Hosts Asian Fencing Championships

New Delhi: India is set to host the Asian Senior Fencing Championships for the first time from June 19 to 24 at Bharat Mandapam in New Delhi, marking a historic milestone for the sport in the country. Regarded as the premier fencing event in the Asia-Oceania region, the championship will feature top-ranked athletes from across the continent and serve as an important qualification tournament for the upcoming Asian Games while contributing ranking points for the Los Angeles 2028 Olympic cycle. The event will also coincide with the 39th General Assembly of the Fencing Confederation of Asia (FCA), making



India the host of the governing body's administrative summit for the first time. The Indian contingent will field a 24-member squad led by Olympian Bhavani Devi, the country's first fencer to qualify for the Olympic Games and an Asian Championships medallist. She will be joined by promising

talents including Karan Singh, Tanishka Khatri, and Gisho Nidhi. Speaking ahead of the tournament, Fencing Association of India Secretary General Rajeev Mehta described the event as a landmark opportunity to boost the sport's profile in India and inspire the next generation of athletes. The six-day competition will feature 12 medal events across foil, epee and sabre disciplines in both individual and team categories for men and women. Organisers will also introduce an AI-powered video referral system, showcasing advanced technology aimed at improving officiating standards in the sport.

Iran Hold New Zealand to 2-2 Draw

Los Angeles: Iran fought back twice to secure a 2-2 draw against New Zealand in an action-packed Group G match at the FIFA World Cup, with the contest unfolding amid heightened political tensions and heavy security outside the stadium. New Zealand struck first through Elijah Just, who volleyed home after a pass from captain Chris Wood. Iran responded in the first half when Ramin Rezaeian capitalised on a rebound to level the score. Early in the second half, Wood again set up Just, who restored New Zealand's lead with his second goal of the match. However, Iran equalised once more as Mohammad Mo-



hebbi headed in a precise cross from Rezaeian to make it 2-2. The result leaves all four teams in Group G on one point after Belgium and Egypt also played out a draw in their opening fixture. The match was played against the back-

drop of protests by some Iranian-American groups outside the stadium, where demonstrators voiced opposition to Tehran's government. Security was tightened around the venue as hundreds gathered before kickoff. Inside the stadium, supporters displayed mixed reactions, with some backing Iran enthusiastically while others protested during the national anthem. Despite the off-field tensions, the players delivered an entertaining contest featuring four goals and end-to-end action. New Zealand, appearing in their third FIFA World Cup, are still searching for their first-ever victory at the tournament.



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Seerath Kapoor



Arnold Vosloo Joins Vijay's 'Ranabaali'

Hyderabad: The makers of "Ranabaali", starring Vijay Deverakonda and Rashmika Mandanna, have unveiled the first look of Hollywood actor Arnold Vosloo, best known for portraying Imhotep in The Mummy, as he makes his Indian cinema debut. On the occasion of Vosloo's birthday, the film's team introduced him as "Sir Theodore Hector – The Demon of Drought," revealing his intense look as the primary antagonist in the period action drama.

Directed by Rahul Sankrityan, Ranabaali is set against the backdrop of British-era India and is based on historical events believed to have taken place between 1854 and 1878. According to the makers, the film draws inspiration from lesser-known accounts and oral histories rather than serving as a conventional biopic. Vijay Deverakonda plays the titular role of Ranabaali, while Rashmika Mandanna portrays his wife Jayamma. The film marks the third on-screen collab-

oration between the popular pair after Geetha Govindam and Dear Comrade. Produced by Naveen Yerneni and Y. Ravi Shankar under Mythri Movie Makers, with T-Series presenting the project, Ranabaali is being mounted as a large-scale pan-India film and is scheduled for a worldwide theatrical release on September 11. Production recently wrapped up a key shooting schedule in Rayalaseema, where the cast and crew received an enthusiastic welcome from local fans.

Tamannaah: 'I Could've Done Better'

Actress Tamannaah Bhatia has revealed that she was not completely satisfied with her performance in the chartbuster song "Kaavaalaa" from Rajinikanth's blockbuster film Jailer, saying she believes she could have performed better. Speaking during a conversation with filmmaker and choreographer Farah Khan for the latter's YouTube vlog, Tamannaah admitted that despite the song's massive popularity, she felt there was room for improvement in her performance. "I was a little unsatisfied when I shot for Kaavaalaa because I felt like I could have done better," the actress said. Farah responded by noting that Tamannaah is someone who always strives for perfection. The actress added that she had rehearsed extensively for another popular number, "Aaj Ki Raat," spending around 15 days preparing for it. "I am not a trained dancer, so I like to put in that extra effort," she explained. Composed by Anirudh Ravichander, Kaavaalaa became one of the biggest musical hits from Jailer, with vocals by Shilpa Rao and lyrics by Arunraja Kamaraj. On the professional front, Tamannaah is set to star opposite Sidharth Malhotra in the upcoming folklore-based film "Vvan – Force of the Forest." She is also part of the horror project "Ragini 3," which features Junaid Khan in a lead role and is being produced by Balaji Motion Pictures.



Alia Buzz Grows Around 'Kalki 2'



Mumbai: Speculation is mounting over Alia Bhatt's possible involvement in "Kalki 2", with unconfirmed reports suggesting she could either replace Deepika Padukone's character or take on an entirely new role in the much-awaited sequel. Social media has been abuzz with claims that Alia may portray Goddess Vaishno Devi, while other reports suggest she could step into the role of Sumathi, originally played by Deepika in Kalki 2898 AD. AI-generated images depicting Alia in a divine avatar have further fuelled the rumours. However, neither the actress nor the filmmakers have officially confirmed her casting. Director Nag Ashwin recently addressed the speculation, stating that the character of Sumathi will definitely remain an important part of the sequel but clarified that discussions surrounding the casting are purely speculative at this stage. The rumours gained momentum after production house Vyjayanthi Movies announced in September 2025 that Deepika Padukone would not return for the sequel, with both sides reportedly parting ways by mutual consent. Some reports have also claimed that Alia has already filmed a few scenes in Hyderabad, though these remain unverified. For now, fans will have to wait for an official announcement to know whether Alia Bhatt will join the Prabhas-starrer franchise and, if so, what role she will play.

Fatima Finds Joy in Little Things

Mumbai: Actress Fatima Sana Shaikh has embraced the beauty of everyday moments, sharing a heartfelt social media post celebrating life's "chotti chotti khushiyaan" (little joys). Taking to Instagram, the Dangal star posted a series of candid photographs featuring herself in elegant outfits, enjoying nature, relishing meals and posing amidst lush greenery. Accompanying the pictures, she simply captioned the post, "Chotti chotti

khushiyaan." The actress, known for frequently sharing glimpses of her personal and professional life, once again won over fans with her positive outlook and appreciation for simple pleasures. On the work front, Fatima has recently completed shooting for an untitled film and shared behind-the-scenes moments with the cast and crew during the wrap-up celebrations. The project also features Pavail Gulatie, Ravi Behl, Kabir Bedi, and Zain Khan Durrani, among others. She is also set to appear in "Nyaya".

Pooja Hegde Walks Backward in Style

Mumbai: Actress Pooja Hegde has once again impressed fans with her dedication to fitness, sharing a video of herself confidently walking backwards on a treadmill during a gym session. The actress posted the clip on social media, where she is seen recording herself while performing the workout in an orange crop top and matching shorts, showcasing both balance and style. Known for maintaining a disciplined fitness routine, Pooja frequently shares glimpses of her workouts and healthy lifestyle, inspiring her followers with her commitment to staying in shape. Beyond fitness updates, the actress also keeps fans engaged with moments from her personal life and film projects. On the professional front, Pooja was last seen in director David Dhawan's romantic comedy "Hai Jawani Toh Ishq Hona Hai", alongside Varun Dhawan and Mrunal Thakur. The film, backed by TIPS, hit theatres on June 5 and features an ensemble cast including Mouni Roy, Chunky Panday, Jimmy Shergill, Maniesh Paul, Rakesh Bedi, and Ali Asgar. The film marks the fourth collaboration between Varun Dhawan and his father David Dhawan and is expected to be the veteran filmmaker's final directorial venture.



Vishnu Priya's Candid Reply Sparks Debate

Hyderabad: Actress and television personality Vishnu Priya Bhimeneni has sparked widespread discussion on social media after candidly responding to a personal question about her dating history during an interaction with followers on Instagram. During the question-and-answer session, the actress replied that her "body count" was five when asked by a follower. Her response quickly went viral, drawing mixed reactions online. While some social media users criticised the actress and questioned her personal choices, many others defended her, arguing that her private life is a matter of personal autonomy and should not be subject to public judgment or moral policing. The discussion reignited debates around privacy, consent and the scrutiny faced by public figures on social media platforms. Earlier this year, in April, the All India Students Federation (AISF) filed a complaint with the Vijayawada Cyber Crime Police alleging that Vishnu Priya had shared obscene and semi-nude content on Instagram. The organisation claimed such posts could negatively influence young audiences. Vishnu Priya is known for her work in South Indian cinema and television, with credits including "Rathri Mazha," "Keralotsavam 2009," and "Puthumangal Thevai."

