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## 2,50,000 Girls Exploited, Claims UK Report

London: A privately funded parliamentary inquiry in the United Kingdom has alleged that at least 250,000 girls may have been subjected to organised sexual exploitation, including gang rape, trafficking and abuse over several decades. The Rape Gang Inquiry, chaired by Rupert Lowe and led by survivor advocate Sammy Woodhouse, released a 219-page report based on testimonies from survivors, whistleblowers, experts and public hearings. The inquiry was privately funded and did not possess statutory investigative powers. The report describes the estimate of 250,000 victims as conservative, citing previous investigations and parliamentary references while

noting that the full scale of abuse was never systematically documented by authorities. It alleges that organised exploitation networks operated across numerous local authority areas in the UK over many years. According to the inquiry, many convicted offenders in group-based child sexual exploitation cases were of Pakistani Muslim heritage, while also asserting that police, social services, schools and other public institutions failed to respond adequately to repeated complaints and warning signs. The report outlines allegations that victims, some as young as 11 years old, were groomed through gifts, alcohol or drugs before being subjected to repeated abuse and exploitation. It further

claims that institutional failures included missed safeguarding opportunities, inadequate investigations and poor victim support. The inquiry calls for stronger accountability, improved child protection measures and comprehensive reforms across law enforcement and public agencies to prevent similar abuses in the future. The findings are expected to add to ongoing debate in the UK over organised child sexual exploitation, institutional accountability and the effectiveness of safeguarding systems. Several previous official inquiries into grooming gangs in towns including Rotherham, Rochdale and Oxford have documented serious failures by authorities to protect vulnerable children.



## Jana Sena to Speed Up TG Expansion

Hyderabad: Jana Sena Party president and Andhra Pradesh Deputy Chief Minister Pawan Kalyan on Friday declared that the party would accelerate its political journey in Telangana while inaugurating the party's new state office in Manikonda, Hyderabad. Addressing party leaders and workers, Pawan Kalyan said that Jana Sena's primary focus in Telangana would be to address people's issues and work towards fulfilling the aspirations of the state. He stressed that national integrity and unity should remain the party's foremost priority. Calling Telangana a land of struggles and sacrifices, he said the region had inspired him deeply and noted that the Jana Sena movement itself had its roots in Telangana. He urged party cadres to spread the organisation's principles and ideology among the public while encouraging senior leaders to mentor new members. The Jana Sena

chief also called for the implementation of the "Janavani" programme in Telangana, under which party workers would directly interact with citizens, listen to their grievances and work towards resolving them through officials and public representatives. If issues remained unresolved, he said, the party should be prepared to launch public movements. Pawan Kalyan described Telangana as the "heart of India" and recalled its historical significance, including the role of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel during the integration of Hyderabad into the Indian Union. He urged party workers to dedicate themselves to serving the people of the state. Highlighting the party's broader ambitions, he revealed that Jana Sena had also begun expanding its presence in Kerala, Tamil Nadu and Karnataka, signalling its intent to strengthen its organisational base beyond Andhra Pradesh.



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## EDITORIAL

## Skills Without Jobs?

India is often described as a young nation with an enormous demographic advantage. Every year, millions of students graduate from schools, colleges, and universities hoping to secure meaningful employment. Yet, the country continues to witness a troubling paradox: while skill development has become a national priority, unemployment among young people remains a persistent challenge. This disconnect raises an important question—are we creating skills that match the needs of the economy, or merely producing certificates without opportunities? Governments and private institutions have launched numerous skill development initiatives aimed at preparing youth for modern industries. Training programs in information technology, manufacturing, digital services, healthcare, and entrepreneurship have expanded significantly. However, many employers still report difficulty in finding candidates with practical problem-solving abilities, communication skills, adaptability, and industry-specific experience. This suggests that the issue is not only about the number of trained individuals but also about the quality and relevance of training.

Another concern is the gap between education and employment. Many academic institutions continue to emphasize theoretical learning while giving limited exposure to internships, apprenticeships, and real-world projects. As technology evolves rapidly, curricula often struggle to keep pace with changing industry requirements. Graduates therefore enter the job market with qualifications that may not align with employer expectations. The economy itself also plays a crucial role. Skill development cannot solve unemployment if sufficient jobs are not being created. Sectors such as manufacturing, green energy, logistics, tourism, and digital services have the potential to absorb large numbers of workers, but sustained investment and supportive policies are essential. Small and medium enterprises, which generate significant employment, need easier access to finance and infrastructure so they can expand hiring.

Equally important is changing societal attitudes toward vocational careers. Technical trades, skilled craftsmanship, and service professions are often undervalued despite offering stable incomes and opportunities for entrepreneurship. Encouraging respect for these occupations can broaden career choices and reduce excessive dependence on a limited number of white-collar jobs. Young people also need to view learning as a continuous process rather than a one-time qualification. Artificial intelligence, automation, and emerging technologies are transforming workplaces at an unprecedented pace. Upskilling and reskilling throughout one's career will become essential for long-term employability.

## Premium Paddy: Promise or Peril for Farmers?

Agriculture in India is undergoing a gradual but significant transformation. For decades, the focus of policy was on maximizing food production to ensure national food security. Today, however, changing consumer preferences, growing export markets, and the demand for high-quality agricultural products have encouraged governments and policymakers to promote premium varieties of crops, including paddy. States such as Telangana have shown interest in encouraging farmers to cultivate premium rice varieties that command better prices in domestic and international markets. On paper, the idea appears attractive: higher quality should mean higher income. But the reality is far more complex. For farmers, premium paddy cultivation represents both a promising opportunity and a substantial risk. The biggest argument in favor of premium paddy is its potential to increase farm incomes. Traditional paddy varieties are often sold at prices linked to the Minimum Support Price (MSP) or local market conditions, leaving limited room for significant profit. Premium varieties, on the other hand, can fetch better prices because of their superior grain quality, aroma, texture, or suitability for export. If farmers receive a genuine price premium, their earnings could improve without necessarily expanding cultivated land. At a time when landholdings are shrinking and input costs are rising, increasing value rather than volume is an attractive proposition. Premium paddy can also strengthen India's position in global agricultural markets. International consumers increasingly seek specialty rice with distinct characteristics. Expanding the cultivation of quality varieties could enhance export earnings, improve the country's agricultural brand, and encourage investment in processing and value addition. Such diversification may reduce dependence on low-margin commodity markets and create opportunities across the supply chain, from milling to packaging and logistics. For states like Telangana, promoting premium paddy may also help shift agriculture toward quality-driven production

rather than sheer quantity. Farmers adopting scientifically recommended varieties often receive better technical guidance, improved seed quality, and access to modern cultivation practices. This can lead to enhanced productivity and encourage greater awareness of soil health, water management, and post-harvest handling. However, these potential benefits come with serious caveats. The first and most significant concern is market uncertainty. A premium crop is profitable only when there is sustained demand and a dependable procurement mechanism. If farmers invest in expensive seeds and inputs but fail to find buyers willing to pay higher prices, the supposed premium quickly disappears. In such cases, growers may be forced to sell at ordinary market rates, suffering financial losses rather than gains. The experience of Indian agriculture is replete with examples of crops that enjoyed temporary market booms before collapsing due to oversupply or weak procurement systems. Farmers often respond collectively to price signals, and when large numbers switch to the same crop, the resulting increase in production can depress prices dramatically. Without careful planning, premium paddy could face a similar fate. Another challenge lies in production costs. Premium varieties frequently require certified seeds, careful crop management, timely irrigation, pest control, and meticulous harvesting techniques to preserve grain quality. These requirements increase cultivation expenses. Small and marginal farmers, who constitute the majority of India's agricultural community, may struggle to bear these costs without access to affordable credit and reliable extension services. Climate uncertainty adds another layer of risk. Agriculture is increasingly vulnerable to irregular monsoons, heat waves, floods, and changing pest patterns. Some premium varieties may be less resilient than traditional local strains under adverse conditions. If weather-related shocks reduce yields or quality, farmers may lose both production and the price premium they expected. In regions facing water stress, encouraging

water-intensive paddy cultivation without parallel investments in irrigation efficiency could prove environmentally unsustainable. The question of procurement cannot be ignored. India's MSP system has historically provided farmers with a degree of income security for certain crops. If governments encourage premium varieties but fail to establish transparent procurement channels or facilitate contract farming arrangements with appropriate safeguards, producers may become dependent on private traders with stronger bargaining power. This imbalance can erode much of the financial advantage that premium cultivation promises. Post-harvest infrastructure is equally critical. Premium rice demands careful storage, milling, grading, branding, and transportation to maintain quality standards. Poor handling can diminish grain value before it reaches consumers. Many rural areas still lack adequate warehouses, drying facilities, and modern mills capable of preserving premium characteristics. Unless infrastructure improves, farmers may not realize the higher returns associated with specialized production. There is also a policy concern regarding crop diversification. Several Indian states already face ecological challenges due to excessive paddy cultivation, including groundwater depletion and soil degradation. Promoting premium paddy should not inadvertently discourage diversification into pulses, oilseeds, millets, or horticultural crops that may be better suited to local agro-climatic conditions. Agricultural planning must balance profitability with long-term sustainability. Consumer demand, too, is subject to change. Premium food products often perform well during periods of economic growth but may experience reduced demand during inflationary pressures or economic downturns. Export markets can fluctuate due to international trade policies, currency movements, or geopolitical developments. Farmers should not be exposed to these market risks without appropriate insurance mechanisms and institutional support. Despite these challenges, dismissing premium paddy

- Karunakar Paidiraju,  
Agri Expert,  
Mahabubnagar

## Gaming Industry Sees 3,700 Job Cuts in 2026



New Delhi: The global video game industry continues to grapple with widespread workforce reductions, recording around 3,700 verified layoffs in 2026 so far, according to a new report. The actual number is estimated to exceed 4,000 when unreported job cuts and studio closures are included. The report, released by TradingPlatforms, noted that the United States accounts for the largest share of layoffs, with 2,153 confirmed job losses, representing nearly 58 per cent of the global total. Among the biggest reductions, Epic Games reportedly eliminated around 1,000 positions, marking one of the largest workforce cuts in gaming history. Meanwhile, Bungie announced plans to lay off approximately 400 employees, while several other developers have also reduced staff. In Europe, Ubisoft announced nearly 680 layoffs across multiple studios as part of a major restructuring initiative. Canada also witnessed significant cuts, with at least 257 gaming jobs lost, including 124 positions at Eidos-Montréal following the cancellation of a major project. The report added that the broader technology sector has recorded more than 143,000 layoffs by June 2026, with cloud computing, e-commerce, IT services, enterprise software, fintech and social media companies also implementing large-scale workforce reductions. Industry analysts attribute the continued downsizing to restructuring efforts, project cancellations, and changing market conditions as gaming companies seek to streamline operations and control costs.

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# Morocco Edge Scotland, Go Top

Morocco strengthened their FIFA World Cup campaign with a hard-fought 1-0 victory over Scotland, moving to the top of Group C with four points from two matches. Midfielder Ismael

Saibari scored the decisive goal just 71 seconds into the contest, registering the fastest strike of the tournament so far. The early breakthrough allowed Morocco to dominate possession and

dictate play for most of the match. The North Africans, who reached the semifinals in the previous World Cup, controlled proceedings through disciplined pressing and fluid attacking moves.

Scotland struggled to create meaningful chances and managed little threat despite pushing forward late in the game. With the win, Morocco now sit in a strong position to qualify for the

knockout stage and will face Haiti in their final group fixture. Scotland, meanwhile, remain on three points and must now prepare for a crucial clash against five-time champions Brazil to keep their qualification hopes alive.



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Andrea Jeremiah

## 'Nagabandham' Trailer Unveiled

The trailer of Nagabandham has been released, promising a visually rich blend of mythology, history, and fantasy adventure ahead of its theatrical release on July 3. Directed by Abhishek Nama and starring Virat Karina, the film revolves around the mysteries surrounding the revered Anantha Padmanabha Swamy Temple and the legendary Brahma Kamalam, a sacred relic believed to possess extraordinary powers. The trailer hints at an epic quest involving hidden treasures, ancient guardians, and supernatural forces, with divine intervention and Naga Sadhus standing against evil forces seeking the mystical artifact. The final reveal of the mysterious "Nagabandham" adds intrigue to the story. Virat Karina appears in a powerful role, while the film also features Nabha Natesh, Aishwarya Menon, Daksha Nagarkar, Mahesh Manjrekar, Jagapathi Babu, and Murali Sharma in key roles. Featuring grand temple sets, expansive visuals, cinematography by Soundar Rajan S, and a background score by Junaid Kumar, Nagabandham aims to deliver a large-scale mythological spectacle with a strong emphasis on adventure and mystery.



## Naga Durga Turns Heroine For Priyadarshi



Popular folk performer Naga Durga is set to make her mainstream acting debut as the female lead opposite Priyadarshi Pulikonda in an upcoming Telugu film set against a Telangana family backdrop. The yet-to-be-titled project will be directed by Vamsi Reddy and jointly produced under the banners of Sukumar Writings and Bunny Vas Works, backed by Sukumar and Bunny Vas. Known for her popularity in folk music and dance performances, Naga Durga's transition to cinema is expected to bring a fresh and authentic local flavour to the project. The makers reportedly chose her to suit the film's rooted Telangana setting. The film is scheduled to be formally launched with a traditional pooja ceremony on June 25, 2026. More details about the supporting cast and technical crew are expected to be revealed after the launch.

## Allu Arjun Gets Summons

Allu Arjun has been summoned by the Nampally Court in Hyderabad in connection with the fatal stampede that occurred during a special screening of Pushpa 2: The Rule at Sandhya Theatre. The court has directed the actor to appear in person on June 22 as proceedings in the case move forward. According to the chargesheet filed by the police, Allu Arjun has been listed as Accused No. 11 (A11), while members of the Sandhya Theatre management have been named among the other accused. Summons have also been issued to several additional individuals linked to the case. The case stems from the December 4, 2024 premiere screening of Pushpa 2,

when a large crowd gathered outside the theatre to catch a glimpse of the actor. The resulting stampede claimed the life of a woman named Revathi and left her young son seriously injured, prompting the registration of a criminal case by the Hyderabad police. Following the incident, police booked the actor, his security personnel, and the theatre management over alleged lapses in crowd management and safety arrangements. Allu Arjun was briefly arrested in December 2024 before obtaining bail from the court. The latest summons mark the next stage in the legal proceedings, with the court expected to hear the matter after the accused appear before it.



## Rashmika Opens Up on Marriage

Actor Rashmika Mandanna has shared her thoughts on marriage, saying the institution should be shaped by the couple involved rather than by societal expectations. In a recent interview, Rashmika described her partner as her "best friend" and said having a strong emotional support system gives her stability amid the demands of a busy film career. She added that returning home to a place of peace helps her navigate hectic shooting schedules and promotions. Addressing the view held by some young people that marriage has become outdated, the actress said she understands why many question traditional expectations. However, she believes marriage does not have to follow rigid social norms and can instead reflect the values and choices of the two individuals involved. Rashmika also spoke about balancing her professional and personal responsibilities, saying she does not see them as separate roles but as complementary parts of her life. She praised working women for finding their own ways to manage multiple commitments. On the work front, Rashmika expressed excitement about reuniting with Vijay Deverakonda in the upcoming period drama Ranabali, noting that the film is vastly different from their previous collaborations and explores a more intense, emotionally charged setting. She said both actors are grateful for the positive response the project has already received from audiences.



## Kajal's First Look from 'NBK111'



Hyderabad: The makers of the upcoming action entertainer NBK111 have unveiled the first look of actress Kajal Aggarwal from the film on the occasion of her birthday, offering audiences a glimpse of her intriguing character. Headlined by Nandamuri Balakrishna and directed by Gopichand Malineni, the film is being produced by Venkata Satish Kilaru under the banner of Vriddhi Cinemas. The newly released poster presents Kajal in a dignified and authoritative look, dressed in a checked saree and spectacles, standing inside what appears to be a government office filled with files and official documents. The image hints at a strong, influential, and layered role in the film.