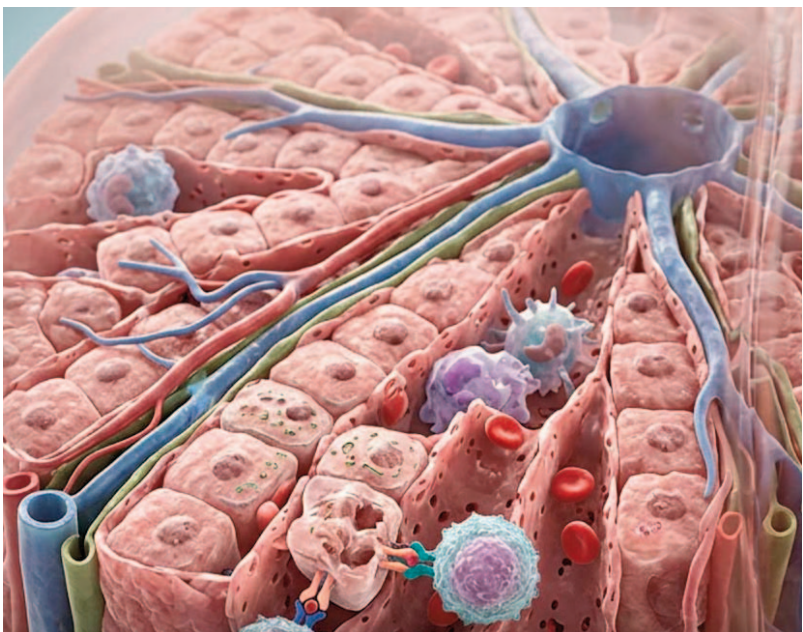


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Wednesday 15.7.2026	Pages: 4 Price: Rs.2	Volume: 1 Issue: 57	Published from Jagitial Circulated to Telangana	PRGI Regd: TGENG/26/A3325 www.tricolourestate.com
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Immune Cells Offer Hepatitis Hope

Researchers have identified a group of immune cells in the liver that could pave the way for more effective treatments for chronic hepatitis B, offering fresh hope for millions living with the infection. For most people with chronic hepatitis B, antiviral medicines can suppress the virus but rarely eliminate it completely. The new study found that CD4-positive T cells, a specific type of immune cell, play a much larger role in clearing the virus than previously understood. The research, which combined laboratory experiments with patient samples, showed that these immune cells help coordinate a powerful defence against the virus when antiviral treatment is carefully discontinued in selected patients. Scientists observed that CD4-positive T cells recognise viral proteins in the liver and release chemical signals that activate other immune cells. These cells then form organised immune clusters that strengthen the body's ability to identify and destroy infected liver cells.



Bee-Design Solar Panels

Engineers have developed a revolutionary solar panel design inspired by the hexagonal honeycomb structure built by bees, significantly improving energy generation. Unlike conventional flat panels that lose sunlight due to reflection when the sun's angle changes, the new three-dimensional concave design traps and redirects reflected light back into the panel for better absorption. The innovative technology increased power output by up to 142.3%, with efficiency gains of 36.4% under direct sunlight and 61.8% when sunlight struck at a 60-degree angle. The flexible honeycomb-inspired structure could also be used on curved buildings, electric vehicles, and aerospace equipment, expanding the future applications of solar energy.



'Sun-Dimming' to Tame El Nino

Scientists at the University of California, San Diego have proposed a controversial "sun-dimming" technique to reduce the impact of severe El Niño events. The study suggests using marine cloud brightening, a form of solar geo-engineering, where aerosols are released into the atmosphere to make clouds reflect more sunlight back into space, helping cool the Earth's surface. Researchers say the method could lessen extreme weather such as heatwaves, droughts and heavy rainfall associated with Super El Niño, with simulations indicating up to a 40% increase in cooling and drying effects. However, experts caution that the technology carries unknown environmental risks and could divert attention from cutting greenhouse gas emissions. Scientists stress that the proposal remains theoretical, with no plans for real-world implementation at present.



Six Civilians Killed in POK

Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK) witnessed fresh unrest after Pakistani security forces allegedly opened fire on civilians during a crackdown in Rawalakot, leaving at least six people dead and several others injured. The violence erupted near the New Bus Terminal in Rawalakot after clashes broke out between local residents and security personnel. The latest incident has intensified anti-Pakistan sentiment in the region, where protests against Islamabad's policies have been growing over the past several months. Among those killed were Zahid Mughal, Zafar Mughal, Arsalan Akbar, Wajid Hayat, who was shot near the Matial Mira Bus Terminal, along with two other civilians from the Baloch Sadhunati district. A day before the violence, nearly 100 members of the Pakistan-occupied

Kashmir diaspora gathered outside the White House in Washington, urging the international community to intervene in what they described as a worsening humanitarian crisis in PoK. The protesters demanded the withdrawal of Pakistani military forces from civilian areas and accused Islamabad of using excessive force against unarmed residents. They also highlighted a prolonged internet shutdown that has reportedly left nearly four million people disconnected from the outside world. The demonstrators appealed for humanitarian assistance and called for the opening of the Line of Control through the Poonch and Doda sectors to facilitate relief operations. Residents of PoK continue to face severe economic hardship. According to a 2025 study published in Nature, nearly 66 per cent of the population depends

on agriculture and livestock, while 57 per cent of households suffer from food insecurity. The situation is particularly grim in mountainous regions, where food insecurity reportedly affects up to 90 per cent of households. Healthcare indicators also remain alarming. Pakistan's Voluntary National Review Report states that 39 per cent of children under five suffer from stunted growth, while the maternal mortality rate stands at 104 deaths per 100,000 live births. Reacting to the violence, India's Ministry of External Affairs strongly criticised Pakistan's handling of the situation. MEA spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal said the ongoing protests were the result of Pakistan's "systematic exploitation, denial of fundamental rights" in territories under its illegal occupation.

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Nifty Ends Below 24,100

Mumbai, July 14: Indian equity markets ended sharply lower on Tuesday as escalating geopolitical tensions in West Asia rattled investor sentiment, triggering broad-based selling across sectors. Weakness in PSU banking, realty and automobile stocks dragged benchmark indices into the red, while pharmaceutical shares offered some support. The BSE Sensex declined 561.46 points (0.72%) to close at 77,054.94, while the NSE Nifty 50 slipped 159 points (0.66%) to settle at 24,052.05, falling below the crucial 24,100 mark. In-

vestor caution intensified amid concerns over the evolving situation in West Asia, prompting profit-taking in rate-sensitive and cyclical sectors. Realty, PSU banking and auto stocks witnessed the sharpest declines, reflecting risk-off sentiment in the market. Among Nifty constituents, HCL Technologies, Shriram Finance and HDFC Life Insurance emerged as the biggest losers of the day, weighing heavily on the benchmark index. The weakness also spread to broader markets. The Nifty MidCap Index ended 0.44% lower, while the Nifty SmallCap Index fell 1.01%, indicating widespread selling beyond

frontline stocks. Despite the overall market weakness, pharmaceutical stocks attracted defensive buying. The Nifty Pharma Index ended as the top-performing sector, as investors shifted towards relatively safer segments amid global uncertainty. Market analysts noted that the Nifty traded within a narrow range after opening with a gap-down due to weekly options expiry. According to technical experts, the index continues to hold above a key falling trendline, suggesting that the broader bullish structure remains intact. They believe the short-term outlook will stay positive as long as the Nifty remains



above 23,950. If this support holds, the index could move towards the 24,250-24,300 zone. However, a decisive break below 23,950 could weaken the current momentum and lead to a period of consolidation. Market participants are now closely watching remarks from the US Federal Reserve Chair, which could influence expectations regarding future interest rate decisions and global liquidity. At the same time, the ongoing first-quarter corporate earnings season re-

mains another key driver for domestic equities. While earnings have largely been encouraging so far, analysts believe rising geopolitical tensions have temporarily overshadowed positive corporate developments. Analysts expect market volatility to continue in the near term as investors closely monitor developments in West Asia, global monetary policy signals, and domestic earnings. Defensive sectors such as pharmaceuticals may continue to outperform.

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EDITORIAL

India's Net-Zero Journey

Climate change is no longer a distant environmental concern—it is an immediate global challenge affecting economies, ecosystems, and human lives. Rising temperatures, frequent heatwaves, erratic monsoons, floods, droughts, and cyclones are becoming increasingly common across India. As one of the world's fastest-growing economies, India faces the dual responsibility of accelerating development while reducing carbon emissions. This delicate balance makes climate action and the country's journey towards net-zero emissions one of the defining challenges of the 21st century. India has pledged to achieve net-zero carbon emissions by 2070, while significantly expanding renewable energy, improving energy efficiency, and reducing the carbon intensity of its economy. Unlike many developed nations that industrialized over centuries using fossil fuels, India must pursue economic growth through cleaner and more sustainable pathways. This transition is not only an environmental necessity but also an opportunity to build a modern, resilient economy. Renewable energy has become the cornerstone of India's climate strategy. Rapid expansion of solar, wind, and hydroelectric power has reduced dependence on coal while strengthening energy security. India is also investing in green hydrogen, electric vehicles, battery storage, and sustainable mobility to accelerate the transition towards a low-carbon future. These initiatives are creating new industries, attracting investments, and generating employment opportunities.

However, achieving net-zero requires action beyond the energy sector. Agriculture, industries, transport, construction, and waste management must all adopt cleaner technologies and sustainable practices. Water conservation, afforestation, climate-resilient farming, and improved public transport can significantly reduce environmental impacts while enhancing economic productivity. Climate action must also be inclusive. Millions of Indians still depend on traditional livelihoods and affordable energy. Policies should therefore ensure a just transition, protecting workers and communities while creating new opportunities in green industries. Investments in skill development, research, innovation, and climate-resilient infrastructure will play a vital role in achieving this balance. India has also emerged as a strong advocate of climate justice, emphasizing that developed nations should fulfil their commitments on climate finance and technology transfer. Developing countries require adequate support to pursue sustainable development without compromising economic growth or poverty reduction.

The road to net-zero will not be easy, but the cost of inaction is far greater. Climate change threatens food security, water resources, public health, biodiversity, and long-term economic stability. Every investment in clean energy, sustainable infrastructure, and environmental conservation is an investment in the nation's future. India's net-zero journey is not merely about reducing emissions—it is about redefining development for future generations.

India Creates 17 Crore Jobs

Mandaviya at BRICS Trade Union Summit

Hyderabad, July 14 (PIB): Union Labour and Employment Minister Dr. Mansukh Mandaviya on Tuesday said India has created nearly 17 crore (170 million) employment opportunities over the past decade and expanded social security coverage to more than 100 crore citizens, while inaugurating the 15th BRICS Trade Union Forum (TUF) Summit 2026 in Hyderabad. Addressing trade union leaders and delegates from BRICS nations, the Minister called for building a worker-centric global order where technological advancement is guided by social justice, responsible innovation and human dignity.

17 Crore Employment Opportunities

Highlighting the government's employment initiatives, Dr. Mandaviya said India generated nearly 17 crore employment opportunities during the last ten years. He also announced that the Pradhan Mantri Viksit Bharat Rozgar Yojana aims to create another 3.5 crore formal sector jobs over the next two years through employment-linked incentive schemes. The Minister said the Centre's labour reforms have simplified labour laws while strengthening workers' welfare. The Four Labour Codes have consolidated 29 labour laws into a modern framework providing universal minimum wages, appointment

letters, enhanced workplace safety, digital compliance mechanisms and, for the first time, formal recognition of gig and platform workers. Dr. Mandaviya highlighted India's digital initiatives in labour administration. He said the e-Shram portal has registered more than 31.7 crore unorganised workers, enabling them to access various government welfare schemes. He added that the National Career Service Portal has emerged as a nationwide digital platform connecting job seekers, employers, training institutions and career centres.

Social Security Coverage Crosses 100 Crore

The Union Minister said India's social protection coverage has witnessed remarkable growth over the last decade. According to him, coverage increased from 19 per cent in 2015 to 64.3 per cent in 2025, benefiting nearly 94 crore people, while preliminary estimates indicate that the number has now crossed 100 crore citizens in 2026. He also noted that the Employees' Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO), with over 8 crore active subscribers and 80 lakh pensioners, has become one of the world's largest social security institutions. Similarly, the Employees' State Insurance Corporation (ESIC) currently provides healthcare and social security benefits to over 15 crore insured workers and their dependants. Dr. Mandaviya said India's labour governance is built on continuous dialogue



among the government, employers and trade unions. Institutions such as EPFO and ESIC function through tripartite mechanisms, ensuring participative decision-making in labour welfare.

Call for Greater BRICS Cooperation

The Minister said BRICS countries collectively represent nearly half of the world's population and possess one of the largest labour forces globally. He stressed the need for stronger cooperation among BRICS nations in areas including social security, labour mobility, skill development, artificial intelligence governance and decent work. He expressed confidence that the recommendations emerging from the summit would contribute meaningfully

to the upcoming BRICS Labour and Employment Ministers' Meeting. The summit is being organised under India's BRICS Presidency theme, "Building for Resilience, Innovation, Cooperation and Sustainability." Earlier, Bharatiya Mazdoor Sangh (BMS) National President Sunkari Malleshram, who chairs the BRICS Trade Union Forum Summit 2026, said the forum aims to strengthen cooperation among BRICS nations to improve workers' welfare and promote inclusive economic development. BMS Organising Secretary and Chief Coordinator of the forum B. Surendran welcomed delegates and expressed hope that the deliberations would produce meaningful outcomes for workers across BRICS countries.

Students Must Lead Cleanliness Mission: Suresh Gopi

Hyderabad, July 14 (PIB): Union Minister of State for Petroleum and Natural Gas Suresh Gopi on Tuesday called upon students to become ambassadors of cleanliness and environmental protection, stating that cleanliness is not merely a campaign but a culture rooted in personal responsibility and people's participation. The Minister was addressing the Swachhta Pakhwada programme jointly organised by Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs) at the Telangana Social Welfare Residential Centre for Excellence in Hyderabad. Suresh Gopi said the Swachh Bharat Mission, launched under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, has transformed cleanliness into a nationwide people's movement. He said every clean classroom, litter-free street and



green campus reflects responsible citizenship and contributes to nation-building. He urged students to adopt discipline, compassion, integrity and respect for nature as essential values. Participating in the "Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam" plantation drive, the Minister planted a sapling and distributed plants

to students, encouraging them to nurture every tree with care. He said trees are among the greatest gifts to future generations as they provide clean air, shade, biodiversity and a healthier environment. He appealed to every family to plant and protect at least one tree to build a greener Telangana and a greener India. The Minister said the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas is committed not only to ensuring India's energy security but also to promoting sustainable development and social welfare. He appreciated the joint efforts of Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOCL), Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited (BPCL), Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Limited (HPCL), Reliance Industries Limited and Nayara Energy for organising pro-

grammes that promote environmental awareness beyond their core business responsibilities. Suresh Gopi urged students to keep classrooms clean, conserve water and electricity, avoid single-use plastics, protect public property and actively participate in environmental conservation. He said true excellence lies not only in academic success but also in responsible citizenship. Highlighting the vision of Viksit Bharat@2047, the Minister said every citizen has a responsibility towards cleanliness, environmental conservation, health, education and social welfare. He appealed to people to make cleanliness a lifelong commitment and work collectively towards building a cleaner, greener, healthier and more compassionate India.



Trump Drops Hormuz Fee Plan

US President Donald Trump has withdrawn his proposal to impose a 20% shipping fee on vessels passing through the Strait of Hormuz after Gulf nations pledged to make billions of dollars in additional investments in the United States. Trump said leaders from Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Qatar, Bahrain and Kuwait proposed increased investments as an alternative to the fee, calling it a better and fairer arrangement. He added that while the US has long safeguarded the vital energy corridor for the benefit of the world, the new investment commitments would provide greater economic returns without disrupting global shipping.

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Gill, Axar Star as India Go 1-0 Up

Birmingham, July 15: India registered their first victory of the ongoing United Kingdom tour with a commanding six-wicket win over England in the opening ODI at Edgbaston on Tuesday, taking a 1-0 lead in the three-match series. Captain Shubman Gill led the chase with a classy 80 before retiring hurt due to cramps, while Axar Patel produced an impressive all-round performance with four wickets and an unbeaten half-century to guide India to victory. Chasing a target of 259, India reached 262/4 in 45.2 overs. Gill played a fluent knock of 80 off 75 balls, smashing 11 fours and a six. His 101-run partnership with Shreyas Iyer (35) steadied the innings after India lost Rohit Sharma (11) and Virat Kohli (5) early. Gill, who scored 269 and 161 in last year's Edgbaston Test, once again enjoyed success at the venue before retiring hurt with calf and hamstring cramps. England briefly clawed back into the contest after Gill's exit. Shreyas Iyer was run out, while KL Rahul was dismissed by Josh Tongue, reducing India to 160/4. However, Axar Patel (57 not out) and Washington Sundar (52 not out) stitched together an unbeaten 102-run partnership for the fifth wicket to complete the chase comfortably with 28 balls to spare. Earlier, England recovered from a dramatic collapse to post 258 all out after electing to bat. From a strong position of 61/0, the hosts slumped to 107/6 before Joe Root (76) and Liam Dawson (68) rescued the innings with a crucial 121-run partnership for the seventh wicket. Root mixed caution with aggression, handling India's pace attack before targeting the spinners. Dawson registered his career-best ODI score to help England post a competitive total. India's bowling was led by Axar Patel, who claimed 4/62, while Gurnoor Brar (2/61) and Prasidh Krishna (2/50) provided key breakthroughs. Jasprit Bumrah was economical once again, finishing with 1/31 in his nine overs.



BBL 16 Schedule Unveiled

Cricket Australia has unveiled the schedule for the 2026-27 Big Bash League (BBL 16), featuring several firsts, including a historic season opener in Chennai, the return of Christmas Eve cricket, and an Australia Day final. For the first time in BBL history, the tournament will begin outside Australia. The opening match on December 12 will see the Melbourne Renegades take on defending champions Perth Scorchers at the MA Chidambaram Stadium in Chennai. Australia's first home game will be played on December 15, with the Brisbane Heat hosting the Sydney Sixers at the Gabba. The 44-match tournament will feature marquee fixtures on Christmas Eve, Box-

ing Day, New Year's Eve, and New Year's Day, while Christmas Day will remain the only break in the schedule. The Christmas Eve clash will see the Renegades face the Hobart Hurricanes at Junction Oval. The league stage concludes with double-headers on January 16 and 17, followed by the four-team finals beginning on January 19. The championship match is scheduled for January 26 (Australia Day), with a reserve day in place if required. Cricket Australia has also introduced scheduling changes aimed at reducing travel fatigue. No team will play three matches within five days, and additional rest days have been included during the finals to ease travel demands. Canberra will host

an expanded BBL programme, with the Sydney Thunder playing two home matches at Manuka Oval, while the Sydney Sixers will also use the venue due to the unavailability of the Sydney Cricket Ground during the Australia-New Zealand Test. Melbourne will host nine matches, including both Melbourne derbies at the Melbourne Cricket Ground, while Adelaide's traditional New Year's Eve fixture remains, with the Adelaide Strikers taking on the Melbourne Stars at Adelaide Oval. The revamped schedule aims to improve player welfare while maintaining the league's festive appeal and expanding its global footprint with the landmark opening fixture in India.



Norway Football team gets Royal Welcome

Norway's national football team received a rousing heroes' welcome in Oslo despite their FIFA World Cup 2026 campaign ending in the quarterfinals, as more than 100,000 fans turned out to celebrate the country's historic achievement. The Norwegian squad returned home after suffering a 2-1 extra-time defeat to England in the World Cup quarterfinals, ending their dream run. However, the disappointing exit did little to dampen the celebrations. Fans packed the streets of the capital from the Royal Palace to Karl Johans gate, while the team was greeted with a traditional water cannon salute upon arrival. The players later attended a reception hosted by King Harald before greeting supporters gathered outside the palace. The celebrations continued with an open-top bus parade through Oslo, where thousands of fans lined the streets waving Norwegian flags and cheering the team. Star striker Erling Haaland was absent from the final stage of the celebrations after leaving early to catch a flight, following delays to the team's return from the United States. Midfielder Sander Berge also departed early. Coach Stale Solbakken explained that both players had travel commitments after the squad's flight was delayed by four hours. The remaining players joined fans in a traditional "Viking row" celebration on the palace steps, led by Crown Prince Haakon, who participated by beating ceremonial drums. Although Norway narrowly missed out on a semifinal berth, the team's impressive World Cup performance sparked nationwide pride, with supporters celebrating what many described as one of the country's greatest football achievements.





Sunny Leone



Jr NTR has no Association: Team

Actor Jr NTR's team has issued an official clarification stating that the star has no association whatsoever with an organisation operating under the name RAW NTR. In a statement released on Tuesday, the actor's office said the organisation was creating an impression that it was linked to Jr NTR and acting on his behalf, which it described as completely false. "It has come to our attention that an organisation operating under the name RAW NTR has been carrying out activities that may create an impression of being associated with Mr. NTR. We categorically clarify that Mr. NTR and his office have absolutely no association, affiliation or involvement with RAW NTR or any of its activities," the statement said. The team emphasised that the organisation is not authorised to represent Jr NTR or communicate on his behalf in any capacity. It further clarified that any charitable activity, public welfare initiative, official announcement or association involving the actor would only be communicated through Jr NTR or his official team. The public was urged not to believe or circulate information shared by unauthorised individuals or organisations. The actor's office also appealed to traditional media, digital platforms and fans to refrain from spreading unverified reports, adding that the clarification should put an end to all rumours and speculation surrounding the issue. On the professional front, Jr NTR is currently working with director Prashanth Neel on the much-awaited action film Dragon. The makers recently released a special video featuring the actor to mark his birthday. Originally scheduled for release on June 25, 2027, the film has now been rescheduled and is slated to hit theatres on June 11, 2027.



Aamir Khan Faces Fatwa

Aamir Khan has landed in controversy after a Muslim cleric objected to his recent marriage to Gauri Spratt, claiming that the union is not permissible under his interpretation of Islamic law. According to reports, Shahi Chief Mufti Maulana Ibrahim Hussain of the Muslim Personal Darul Ifta stated that a Muslim man should not marry a non-Muslim woman unless she accepts Islam. He described such marriages as "haraam" under Sharia. In a video circulating on social media, the cleric said that Muslims who marry non-Muslim women are committing a sin and would ultimately be accountable before Allah. He also criticised the practice of marrying multiple times, saying that a person who cannot fulfil marital responsibilities fairly should not enter into another marriage. Referring to Aamir Khan, the cleric said protests had emerged following the actor's third marriage to a non-Muslim woman and reiterated his religious objection to the union. Aamir Khan married Gauri Spratt, a Bengaluru-based entrepreneur, in a registered ceremony under the Special Marriage Act on July 5, 2026. The ceremony was held privately in the presence of close family members and friends. The actor was previously married to Reena Dutta, with whom he has two children, Junaid Khan and Ira Khan. After their divorce in 2002, he married filmmaker Kiran Rao in 2005. The couple welcomed son Azad Rao Khan through surrogacy before announcing their separation in 2021. They continue to co-parent their son. Neither Aamir Khan nor his representatives have responded publicly to the cleric's remarks. The reported religious opinion has sparked discussions on social media, while the actor's marriage remains legally valid under the provisions of the Special Marriage Act, which allows interfaith marriages in India.

Zareen Khan Pulls Up Paparazzi



Actress Zareen Khan strongly reprimanded members of the paparazzi after one of them allegedly made an inappropriate comment during a public event in Mumbai. A video of the incident, which has since gone viral on social media, shows the actress browsing outfits when a photographer allegedly asked her to try one on at the venue. Visibly upset, Zareen responded firmly, saying, "In front of everyone? That's not happening. Don't talk nonsense with me because I'm not the one who's going to take that s. Stay within your limits when you talk." Her response quickly drew widespread support online, with many social media users praising her for standing up against disrespectful behaviour. One user commented that she gave the "perfect answer," while another criticised the conduct of some members of the media, saying such behaviour was becoming increasingly unacceptable. The incident has reignited discussions on the need for maintaining professional boundaries and respectful conduct during celebrity interactions.

Feeling Alone: Avika Gor

Actress Avika Gor has shared an emotional note on social media, reflecting on loneliness, growing up and the struggle to find a true sense of belonging despite being surrounded by people. The Balika Vadhu actress said loneliness is not always about being physically alone but can also stem from feeling disconnected even while knowing many people. "Lately, I've realized that loneliness doesn't always look like being alone. Sometimes it looks like knowing a hundred people but not knowing where you belong," she wrote. Avika said trying to become part of social circles that were formed long ago can be emotionally draining. According to her, people often assume that someone either does not need companionship or is overly dependent on others. She also admitted that dedicating most of her life to her career came at a personal cost. "I gave all my life to my career without realising how difficult it gets with time to have people include you in their lives unconditionally," she wrote. The actress further reflected that growing up is not only about losing time but also about losing the ease with which meaningful relationships are formed. "Nobody tells you that growing up isn't just about losing time, it's also about losing the ease of finding people who consider you as important as you consider them," she added.



Not Jumping in Air yet: Akhil



Akhil Akkineni has filled him with gratitude, but insists he is keeping his feet firmly on the ground. In an exclusive interaction with IANS, Akhil said he was happy with the audience's response but believes he still has a long journey ahead as an actor. "I'm full of gratitude, but I'm not jumping in the air yet. I have a long way to go," he said. The actor revealed that his father, veteran actor Nagarjuna, did not offer any elaborate praise after the film's success. Instead, the two shared "one special hug," which Akhil described as more meaningful than words. "It's always worth it when your honest effort is appreciated. We work for the audience, and when they enjoy our content, that's the best reward," he added. Released on July 10, director Murali Kishor Abburi's Lenin, starring Akhil Akkineni and Bhagyashri Borse, has enjoyed a strong box-office run, collecting over ₹61 crore in its first three days and moving towards blockbuster status. Akhil said satisfaction came from learning that the film's distributors had recovered investments.