

BJP MP accuses Punjab Police of custodial torture of Sikh youth

■ New Delhi

BJP's Rajya Sabha MP Tarun Chugh on Friday urged the National Human Rights Commission to take suo motu cognisance of the alleged custodial torture of a Sikh youth, who waved a black flag at a programme of the Punjab chief minister.

Chugh requested the human rights body to send an independent fact-finding team to the village where the incident took place and the police station concerned, and direct registration of an FIR against the officers involved, including the deputy superintendent of police.

He also sought high-level security and medical assistance for the victim and his family, alleging that they face serious threats from the State machinery.

In a letter to National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) member Priyank Kanoongo, Chugh, who is also the BJP national headquarters in-charge, alleged



BJP's Rajya Sabha MP Tarun Chugh

that a local youth, Mohanjeet Singh, was arrested and subjected to brutal custodial torture after he waved a black flag at Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann's programme in Sheron village on September 2 to protest against the AAP Government's handling of drug menace.

Singh was subjected to brutality "reminiscent of medieval-era torture", Chugh said, adding that he was stripped naked and beaten in custody.

The youth's thighs were cut with a blade, salt was rubbed onto his bleeding wounds,

and he was subjected to repeated electric shocks, the MP claimed.

"I am writing to urgently and immediately draw your attention to a deeply disturbing and horrific incident of alleged State-sponsored custodial torture in Punjab, which has completely shaken the conscience of our democratic society," Chugh wrote.

"The brutal treatment allegedly meted out to a young citizen by Punjab Police not only violates fundamental human rights but also represents a dark day for democracy and the rule of law in the state," he added.

Quoting the youth's revelation to the media, Chugh said that when the youngster was being stripped and assaulted, police officials made a video call.

"The officials allegedly showed the youth's naked, bloodied, and agonised condition to the caller. If true, this would indicate the direct involvement and sadistic complicity of the highest executive office of the State machinery," he said.

The BJP leader also alleged that police officials forcibly opened the youth's "joora" (hair knot) and pulled his beard and hair, describing it as an attack on his Sikh identity and religious sentiments.

In addition to this, a DSP-rank officer tortured and humiliated the youth's elderly mother and sister, the BJP leader said.

"We cannot allow our State to become a police State, where young people are subjected to torture and humiliation for raising their voice against drugs," he said, demanding action.

Karnataka CM Shivakumar seeks Union Govt's help on farm loan waiver, defends Parks Bill withdrawal

■ Bengaluru

Karnataka Chief Minister DK Shivakumar on Friday urged the Union Govt to waive farm loans in the State amid the drought situation and called on BJP leaders to join him in pressing the demand in New Delhi.

The CM also defended his Government's decision to withdraw the contentious Parks Bill, which allows five per cent of park and garden land to be used for public infrastructure and utility projects, saying the move was meant to facilitate a debate and make people aware of its objectives. He criticised the BJP for claiming victory over the Bill's withdrawal, calling the party "anti-development" and saying it was responsible for any "curse" facing Bengaluru. "You have seen the BJP and JD(S)' politics. There was no discussion on farmers and the drought situation during the recent legislature session. That's the reason the special session has been called," Shivakumar said ahead of his



Karnataka Chief Minister DK Shivakumar

visit to drought-affected areas in Bagalkote and Vijayanagar districts.

Speaking to reporters, he said BJP and JD(S) legislators had themselves expressed displeasure over the lack of an opportunity to discuss the drought situation during the recently concluded monsoon session, adding that ruling Congress legislators had voiced similar concerns.

"I want to help them. The central Government should also provide funds. There is a need to take an all-party delegation. BJP state president BY Vijayendra has demanded a farm loan waiver. The central Government should take responsibility for the farm

loan waiver, as the prime minister himself said that this is a drought," he said, urging Vijayendra and Leader of Opposition R Ashoka to join him in Delhi to press the demand, since the union Government had control over the matter.

The State legislature's special session has been convened from September 21 to 23 to discuss the drought situation, the related agrarian crisis and the Kasturirangan report on the proposed Western Ghats eco-sensitive zone.

Responding to Opposition criticism branding him "Utturn Shivakumar" over the Bill's withdrawal, the CM denied doing any U-turn.

"Why should I do a U-turn? I would have explained the Bill to them in the Assembly, but they did not participate in the discussion during its passage," he said.

The Karnataka Cabinet decided to withdraw the Bill on Thursday. It had sought to amend the Karnataka Government Parks (Preservation) Act, 1975, to permit alienation of up to five per cent of park land - through sale or lease, subject to the ceiling and other safeguards - for public utility and infrastructure projects.

Shivakumar said he would release documents on what happened to parks during the BJP Governments of BS Yediyurappa and Basavaraj Bommai. "Let there be a discussion. I don't have anything that Lalbagh land should be used for (the tunnel road project). We have thought about other places as well. But what else can be done? Give us an alternative," he said, recalling that the BJP had also opposed the steel bridge project proposed by the previous Siddaramaiah Government.

Govt trying to build consensus on restricting DJs, says Fadnavis

■ Pune

Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis on Friday said the State Government is working to build a consensus on restricting the use of high-decibel DJ systems during festivals and called for a return to traditional ways of celebrating.

Speaking to reporters on the sidelines of a programme in Pune, Fadnavis condemned the assault on an activist in the city and said he had spoken to the Pune police commissioner and there appeared to be broad agreement among stakeholders on curbing excessive sound systems that inconvenience people. Vidyandand Bapat, an activist who has been vocal against the use of DJs and loudspeakers during festivals and was campaigning against noise pollution during Ganeshotsav, was assaulted on Thursday while speaking to a television news channel on Tilak Road in Pune.

"I have already condemned yesterday's incident. There can be different points of view, and people can be on either side, but violence is not right. Everyone



Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis

should put forward their views," he said.

Festivals acquire greater significance when celebrated traditionally, but practices developed over the years cannot be eliminated only through legal action, he noted.

"Law has to be used; otherwise such practices cannot be stopped. But along with that, it is more important to take people into confidence and find a way forward," Fadnavis said.

He further likened the vibration of high-powered DJ setups to an "earthquake", but said that a Statewide policy on the issue would

not be framed immediately, as the Government was first pursuing discussions with stakeholders.

"Our experience is that wherever discussions have been held, 90 to 95 per cent of people agree. Therefore, this has to happen through discussion and, once that is done, a policy can be framed and an order issued," he said.

The process will take time, but the Government's direction was clear, he said.

"The direction is clear. We have to move towards traditional celebrations or at least move away from the very high level of noise pollution," the chief minister said.

9 newborns evacuated as fire erupts in Maharashtra hospital

■ Chhatrapati Sambhajinagar

Nine newborns were shifted after a fire broke out in the NICU (Neonatal Intensive Care Unit) of a private hospital in Maharashtra's Chhatrapati Sambhajinagar in the early hours of Friday, the hospital administration said.

The incident occurred at Asian Hospital located in the Jalna Road area of the city in the State's Marathwada region, officials said.

Nine babies, in need of intensive or specialised



medical care, were in the NICU when the staff noticed smoke coming out of an AC unit, said Dr Shoaib Hashmi,

who runs the hospital. "It was a small incident, and nothing untoward happened. As a precaution, our

team evacuated the infants along with the patients in the neighbouring general ward," he said. The general ward patients were brought back later, he said.

The doctor said that the newborns were shifted to other hospitals with the consent of their families.

"The hospital team took immediate action and brought the situation under control. There were injuries in the incident. The hospital has been cleaned and is functioning as per its routine," he said.

When contacted, the in-charge officer at Jawaharnagar police station said, "A fire incident was reported to us. There were no injuries or casualties in the incident."

About ten days ago, three newborns died, and 36 were rescued after a devastating fire broke out in the NICU of the District Women's Hospital in Amravati in the neighbouring Vidarbha region, prompting the State Government to order a high-level inquiry into the tragedy.

JD(U) opposes renewal of Ganga treaty with Bangladesh, cites Bihar's interests

■ Patna

The ruling JD(U) in Bihar on Friday opposed the renewal of the Ganga water treaty with Bangladesh, saying the agreement conflicts with the State's interests.

JD(U) State president Umesh Kushwaha said the party's stand was in line with the position taken by former chief minister Nitish Kumar, asserting that the concerns of the state's people must be taken into account if the treaty is renewed.

"Our leader Nitish Kumar has always spoken against the treaty. Now, as the term

of the agreement is about to end, our stand is clear that it should not be renewed as it hampers the interests of people of Bihar," Kushwaha told reporters at the party headquarters.

The Ganga water treaty, also known as the Farakka water-sharing treaty, is a 30-year agreement signed by India and Bangladesh on December 12, 1996, to regulate the sharing of dry-season water flows at the Farakka Barrage.

Kushwaha blamed the then Bihar Government led by Lalu Prasad and the Deve Gowda-led Centre for allegedly failing to take into account



JD(U) State president Umesh Kushwaha

the concerns of the people of the State while the treaty was signed.

He said silt accumulation on the Indian side of the Farakka Barrage leads to excess water which, when

diverted to other streams, causes flooding and destruction in Bihar.

"The State has been braving the vagaries of deluge for decades, but now we are committed to putting

the concerns of people of Bihar on the international stage," Kushwaha said.

He also announced that he, JD(U) working president Sanjay Kumar Jha and other party leaders would undertake a "Nitish Samvad Yatra" from Saturday.

The yatra will begin in Buxar and cover 12 districts along the Ganga before culminating in Katiहार, Kushwaha said.

"The route of Nitish Samvad Yatra coincides with the trajectory of the Ganga in Bihar. We will talk with people, take stock of the situation and their grievances," he said.

Farmers body urges MSP law, announces statewide protest against Mekedatu Dam from September 20

■ New Delhi/Chennai

The Coordination Committee of All Farmers' Associations of Tamil Nadu on Friday announced a massive five-day Statewide campaign from September 20 to protest the Karnataka Government's attempt to construct a dam across the Cauvery at Mekedatu.

President of the farmers' body, PR Pandian, made this announcement following a detailed, five-hour meeting between a farmers' delegation and Union Minister of Power Manohar Lal Khattar



File Photo

in Gurugram. Accusing Karnataka's political leadership of pushing the Mekedatu project for political gain despite local opposition, Pandian stated that farmers will seek an audience with the prime minister, if neces-

sary, to press their demands after the campaign that will start at Poompuhar.

While speaking to reporters, he strongly objected to the proposed dam across the River Cauvery, terming the Detailed Project Report (DPR) submitted by Karnataka to the Central Water Commission (CWC) as "fraudulent" and legally invalid. He noted the DPR lacks the requisite consent from Tamil Nadu, Puducherry, and the Cauvery Water Management Authority (CWMA).

Urging the Central Government to deny any

environmental or forest clearance for the project, Pandian warned that the dam would be detrimental to farmers in both Tamil Nadu and Karnataka. He stated that Karnataka farmers acknowledge that the dam would offer them no benefits due to its location deep in forested areas downstream of the Krishnarajasagara (KRS) dam.

"Building a dam at Mekedatu to store water under the guise of drinking water requirements during scarcity periods is unacceptable and will only ruin agriculture," he stated.

The tourism department said Goa attracts visitors year-round and is seeking to promote the coastal State as a year-round destination by showcasing monsoon, hinterland, heritage, cultural, and experiential tourism. The average duration of stay is approximately nine days for international tourists and three to four days for domestic visitors, it said.

Tourism is a major contributor to Goa's economy, with its direct contribution estimated at 16.43 per cent of the state's Gross Domestic Product, according to the Government.



and 1,69,005 international tourist arrivals in 2022.

The number of domestic tourists increased to 81,75,460 in 2023 and 99,41,285 in 2024, before reaching 1,02,84,608 in 2025, it said.

International arrivals also

rose from 4,52,702 in 2023 to 4,67,911 in 2024 and 5,17,802 in 2025. In the first seven months of 2026, Goa recorded 59,01,769 domestic and 2,36,113 international tourist arrivals, taking the total to more than 61.37 lakh.

Release Nagarjuna Sagar water or I will march again: KTR warns Telangana Govt

■ Hyderabad

BRS Working President K T Rama Rao said he would undertake a padayatra from Kodad to Haliya with thousands of farmers if the Telangana Government failed to announce a schedule for releasing water into the Nagarjuna Sagar Left Canal by September 14.

Alleging that the Congress Government was withholding water from the Left Canal despite around 180 TMC being available in the Nagarjuna Sagar project, Rama Rao, also known as KTR, said farmers were anxious about their crops.

"If the Government does not announce a clear water-release schedule by September 14, I will personally undertake a padayatra from Kodad to Haliya with thousands of farmers," he said, demanding that the Government immediately announce a detailed plan specifying when water would reach farmers.

He recalled that his father and BRS president K Chandrasekhara Rao had undertaken a similar padayatra (foot march) from Kodad to Haliya in Nalgonda district in 2003 in support of farmers dependent on the Left Canal, successfully pressuring the



BRS Working President KT Rama Rao

then Government to resolve their water woes. He said he was prepared to launch a similar agitation now.

Addressing an event in Miryalguda in Nalgonda district on Thursday evening, Rama Rao said the Nagarjuna Sagar command area, which had flourished under the BRS Government and contributed significantly to Telangana's agricultural growth, was facing a severe crisis, leaving farmers across the Left Canal command area uncertain about water for their crops.

He attacked the Congress Government over unfulfilled poll promises on farm loan waivers, financial assistance and crop bonuses.

Countering Rama Rao, Congress MLA Beerla Ilaiiah told reporters on Friday that irrigation projects in Nalgonda district, including modernisation works on the Left Canal, had been ignored under the previous BRS regime, and that people would not trust the BRS even if Rama Rao undertook a padayatra or similar agitation.

Ilaiiah said the State Government was prioritising drinking water supply in view of deficient rainfall attributed to El Nino and alleged that Rama Rao was resorting to agitations as he was "unable to digest the popularity of the Congress Government", which had recently completed 1,000 days in office.

Flood-like situation in 5 Bihar districts as rivers breach danger mark

■ Patna

Five districts in Bihar have been experiencing a flood-like situation as several rivers flowed above their danger marks in the State following incessant rainfall in the upper riparian nation of Nepal and in the neighbouring State of Jharkhand.

With the swelled Ganga, Gandak, Kosi, Burhi Gandak, Bagmati, Punpun and Ghaghra rivers inundating several places, Chief Minister Samrat Choudhary conducted an aerial survey of the affected areas on Friday and reviewed relief and rescue operations.

In a post on X, the chief minister said, "I instructed officials to take swift and effective action to ensure that the public in the affected areas receives all possible assistance promptly, faces no difficulties, and that the safety of lives and property is ensured."



EDITORIAL

Make children's online protection rules foolproof

With the pernicious influence of social media on children worsening by the day, as can be seen in their odd behaviours and rush to act like adults, aping wrong precedents, there has been a cry by certain groups in society, in many countries, to keep the children off the social media. Parents, educators, and psychologists have for some time been much chary of the social media weaving its negative influence on children by exposing them to cyberbullying, unrealistic comparisons, inferior and aggressive complexities, slowly leading them into cove of anxiety and depressing. The children thus get far removed from the realities and real-life situations, even accessing inappropriate content such as gambling, drug abuse, pornography, or even fundamentalism. Many countries are rolling out or contemplating either total ban or curbs on children's access to social media so as to ensure the online well-being of children. Australian government has tabled a bill in Parliament to ban children below the age of 16 from accessing several social media platforms. Said to be the first of its kind in the world, the draft bill proposes fines of up to A\$50 million (\$33 million) on platforms if they violate the age restriction protocols. It is said that about two-thirds of Australian children aged 14-17 are found to be exposed to inappropriate internet content. Of course, Elon Musk terms the move as "a backdoor way to control access to the internet by all Australians." The move will certainly hit hard social media platforms such as TikTok, Facebook, Snapchat, Reddit, X, and Instagram. Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese said the law would not allow any exemptions for children below 18 even with parental consent.

- Trump 2.0 Has Already The World On The Edge France allows social media access to children below 15 only with parental consent. The European Union's Digital Services Act (DSA) bans ads targeting children aged 17 and under. Facebook and Instagram are under probe over allegations that their algorithmic systems could induce "addictive behaviours." This shows governments are empathising with the concerns of parents when it comes to supporting their children's wellbeing online. Also Read - Tragedy in Tirupati: A Failure in Crowd Management and Safety Protocols India does have laws that do not allow accessing personal data of children below 18 and tracking their online behaviours. The government has released the draft Digital Personal Data Protection (DPDP) Rules, 2025 for public views. Since August 24, 2017, when the Supreme Court of India adjudicated that the right to privacy is protected under Article 21 and Part III of the Indian Constitution, it took seven years for the government to set about enforcing the fundamental right in electronic information arena, too. Colonial mindset stumbling block for Speed of Business The government proposes mandatory consent from parents instead of a total ban on children's access to social media.

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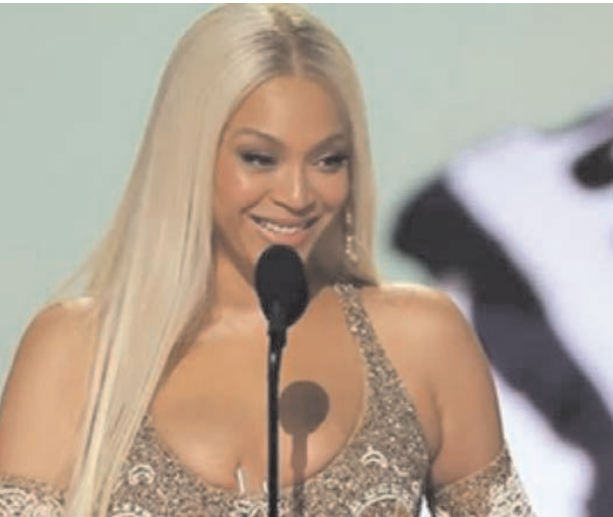
A hand-drawn illustration of a hand writing on a notepad, with a newspaper clipping titled 'TRICOLLOUR ESTATE' and a spiral notebook in the foreground.

Mohan Babu, Manoj at Rangareddy



Ranga Reddy, February 3 (Bharat Samachar) Actors Manchu Mohan Babu and Manchu Manoj reached the Rangareddy Collectorate office. Mohan Babu's family members attended the Collector's inquiry regarding the property dispute. "What actually happened: Mohan Babu complained to the Rangareddy District Collector that Manchu Manoj had encroached on his acquired house and properties. A few days ago, he sent a letter through his representative, seeking protection under the Parents, Elderly, Care and Maintenance Act. The letter stated that he had illegally entered the house where he was staying in Jalpalli village of Balapur mandal and was demanding his properties. Mohan Babu said that no one has the right to his own property and demanded that his properties be handed over to him. Notices to Manchu Manoj: Responding to Mohan Babu's complaint, the revenue officials sent notices to Manchu Manoj a week ago under the said act. Manoj also came to the collectorate in Kongarakal on January 19 to answer these. He appeared before Additional Collector Pratima Singh for questioning. Collector C. Narayana Reddy said that Mohan Babu's representative came to the collectorate last month and complained about his sons and properties. He said that notices have been sent to Manoj through the tribunal office to conduct an inquiry based on the issues mentioned in the complaint. How are they making a film with hundreds of crores: Manchu Manoj clarified to the media that day that there is no property dispute between his father and brothers. He accused his elder brother Manchu Vishnu and his father Mohan Babu of obstructing and playing a drama because they opposed the injustice being done to students in their educational institutions and trusts. He questioned how his father and brothers, who say they do not have money, are making films with a budget of hundreds of crores. He said that he is fighting for his family members, students and relatives, not for property.

Grammy 2025: In a First, Beyonce Wins Album of the Year; Full List of Winners Revealed



Hyderabad: The 67th Annual Grammy Awards held at Crypto.com Arena in Los Angeles on February 3, marked the year's biggest musical celebration. It was an unforgettable night with many singers winning their firsts. The show was hosted by Trevor Noah for the 5th consecutive year. Beyonce stood out with her first win with the coveted Album of the Year Award for her album Cowboy Carter. Accepting the prestigious honour, Beyonce, visibly moved, expressed her gratitude to her team who contributed to the album. She said: "I just feel very full and very honoured. It's been many, many years." In another historic achievement, Beyonce became the first Black woman in 50 years to win the Best Country Duo/Group Performance at the Grammys 2025, for her collaboration with Miley Cyrus on 'MOST WANTED' from Cowboy Carter.

Shahid Kapoor-Pooja Hegde Starrer Sees Minimal Growth



Shahid Kapoor and Pooja Hegde's much-anticipated film Deva, directed by Malayalam filmmaker Rosshan Andrews in his Hindi debut, opened on January 31 to mixed reviews. Despite the buzz, the film showed only a slight improvement in its second day of earnings. Deva collected ₹11.37 crore over its opening weekend, with ₹5.5 crore on Day 1 and an estimated ₹5.87 crore on Day 2, according to Sacnilk. Also Read - Deva Review: Shahid Kapoor's Mass Appeal Steals the Show in this Reworked Version of Mumbai Police The movie, which follows ACP Dev Ambre (played by Shahid Kapoor), a hot-headed cop who loses his memory while investigating a murder, managed to secure a 5.84% occupancy for morning shows, 11.28% in the afternoon, and 14.20% in the evening on its second day. Though the action drama faced stiff competition from Sky Force, it still earned ₹10.31 crore gross on its opening day, with ₹6.82 crore from domestic collections and ₹3.49 crore from overseas markets. On its second day, the film grossed ₹6.60 crore in India and ₹10.10 crore worldwide, as per trade reports. Also Read - Shahid Kapoor Showcases U&I's Latest Offerings in Dynamic Digital Ad Film Deva is an adaptation of Rosshan Andrews' 2013 Malayalam film Mumbai Police, with several key changes, particularly in the film's climax. Pooja Hegde stars as Dev's girlfriend, Divya Sathaye, a journalist who is central to the plot. While the film has received mixed reviews, Shahid Kapoor's performance has garnered praise for his portrayal of the complex lead character. Also Read - 'Deva' director keeps climax a mystery for actors to enhance suspense Ahead of the release, Shahid Kapoor shared a heartfelt message on social media, reflecting on the

intense effort that went into making the film. He described Deva as a culmination of a year's worth of hard work, with his heart, soul, and years of experience infused into the project. "My heart, my soul. My work, my dedication. My love for acting. My affection for my audience. My years of experience, my inner creative child—everything is in this DEVA," Shahid wrote. As Deva continues its box-office journey, it will be interesting to see how it performs during the rest of the weekend amidst the ongoing competition. Bollywood actor Sonam Kapoor paid a heartfelt tribute to late fashion designer Rohit Bal on Saturday at Le Meridien in Gurugram. The event Blenders Pride X FDCI Fashion Tour 2025 was held in memory of the legendary designer, who passed away in November 2024 at the age of 63. Kapoor walked the ramp probably for the last time for the ace designer in his collection. Kapoor took to the ramp in a stunning ivory outfit by Bal. The actor broke down in tears in the poignant celebration of Bal's contribution to fashion and style. She fought back tears as she folded her arms to mark her respect for the man she referred to as Gudda. Bal, renowned for his ability to blend traditional Indian craftsmanship with contemporary designs, was not just a designer but a mentor and friend to many in the fashion industry, including Kapoor. Her emotional walk showcases how deeply Bal affected those he worked with or knew personally. Talking to a news agency, Sonam said: "I am so happy to be here for Gudda. I have been privileged to wear his clothes many times and have had the honour of walking for him. It feels wonderful to do probably his last show," adding, "He embraced the Indian aesthetic so beautifully, and that makes it timeless and elegant." Celebrating Bal's legacy, a special tribute segment was organised featuring sixty-three prominent figures from diverse fields, including filmmaker Madhur Bhandarkar, fashion designer JJ Valaya, and actors Eesha Gupta, Rahul Dev, and Mughda Godse. Bollywood star Saif Ali Khan's son Ibrahim Ali Khan will be making his debut digitally just like his contemporaries such as Junaid Khan and Agastya Nanda, among many others, with the romantic drama christened 'Nadaanian', where he will be seen paired alongside actor Khushi Kapoor. Directed by debutant Shauna Gautam, the film also stars Mahima Chaudhary, Suniel Shetty, Dia Mirza, Jugal Hansraj. The young adult romantic drama is about Piya, a bold and spirited girl from South Delhi, and Arjun, a determined middle-class boy from Noida. As their two completely different worlds collide, they embark on a journey filled with mischief, heart, and the sweet messiness of first love. Talking about the film, producers of Dharmatic Entertainment share: "Love has always been at the heart of our storytelling, and with 'Nadaanian', we're celebrating it in its purest, most youthful form." The film will be released on the streaming giant Netflix. However, the release date is still under wraps. "This film introduces a fresh, dynamic pairing with Ibrahim and Khushi, while also marking the exciting debut of Ibrahim. It's a story of connection, chaos and relationships that perfectly capture the essence of young love. Netflix, with its unparalleled reach, is the ideal platform to bring this vibrant and young romantic drama to audiences around the world." Making her directorial debut is Shauna Gautam, who was also the assistant director on 'Rocky Aur Rani Kii Prem Kahani'.

X reactivates Swara Bhasker's account

Hyderabad: Pop sensation Charli XCX is at the top of her game. At the 2025 Grammy ceremony, Charli took home three Grammy Awards: Best Dance Pop Recording for Von Dutch, Best Electronic/Dance Album for Brat, and Best Recording Package as the art director of the album's visual aesthetic. Talking of Brat, the album was one of the most talked about records of the year, receiving a total of eight Grammy nominations. The album got nominated in two of the most vouched-for categories: Album of the Year and Best Pop Solo Performance. Before creating this major milestone in her musical career, the singer showcased her immense talent at the 2025 Grammys with her debut performance. She delivered an electrifying gig at the venue Crypti.com Arena prior to the show. Charli had the audience tapping their feet joining her on the beats of the song 360, a Grammy-nominated song from her album titled Brat. Charli has been active in the music industry for more than a decade now. She has with time only proved her mettle. Her standout moment came after she made an X post in support of 2024 Presidential candidate Kamala Harris. In the summer of 2024, referring to her album, she humorously posted "Kamala IS brat" on X. The tweet gained traction with her album coming into focus. But did you know, the pop icon has Indian roots? Charli, born as Charlotte Emma Aitchison is half Indian from her mother's side. Born to a half-Gujarati Indian mother, Shameera, and a Scottish father, Jon Aitchison, the different worlds shaped her perspective heavily. Her mother grew up in Uganda but had to leave the country with her family in the 1970s after then-President Idi Amin ordered the expulsion of the Asian population. Opening up to an international magazine, she said: "I grew up in two halves, I suppose, adding, "When I would go and visit my mum's family, I felt very Indian. It was all the classic scenes of my nani and bappa cooking with Bollywood films playing in the background and everybody speaking in Gujarati." However, her world at home with her



father's side of the family was mostly white. This difference in cultures left the singer feeling like an outsider in both worlds, a sentiment familiar to many mixed-race individuals. "I never quite felt like I fit into either world," she concluded. Two images from two tweets have been marked as 'copyright infringements'. Basis which my X account is locked / disabled, I can't access it and permanent suspension has been approved by your teams," she wrote. The actor, known for films such as "Nil Battey Sannata", "Tanu Weds Manu" franchise, and "Veere Di Wedding", had then shared a screenshot of the "email" she received from the team of X on Instagram and criticised the decision as "ridiculous" and "untenable". The next day, in an Instagram post, Bhasker said the email that was sent "claiming suspension was fake". "When I clicked those links my account got hacked... This is the fake email ID... Real email from X. And it's super scary because the fake link took me to a proper ditto lookalike site of X with the logo and everything and I even filled out an appeal form that asked for govt. ID !!!" Then I got this email which alerted me that the account had been hacked because I never delegated my account or granted access to anyone!!" she wrote alongside the screenshots of the mails. The upcoming film Loveyapa, starring Bollywood superstar Aamir Khan's son Junaid Khan and late actor Sridevi's younger daughter Khushi Kapoor in the lead roles, is all set to hit the silver screens on February 7, just ahead of Valentine's Day. The romantic comedy-drama marks the theatrical debuts of both the star kids. The movie, directed by Advait Chandan, promises a thrilling blend of love, chaos, and drama. It delves into the complexity of modern relationships and provides a comedic perspective on what happens when the idea of a perfect romance is shattered. The trailer, which was released a few weeks ago, begins with a lighthearted story filled with humour, highlighting the undeniable chemistry between the lead characters, Gaurav (played by Junaid Khan) and Baani (portrayed by Khushi Kapoor). The scenario begins with Junaid's character sitting with Khushi's father (played by Ashutosh Rana), who pushes the couple to switch phones and prove the depth of their love. This seemingly harmless plea sets off a dramatic maelstrom of secrets, misunderstandings, and startling disclosures. As Gaurav and Baani switch phones, a series of hidden truths emerge, entangling them in a web of cryptic messages and past relationships that put their trust and communication to the test. The trailer depicts the couple's emotional reaction to this discovery as they negotiate the highs and lows of modern love. As the pair deals with the consequences of their phone swap, the video ends on a funny note, warning viewers about the dangers of exchanging phones, and highlighting how technology can both connect and disrupt relationships. The film offers a timely reflection on trust and communication in today's fast-paced digital world. Loveyapa is a remake of the 2022 Tamil hit Love Today, directed by Pradeep Ranganathan. The original starred Pradeep Ranganathan and Ivana, receiving widespread acclaim for its engaging plot and relatable themes. Other actors in Loveyapa include Grusha Kapoor, Ashutosh Rana, Tanvika Parikar, Kiku Sharda, Devishi Mandan, Aaditya Kulshreshtha, Nikhil Mehta, Jason Tham, Yunus Khan, Yuktam Kholsa, and Kunj Anand Kalesh. unaid And Khushi's Previous Projects Loveyapa marks Junaid Khan's debut in the romantic comedy genre after his role in Maharaj. Khushi Kapoor, on the other hand, steps onto the big screen for the first time following her OTT debut in The Archies. Hollywood couple Blake Lively and Ryan Reynolds are trying to silence actor-director Justin Baldoni, who has been accused of sexual harassment by Blake. Blake and Ryan Reynolds told a federal judge

PMU Faces Scrutiny Over Inflated Procurement Rates for Welfare Student Amenities

Children's Life at Stake?

HYDERABAD

Serious questions have emerged over a major procurement order placed by the Project Management Unit (PMU) for various amenities meant for seven lakh welfare students. Market enquiries reveal that the rates accepted by the PMU stand substantially higher than prevailing market prices, with some items showing mark-ups approaching 100 percent. Critics argue that the arrangement risks both financial loss to the public exchequer and potential harm to the health of underprivileged students who depend on these supplies. According to details circulating among observers tracking government tenders, the order covers a range of commodities including pulses, legumes and cleaning materials.

A comparison of accepted base prices against Hyderabad wholesale market rates highlights the scale of the discrepancy. Red gram dal, listed under the DCA-Hyderabad benchmark series, carries an accepted base price of Rs 159 per kg against a market price of Rs 80. Green gram dal stands at Rs 148 per kg versus Rs 100 in the market. Black gram dal is priced at Rs 140 against Rs 100, while Bengal gram dal is accepted at Rs 113 compared with Rs 80. Whole pulses and legumes show similar gaps. Green gram (whole moong) is accepted at Rs 108 per kg while the market rate is Rs 90. Bengal gram (whole chana) is listed at Rs 100 against Rs 70. Black gram (whole urad) carries an accepted price of Rs

CATEGORY B – VOLATILE COMMODITIES (BASE PRICE, MARKET-LINKED)					
DAL (PULSES – SPLIT)					
Sl. No.	Item	DCA – Hyderabad Benchmark Series	Unit	Accepted Base Price (Rs./unit)	Market Price (Rs./unit)
1	Red Gram Dal (Toor Dal)	Tur Dal - Hyderabad Wholesale (Direct)	Kg.	159	80
2	Green Gram Dal (Moong Dal)	Moong Dal - Hyderabad Wholesale (Direct)	Kg.	148	100
3	Black Gram Dal (Urad Dal)	Urad Dal - Hyderabad Wholesale (Direct)	Kg.	140	100
4	Bengal Gram Dal (Chana Dal)	Gram Dal - Hyderabad Wholesale (Direct)	Kg.	113	80
WHOLE PULSES & LEGUMES					
Sl. No.	Item	DCA – Hyderabad Benchmark Series	Unit	Accepted Base Price (Rs./unit)	Market Price (Rs./unit)
1	Green Gram (Whole Moong)	Moong Dal - Hyderabad Wholesale (Proxy)	Kg.	108	90
2	Bengal Gram (Whole Chana)	Gram - Hyderabad Wholesale (Direct)	Kg.	100	70
3	Black Gram (Whole Urad)	Urad Dal - Hyderabad Wholesale (Proxy)	Kg.	98	60
4	Cowpeas (Alasandalu)	Gram - Hyderabad Wholesale (Proxy)	Kg.	98	60
5	Bobbarlu (Black Eyed peas)	Gram - Hyderabad Wholesale (Proxy)	Kg.	105	70
6	Horse Gram (Ulavalu)	Gram - Hyderabad Wholesale (Proxy)	Kg.	70	40
CLEANING MATERIALS (UNBRANDED)					
Sl. No.	Item	DCA – Hyderabad Benchmark Series	Unit	Accepted Base Price (Rs./unit)	Market Price (Rs./unit)
1	Bleaching powder	—	Kg.	70	15
2	Phenyl	—	Litre	60	20

98 versus Rs 60. Cowpeas (alasandalu) and bobbarlu (black-eyed peas) are both accepted near Rs 98-105 against market levels of Rs 60-70. Horse gram (ulavalu) is accepted at Rs 70 per kg while the market price is Rs 40. Cleaning materials present even starker differences. Bleaching powder is accepted at Rs 70 per kg against a market rate of Rs 15. Phenyl is listed at

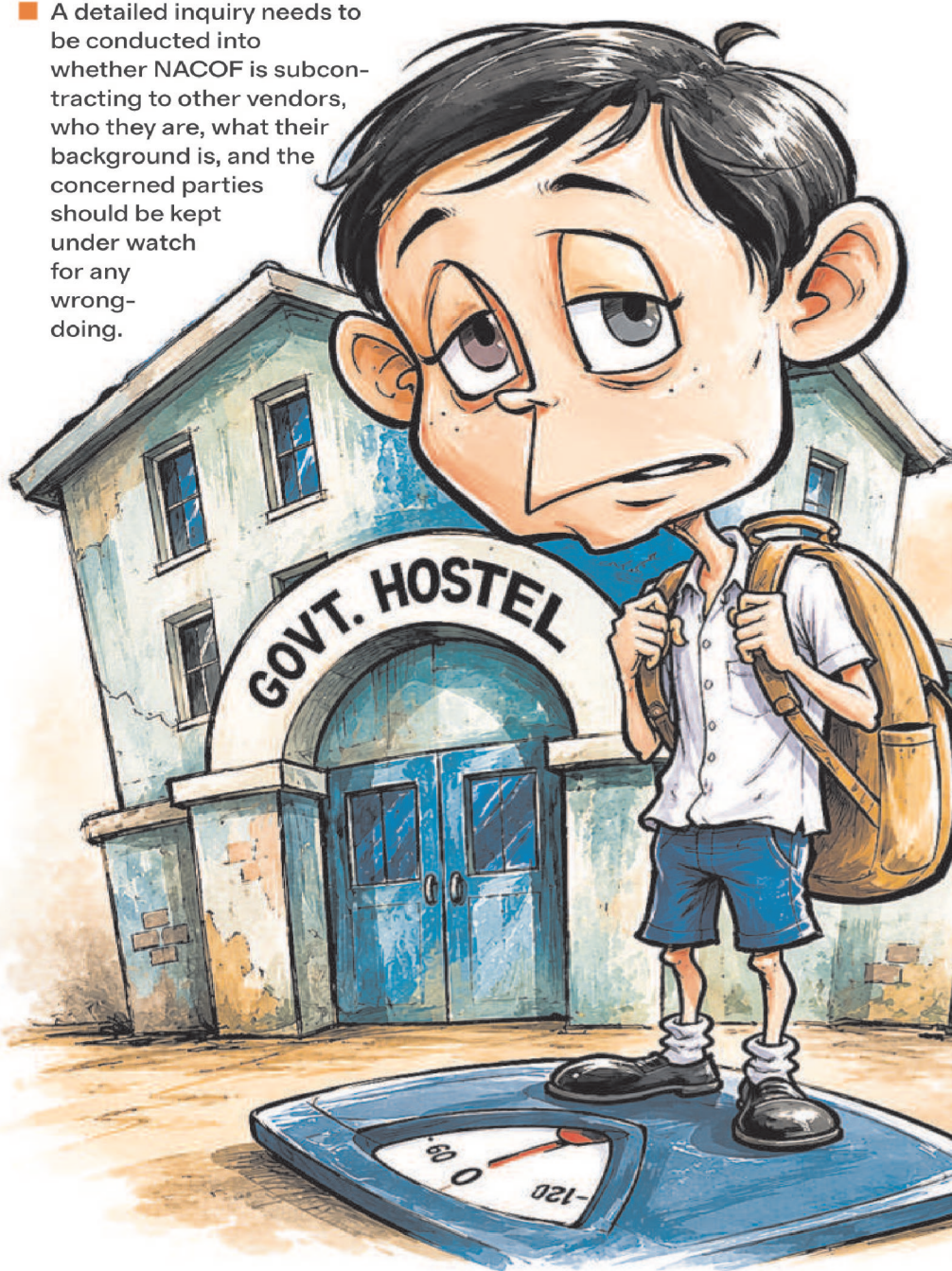
Rs 60 per litre compared with Rs 20 in the open market.

These figures form part of Category B volatile commodities that are supposed to be linked to market benchmarks, raising concerns about how the accepted base prices were arrived at. Observers note that for branded items the selected supplier, NACOF, is offering rates only 2 to 5 percent below the

TRP rate. Industry practice indicates that wholesale purchases of this scale should normally secure discounts of at least 30 percent below TRP. The limited margin raises doubts about the competitiveness of the tender process.

A further issue centres on the tender conditions themselves. Documents examined by those following the matter do not lay down clear specifications or specimens for all non-branded loose items. Without precise quality benchmarks, there is a heightened risk that inferior materials could enter the supply chain. Given that the commodities will reach seven lakh poor students, any compromise on quality could have direct implications for their health and nutrition. Additional questions surround the credentials of the supplier. NACOF is reported to be a defaulter in another wing of the government. How a firm carrying such a status secured consideration for a large-scale supply contract under the PMU remains a point of public interest. Transparency advocates argue that past performance and compliance records should form part of any rigorous evaluation. Calls have grown for stronger safeguards. Proper quality certification by recognised standard institutions is seen as essential, alongside frequent physical verification of quantities delivered. Without these checks, the system remains vulnerable to both substandard goods and short supply.

■ A detailed inquiry needs to be conducted into whether NACOF is subcontracting to other vendors, who they are, what their background is, and the concerned parties should be kept under watch for any wrongdoing.

Revanth Inspects Hakimpeta Edn Hub
Stresses Coordination, Quality, and Sustainable Water Management

HYDERABAD

Telangana Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy conducted a detailed on-site inspection of the ongoing construction works at the ambitious Hakimpeta (Hakimpet/Hakeempet) Education Hub in Dudyal mandal of Vikarabad district, located in his home Kodangal assembly constituency. The visit underscored the state government's priority to develop integrated professional education infrastructure outside Hyderabad and expand access for students from rural and neighbouring areas. During the inspection, the Chief Minister closely examined the progress on key components of the multi-institutional campus.

These include the Young India Integrated Residential School, government medical, nursing, physiotherapy and paramedical colleges, a 430-bedded hospital, hostels, and other supporting structures. Officials



accompanying him provided updates on civil works, academic buildings, internal infrastructure and related facilities that form part of the sprawling education hub. The Hakimpeta Education Hub is envisioned as an integrated higher education and professional training campus bringing multiple institutions under one

umbrella. Once completed, it is expected to strengthen medical, paramedical, nursing and allied health education while easing pressure on facilities concentrated in the state capital.

The project aligns with the broader "Young India" initiatives of the Congress government, which include residential schools across con-

stituencies aimed at providing quality education with modern amenities to students from diverse backgrounds. Revanth Reddy directed officials to ensure seamless coordination among all departments and agencies involved in the various construction packages.

Uttam Seeks Chhattisgarh NOC
for Sammakka Sarakka Barrage

Meets Chief Minister Vishnu Deo Sai in Delhi; presses for clearance to enable full reservoir storage

NEW DELHI

Telangana Irrigation, Food and Civil Supplies Minister Capt. N. Uttam Kumar Reddy met Chhattisgarh Chief Minister Shri Vishnu Deo Sai ji in New Delhi on September 3 and requested early issuance of a No Objection Certificate (NOC) for the Sammakka Sarakka barrage, officially known as the Sammakka Sagar Project. He sought Chhattisgarh's cooperation to enable storage up to the barrage's full reservoir level and realise its intended irrigation benefits.

During the meeting, Uttam Kumar Reddy assured the Chief Minister that Telangana would pay full compensation for the land and houses in Chhattisgarh that would be submerged because of the barrage. He emphasised Te-



langana's readiness to meet the compensation requirement and work with the neighbouring State to resolve the outstanding issues.

"Telangana will pay full compensation for the land and houses that will be sub-

merged in Chhattisgarh. We request the State Government to issue the NOC at the earliest to enable us to store water fully in the barrage," the Minister said.

Remembering Dr. Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan on His Birthday

A TEACHER'S ETERNAL GIFT

HYDERABAD

As the soft light of September 5 dawned across India once more, classrooms filled with flowers, songs and quiet gratitude. On this day the nation pauses to honour its teachers, and at the heart of that observance stands a man whose life itself became a living classroom. Dr. Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan, philosopher, scholar and former President of India, was born on this date in 1888. His story continues to move hearts because it is rooted in simplicity, shaped by quiet struggle and crowned by an uncommon humility.

His Telugu roots run deep into the soil of Andhra Pradesh. The family name Sarvepalli traces back to a village of the same name in Nellore district. Generations earlier, his forefathers had migrated westward from that coastal settlement, carrying with them

the language, customs and quiet dignity of Telugu Niyogi Brahmins. They eventually settled near the temple town of Tiruttani in what was then the Madras Presidency. There, on 5 September 1888, a second son was born to Sarvepalli Veeraswami, a modest revenue official serving a local zamindar, and his wife Sitamma.

The household lived with limited means. Meagre earnings stretched thin across a large family, and the boy's early years in Tiruttani and the nearby sacred town of Tirupati were marked by the rhythms of temple bells, simple meals and the constant need to make every opportunity count. From those beginnings the young Radhakrishnan rose through sheer brilliance and scholarships. He studied at local schools, then at the Hermannsburg Evangelical Lutheran Mission School in Tirupati, and

later at Voorhees College in Vellore before entering Madras Christian College.

There he completed his bachelor's and master's degrees in philosophy. The encounter with Western thought and Christian critiques of Hinduism only deepened his resolve to understand and present Indian philosophy with clarity and dignity. His early writings defended the ethical foundations of Vedanta and began the lifelong work of building bridges between Eastern wisdom and Western inquiry. Teaching became his true vocation. He began as a lecturer at Madras Presidency College and later served as professor at the University of Mysore and the University of Calcutta.

Crowds gathered for his lectures. Students remembered not only the depth of his scholarship but the warmth with which he guided them. He believed

teachers should be among the finest minds in the country, and he lived that belief every day. International recognition followed. He delivered the Hibbert Lectures at Oxford, published as *An Idealist View of Life*, and in 1936 he was appointed Spalding Professor of Eastern Religions and Ethics at the University of Oxford, the first Indian to hold such a chair.

Through his books—*Indian Philosophy*, *The Hindu View of Life* and others—he introduced the world to the living spirit of Indian thought with grace and intellectual honesty. Even as his fame grew, the man remained grounded in the values of his Telugu upbringing: respect for learning, restraint and service. When independent India called upon him, he answered with the same quiet dedication. He served as Ambassador to the Soviet Union, then as the first Vice-Presi-

dent of India from 1952 to 1962, and finally as the second President from 1962 to 1967.

Throughout those years he accepted only a portion of his official salary, directing the rest to national relief. He continued to speak of education as the surest path to national strength and individual fulfillment. The most heartfelt chapter of his public life came in 1962, shortly after he assumed the presidency. Former students and well-wishers approached him, eager to celebrate his birthday. With characteristic grace he declined personal honour.

