

# Gandikota wins 'Most Promising New Destination' award at BLTM 2025

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NEW DELHI /VIJAYAWADA

ANDHRA Pradesh Tourism wins 'Most Promising New Destination' award for Gandikota at BLTM 2025. The award was received by Padmarani Seela, chief marketing officer and communication officer of APTA, at the Business Leisure Travel and MICE Exhibition (BLTM 2025) in New Delhi.

The state's tourism department showcased its diverse offerings, including heritage sites, pristine beach destinations, rural tourism experiences, and eco-tourism initiatives, at the event held from Friday to Sunday at Yashobhoomi, India International Convention Centre (IICC). Gandikota, known as



AP tourism representative receives award at Business Leisure Travel and MICE Exhibition

'India's Grand Canyon,' received the award in the 'Responsible Tourism Awards' category, supported by ICRT and the Ministry of Tourism,

Government of India. This recognition is expected to boost Gandikota's appeal to adventure-seeking tourists. During BLTM 2025,

Andhra Pradesh Tourism representatives participated in B2B speed networking sessions, building relationships with corporate buyers, MICE

planners, tour operators, destination management companies (DMCs), hospitality brands, and international tourism boards from countries like Sri Lanka, Israel, and St. Petersburg.

The Andhra Pradesh government aims to develop world-class MICE facilities in destinations like Visakhapatnam, Gandikota, and Suryalanka Beach, targeting conferences, corporate events, and incentive packages to become a leader in the MICE tourism segment.

The BLTM event, focused on business and MICE tourism in India, featured over 500 exhibitors and 15,000 pre-qualified buyers, showcasing Andhra Pradesh's tourism potential to a global audience.

## Bode demands ex-gratia to kin of deceased in Turakapalem

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GUNTUR

BCY party president Bode Ramachandra Yadav demanded the government to announce ex-gratia for the families of those who died in Turakapalem due to diseases during the last two months. He visited Turakapalem on Saturday and consoled the kin of the deceased. He announced financial assistance of Rs 10,000 for each family. Speaking on the occasion, he expressed concern over the unnatural deaths occurring in the last 2-3 months. He demanded that all individuals who consumed alcohol between 2019 and 2024 undergo health check-ups. He said families were suffering due to the loss of breadwinners in middle age, and it is the government's responsibility to support them. He also urged the state to monitor the details of youth being admitted to hospitals.

## TTD Trust Board members take oath



Dr M Hari Jawaharlal



Sudarshan Venu

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TIRUMALA

ENDOWMENTS Department Secretary Dr Hari Jawahar Lal and Sudarshan Venu took oath as ex-Officio Member and as TTD Trust Board member respectively at Sri Venkateswara Swamy temple here on Saturday.

The oath was administered by TTD Additional

EO Ch Venkaiah Chowdary. Later, along with their family members, they had Lord Venkateswara darshan. Vedic scholars rendered Veda Asheervachanam at Rangamayakula Mandapam.

The Additional EO presented them with the portrait of Srivaru and Tirtha Prasadam.

Deputy EO Bhaskar and other officials were present.

## Karki is shining example of women empowerment: Modi

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"I want to congratulate Karki on behalf of 140 crore Indians. I am confident that she will pave the way for peace, stability, and prosperity in Nepal," the PM said.

Former Chief Justice Sushila Karki on Friday night became Nepal's first woman prime minister to lead an interim government.

"Karki occupying the top post of that country is an example of women's empowerment," Modi asserted.

Her appointment ended days of political uncertainty after the K P Sharma Oli dispensation was forced to quit in the face of a nationwide agitation triggered by a social media ban.

Karki was chosen to lead the interim government after a meeting between

President Paudel, Nepal's top military brass, and the youth protesters, who spearheaded the agitation.

The PM also lauded the resilience of the Nepali people, noting how citizens, especially young men and women, were taking part in cleaning and painting buildings in the past few days, amid political turbulence.

"I also want to congratulate the people of Nepal who, despite such turbulent times, have kept democratic values supreme," Modi said, drawing applause from the gathering.

Emphasising India's solidarity, the PM said both nations were "moving forward together", and reiterated New Delhi's commitment to support Nepal's democratic journey and its aspiration for stability.

## 3-hour pit stop is not compassion: Cong targets Modi's Manipur visit

Continued from P1

"864 days of violence:-- 300 lives lost, 67,000 displaced, 1,500 plus injured. You made 46 foreign trips since, but not a single visit to share two words of sympathy with your own citizens," Kharage said.

"Your last visit to Manipur? January 2022 for elections! Your 'Double Engine' has bulldozed the innocent lives of Manipur. You and Home Minister Amit Shah's gross incompetence and complicity in betraying all communities was shielded from scrutiny, by imposing President's Rule in the state. Violence

still continues," he said.

It is the BJP which was responsible for maintaining law and order in the state and it is now the Union government which is again dithering, he claimed.

"Not to forget, that is your government which is responsible for National Security and border patrol. This hush-hush pit stop isn't repentance. It's not even guilt. You are organising a grand welcome ceremony for yourself. It is a cruel prick to the wounds of those still suffering because of your own abdication of basic constitutional responsibilities!" Kharage said.

Speaking with reporters in Wayanad, Congress general secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra also hit out at the PM and said he should have visited the state long before.

"I am glad that he has decided, after two years, that it is worth visiting (Manipur)."

He should have gone long before. It is very unfortunate that he has allowed what is happening there to continue for so long and for so many people to be killed. That has not been the tradition of prime ministers in India," she said.

## CM Naidu urges SPs to focus on public safety

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He stressed that instilling fear in criminals is the best way to reduce crime, citing the example of how he brought an end to rowdiness in Vijayawada, which also helped Hyderabad become the brand it is today.

The Chief Minister asked police officers to take up the murder of YS Vivekananda Reddy as a case study. "A brutal murder was first called a heart attack, then a murder, and later was blamed on me," he said. He highlighted the numerous twists and turns in the case, calling it an "unprecedented" case study for police officials.

Naidu also brought up the recent death of a political worker named Singaiah, who was run over by a car belong-

ing to a party leader. "The incident was initially hidden from the police, and when it was exposed, the same party leaders manipulated the victim's family to speak against the government," he said. "You have to understand their criminal politics."

The Chief Minister advised the police to utilise technology to the hilt in investigations.

Naidu suggested a four-point strategy for police officials: React, Reach, Respond, and Result. React immediately to any serious incident and do not leave it to junior staff. Reach the crime scene quickly to collect evidence and take necessary investigative steps. Respond to misinformation and fake news on social media by taking strict action against those spread-

ing it. Work towards a quick Result in every case.

Naidu instructed the SPs to be friendly with the public, while instilling fear in anti-social elements and controlling "social media psychos" who engage in character assassination. He emphasised that the alliance government's policy is to punish offenders, regardless of their political affiliation.

The Chief Minister warned against political parties' attempts to create unrest under the guise of protests. "I am not against protests, but I will not tolerate any illegal activities," he asserted.

"I have chosen you after a long process, considering all factors. Now, prove yourselves and deliver the best performance," he exhorted the SPs.

## Want to make Manipur symbol of peace & prosperity, says Modi

Continued from P1

After meeting them, I can say with confidence that a new dawn of hope and trust is rising in Manipur," he said.

"For development to take root anywhere, peace is essential.

In the last 11 years, many conflicts and disputes in the Northeast have been resolved. People have chosen the path of peace and given priority to development," he added.

The PM, who faced sharp criticisms from the opposition for not visiting the state despite the prolonged ethnic violence, underlined that the Centre's efforts were already yielding results. "We have seen that recently in the Hills and the Valley... negotiations have taken place for agreements with different groups.

These are part of the

efforts of the Government of India to establish peace while giving importance to dialogue, respect, and mutual understanding," he said.

"I would appeal to all organisations to move forward on the path of peace and fulfil their dreams.

I am with you... The Government of India is with the people of Manipur. We are working towards the goal of making Manipur a symbol of peace, prosperity and progress," he said.

Modi said the Centre is providing support to build 7,000 new houses for families who have been displaced by the violence. A special package of about Rs 3,000 crore has recently been approved, he said, adding that Rs 500 crore has been specifically allocated to assist the displaced people.

## 'Students used their pocket money for drugs'

Continued from P1

Supporting this statement, Neha Agarwal, psychologist and co-founder of InnerHeal Therapy, said, "Many of these students are simply trying to fill an emotional void—whether it's love, acceptance, or fear of abandonment. "The pain they want to escape can make drugs seem like an easy way out, offering a quick high and temporary thrill. Sadly, many do not realize that they are trapped until it is already too late to turn back.

Many students from well-off families use their pocket money in unhealthy ways, such as through substance abuse. Easy access to cash sometimes makes them feel

independent, but without real responsibility. Often, just to feel included and part of a group, students get pulled into these habits, creating a dangerous cycle that harms their studies and personal growth," she added. Officials stressed that strict surveillance is being paired with the rehabilitation of students. One of the students recently caught is currently undergoing regular blood tests and counselling. "We are also conducting regular awareness campaigns, in collaboration with universities like ICFAI, to sensitize students to the dangers of substance abuse," an anti-narcotics officer said. Meanwhile, Mahindra University, in its official

statement, maintained that "any act that violates the law or endangers the safety of the student community will be dealt with severely." Vice-Chancellor Dr. Yajulu Meduri assured that the campus would ramp up preventive awareness, counselling, and partnerships with the law enforcement authorities. Yet, as more institutions figure in the narcotics trail and as courier loopholes remain unaddressed, the case underscores a disturbing dual reality. While Hyderabad's private universities project themselves as global education hubs, they are also becoming fertile grounds for organized rackets feeding on the youth's vulnerabilities.

## KTR parroting BJP's remarks against Gandhi family: TPCC chief

### ACCUSES BRS WORKING PRESIDENT OF ACTING UNDER THE INFLUENCE OF BJP LEADERS TO EVADE INQUIRIES RELATED TO KALESHWARAM PROJECT

HYDERABAD

TPCC president Mahesh Kumar Goud has criticised BRS working president KT Rama Rao for making derogatory remarks about Congress leader Rahul Gandhi and his family.

"KTR is speaking out of turn. What is your status, KTR? Do you have the standing to comment on the Gandhi family, who have dedicated everything for the nation," he said.

During a media briefing at Gandhi Bhavan on Saturday, Mahesh Kumar Goud accused the BRS working president of acting



under the influence of BJP leaders to evade inquiries related to the Kaleshwaram project.

"BJP leaders are behind

KTR's statements. His criticism of Rahul is an attempt to win praise from Prime Minister Narendra Modi," he asserted.

The TPCC chief claimed that the BRS's position was revealed by its failure to support Sudershan Reddy in the Vice Presidential election, indicating its indirect backing of the NDA government.

"The BJP and BRS are not distinct entities. Kavitha's comments clearly show that the BRS has aligned itself mentally with the BJP," Mahesh Kumar Goud stated.

The TPCC chief called

for a thorough investigation into the Kaleshwaram corruption and criticised Union Ministers G Kishan Reddy and Bandi Sanjay for their silence on the matter.

Mahesh Kumar Goud noted, "Kishan Reddy had promised to make details about the Kaleshwaram corruption public within 48 hours if the case was transferred to the CBI, yet he has not responded. Why is he not speaking up? We suspect that the investigation into Kaleshwaram was halted as part of the proposed merger between the BRS and BJP."

## UN congratulates new Nepal PM Sushila Karki

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She also recognised the contributions of the president, the chief of army staff and 'Gen Z' youth leaders, noting that their efforts "helped make this transition possible". Karki was chosen to lead the interim government after a meeting between President Ram Chandra Paudel, Nepal's top military brass, and representatives of youth protesters.

President Paudel administered the oath of office to former chief justice Karki, 73, on Friday three days after Oli resigned from the prime minister's post following the worst unrest that the Himalayan nation has witnessed in decades. Oli quit on Tuesday shortly after hundreds of agitators entered his office demanding his resignation for the death of at least 19 people in police action during Monday's protests.

## NE is India's growth engine: PM

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Kaladan Multimodal Transit Transport Project is a joint India-Myanmar initiative to create a multi-modal transport corridor connecting India's eastern ports to India's Northeast through Myanmar, utilising waterways and roads to bypass the Siliguri Corridor.

The Prime Minister said: "After the Kaladan Multimodal Transit Transport Project becomes operational, trade and tourism would be boosted a lot in the Northeast region. All these plans are part of India's Act East Policy."

He said that earlier the political parties were doing vote bank politics in Northeast and due to this attitude the entire region suffered greatly. "Our attitude, plans and vision are different. We want peace and development of the region. Rail, road, air, waterway connectivities were developed a lot in the region and these would be further

developed in the coming days," the Prime Minister said.

Referring to the GST reforms, he said that taxes were lowered substantially in many products making life easier for common people.

During 'Operation Sindoor', India's armed forces taught lessons to terrorists and the entire world witnessed the power of the country's armed forces and 'Made in India' weapons to help protect the country, the Prime Minister pointed out.

Saturday's visit is PM Modi's second trip to Mizoram since he became the Prime Minister in 2014. From Aizawl, the Prime Minister would fly to Manipur's Churachandpur and then to state capital Imphal. In both Churachandpur and Imphal, PM Modi would unveil a total of 31 projects worth Rs 8,500 crore for the state of Manipur and would address public gatherings in both the places.

## Low-pressure area to trigger rains in AP

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Jain also provided a summary of rainfall recorded as of 5:00 pm on Saturday.

Heavy rainfall was recorded in several areas, including Thallapudi in East Godavari district and Lingapalem in Eluru district (87.2 mm), Pedakakani in Guntur district (77.2 mm), Sattenapalli in Palnadu district (75 mm), Vallabhapuram in Guntur (74 mm), Guntur (72.2 mm), Nuzvidu (71 mm), Thotavalluru (70.7 mm), Kouthavaram (70.2 mm), and Darsi in Prakasam district (68.5 mm). More than 40 mm of rain was recorded in 47 other locations.