



# THE Hans India



**WOMENIA**  
**Dehydration, headaches and low energy: Why women are more vulnerable in summer**  
 Summer heat can be harsh on the body, especially for women. Dehydration happens when the body loses more fluids than it takes in. During hot weather, we sweat more to cool down. **P8**

**BUSINESS**  
**Life must be protected, not 'pactually' abandoned**  
 Whether it is the Constitutional law or criminal law, suicide cannot be accepted under any circumstances. Life is for living. No one has the right to die, but rather a duty to live and let others live. **P6**

**YOUNG HANS**  
**Finance Minister asks banks to refocus on core business**  
 Articulating the strategic vision of the Union Budget while sharply calling out mis-selling by banks, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Monday urged lenders to refocus on their core business. **P9**

**WOMENIA**  
**Employer survey signals rise in skills-focused fresher hiring**  
 Hiring sentiment for entry-level talent has strengthened for the first half of 2026, with 73 per cent of employers indicating plans to recruit freshers, according to the latest Career Outlook Report HY1 2026 released by TeamLease EdTech. **P7**

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**WINDOWS**  
**RAMZAN TIMINGS**  
 IFTAR (Tue) 6.27 PM  
 SEHAR (Wed) 5.15 AM



**CROSS-BORDER TERROR**  
**INDIA ROLLS OUT ANTI-TERROR DOCTRINE PRAHAAR**

**NEW DELHI:** The Union Ministry of Home Affairs on Monday released India's first comprehensive anti-terror policy, naming it "PRAHAAR", and flagged threats ranging from cross-border terrorism and cyber-attacks to the misuse of drones and emerging technologies. The policy emphasizes that apart from terror sponsored from across the border, "criminal hackers and nation states continue to target India through cyber-attacks." It notes that India faces terrorist threats across water, land and air, and states that capacities have been developed to secure critical sectors of the economy, including power, railways, aviation, ports, defence, space and atomic energy, against state and non-state actors. The strategy document, uploaded on the MHA's website, states that "India does not link terrorism to any specific religion, ethnicity, nationality or civilisation." It adds that the country has long been affected by "sponsored terrorism" from across the border, with "Jihadi terror outfits as well as their frontal organisations" continuing to plan and execute attacks. The policy names global terror groups such as Al-Qaeda and Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS), stating that they have sought to incite violence in India through sleeper cells, while violent extremists operating from foreign countries have hatched conspiracies to promote terrorism. It further highlights the use of advanced technologies by handlers across the border, including drones, particularly in Punjab and Jammu and Kashmir.

## Cabinet finalises Budget session, Metro takeover

Budget session of Assembly will begin on March 16

- ▶▶ Budget presentation on March 20
- ▶▶ Takeover of metro rail by March 31

HANS NEWS SERVICE HYDERABAD

THE state Cabinet has on Monday finalised the schedule for the Budget session of the Assembly. As per the schedule, the two-week-long session will start on March 16 with the Governor's address on the first day. Budget presentation is scheduled for March 20. The Cabinet, at a meeting held at Dr BR Ambedkar Telangana State Secretariat on Monday, also approved a proposal for takeover of the Hyderabad Metro Rail before the end of this financial year



After the L&T company expressed its intent to exit the venture citing accumulated losses and financial hurdles in running the Metro Rail, the Cabinet decided to take complete control of the elevated rapid transport system. According to the latest agreement, the state government will bear the company's debt of Rs. 13,000 crore. The government will also pay Rs. 2,000 crore to L&T towards its equity investment. The government hastened the official process to take over the Metro Rail by March 31 this year so as to be in a position get funds from the Centre for the second phase of the Metro Rail project in the new financial year. In a move to strengthen public healthcare delivery, the Cabinet also gave its nod to convert the Telangana Vaidya Vidhana Parishad (TVVP) into the Directorate of Secondary Health Care (DSH). The Cabinet approved the proposed DSH Bill, which seeks to accord Directorate status to TVVP, which has been functioning as an autonomous body. Cabinet also decided to allocate land to Congress in all district headquarters for the construction of its offices. It also allotted 70 acres of land for JNTU college in Gummadur village in Mahabubabad district. The Cabinet also allocated 20 acres to Tirumula Tirupati Devasthanams (TTD) in Khammam. The Cabinet also discussed about ZPTC and MPTC polls. The government has no plans to scrap these elections, it is said. The Cabinet decided to set up a trust with equal contribution from employees and government to provide health insurance to government employees. The trust will be set up with over Rs 1,000 crore.

## 'Leave Iran by any available means'

India's fresh advisory amid 'fear of war' in Middle East

NEW DELHI

Indians in Iran have been advised to leave amid possible US strikes in the days to come. In its latest advisory, the Embassy of India asked its citizens to "leave Iran by available means of transport, including commercial flights." The advisory applies to everyone in Iran - students, pilgrims, businesspersons and tourists. "The January 14, 2026, advisory is hereby reiterated that all Indian citizens and Persons of Indian Origin (PIOs) should exercise due caution, avoid areas of protests or demonstrations, stay in contact with the Indian Embassy in Iran and monitor local media for any developments," the advisory read. **Continued on Page 5**

## 'Heartbroken with status of West Bengal under Mamata rule'

Modi says change of guard inevitable in state

KOLKATA



IN a public appeal to West Bengal voters, weeks before the declaration of Assembly polls, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday said he was "heartbroken by the deceit and anguish" faced by the cross-section of the state's citizens under the current Mamata Banerjee regime and vowed to correct it by building a "Viksit Paschim Banga". Modi said while a political change was "inevitable", a "judicious choice" by voters could align the state with the accelerated development seen in the rest of the country. In an open letter written in Bengali, which began with the slogan 'Jai Maa Kali', Modi targeted the TMC government on issues ranging from lack of governance and appeasement politics to fake voters, employment

deficiency and women's safety. The PM also promised citizenship to refugees through the CAA and pledged to stop infiltration through state borders as part of his pre-election promises. "Bengal used to be the nation's vanguard in both financial and industrial sectors in post-Independence India. It pains me to witness the brittle and sick state it has turned into. It is impossible to describe the irreversible damage which six decades of misgovernance and appeasement politics have caused," Modi said. **Continued on Page 5**

## Inter exams from tomorrow

- ▶▶ Exams are scheduled from Feb 25 to March 18
- ▶▶ 9.97 lakh students to appear across 1,495 centres
- ▶▶ 28,500 invigilators and multiple squads will be deployed

HANS NEWS SERVICE HYDERABAD

Telangana Board of Intermediate Education (TGBIE) is all set for the Intermediate Public Examinations (IPE), March 2026 (Theory Exams) to be held from February 25 to March 18.

Addressing the media on Monday, TGBIE Secretary Krishna Aditya said that the examinations will run daily from 9 AM to 12 noon, covering both first-year and second-year students across general and vocational streams.



According to official data, a total of 9,97,075 students will appear this year, including 4,89,126 first-year students and 5,07,949 second-year students. The examinations will be conducted in 1,495 centres across Telangana, comprising government, private, and other institutions. To ensure smooth conduct, the Board has deployed 1,495 chief superintendents, 1,495 departmental officers, and 28,500 invigilators. Additionally, 75 flying squads and 200 sitting squads have been constituted to monitor malpractice. District-level committees, including High Power Committees chaired by Collectors, have been formed to oversee arrangements. Security and logistics have been strengthened with CC cameras installed at all centres, integrated into a Command Control Room in Hyderabad equipped with 31 screens and a video wall. **Continued on Page 5**

## Chief Electoral SIR complete

Names of 97 lakh voters deleted in draft list

CHENNAI:

The Special Intensive Revision (SIR) in Tamil Nadu has been completed with the state now having a total of 5,67,07,380 voters, comprising 2,77,38,925 male and 2,89,60,838 female and 7,617 third gender voters. Chief Electoral Officer of Tamil Nadu, Archana Patnaik, released the final electoral roll. Post the Special Intensive Revision (SIR), the state saw 97.37 lakh voter deletions, with urban constituencies accounting for the bulk of deletions. **Continued on Page 5**

## CM's new Camp Office to get high security features

HANS NEWS SERVICE HYDERABAD

CHIEF Minister A Revanth Reddy's new Camp Office will be equipped with high security devices along the compound wall. The state government has decided to construct the new camp office for the Chief Minister at Dr Marri Channa Reddy Human Resource Development Institute of Telangana (Dr MCR HRD Institute) with high security features along with the wall at a cost of about Rs 9 crore. The compound wall will have watchtowers, concertina wire on the top of the wall, heavy gates, furniture, security arrangements, approach ramp, construction of a road on the west side to reach the VVIP guest house there. All these things are expected to be provided at the new camp office. The Roads & Buildings Department has invited tenders for the construction of the Chief Minister's Camp Office. The deadline for submitting applications for the work worth Rs 9.08 crore is March 4. The R&B Department officials will examine the technical bids on the last day and finalize the company. The officials have set a deadline of two years to complete all the work mentioned in the tender.

## MASSIVE BLOW TO TERROR Armed forces eliminate 7 dreaded ultras

SRIANGAR: The Indian Army on Monday said that it dealt a massive blow to the terror network in Jammu & Kashmir, a day after security forces gunned down three members of the Pakistan-based Jaish-e-Mohammad (JeM), including most wanted terrorist Saifullah, in an encounter in Kishtwar district. In a post on X, the Army's White Knight Corps said that it conducted a relentless and painstaking high-altitude joint operations over 326 days in the Kishtwar region. "Forces tracked terrorists in challenging conditions of cold, wet and freezing weather across daunting terrain, leading to multiple contacts.

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## MISLEADING UPSC 2023 RESULT ADS CCPA slaps ₹15L penalty on Vajirao & Reddy

NEW DELHI

THE Central Consumer Protection Authority (CCPA) has imposed a penalty of Rs 15 lakh on Vajirao & Reddy Institute for issuing misleading advertisements related to the UPSC Civil Services Examination (CSE) 2023. The authorities found that the institute deliberately concealed important information about the specific courses taken by successful candidates, creating a false



impression of the coaching services provided. The institute had advertised claims such as:  
 • "Over 645 Selections Out of 1016 Vacancies in UPSC CSE 2023 From Vajirao & Reddy Institute" **Continued on Page 5**

- "6 in Top 10 AIR"
- "35 in Top 50 AIR"
- "64 in Top 100 AIR"

These advertisements, coupled with images and names of successful candidates, suggested that all students had enrolled in the institute's regular courses, including GS/Complete Course, Foundation Course, Pre-Foundation Course, Weekend Course, Optional Subject Course, and GS Pre-cum-Mains Course. **Continued on Page 5**



## Maha seeks CBI probe into Ajit Pawar plane crash

MUMBAI: The Maharashtra government has requested Union Home Minister Amit Shah to order a CBI investigation into the plane crash that killed Deputy Chief Minister Ajit Pawar last month, Chief Minister Devendra Fadnis has said. **Continued on Page 5**

## Bill Gates building 'artificial sun' that could replace coal



WASHINGTON

THE old coal plant is gone. Something very different is planned in its place. The twin smokestacks of the Bull Run Fossil Plant in Claxton, Tennessee, were demolished after more than six decades. That coal plant used fossil fuels to generate electricity. Now the same site is being prepared for a fusion energy project. On January 29, 2026, Type One Energy, a Bill Gates-backed nuclear fusion company, submitted its first major licensing application to state regulators. The company is working with the Tennessee Valley Authority, known as TVA. The project is called Infinity One. Bill Gates-backed Infinity One aims to recreate the power of the Sun with a 100 million-degree fusion reactor. Infinity One is not a traditional nuclear plant. It is a fusion reactor. Fusion is the process that powers the Sun. Instead of splitting atoms like today's nuclear fission plants, fusion joins light atoms together. When that happens, it releases large amounts of energy. **Continued on Page 5**

# Gold and silver buying not alarming, says FM

CLAIMS HIGH-PITCHED DEMAND APPEARS TO BE SEASONAL

NEW DELHI

THE Union government is closely monitoring gold and silver prices, and the situation is not alarming, Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman has said, adding that the high-pitched demand in the domestic market appears to be "seasonal". Addressing the media after its customary post-budget meeting with the Central Board of Directors of the

Reserve Bank of India (RBI), Sitharaman said, "Almost all the gold that comes to the market is imported. We are an import-dependent country; steps have been taken, but they are not sufficient to meet demand." "Gold is a favoured investment for households. The high-pitched demand in the domestic market appears to be seasonal. We are watching it; it has not reached an alarming situation," she said.



Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman at a post-budget meeting with RBI's Central Board of Directors

The RBI, she said, is also monitoring the situation. "Most countries today, particularly central banks, are buying gold and silver. International prices of gold and silver are spiking up and down largely due to central bank buying," Sitharaman said. On the US tariff issue, the minister said the Ministry of Commerce and Industry is reviewing the situation. "It is early to comment." The Finance Minister was

also asked about the ongoing strategic disinvestment of IDBI Bank. She said there is "no systemic kind of issue" and added that the government does not comment on individual companies. She further said the RBI has adequate liquidity. RBI Governor Sanjay Malhotra echoed the Finance Minister. "We stand committed to providing liquidity for the productive needs of our economy."

## INFANT'S DEATH AT KUMMERA

# MLA Vamsi Krishna orders probe

HANS NEWS SERVICE  
NAGARKURNOOL

ACHAMPET MLA Dr Vamsi Krishna has assured a comprehensive investigation into the death of an infant that occurred during a village fair in Kummera of Nagarkurnool mandal on the 18th of this month.

Speaking at a press conference held on Monday evening at his camp office in Nagarkurnool district headquarters, he said the matter would be brought to the attention of Chief Minister Revanth Reddy. He described the infant's death as tragic and deeply painful.

The MLA stated that if the death resulted from a clash, those responsible would face strict legal punishment. He warned that stringent action would be taken against the accused, irrespective of their background. He also said he had spoken to the Nagarkurnool DSP over the phone and directed that anyone involved in the case be



Case to be taken to CM Revanth Reddy

arrested by the same night.

He assured complete justice to the victim's family on behalf of the government, announcing that an Indiramma house would be sanctioned to them soon. Financial assistance would also be provided, he added. He appealed to political parties and public organisa-

tions to extend support to the bereaved family.

Dr Vamsi Krishna criticised attempts to make allegations against other public representatives over the incident. He said former MLA Marri Janardhan Reddy was making comments for political gain and warned that political accu-

sations would be responded to appropriately.

MLC Damodar Reddy, Market Committee Chairman Ramana Rao, Municipal Chairperson Sunindra, Vice Chairman Badam Ramesh, Congress leaders Banda Parvathalu and others were present at the press meet.

# CPI(M) demands action over infant's death in Kummera attack

An indefinite hunger strike is underway at Ambedkar Chowrasta in Nagarkurnool under the leadership of the SC, ST, and BC JAC

HANS NEWS SERVICE NA-  
GARKURNOOL

THE CPI(M) has expressed strong anger over the death of a two-month-old infant in an attack that took place during a village fair at Kummera in Nagarkurnool mandal. CPI(M) State Secretary John Wesley demanded that Chief Minister Revanth Reddy take immediate action on the incident. He called for the registration of attempt to murder/murder cases against the sarpanch and his associates and demanded their immediate arrest.

He also urged the District Collector, SP, and local MLA to visit and console the victim's family members



- Chandrakala, Ganesh, and Mounika.

An indefinite hunger strike is underway at Ambedkar Chowrasta in Nagarkurnool under the leadership of the SC, ST, and BC JAC. A CPI(M) state delegation visited the victim's family and expressed solidarity. John Wesley alleged that

attacks on weaker sections are increasing and questioned the law and order situation in the state. He criticized the police for not registering murder/atrocities cases even six days after the incident and for not remanding the accused. He warned that the issue would be taken to the notice of the DGP.

CPI(M) announced district-wide protest programmes and stated that the agitation would continue until justice is delivered to the victim's family.

CPI(M) state leaders Sagar, Sriram Naik, Parvathalu, Kandikonda Geetha, Asia Naik, Anjaneyulu, Ramaiah and others participated in the programme.

# Caste brutality claimed infant's life in Nagarkurnool: Kavitha

HANS NEWS SERVICE  
JOGULAMBA GADWAL

TELANGANA Jagruthi president K Kavitha launched a scathing attack on the Congress government, accusing it of betraying farmers, encouraging caste injustice, and completely failing the Nadigadda region.

Speaking at the Rythu Sangarshana Sabha in Gadwal on Monday, she said the death of a two-month-old infant in Nagarkurnool, allegedly after being assaulted in the name of caste, is a blot on Telangana and a direct indictment of the government's failure to protect the weakest sections

Kavitha announced that henceforth, every major Telangana Jagruthi programme would begin from Jogulamba Gadwal, asserting that the Nadigadda region has been ignored

of society. "This is not just an incident; it is a crime against humanity. Caste-based brutality has no place in Telangana, and this government's silence is shameful," she said, demanding immediate accountability and justice.

Kavitha announced that henceforth, every major Telangana Jagruthi programme would begin from Jogulamba Gadwal, asserting that the Nadigadda region has been ignored, cheated, and pushed

to the margins by both BRS and Congress governments. "This land has ethics, courage, and self-respect. Any movement that begins here will shake the corridors of power," she warned.

Strongly condemning the corporate exploitation of seed cotton farmers, Kavitha said that while Nadigadda's seed cotton feeds the entire country, farmers are being harassed daily and denied payments even after assurances

given to the district administration.

"Companies are looting farmers with the full backing of the government," she alleged, demanding that all pending dues be cleared within one week, failing which Telangana Jagruthi would launch an uncompromising statewide agitation.

Attacking the Congress government's anti-farmer policies, Kavitha said mid-night power supply has



turned agriculture into a life-threatening struggle. "Farmers are forced to guard their fields at night, risking their lives to snakes and scorpions. This is not governance; this is cruelty," she said. Kavitha also

slammed the government for failing to supply even basic urea fertiliser and mocked the idea of app-based booking. "First give farmers smartphones, then talk about apps. Otherwise, stop this non-

sense," she remarked.

Kavitha tore into the Congress government's loan-waiver claims, calling them a "big political fraud." She said promises were made to waive loans of 40 lakh farmers, but

only 25 lakh were covered, leaving 15 lakh farmers betrayed. "Even small farmers with ₹50,000 and ₹1 lakh loans have been abandoned. This government lied openly and ran away from debate," she said, demanding a complete and unconditional loan waiver for every farmer.

Later, Kavitha met the District Collector of Gadwal district and submitted the memorandum. She warned that if the problems of seed cotton farmers are not resolved within one week, Telangana Jagruthi will take to the streets and launch road blockades across the district until the issues are fully addressed.

# Youth participation key to achieving devpt goals: Konda

HANS NEWS SERVICE

HYDERABAD: The closing

ceremonies of the International Youth Biodiversity Conference-2026, organised with the aim of biodiversity conservation and youth empowerment in the state of Telangana, were held with great pomp.

The three-day conference, organised under the auspices of the Telangana Biodiversity Board, was attended by youth, environmental scientists, researchers, policymakers, and representatives of voluntary organisations from across the country and abroad.

The closing ceremony was graced by the Chief Guest, Minister for Forests, Environment and Endowments, Konda Surekha.

# Three critically injured after RTC bus falls into gorge near Utnoor

MLA directs officials to ensure better medical care and shift critical victims to RIMS Adilabad

HANS NEWS SERVICE  
KHANAPUR

AN RTC bus belonging to the Asifabad depot overturned and plunged into a ravine on Monday morning at Shamapur village in Utnoor mandal of Khanapur constituency, leaving three passengers seriously injured.

The bus, which had departed from Adilabad at around 5 am and was heading towards Asifabad, reportedly lost control near Shamapur before overturning and falling into a nearby ravine. According to eyewitnesses, nearly 30 passengers were travelling in the vehicle at the time of the accident.

Locals stated that screams were heard as the bus tumbled into the ravine, sending shockwaves through the surrounding area. Residents who noticed the mishap rushed to the spot and immediately began rescue operations.



The injured passengers were shifted to the Government Hospital in Utnoor with the assistance of the 108 ambulance service and other vehicles. Medical officials confirmed that three passengers sustained serious injuries and were being provided treatment.

Khanapur MLA Vedma Boju Patel, who was in Vikarabad at the time, was informed about the accident and promptly contacted the

Superintendent of the Utnoor Government Hospital. He directed hospital authorities to ascertain the condition of the injured and ensure that they received proper medical attention. The MLA also instructed officials to shift the critically injured to RIMS Adilabad for advanced treatment. Utnoor police registered a case in connection with the incident and initiated an investigation to ascertain the cause of the accident.

# Elaborate arrangements underway for Godavari Pushkaralu in Nirmal

- Large number of devotees are expected at Basara Gnana Saraswati Temple and Pushkar ghats
- Facilities including ghats, drinking water, toilets and parking are being arranged to ensure convenience

HANS NEWS SERVICE  
NIRMAL

DISTRICT Collector Abhilasha Abhinav on Monday stated that comprehensive arrangements are being made in Nirmal district for the forthcoming Godavari Pushkaralu, with special focus on ensuring the safety and convenience of devotees expected to arrive in large numbers.

The Collector was speaking from the District Collectorate during a video conference



convened by State Endowments Department Principal Secretary Shailaja Ramaier to review preparedness for the religious festival. During the meeting, Abhilasha Abhinav informed the Principal Secretary that preparatory meetings had already been conducted with officials of the concerned departments to coordinate efforts effectively.

She noted that a significant influx of pilgrims was anticipated at the revered Basara Gnana Saraswati Temple as well as at various Pushkar ghats along the Godavari river. In view of this, the district administration was putting in place robust arrangements to manage the expected rush

and ensure smooth conduct of rituals.

The Collector stated that essential facilities including construction and strengthening of ghats, provision of safe drinking water, installation of temporary toilets, and development of adequate parking spaces were being arranged at every designated Pushkar ghat. She assured that all necessary steps were being taken to prevent inconvenience to devotees during the festival period. Officials from multiple departments participated in the video conference and reviewed the action plan to ensure coordinated implementation of the arrangements well ahead of the event.

# Detailed proposals sought for Godavari Pushkarams arrangements

Principal Secretary reviews preparedness with district collectors, stresses comprehensive facilities for devotees

HANS NEWS SERVICE  
HANUMAKONDA

SHAILAJA Ramaier, Principal Secretary of the Endowments Department, on Monday directed officials to prepare detailed proposals for the necessary arrangements for the forthcoming Godavari Pushkarams.

She conducted a review meeting via video conference from Hyderabad with Collectors of districts located along the banks of the

Godavari River and other concerned officials to assess the preparedness for the religious event.

Addressing the officials, Shailaja Ramaier instructed them to compile and submit comprehensive reports covering all arrangements related to the Pushkarams to be held along the Godavari riverbank across the State. She emphasised that adequate measures must be put in place to ensure that devotees arriving to take the



holy dip do not face any inconvenience.

The Principal Secretary called for proposals to include

sanitation measures, provision of safe drinking water, establishment of medical camps, deployment of trained

swimmers, foolproof security arrangements and other essential amenities. She also directed that a detailed report be submitted regarding the arrangements proposed for conducting the Pushkarams in Mancherial district.

During the meeting, Divakara T.S., District Collector of Mulugu district, stated that steps were being taken to ensure that the Godavari Pushkarams in the district were conducted without any lapses. He informed that

four Pushkar ghats were being prepared at Mangapet, Mulla Katta, Ramannagudem and Kannayigudem.

The Collector added that plans were being finalised to provide all necessary facilities to devotees attending the event. Amenities such as drinking water, toilets, parking facilities and proper lighting arrangements would be ensured at every Pushkar ghat to facilitate smooth conduct of the religious congregation.

**SBI STATE BANK OF INDIA**  
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## LOCKER BREAK OPEN NOTICE

Sub: Break-open of unclaimed lockers and rent due lockers To. All valued customers of our Branch. We hereby notify that the following safe deposit lockers have not been paying rents or remained unclaimed/unoperated for an extended period. The notices sent as per RBI/Bank's guidelines to the customers at their recorded addresses have been returned undelivered stating either persons/ addresses not found or left or remaining unanswered. The below mentioned locker hirers have failed to / breached the terms and conditions of the locker agreement.

## DETAILS OF RENT DUE LOCKERS:

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2	2/73	Pedda Mala Devaiah
3	3/156	M.Karnakar Reddy and M. Kavaya
4	5/6	Aziz Ali
5	5/23	Sham Sunnisa Begum
6	5/32	Amrutha Bai
7	5/69	S. Ramji Anandji and Anandlal Ramji, amruthal Company
8	6/2	Kesha Yasoda Devi

**ACTION TO BE TAKEN:** Pursuant to the Bank's policy and applicable laws, we will forcibly open these lockers on **26-03-2026**. The Locker will be broken open in the presence of a Committee consisting of two officers of the branch and two independent witnesses. Content will be inventoried and stored securely. Disposal of the articles is to be done either by sale in public auction or otherwise proceeds are to be applied first towards bank's charges and balance refunded to locker hirer(s). **IMPORTANT INSTRUCTIONS:** If you are a holder of these lockers or known of the above mentioned customers, please contact us immediately within a period of 30 days, failing which the bank will proceed to Break Open the Locker. Sd/- Asst. General Manager

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The Bank reserves the right to reject any or all bids without assigning any reasons whatsoever.

Sd/- Deputy General Manager

**GOVERNMENT OF TELANGANA**  
**PANCHAYAT RAJ ENGINEERING DEPARTMENT**  
OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER PR DIVISION, BHADRACHALAM.

e-Procurement Tender Notice  
Online tenders are invited for the NIT No.35/2025-26 dt:21/02/2026 from the eligible registered contractors for 01 work in P.R. Division, Bhadrachalam in Bhadradi Kothagudem Dist., sanctioned under TG M&G Grants with an estimate cost Rs.8.50 Lakhs. Further details will be available from 25-02-2026 onwards on <https://tender.telangana.gov.in>  
Sd/- EXECUTIVE ENGINEER, P.R. Division, BHADRACHALAM, Bhadradi Kothagudem Dist., DIFR.R.O.No: 15815-PP/CL/ADVT/1/2025-26 Date: 23-02-26

# Naini drops murder bombshell, demands PD Act against former MLA



Warangal West MLA Naini Rajender Reddy addressing the media outside the Warangal Police Commissionerate on Monday

HANS NEWS SERVICE  
HANUMAKONDA

WARANGAL West MLA Naini Rajender Reddy on Monday made sensational allegations against former MLA Dasayam Vinay Bhaskar, accusing him of orchestrating the murder of former BRS corporator Anishetty Murali, Vaddepalli Pasha, Goud and four others in the Warangal West constituency.

The MLA alleged that a series of violent attacks on Congress workers had been carried out at the behest of the former MLA. Accompanied by senior leaders, Naini met Warangal Police Commissioner Sun Preet Singh at the Commissionerate and submitted a detailed

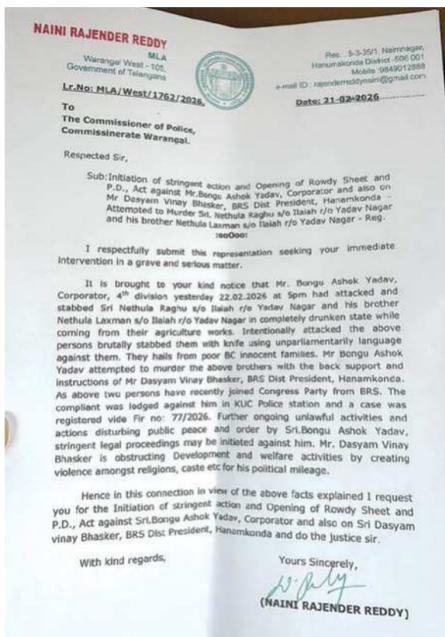
complaint seeking immediate action. He stated that on Sunday, the 22nd of this month, local BRS corporator Bongu Ashok Yadav and his associates, allegedly under the influence of alcohol, attacked Congress worker Netula Raghu of the 4th Division and attempted to murder him. He further recalled that earlier, followers of Vinay Bhaskar had attacked Congress worker Thota Pawan at Hanumakonda Chowrasta in an alleged attempt to kill him.

Citing repeated attacks on Congress activists, Naini demanded a comprehensive investigation against Vinay Bhaskar within a week. He urged the police to invoke the Preventive Detention (PD) Act against the former

- Naini alleges former MLA masterminds murders and attacks on Congress workers
- Demand raised for PD Act, city extermination and rowdy sheets against accused
- Warning issued of strong action if police fail to act within a week

MLA and to initiate city extermination proceedings. He also demanded that rowdy sheets be opened against those involved in the attack on Netula Raghu.

Speaking to the media outside the Warangal Police Commissionerate, the MLA accused certain BRS leaders of behaving like goondas and indulging in violence-driven



politics. He alleged that such behaviour had been consistent even during the Telangana agitation period and criticised what he described as attempts to intimidate political opponents through force.

Clarifying that the Congress government was focused on development and not violence, Naini said they had exercised patience despite provocation. However, he warned that continued attacks on party workers would not be tolerated. "If you

touch our party workers, we will not spare you," he asserted, adding that if the police failed to act within a week, they would not be responsible for the consequences.

He further warned that if such incidents persisted, he would personally confront the former MLA at his residence.

He also alleged that efforts to exploit religious or caste sentiments and misuse Telangana sentiment for political gain would not succeed in the constituency.

# Karimnagar ramps up summer water shield to ensure uninterrupted supply

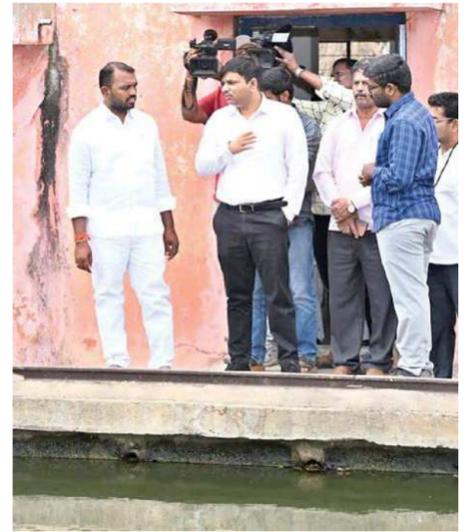
- Water supply preparedness reviewed at LMD plant
- Rs 49 lakh allocated and tenders initiated to tackle summer demand
- Booster pumps and renovation works to strengthen supply system

HANS NEWS SERVICE  
KARIMNAGAR

CIVIC authorities intensified efforts on Monday to prevent any disruption in drinking water supply during the peak summer months, conducting a comprehensive inspection of the Drinking Water Purification Plant at Lower Mainair Dam (LMD) in Karimnagar.

Mayor Kolagani Srinivas, accompanied by Municipal Commissioner Praful Desai and engineering officials, reviewed the high-level reservoir, sump and motor pumps at the facility. The team assessed operational preparedness and directed staff to ensure uninterrupted water supply across the city, including all merged village divisions.

Addressing officials, the Mayor stated that a detailed Summer Action Plan had been prepared to manage the anticipated seasonal rise in demand. With the dam's current water level standing at 7 TMC, authorities were instructed to maintain optimum supply capacity. He informed that Rs 49 lakh had been allocated to address drinking water concerns, with the tendering process already initiated. Arrangements for tanker



Mayor Kolagani Srinivas and municipal commissioner Praful Desai inspecting the Water Purification plant

supply and the hiring of wells would be made wherever necessary to prevent shortages. Pipeline works under the scheme were also progressing in the merged villages to strengthen the distribution network.

The Mayor further emphasised the need for proper chlorination of water, immediate repair of valve leakages and strict monitoring of both high-level and low-level supply systems.

He directed officials to take proactive measures to curb water leakages and resolve labour shortages to ensure smooth operations throughout the summer season. Municipal Commissioner Praful Desai stated that alternate-day

water supply had been implemented since 26 February due to reduced water levels and gravity constraints. To improve the intake of raw water, four booster pumps would be activated shortly.

Of the four filter beds at the plant, three were currently operational, while the 10 MLD unit was undergoing renovation and was expected to be commissioned in March. Once fully functional, the upgraded system was expected to ensure adequate and consistent water supply during the summer months.

Corporator Devender and other municipal officials were also present during the inspection.

# Digital connectivity drive gains momentum in Asifabad

Review meeting held to expedite cell tower installations and ensure coordination among telecom providers

HANS NEWS SERVICE  
KUMURAM BHEEM  
ASIFABAD

DISTRICT Collector K. Haritha on Monday directed officials to ensure that remote villages in the district are provided with reliable internet connectivity at the earliest.

A review meeting was held at the Integrated District Collectorate building conference hall in the district headquarters to discuss the establishment of cell towers and the expansion of internet services. The meeting was attended by District Additional Collector (Revenue) David, Training IFS Officer Bhargav Kumar, Asifabad Revenue Mandal Officer Lokeshwar Rao, Kazganagar Division Forest Officer Appaiah, along with Tehsildars, Forest Department officials and repre-



sentatives of BSNL, Airtel, Jio and T-Fiber. Addressing the officials, the Collector emphasised the need for coordinated efforts among all departments and service providers to improve digital connectivity across the district. She directed that the construction of cell towers being set up under the aegis of BSNL be expedited.

The Collector also instructed Airtel and Jio representatives to swiftly complete land identification and secure

the necessary administrative permissions for the installation of towers and provision of internet services. She stated that steps would be taken to ensure mobile signals and internet access reach even the most remote villages through the timely construction of infrastructure.

Officials from the concerned departments and telecom companies participated in the meeting and assured cooperation in implementing the connectivity plans.

# Collector calls for devotion, discipline and communal harmony during Ramadhan

Officials directed to ensure sanitation, uninterrupted power supply and smooth traffic arrangements

HANS NEWS SERVICE  
KUMURAM BHEEM  
ASIFABAD

DISTRICT Collector K. Haritha on Monday emphasised that festivals should be celebrated peacefully and in a spirit of religious harmony, urging all communities to observe the holy month of Ramadhan with devotion and mutual respect.

A Peace Committee meeting was held at the Integrated District Collectorate Bhavan conference hall in the district headquarters in view of the forthcoming festival.

The meeting was attended by District Additional Collector (Revenue) David, Training IFS Officer Bhargav Kumar and Asifabad Revenue Mandal Officer Lokeshwar Rao, along with other officials and community representatives.

Addressing the gathering, the Collector stated that the month of Ramadhan should be observed in a calm and devotional atmosphere.

She directed the Municipal Commissioner to undertake daily sanitation works at mosques to ensure cleanliness during the holy month. The Electricity Department Superintendent Engineer was in-



District Collector K. Haritha during a meeting on Monday

structed to make arrangements for uninterrupted power supply, particularly during prayer times.

The Collector further directed the Police Department to coordinate effectively and ensure that no traffic congestion occurred near mosques during peak hours. She reiterated that all festivals in the district must be celebrated in a peaceful environment, strengthening communal harmony and unity.

District Minority Welfare Officer Na-deem, Electricity Department SE Uttam Jade, Tehsildars Riyaz and Madhukar, Municipal Commissioner Gajanan, Asifabad Municipal Vice Chairman Mohammed Ahmed, members of the Peace Committee, religious leaders and other officials were present at the meeting.

# Jeevan Reddy's political future in limbo amid exit buzz

- Internal rift with Jagtial MLA fuels exit speculation
- BJP and BRS reportedly reach out amid Rajya Sabha suspense
- Final decision likely after consultations with supporters

TIRUNAGIRI  
VENKATESHWARA SWAMY  
KARIMNAGAR

SENIOR Congress leader T. Jeevan Reddy's political future has become a subject of intense debate amid reports of growing differences within the party and invitations from opposition outfits.

A multiple-time MLA and former minister in the government led by Y. S. Rajasekhara Reddy, Jeevan Reddy has long been



T. Jeevan Reddy

regarded as a loyalist who stood firmly with the Congress even during its difficult phases in the State. He consistently criticised the

previous government when the party was out of power and worked to strengthen the cadre in the Jagtial constituency.

However, tensions escalated after Jagtial MLA Dr Sanjay joined the Congress. Jeevan Reddy reportedly expressed dissatisfaction over not being informed about Sanjay's induction into the party. The internal rift deepened following disagreements over party meetings and local political affairs.

In the recent municipal elections, Jeevan Reddy's faction contested independently and secured several councillor seats, signalling his continued influence in the region.

Despite repeated interventions by the party leadership, differences between the two leaders remained unresolved. A recent phone call from K. C. Venugopal, All India Congress Com-

mittee General Secretary, to Jeevan Reddy further fuelled speculation over his next move.

During a recent media interaction, Jeevan Reddy indicated that he was no longer interested in continuing with the Congress, intensifying rumours of a possible switch. While some party circles claimed he had been offered a Rajya Sabha seat to pacify him, reports suggested that he had also received calls from leaders of the BJP and the BRS.

It is learnt that Dharmapuri Arvind from the BJP reached out to him, with rumours suggesting that discussions even touched upon the possibility of recommending his name for a gubernatorial post after

consultations with Narendra Modi. Meanwhile, sources indicated that K. Chandrashekar Rao and K. T. Rama Rao from the BRS also contacted him.

As two Rajya Sabha seats from Telangana are set to fall vacant, suspense continued over whether Jeevan Reddy would be accommodated by the Congress. Political observers noted that if a Rajya Sabha berth was not offered, the possibility of his shifting allegiance could not be ruled out.

Jeevan Reddy is expected to hold consultations with his supporters in Jagtial district before announcing his decision. Meanwhile, his followers continued to hope that the party leadership would accord him due recognition and respect.

**Hans India Classifieds**

**CHANGE OF NAME**

I, MAIDAM LAXMI W/O. MAIDAM RAJARAM, R/o: -16-84, Arundathi Nagar, Armoor-503224, Nizamabad Dist. Has Changed my name as **MAIDAM GANGU, W/O. MAIDAM RAJARAM.** (TH\_44949)

**CHANGE OF NAME**

I, YALLA RAMANA, S/o. YALLA KANAKA REDDY, R/o.1-12/1, Mallapur, Thimmapur, Karimnagar, TS, Have Changed my name as **YALLA RAMANA REDDY, S/o. YALLA KANAKA REDDY** (TH\_44949)

**CHANGE OF NAME**

I, ADIL AHMED KHALIDI, R/o. H.No. 9-13/202/A, Hajam Colony, Nizamabad-503001, my Father name: MOHAMMED ABDUL SAMAD (OLD NAME), Changed to **MAHEMOOD AHMED KHALDI (NEW NAME)** (TH\_44949)

**CHANGE OF NAME**

I, GUGULOTHU HARESHITHA, D/o GUGULOTHU RAVINDAR (Old Name) H.No. C16, LOKYA THANDA, NARAYANAPUR VILLAGE, (K. SAMUDRAN MARIDA, MAHABUBNAGAR DISTRICT, T.G., Pin Code 506112. I have changed my name as **GUGULOTHU ARADHYA, D/o GUGULOTHU RAVINDAR (New Name)** for all future purposes (TH\_0DELU)

**CHANGE OF NAME**

I, QUAVI AHMED KHALIDI, R/o. H.No. 9-13/202/A, Hajam Colony, Nizamabad-503001, my Father name: MOHAMMED ABDUL SAMAD (OLD NAME), Changed to **MAHEMOOD AHMED KHALDI (NEW NAME)** (TH\_44949)

**CHANGE OF NAME**

I, ABDUL RASHEED S/O SHAIK ABDUL HAMMED ( OLD NAME ) H NO 5-44 MENDORA BHHEEMGAL, NIZAMABAD I Changed My Name as **SHAIK ABDUL RASHEED S/O SHAIK ABDUL HAMEED (New Name)** (TH\_44949)

**CHANGE OF NAME**

I, MOHAMMED ABDUL AFFU, R/o. H.No. 9-13/202/A, Hajam Colony, Nizamabad-503001, my Father name: MOHAMMED ABDUL SAMAD (OLD NAME), Changed to **MAHEMOOD AHMED KHALDI (NEW NAME)** (TH\_44949)

**CHANGE OF NAME**

Boddu Deepika (old name) W/O: Mamidi Raj Kumar Changed my name as **Mamidi Madhuri (new name) W/o: Mamidi Raj Kumar, R/O:3-88, Hasakottur, kammar pally, Nizamabad T.G** (TH\_44949)

**CHANGE OF NAME**

I, Ravi Kiran S/o Shanker (old name) H.No. 3-63 village Chincholi Malak Mandali, sarangapur dist Nirmal, TS, have changed my name as **maisa Ravi Kiran maisa Shankar (new name)** (TH\_44949)

**CHANGE OF NAME**

H.I, SAFIYA (Old Name) W/o. MOHAMMAD VALLI MOHAMMAD VALLI H.No. 4-4-298/11, Ameenabad, Jagtial Dist: Jagtial (T.G), have changed my name as **SAFIYA BEGUM (New Name) W/o. MOHAMMAD VALLI MOHAMMAD VALLI** (TH\_44949)

**CHANGE OF NAME**

I, BASHETTY LAXMI (old name) H NO 5-11/51/63/2 PRIYADARSHINI NAGAR (VJ) AND(M) NIRMAL (DIST) NIRMAL, T. G, I have changed my name as **MUKKAWAR LAXMI W/O: BASHETTY VISHWANATH (new name)** (TH\_44949)

**CHANGE OF NAME**

I, GUNDA ANUSHA H NO 12-30/A/1 NAGARAM ROAD HUSBAND SIDDIPET HAVE CHANGED MY NAME AS **GUNDA APARNA W/O GUNDA SRINIVAS (TH\_KM GOUD)**

**CHANGE OF NAME**

It is for general information that I, Kondapalli Mahesh son of Kondapalli Laxman Raj resident of House No 4-168/69/2, Ganti Mysamma Bazar, Dantthalapally, VTC: Dantthalapally P.O. Dantalapalli, Dist. Warangal (Telangana) - 506324 declare that name of my father has been wrongly written as Yadhagiri Laxman Raj Kondapalli in my passport bearing No. S9683547. The actual name of my father is Kondapalli Laxman Raj. (TH\_TM RAO)

**CHANGE OF NAME**

I, KONDA VENKATA SWAMY GOND, Legally FATHER of No. 15190130H (HAV) KONDA POCHANNA resident of Village: Nipani, Post: Pippalkoti, Mandal: Bheempur, District: Adilabad, Telangana State, Pin: 504312 have changed my name from **KONDA VENKATA SWAMY to KONDA VENKATA SWAMY GOUD (New name)** vide Affidavit date 20.02.2026 before Telangana court. (TH\_0DELU)

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# Rahul Gandhi as PM is only solution to India's problems, asserts Bhatti

### Dy CM addressed the theme, 'Caste Issues and Reservations - The Role of Congress Workers in Combatting Caste Discrimination'

HANS NEWS SERVICE HYDERABAD

DEPUTY Chief Minister Bhatti Vikramarka asserted that if Rahul Gandhi assume the role of Prime Minister, the entrenched challenges confronting the nation will be resolved.

He urged the presidents of the district Congress Committees from both Andhra Pradesh and Telangana to engage tirelessly until Rahul Gandhi is appointed Prime Minister, emphasising the importance of striving to secure a maximum number of parliamentary seats across both states.

His remarks were delivered during a training camp for district Congress committee presidents convened in Vikarabad on Monday.

Bhatti Vikramarka addressed the theme, "Caste Issues and Reservations - The Role of Congress Workers in Combatting Caste Discrimination."

He noted that in instances of untouchability or discrimination throughout the country, Rahul Gandhi takes personal initiative to visit af-



affected areas. Citing the situation at Hyderabad Central University, he recalled that following the tragic suicide of Rohith Vemula, who reportedly experienced caste discrimination, Rahul Gandhi made a direct visit to the university, engaged with students, and played a pivotal role in shaping the ensuing movement.

Bhatti Vikramarka highlighted that during that period, Congress leaders prohibited party workers from accessing the campus, as

Rahul Gandhi maintained that untouchability should be addressed as a social concern rather than being politicized.

He elaborated that initiatives are currently in progress in Karnataka and Telangana to introduce legislation in memory of Rohith Vemula. Bhatti Vikramarka remarked that Rahul Gandhi had pledged to ensure fair distribution of resources and wealth prior to the elections, and since gaining power, the people's government has effectively implemented vari-

ous development and welfare programmes in alignment with this promise.

He indicated that, for the first time since India's Independence, a caste census was completed within 50 days and presented to the Legislative Assembly, where it garnered unanimous approval.

Bhatti Vikramarka accused the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) of conspiring to dismantle the Congress Party, which not only played a crucial role in securing India's independence but also

enacted significant revolutionary laws aimed at achieving economic, social, and political equality.

He remarked that certain political entities aim to perpetuate social and economic divisions within society. Acknowledging the persistent reality of caste in India, the Deputy Chief Minister shared his personal experiences with caste discrimination, reaffirming his commitment to pursue his objectives resolutely, notwithstanding the obstacles posed by such discrimination.

# NPDCL rolls out comprehensive plan to ensure seamless power supply during summer

### Infrastructure upgraded with new substations, transformers and interlinking lines to handle rising peak demand without disruption

HANS NEWS SERVICE KARIMNAGAR

WITH electricity demand steadily rising ahead of the summer season, the Northern Power Distribution Company of Telangana Limited (NPDCL) has undertaken extensive measures to guarantee uninterrupted power supply across the Karimnagar Circle.

Superintendent Engineer V Gangadhar stated on Monday that the department had proactively strengthened infrastructure to meet the anticipated surge in demand. He noted that power consumption within the NPDCL jurisdiction had stood at 5,816 MW in March last year and had already risen to 5,904 MW as of 21 February this year. Adequate arrangements, he assured, had been put in place to handle peak summer loads without disruption.

To manage increasing demand, particularly in urban areas, the capacity of 141 overloaded



Superintendent Engineer Gangadhar

distribution transformers had been enhanced in line with projected growth. Additionally, 116 new distribution transformers had been installed, and nine power transformers had been set up at key locations to improve supply stability.

In a further boost to infrastructure, four new substations had been constructed and 32 new breakers installed wherever required. To strengthen connectivity and enhance reliability, 29 new 33/11 kV

interlinking lines had also been established.

The Superintendent Engineer emphasised that all precautionary measures at various operational levels had been completed to ensure improved quality and reliability of power supply during the summer months. He added that officials and field staff were working in close coordination to deliver seamless electricity supply to consumers without interruption.



# MLA lays foundation stone for devpt works in Peddapalli

### CC roads, underground drainage, and high-mast lights with MUDA funds

HANS NEWS SERVICE MAHABUBNAGAR

JADCHERLA MLA Janampalli Anirudh Reddy laid the foundation stone for development works worth Rs 50 lakh in Peddapalli (Sherigudem) Gram Panchayat of Balanagar mandal.

The works, being taken up with MUDA funds, include

construction of CC roads, underground drainage and installation of high-mast lights in the village.

Speaking on the occasion, the MLA said that development of basic infrastructure in villages is the government's top priority. He stated that CC roads and underground drainage would improve sanitation and make trans-

portation easier for villagers. The high-mast lights would enhance safety and convenience during night hours. He assured that more development works would be taken up in phases for the overall progress of the village.

Local public representatives, leaders, officials and villagers participated in the programme.

# Rain alert in Telangana for next three days

HANS NEWS SERVICE HYDERABAD

THE Meteorological Department has issued a three-day weather alert for Telangana, forecasting light to moderate rainfall in several districts.

Officials said a trough has

formed from South Interior Karnataka to Marathwada at an altitude of 0.9 km above mean sea level. Another trough extends from Gangetic West Bengal to the Andhra coast over Odisha at the same altitude.

Meanwhile, the trough linked to the earlier low-

pressure area over the Southwest Bay of Bengal has weakened.

Light to moderate rains accompanied by thunder and lightning are likely at isolated places across the state on Monday and Tuesday, with similar conditions expected on Wednesday.

# CPI slams Centre over Indo-US trade deal

HANS NEWS SERVICE NALGONDA

CPI National Secretary Palla Venkat Reddy strongly criticized Prime Minister Narendra Modi over his stance on the Indo-US interim trade agreement. Addressing a district executive meeting held in Nalgonda on Monday, Reddy alleged that the Prime Minister's approach was against national interests and that the Centre failed to adopt a firm stand against tariffs imposed by the United States, adversely affecting India's economy.

He warned that the agreement could harm domestic industries, particularly farm-



ers and small traders, as increased imports may shrink markets for local products. The meeting was held at the CPI district office, Makhdoom Bhavan, in Nalgonda.

CPI District Secretary and MLC Nellikanti Satyam urged party cadres to prepare for the upcoming MPCTC and

ZPTC elections in Telangana, expressing confidence of winning more seats.

Leaders also criticized the state's urea distribution app, saying farmers face severe hardships due to lack of awareness, and demanded restoration of the old transparent supply system.



# Paddy storage facility inspected in Nizamabad

HANS NEWS SERVICE NIZAMABAD/KHAMMAM

CHAIRMAN of the State Warehousing Corporation, Rayala Nageswara Rao, on Monday inspected the Corporation's warehouse at Lakora village in Nizamabad district and reviewed the storage of fine rice stocks.

During the inspection, the Chairman examined the quality of the fine rice stored at the facility and verified whether the stock quantities matched the entries recorded in official registers.

He also checked the stock registers and other relevant

documentation to ensure proper maintenance of records.

Rao warned that strict action would be taken against anyone found involved in irregularities related to the storage of fine rice. He stressed the need for transparency and adherence to established norms in maintaining warehouse stocks.

The Chairman also reviewed the methods adopted for the use of chemicals in preserving the stored grain and directed officials to follow all prescribed safety measures to prevent damage and ensure quality standards.

# Rs 22L cash stolen from locked house

HANS NEWS SERVICE CHOUTUPPAL (YADADRI-BHONGIR)

A major theft was reported in the town center of Choutuppal in Yadadri Bhuvanagiri district. Unidentified miscreants created havoc in a locked house and decamped with Rs 22 lakh in cash that had been stored in a cupboard.

The victim, Narasimha, said the money was arranged for a plot registration. He explained that the cash was raised by pledging his wife's gold ornaments at a bank, making the loss even more distressing for the family.

Upon receiving information, the police rushed to the scene along with the clues team and dog squad to collect evidence. Authorities are closely examining CCTV footage from nearby areas to identify the culprits. Police officials stated that locked houses are increasingly being targeted by burglars and advised residents to remain vigilant and take necessary precautions. The Choutuppal police have intensified the investigation under the supervision of CI Manmadh Kumar.



Victims protesting in front of the jewellery shop

# Gold trade betrayal: Fake biscuits sold in Huzurnagar

### The owner of Sri Sairam Jewellers allegedly colluded with a private gold mortgage dealer and sold rolled gold disguised as authentic to unsuspecting victims

HANS NEWS SERVICE HUZURNAGAR (SURYAPET)

A major fraud by the owner of Sri Sairam Jewellers in Huzurnagar of Suryapet district has come to light belatedly. Under the guise of selling gold biscuits, the jeweller allegedly supplied fake (rolled gold) biscuits, cheating victims of a significant amount.

According to local sources, the owner of Sri Sairam Jewellers colluded with a private gold mortgage dealer. The victims reportedly purchased gold biscuits worth around

Rs 10 lakh. However, when the biscuits were tested due to an urgent need, it was revealed that they were merely rolled gold pieces. The victims were shocked to discover that the very trader they trusted had deceived them.

Protesting the injustice, the victims staged a demonstration in front of the jewellery shop, demanding immediate repayment of their money and strict action against the owner responsible for the fraud. The protest led to brief tension in the town.

HANS NEWS SERVICE HYDERABAD

TENSION prevailed in the city as thousands of ASHA workers staged a massive dharna at the Koti Commissioner's Office under the banner of 'Chalo Hyderabad', demanding immediate payment of pending January salaries, a fixed monthly pay of Rs 18,000, and allocation of sufficient funds in the upcoming Assembly budget to resolve their problems.

Despite heavy restrictions and reported arrests across the state, large numbers of ASHA workers reached the protest venue. A scuffle broke out between the protesters



and police, leading to several workers sustaining injuries. Protesters alleged that police personnel dragged women

workers, resulting in torn clothes and some falling unconscious. The dharna continued

from 12 noon to 3 pm. The Union leaders criticized the state government for not even being ready to listen to their

problems and for allegedly suppressing their democratic right to protest and warned of intensified agitation if their demands are not addressed.

The leaders criticized the government for not even being ready to listen to their problems. The leaders warned the government that if it does not resolve the problems faced by the ASHA workers soon, they would intensify the struggles in the future.

Prominent participants included ASHA Union CITU State President P. Jayalakshmi, General Secretary R. Neela Devi, Treasurer P. Gangamani, CITU State Secretary J. Venkatesh, and other union leaders.

# Banswada clashes: MIM seeks release of minority youth

## Delegation meets Minorities Minister Mohd Azharuddin and submits request

- Stay requested on further arrests
- Request also made for disbursement of compensation to affected shop owners

HANS NEWS SERVICE  
HYDERABAD

A delegation of All India Majlis-e-Ittehadul Muslimeen (AIMIM) legislators met Minister for Minorities Welfare Mohammed Azharuddin and Additional Director General of Police (ADGP) Mahesh Bhagwat separately on Monday and submitted a detailed representation regarding the Baswada communal incident.

The AIMIM legislators, including Mohammad Mubeen, Mir Zulfqar Ali, Ahmed Bin Abdullah Balala, Kausar Mohiuddin, Mirza Rahmat Baig (MLC), and Mirza Riyaz-ul-Hasan Ef-



fendi (MLC) requested the immediate release of minority youth, a stay on further arrests, and the disbursement of adequate compensation to affected shop owners.

They also urged the Minister to ensure a fair and impartial investigation, take stringent action against those responsible, and implement measures to maintain communal harmony and restore peace in the affected area.

During the meeting, the leaders expressed serious concern over the recent

clashes between two religious groups in Banswada, which resulted in minor vandalism and tension in the area. Following the incident, certain right-wing organisations called for a bandh on Saturday, which was observed amid heavy police deployment. The representatives informed the Minister that eight Muslims were arrested in connection with the incident and requested a fair and impartial review of the cases. They urged that innocent individuals should not be har-

assed and appealed for their release after proper legal examination. The leaders also raised the issue of alleged looting and damage to Muslim-owned shops during the violence and requested that adequate compensation be provided to the affected traders.

Reacting to the violence, the Minister called for a thorough and impartial investigation into the incident and demanded strict action against those responsible for disturbing communal har-

mony. He emphasised that maintaining peace and protecting the rights and properties of all citizens is the government's priority. The issue of the reported demolition of Masjid-e-Maulana was also discussed, and concern was expressed over the matter. The Minister assured that the issue would be examined carefully and appropriate steps would be taken as per law.

In addition, the meeting reviewed the preparations for the upcoming holy month of Ramadan. Minister Mohammad Azharuddin directed the concerned officials to ensure that all necessary arrangements are made smoothly and efficiently so that the community does not face any inconvenience. The Minister reiterated his commitment to safeguarding communal harmony, ensuring justice, and providing necessary support to affected families.

# Warangal police shine at state games, CP eyes national podium

- Warangal Commissionerate sportspersons excel at State-Level Police Games
- CP Sunpreet Singh urges greater dedication to achieve national-level success
- Commissioner assures full support for police personnel who excel in sports

HANS NEWS SERVICE  
HANUMAKONDA



Warangal Police Commissioner Sunpreet Singh with players during the felicitation ceremony on Monday

SUNPREET Singh, Commissioner of Police, Warangal, said that with greater dedication and sustained effort in the coming days, sportspersons from the Commissionerate could secure medals at the national level.

He was speaking at a felicitation ceremony held on Monday at the Warangal Police Commissionerate office to honour police personnel who excelled at the State-Level Police Games conducted at the Cyberabad Police Commissionerate.

The Commissioner attended the programme as

the chief guest, accompanied by DCPs Dara Kavitha and Ankit Kumar, Trainee IPS Manisha Nehra, Additional DCPs Suresh Kumar, Ravi and Srinivas, ACPs Nagayya, Surrender, Jitender Reddy, Madhusudan and Anthayya, along with RIs Sparjan Raj and others.

On the occasion, the CP personally met and congratulated the medal-winning sportspersons. Hockey players jointly presented a jersey to the Commissioner as a mark of appreciation. In a notable moment, East Zone DCP Ankit Kumar presented a bronze medal to the Commissioner, who had secured third place in table tennis at the State-Level Police Games.

Addressing the gathering, Mr Singh congratulated not only the medal winners but also all participants who represented the Warangal Commissionerate. He expressed satisfaction that the Commissionerate's sportspersons had delivered an impressive performance at the state level, securing more medals than the previous year.

He urged them to sustain their enthusiasm and intensify their training in the coming days to achieve success at the national level. Assuring full support to those excelling in sports, the Commissioner said the department would continue to encourage and promote sporting talent within the force.



K. Pratap Reddy, Vice-Chancellor of Kakatiya University addressing the media on Monday

# Time-bound action on Praja Vani petitions ordered in Mahabubabad

## A total of 131 grievances received as Collector warns officials against delay and negligence

HANS NEWS SERVICE  
MAHABUBABAD

ADVAIT Kumar Singh, District Collector of Mahabubabad, on Monday directed officials to ensure the prompt and time-bound disposal of petitions received under the Praja Vani programme. The programme was held at the Collectorate conference hall in the presence of Additional Collector (Local Bodies) Lenin Vatsal Toppo. Addressing the officials, the Collector stressed that applications pertaining to land record corrections, inheritance mutations, social pensions, ration cards and other welfare schemes must



be processed without delay. He further instructed departments to respond immediately to complaints relating to drainage, drinking water supply and electricity, cautioning that any negligence in addressing public griev-

ances would attract strict action. A total of 131 petitions were received during the programme and were forwarded to the respective departments for necessary action. Senior district officials were present at the meeting.

# Uttam vows to fast-track Gouravelli irrigation project

HANS NEWS SERVICE  
HYDERABAD

IRRIGATION and Civil Supplies Minister N Uttam Kumar Reddy exuded confidence that environmental clearance for the Gouravelli Irrigation Project would be secured soon, asserting that all legal and administrative hurdles would be cleared on priority.

At a high-level review meeting held at the Secretariat here on Sunday, attended by Transport Minister Ponnambhar, the Minister directed the officials to fast-track land acquisition under a time-bound programme. He assured the farmers of fair compensation and speedy payments, making it clear that there would be "zero excuses" in completing the land acquisition process before the June 2 deadline set by Chief Minister A Revanth

Reddy. Part of the Indiramma Flood Flow Canal (IFFC), the reservoir was initially planned with a 1.41 TMC capacity in Siddipet district to irrigate 1.06 lakh acres. The capacity was later enhanced to 8.23 TMC.

Referring to the Supreme Court case coming up for hearing in two days, Uttam Kumar Reddy directed the Telangana Advocate General to be fully prepared with legal strategies. He expressed hope that the long-pending project, stalled for years due to multiple issues, would now move towards completion without further delay. He also asked government advisor (Irrigation) Adityanath Das to resolve bottlenecks and instructed the Collectors of Karimnagar, Jangaon and Siddipet to accord top priority to land acquisition, particularly in areas where urbanisation has driven up land values.

# KU Vice-Chancellor unveils TG EDSET-2026 exam schedule

- Examination to be held on May 12 in two sessions across 16 centres in Telangana
- Preliminary answer key to be released on May 17 with provision for objections

HANS NEWS SERVICE  
HANUMAKONDA

K. Pratap Reddy, Vice-Chancellor of Kakatiya University, announced the notification schedule for TG EDSET-2026 at a press conference held on Monday at the Commerce College on the university campus.

He stated that the online application process for TG EDSET-2026 has started from the 23rd of this month.

He advised aspiring candidates to complete and submit their applications within the stipulated timeframe through the official portal.

The application fee has been fixed at Rs 550 for SC, ST and PH candidates, and Rs 750 for BC and OC candidates. The last date for submission of applications without a late fee is April 15. Applications will be accepted with a late fee of Rs 250 from April 22, with a late fee of Rs 500 from April 27, and with a late fee of Rs 1,000 from April 30.

Candidates who wish to make corrections to their submitted applications will be allowed to do so until May 2. The allotment of examination centres will be finalised on May 4.

An additional opportunity will be provided for last-minute applicants from May 8 to May 9 with a penalty fee of Rs 5,000.

Hall tickets can be downloaded from the official website from May 9 onwards. The examination is scheduled to be conducted on May 12 in two sessions — from 10.00 am to 12.00 noon and from 2.00 pm to 4.00 pm.

The preliminary answer key will be released on May 17. Candidates may raise objections within seven working days by paying Rs 500 per question. If the objection is found to be valid, the amount will be refunded. The Vice-Chancellor added that the examination will be conducted at 16 centres across Telangana.

# 'Leave Iran by any available means'

Continued from P1

Indians in Iran have also been advised to have their travel and immigration documents, including passports and IDs, readily available with them. They are requested to contact the Indian Embassy for any assistance. The Indian Embassy has also issued emergency numbers and email: +989128109115; +989128109109; +989128109102; +989932179359. Email: cons. tehran@mea.gov.in. Indian nationals in Iran are also asked to register with the Indian Embassy. The advisory comes after new anti-government protests erupted in Iran on Saturday following 40-day memorials for people killed in January during anti-government rallies. According to Iran's state news agency, students protested at five universities in the capital,

Tehran and one in the city of Mashhad on Sunday.

A video geolocated by the news agency AFP of what appeared to be the demonstration at Sharif University showed a large crowd chanting anti-government slogans as they thronged around students waving the flag of the toppled monarchy. The US and Iran will hold their next round of nuclear talks on Thursday in Geneva. Oman's foreign minister, Badr al-Busaidi, confirmed the talks. Oman previously hosted the indirect talks on the Islamic Republic's nuclear program and facilitated the latest round in Geneva last week.

The Trump administration on the other hand has ramped up the movement of military aircraft towards the Middle East, as negotiations over a potential nuclear deal with Iran remain fragile.

# Bill Gates building 'artificial sun' that could replace coal

Continued from P1

The exact model Type One Energy intends to build is known as a stellarator. A stellarator is a device that utilises very strong magnetic fields to keep plasma, which is heated to extreme temperatures, in a confined space.

Plasma is a gas that has been heated to such a high temperature that it becomes a sort of fourth state of matter. In a fusion reactor, the plasma needs to be heated to a temperature of approximately 100 million degrees Celsius.

At such high temperatures, atoms have the ability to fuse. Perhaps you have come across tokamaks, which are basically doughnut-shaped fusion machines being developed by other nations. A stellarator essentially serves the same function as a tokamak but differs in its design.

Instead of a simple ring shape, it makes use of twisted, finely engineered magnetic coils. These are intended to maintain the plasma in a stable state for extended periods of time. Tokamaks can struggle with stability problems. Stellarators aim to reduce those issues, though they are harder to build.

# Maha seeks CBI probe into Ajit Pawar plane crash

Continued from P1

The Mahayuti government will ensure that all doubts regarding the plane crash are cleared, Fadnavis said at a press conference on Sunday on the eve of the budget session of the Maharashtra legislature. "I had received a letter from the NCP (an ally of the BJP) seeking a CBI probe into the air crash and spoke with Home Minister Amit Shah. Along with investigations by DGCA and state CID, there will be a probe by the CBI," he added.

Ajit Pawar and four others onboard a chartered plane

were killed when it crashed while attempting to land near Baramati in Pune district on January 28.

The late NCP chief's nephew and NCP (SP) leader Rohit Pawar has raised several allegations regarding the plane crash circumstances and suspected foul play.

On Saturday, Rohit Pawar wrote to Prime Minister Narendra Modi, demanding that Civil Aviation Minister K Rammoohan Naidu be asked to resign till the inquiry into the incident is completed.

# CCPA slaps ₹15L penalty on Vajirao & Reddy

Continued from P1

The CCPA highlighted that the specific courses undertaken by successful candidates constitute material information for UPSC aspirants. Concealment of this information misleads prospective students regarding the efficacy and scope of the institute's programs, violating consumer rights under Section 2(9) of the Consumer Protection Act, 2019.

During the investigation, the Authority examined enrolment records and found that 431 forms lacked course details and submission dates, and many others indicated enrolment only in "Inter-

view Guidance Programmes" or mock interviews. This showed that several candidates had cleared the preliminary stages independently and approached the institute solely for final-stage guidance.

The CCPA noted that Vajirao & Reddy Institute had previously been penalised Rs 7 lakh for similar violations related to the UPSC CSE 2022 results. The recurrence of misleading advertisements warranted a higher penalty this time.

The Authority also emphasised the scale of impact, noting that approximately 11 lakh candidates appear for

the UPSC exams annually. Misleading claims can distort expectations, influencing students and parents who invest significant time, effort, and money in competitive exam preparation.

So far, the CCPA has issued 57 notices to coaching institutes for misleading advertisements, imposing penalties totalling Rs 1.24 crore on 29 institutes.

The Authority has directed coaching centres to ensure truthful and transparent disclosure of material information in their advertisements, enabling students to make informed academic decisions.

# 'Heartbroken with status of West Bengal under Mamata rule'

Continued from P1

"While on the one hand the youth are forced to migrate to other states for lack of employment opportunities, on the other, women of West Bengal are fearful and alarmed due to a lack of security," he added.

Naming Bengal's political and cultural icons such as Swami Vivekananda, Rishi Aurobindo, Subhas Chandra Bose, Rabindranath Tagore and Shyama Prasad Mukherjee at multiple points in his letter, Modi regretted the "darkness of chaos that grips West Bengal" in current times. "The West Bengal visualised by its iconic forefathers,

such as Swami Vivekananda and Rishi Aurobindo, is now riddled with vote bank politics, violence and anarchy. The son of the soil of this state, Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose, whose call for freedom had once stirred the whole country, that holy land is now blighted with infiltration and torture of women. Fake voters currently dominate Rabindranath Tagore's 'Sonar Bangla'.

"The whole country is worried about the darkness of chaos that West Bengal is sinking into," the PM wrote. Insisting that the time has come to break the shackles of "silent suffering", the PM said that change is now "inevitable".

The standard of living has remarkably improved in other states. Smiles have returned to the lips of the poor. Ayushman Bharat has provided health cover, new employment is guaranteed for the youth and women's safety is ensured. Bengal too should be part of this growth and development," Modi said.

Stating that he "waited eagerly for a chance to serve the people," the PM quoted Tagore's "Where the mind is without fear and the head is held high" and promised to

bring an end to "corruption and mal-governance". "We will ensure women's safety, curtail migration for work and restore the state's former glory. Religiously persecuted refugee brothers and sisters who took shelter here would be granted citizenship through CAA and we will establish the rule of law by stopping infiltration," Modi said.

The letter coincided with the Bengal BJP's ongoing house-to-house 'Griha Sampark Abhiyan' during which party leaders will distribute the PM's communication to households during their grassroots outreach programme.

# Tamil Nadu SIR complete

Continued from P1

The total electorate then stood at 5.43 crore, a drop from the previous 6.41 crore.

However, after SIR, 34,75,717 applications were received both offline and online, including for inclusion. As many as 27.53 lakh eligible electors were added and 4.23 lakh ineligible electors were deleted during the period for filing of claims and objections from Dec 19 in 2025 to Jan 30.

As per the final electoral roll, the Assembly constituency with the highest number of electors is Shozhingalur in Chengalpattu district, with 5,36,991 electors — 2,62,621 men, 2,74,254 women, and 116 from the third gender.

# Sri Lankan Parliament shows the way for India

As far as setting an illustrious example goes, it is a matchless move. With the salaries and perks of MPs and MLAs in India rising at regular intervals, with generous dollops of additional facilities to go along ending with a generous pension to enable them to subsist in their sunset years (base pension of Rs 31,000 per month), what has been undertaken by Sri Lanka deserves loud applause. On February 6, the Supreme Court had determined that the Parliamentary Pensions (Repeal) Bill can be passed in Parliament with a simple majority. Its main aim was to repeal the Parliamentary Pensions Law No 1 of 1977, which had established a

non-contributory lifetime pension to persons who have ceased to be members of parliament. The Sri Lankan government has gazetted the Parliamentary Pensions (Repeal) Act after it was passed by 154 votes in the 225-member House, with only two against. Ostensibly, this move is to fund other essential public services, given the not-so-secure financial status that the island-nation has been embroiled in for nearly five years now.

But beyond tokenism, this move has been highlighted as fulfilling a key campaign promise of President Anura Kumara Dissanayake, who assured to do away with 'unjustified' political perks. In Sri Lanka, a

member of parliament was entitled to a pension after serving a five-year term. In contrast, just look at what is happening in our nation. As an additional service pension, for every year of service beyond the mandatory five-year term, an extra ₹2,500 per month is added to the base pension, including to all former members of either House of Parliament. The salary and pension structure is subject to revision every five years based on the Cost Inflation Index. The perks for former MPs include free train travel in first-class. The recent revision was announced in March 2025, with the changes effective retroactively from April 1, 2023. According to PRS India data,

historically, the average age of the Lok Sabha has risen from 46.5 years in the First Lok Sabha to over 55 in recent sessions, indicating a long-term shift toward older representatives.

The average age of Members of Parliament (MPs) in the 18th Lok Sabha (2024) is 56 years. This reflects an aging trend in Indian politics, with 52 per cent of MPs being over 55 years, while only 11 per cent are 40 years or younger. Even if an MP ceases to be one after a single five-year term, the individual is thus part of the gray train, irrespective of age. Interestingly, with a population share of 11 per cent, senior citizens in India are among the worst

treated ones. In an impassioned speech in Parliament, Shiv Sena MP Sanjay Raut had said that the government should kill all the senior citizens after 65 years because the government is not ready to pay attention to these nation builders and queried if it is a crime to be one. The other side of the picture is that senior citizens in politics are given all the benefits possible to MLAs, MPs or ministers and they also get pension. 'Senior citizens have the right to change the government, do not ignore them. They have a lifetime experience of changing the government. Do not consider them weak,' opined the mercurial MP. But will things change, is the moot question.

## LETTERS

### Engg education must move with the times

With reference to the article "The new blueprint for Engineering: Skills, speed and specialisation" by Prof Geeta Tripathi (THI Feb 23), I wish to emphasize the essential significance that engineering education must move with the times or risk being left behind in the fast lane of innovation. As Industry 5.0 builds upon AI, robotics, cloud computing and cyber-physical systems, the writing is on the wall: traditional degrees like engineering alone can no longer carry the whole weight of employability. Engineering education must balance theoretical depth with agility, speed and specialisation to build not just job seekers, but job creators.

Raju Kolluru, Kakinada

### Galgotias episode is an eye-opener

With reference to the editorial "Upshots of the Galgotias robodog controversy" (Feb 23), the Galgotias University episode at the recent AI summit has rightly drawn attention to deeper issues in private higher education. While the robodog claim caused immediate embarrassment, the bigger concern lies in inflated patent numbers and misleading performance claims that many institutions use for rankings and advertisements. This erodes trust among students and parents, who invest heavily expecting genuine quality. To address this realistically, the UGC and NIRF should tighten verification of patent data—perhaps by giving more weight to granted patents over filed ones—and conduct random audits of self-reported metrics. Private universities must also face stricter oversight on marketing practices. This would strengthen the overall credibility of Indian higher education.

S M Jeeva, Chennai-32

### Regulators must get tough post-Galgotias

Propos "Upshots of the Galgotias Robodog Controversy". The editorial makes a fair point that the real victims here are the students, who now carry the stigma of a degree from an institution caught in a fraud. That is deeply unfair to young people who had no say in their university's conduct. NIRF and NAAC rankings are taken seriously by students and parents when choosing institutions, yet as the article notes, neither body adequately captures the gap between private and public universities on critical metrics like patent quality. Regulators must also crack down on misleading advertisements. This incident should become a turning point, not just another forgotten controversy.

A. Myilsami, Coimbatore-641402

### Onus on NIRF and NAAC

The Galgotias robodog controversy has raised uncomfortable questions about claims made by private universities and the systems meant to verify them. When exaggerated achievements go unchecked, it is students and parents who pay the price. Regulatory bodies such as NIRF and NAAC should refine their assessment methods, giving greater weight to verified research, patents granted, faculty quality and student outcomes. Periodic third-party audits and strict penalties for misleading advertisements would help restore credibility. Universities, too, must adopt transparent disclosure practices.

M Barathi, Bengaluru-560076

### Govt must ensure strict verification

This letter refers to your editorial, "Upshots of the Galgotias robodog controversy," (Feb 23). While the incident itself is embarrassing, the systemic issues it exposes regarding our higher education landscape are a matter of serious concern. The disparity in patent approval rates between premier public institutions and certain private universities suggests that quantity is being prioritised over actual innovation. To address this, the NIRF and NAAC must refine their evaluation metrics to emphasize quality and peer-reviewed impact rather than just raw numbers, while the government should implement stricter verification of technological claims made by universities in their advertisements.

K Sakunthala, Coimbatore-16

### Need for a balanced reform agenda

The Galgotias robodog controversy underlines how fragile credibility can be in higher education. While the ridicule faced by students is regrettable, the larger issue is the weak performance of many private universities in research and patent approvals. This gap must be addressed through stronger oversight and transparent evaluation. Ranking bodies should move beyond cosmetic indicators and place greater weight on measurable outcomes such as patents, publications, and employability. A balanced reform agenda—combining stricter regulation with incentives for quality research—can help restore trust and ensure students are not penalised for institutional lapses.

Abbhana Barathi, Chennai-23

thehansreader@gmail.com

## BENGALURU ONLINE

### Minister launches Amazon's 10th corporate office in state

BENGALURU: Minister for Large and Medium Industries MB Patil on Monday inaugurated Amazon's newly constructed, fully equipped corporate main office spread across 11 lakh square feet (1.1 million sq.ft.) at Vinayaka Nagar near Yelahanka. Speaking on the occasion, he said, "This is Amazon's 10th corporate office in the State. The company, which has shared a two-decade association with Karnataka, plans to invest 35 billion dollars in India over the next four years. This investment is expected to support 15 million small businesses and generate lakhs of employment opportunities. Karnataka will receive a significant share of this investment." He pointed out that Karnataka has an annual per capita income of over ₹3.80 lakh, ranking highest in the country. The State also stands second in annual GST contributions to the national exchequer, contributing ₹1.6 lakh crore.

Read more at <https://epaper.thehansindia.com>

# Life must be protected, not 'pactually' abandoned



PROF MADABHUSHI SRIDHAR ACHARYULU

WHETHER it is the Constitutional law or criminal law, suicide cannot be accepted under any circumstances. Life is for living. No one has the right to die, but rather a duty to live and let others live.

The recent Supreme Court's dismissal of the appeal affirms a crucial criminal law principle: surviving a suicide pact does not erase legal responsibility when one has facilitated the other's death. The judgment, delivered by a bench of Justice Rajesh Bindal and Justice Manmohan, not only resolves a long-pending criminal dispute but also clarifies the jurisprudential position on abetment to suicide and the criminality inherent in mutual suicide arrangements.

Right to live under Article 21 cannot be extended to include 'right to die'. This significant case presents a delicate intersection of criminal liability, medical evidence, and the State's constitutional obligation to protect life under Article 21. Life is beautiful, whether killing herself or joining a lover, may be a thrilling cinema, but not in reality. In a pact of dying together, if both die, there may be no criminal case, but all those who abetted will be a criminal offence and culpable.

A beautiful heroine, Pratyusha, ended her life following a mutual agreement (?), while the surviving lover became a criminal.

At a broader constitutional level, the decision reinforces that the State's duty is not merely to punish after death but to create legal and social conditions that discourage suicide, prevent emotional coercion, and protect the sanctity of life.

The tragedy of Pratyusha is therefore not only a criminal case but a societal warning: Love cannot justify self-destruction; despair cannot legalise death; and survival cannot absolve complicity. The law,

ultimately, speaks with a humane yet firm voice: life is inviolable, and any pact to extinguish it invites both moral sorrow and legal consequence.

### Analysis of the Pratyusha case:

The recent dismissal of the appeal by the Supreme Court in the 23-year-old case concerning the tragic death of the south Indian actress raises profound questions about criminal abetment, evidentiary evaluation, suicide prevention, and the legal culpability of a surviving partner in a suicide pact.

The judgment also emphasises evidentiary discipline, rejecting sensational claims unsupported by medical proof while upholding culpability grounded in established facts.

### Love, opposition and a fatal pact:

It is again a story of love, opposition, and a fatal pact. The prosecution's case, accepted by the courts, was that the actress and Gudipalli Siddhartha Reddy were in a relationship despite opposition by his parents. In this emotionally charged setting, both allegedly consumed poison together. While she succumbed, he survived. He was thereafter convicted for: 1. Abetment to suicide; 2. Attempt to commit suicide.

The trial court imposed five years' imprisonment, later reduced to two years by the Andhra Pradesh High Court in 2004. The surviving accused challenged the conviction, while the victim's mother alleged rape, murder by strangulation, and inadequate sentencing.

The Supreme Court, after examining ocular and medical evidence, rejected allegations of rape and strangulation, holding that death was due to poisoning and that purchase of poison (neurotone) constituted abetment.

### Survival as a liability!

The crucial legal principle reaffirmed by the Court is that a surviving partner in a mutual suicide pact can be legally culpable for abetment to suicide. This doctrine flows from Sections 107 and 306 of the Indian Penal Code, which criminalise instigation, conspiracy, or intentional aid to commit suicide. The law does not treat suicide pacts as romantic acts of shared despair but as legally culpable agreements that normalise self-destruction. Thus, survival does not imply innocence. It may instead



The crucial legal principle reaffirmed by the Court is that a surviving partner in a mutual suicide pact can be legally culpable for abetment to suicide. The law does not treat suicide pacts as romantic acts of shared despair but as legally culpable agreements that normalise self-destruction. Thus, survival does not imply innocence. It may instead expose a participant to enhanced criminal scrutiny.

### A judicial reasoning:

The oral pronouncement of the bench outlines a layered evidentiary assessment:

- Murder by strangulation ruled out
- Overwhelming ocular and medical evidence proved poisoning
- Rape allegations not established
- Related claims of rape and strangulation rejected
- Accidental consumption defence disbelieved
- Purchase of poison established abetment
- Unprofessional post-mortem report criticised
- Premature publication of medical findings condemned

These findings reflect the Court's reliance on forensic consistency, contemporaneous evidence, and legal causation, rather than speculative allegations emerging decades later.

### Distinction between attempted suicide and abetment:

Attempts to commit suicide historically attracted punishment under Section 309 IPC, though contemporary mental health jurisprudence treats survivors with compassion. However, when a survivor is shown to have actively enabled the other's death, the law shifts focus

from mental vulnerability to criminal complicity.

### Thus:

Mere survival may invite therapeutic response, while survival with facilitation invites penal consequences

### Romantic myth vs criminal reality:

Popular culture often portrays suicide pacts as tragic expressions of love. Criminal law rejects this romanticism for three reasons:

- Suicide is not a private contract:** A pact to die together cannot be legally validated because life is constitutionally protected, the State has an interest in preserving life, and consent cannot legalise self-destruction.
- Power imbalance and emotional coercion:** One partner may be more vulnerable. Emotional dependence can turn a "mutual pact" into subtle coercion.
- Survival distorts the pact:** If one dies and the other survives, the survivor's role must be scrutinised: Was it equal participation, passive presence, or active facilitation? The law, therefore, presumes that survival coupled with preparatory acts (like procuring poison) may constitute abetment.

### State's duty to prevent suicide:

The constitutional guarantee of life under Article 21 imposes a positive obligation on the State:

- To protect individuals from self-harm;
- To regulate circumstances enabling suicide;
- To penalise those who facilitate self-destruction

Suicide is not merely a private tragedy; it is a constitutional concern involving dignity, mental health, and social responsibility. Criminalising abetment ensures that despair is not converted into a shared criminal enterprise.

### A doctrinal clarification:

This case reiterates a settled but often misunderstood principle—a suicide pact is not a shield against criminal liability. Participation in planning, procuring means, or encouraging the act can constitute abetment if one partner dies. Thus, the law treats suicide pacts not as mutual consent but as shared participation in a legally prohibited act, where survival triggers accountability.

While the decision affirms criminal liability for abetment, it also indirectly underscores the importance of suicide prevention. Punishment alone cannot address the root causes of emotional distress, familial opposition, and social pressures. Preventive measures must include: Mental health counselling for vulnerable individuals; Social awareness about emotional coercion; Early intervention in toxic or high-pressure relationships; Responsible media reporting in celebrity tragedies; Law punishes facilitation, but society must prevent desperation.

### Media and medical evidence:

An important aspect of the case is the Court's criticism of an "unprofessional" post-mortem report and premature publication of medical findings. This highlights two systemic concerns: Forensic evidence must be scientifically consistent and professionally verified; Media leaks of medical opinions can prejudice trials and distort public perception. By rejecting unsupported strangulation claims and relying on consistent ocular and medical evidence, the court reaffirmed the primacy of credible forensic science over sensational allegations.

### Balancing compassion and accountability:

Modern jurisprudence recognises that suicide survivors may themselves be victims of mental distress. However, when evidence shows (a) Purchase of lethal substance, (b) Active facilitation, and (c) Knowledge of consequences, the law must respond not merely with sympathy but with accountability. The Supreme Court's approach reflects a calibrated balance: Reject exaggerated allegations (rape, strangulation); Affirm proven criminal facilitation (purchase of poison); recognise the survivor's culpability within evidentiary limits.

### Evidentiary integrity:

The Supreme Court's refusal to accept rape allegations demonstrates a commitment to evidentiary rigour. Criminal law cannot sustain convictions on delayed or unsupported claims. While sensitivity to victims is essential, judicial fairness requires proof beyond a reasonable doubt. The judgment thus balances compassion with legal certainty.

(The writer is Advisor, School of Law, Mahindra University, Hyderabad)

# Inclusive governance gets an urban mandate in Telangana

AMARAVAJI NAGARAJU

THE outcome of the recent municipal elections in Telangana has done more than merely redrawing the political map of urban local bodies. It has reopened a substantive debate on representation, caste arithmetic and the evolving grammar of social justice in a rapidly urbanising State.

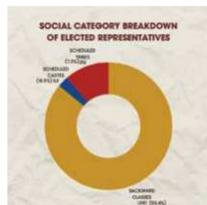
While local elections are often treated as peripheral contests, the scale and pattern of results across the State's 113 municipalities and corporations suggest a deeper political recalibration.

The Congress, which returned to power in the State promising "praja palana" (people-centric governance), has secured control in 90 municipalities. What distinguishes this verdict, however, is not merely the number of urban bodies won, but the social composition of those who now head them.

Approximately, 66 of the 113 municipal chairpersons are from Backward Class (BC) communities, which roughly translates to 61 per cent of the

total. In municipalities secured by the Congress, 51 chairperson posts have gone to BC leaders. Representation extends beyond titular leadership: BCs account for more than 60 per cent of key positions including chairpersons, vice-chairpersons, mayors and deputy mayors. At the ward level too, more than 55 per cent of elected councillors are from BC communities.

At the corporation level, the numbers are equally striking. Four of the seven mayoral positions are now held by BC representatives, marking a notable shift in the social profile of urban power centres. In a State where BC communities constitute a significant share of the population, and are deeply embedded in urban informal economies from small traders and artisans to service providers and lower-middle-class employees, this redistribution of political authority carries symbolic as well as practical weight. The Congress leadership has projected this outcome as validation of its commitment to institutionalising social justice. In the run-up to the Assembly



elections, the party had promised caste enumeration and 42 per cent reservations for BCs in local bodies. While legal and procedural complexities surround the full operationalization of such quotas, the party appears to have moved proactively in ticket distribution. Reports indicate that over 53 per cent of party nominations in municipal elections were given to BC candidates exceeding the stated reservation benchmark.

Critics may argue that candidate selection is ultimately a political calculation rather than a moral gesture. Yet electoral endorsement by voters suggests that the strategy has resonated. Urban constituencies, often perceived as less driven by caste considerations than rural ones, have demonstrated that social

Urban local bodies are not ornamental institutions. They oversee critical functions: water supply, waste management, road infrastructure, public health, urban planning and local taxation. The composition of leadership in these bodies shapes budget priorities and administrative focus. Enhanced BC representation may therefore influence policy choices, particularly in areas like slum upgrading, small enterprise facilitation; market infrastructure and welfare delivery for lower-income households.

Telangana's municipal structure also accommodates representation for Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, minorities and other communities under constitutional mandates. The current distribution appears to reflect a layered inclusion rather than a zero-sum redistribution.

### Broader implications merit closer scrutiny:

Urban local bodies are not ornamental institutions. They oversee critical functions: water supply, waste management, road infrastructure, public health, urban planning and local taxation. The composition of leadership in these bodies shapes budget priorities and administrative focus. Enhanced BC representation may therefore influence policy choices, particularly in areas like slum upgrading, small enterprise facilitation; market infrastructure and welfare delivery for lower-income households. At the same time, social justice in governance cannot be reduced to numerical dominance.

Whether this balance endures will depend on the government's administrative prudence. Politically, the municipal verdict strengthens the Congress's urban foothold at a time when local elections are increasingly interpreted as mid-term referendums. Consolidation among BC voters, a decisive social bloc in Telangana, could influence future Assembly and Parliamentary contests. Yet, as history repeatedly demonstrates, social coalitions are sustained less by symbolism and more by performance.



## JEE Main 2026 session 1: Toppers share preparation mantras

HIGHLIGHT HOW DISCIPLINED ROUTINES, MOCK-TEST ANALYSIS, AND STEADY FOCUS SHAPED THEIR PERFORMANCE

ARTI ADKE

The National Testing Agency (NTA) recently announced the results of JEE Main 2026 Session 1, with several candidates securing above the 99 percentile, underscoring the intense competition for admission to premier engineering institutions across the country. Among the high achievers, Shreyas Pai secured 99.23 percentile, Bharath Madhusudhan Gudi scored 99.87 percentile, and Sughosh Joshi achieved 99.776 percentile. The results mark a significant milestone for thousands of aspirants who appeared for the first session of one of India's most competitive entrance examinations.

### Structured preparation key to success

For Shreyas Pai (99.23 percentile), disciplined daily study routines played a decisive role. Balancing college hours from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m., he dedicated four to five hours each day to focused preparation. His strategy revolved around practising module questions and extensively solving Previous Year Questions (PYQs).

"I followed a question-wise analysis after every mock test," Shreyas said. He maintained an "error book" where he documented mistakes and revised incorrect answers to avoid repeating them. Addressing his biggest weakness — exam nervousness — he relied on repeated practice to build confidence. On exam day, his mantra was simple: remain calm and focus solely on attempting questions without worrying about the outcome.

To prevent burnout, Shreyas divided his workload into manageable daily targets, ensuring he did not leave large portions



Bharath Madhusudhan Gudi

for the last moment. He focused on rigorous practice during the initial months, reserving the final phase for revision and repetition. Leisure time, including playing cricket with friends, helped him maintain balance.

### Learning from mistakes

Bharath Madhusudhan Gudi (99.87 percentile) attributed his success to consistency and discipline in his daily study plan. "I ensured that no backlog spilled over to the next day," he said. Conceptual clarity came from attentive classroom learning and thorough revision of notes, but he emphasised that practice was indispensable. Weekly tests served as checkpoints to track progress.



Shreyas Pai

Bharath described his error book as a powerful self-reflection tool. "Realising your mistakes gives the greatest confidence," he said, adding that poor performances in some tests did not deter him emotionally but instead became learning opportunities.

He identified agitation, overthinking, and exam-day anxiety as personal weaknesses. With conscious effort, guidance from parents and teachers, and cultivating contentment with his preparation, he overcame these challenges.

On the day of the exam, Bharath ensured sufficient sleep and mental relaxation. He followed a structured CPM order — allocating 45 minutes to Chemistry, one hour to Physics, and the remaining time



Sughosh Joshi

to Mathematics. Prioritising accuracy over speed, he maintained composure even when faced with difficult questions.

To manage stress, he maintained a balanced routine combining reading and problem-solving. Time spent with friends and supportive teachers further eased the pressure.

### Discipline and patience pay off

Sughosh Joshi (99.776 percentile) followed a rigorous schedule stretching from 7 a.m. to 11 p.m. In the initial phase, classroom sessions focused on building conceptual foundations, followed by self-study to bridge gaps and gradually increase the level of problem difficulty. In the final month, intensive mock tests boosted his

confidence.

Sughosh analysed every mock test on the same day, using an error log to identify weak areas. This systematic revision helped him avoid repeating mistakes in the final examination.

He acknowledged speed and patience as early weaknesses. Timed practice improved his speed, while tackling challenging, multi-directional questions strengthened his persistence and conceptual depth.

With his exam scheduled in the afternoon session, Sughosh consciously avoided last-minute revision on the day of the test. Treating the examination like any other mock test helped reduce anxiety. "Being in the present and focusing on the current question was crucial," he noted.

Stress management, he emphasised, was a continuous process supported by parents, teachers, healthy peer competition, sufficient sleep, and daily relaxation time.

### Gateway to premier institutes

JEE Main serves as the qualifying examination for admission to National Institutes of Technology (NITs), Indian Institutes of Information Technology (IIITs), and other centrally funded technical institutions, besides acting as a gateway to JEE Advanced.

With Session 1 results now declared, aspirants are gearing up for Session 2, determined to improve their scores and secure seats in leading engineering institutions. The journeys of these 99-percentilers underscore that structured preparation, self-analysis, and emotional resilience remain the cornerstones of success in one of India's toughest academic challenges.

## Employer survey signals rise in skills-focused fresher hiring

Hiring sentiment for entry-level talent has strengthened for the first half of 2026, with 73 per cent of employers indicating plans to recruit freshers, according to the latest Career Outlook Report HY1 2026 released by TeamLease EdTech. The figure marks a three-percentage-point increase over the previous half-year, pointing to renewed employer confidence alongside a sharper focus on applied skills.

The report is based on responses from 1,051 employers surveyed across India between November 2025 and January 2026. It highlights sustained demand for early-career professionals while underscoring a gradual shift from degree-based screening to skills-driven hiring practices.

### Retail, start-ups and manufacturing lead demand

Sector-wise, Retail recorded the highest hiring intent at 91 per cent, followed by E-commerce and Technology Start-ups at 90 per cent, and Manufacturing at 85 per cent. Retail employers are seeking roles such as dark store assistants and inventory management assistants. Start-ups are recruiting digital sales associates and junior web developers, while manufacturing firms are hiring inventory and logistics coordinators and battery assembly technicians.

The survey also points to a sharp surge



in select sectors compared to the same period last year. Retail hiring intent rose from 41 per cent in HY1 2025 to 91 per cent in HY1 2026, a 50-percentage-point increase. Travel recorded a 51-point rise to 77 per cent, while Power and Energy climbed 50 points to 72 per cent, indicating recovery momentum and expanding opportunities for young professionals.

### Applied skills gain priority

Commenting on the findings, Shantanu Roop, Founder and CEO of TeamLease EdTech, described the trend as a "structural reset" in how early-career talent integrates into the workforce. He noted that while opportunities are in-

creasing, hiring is becoming more selective. The report identifies a widening gap between candidates who possess demonstrable skills and those who rely solely on academic qualifications. Employers are increasingly favouring applicants with internships, live projects and work portfolios. Freshers able to showcase hands-on experience are moving more quickly into career tracks, while degree-only candidates face longer job search cycles. Overall, the survey suggests that although the hiring landscape is expanding, success for first-time job seekers will depend significantly on their ability to demonstrate practical, job-ready competencies in a competitive market.

## How to stay calm and focused during exam

Examinations can be stressful, often bringing anxiety and self-doubt even for students who have prepared thoroughly. However, success in an exam depends not only on knowledge but also on the ability to remain calm and focused under pressure. Managing emotions inside the examination hall plays a crucial role in clear thinking and effective time use. With simple strategies such as controlled breathing, structured planning, and positive self-talk, students can improve concentration and perform at their best.

### Practise controlled breathing

One of the simplest and most effective techniques is controlled breathing. Before the question paper is distributed, take slow, deep breaths—inhalation for four seconds, hold for four seconds, and exhale for four seconds. Repeating this process for a minute helps slow the heart rate and relax the mind, reducing immediate stress. If anxiety returns during the exam, pause briefly, place both feet firmly on the floor, and repeat the breathing cycle. Even a short reset can restore concentration.

### Start with familiar questions

Confidence also plays a major role in maintaining calmness. Instead of worrying about difficult questions, remind yourself that you have prepared consistently and are capable of solving the paper step by step. Begin by answering questions you find familiar or easier. Early success builds momentum and boosts confidence, making it easier to approach more challenging sections later. Avoid comparing your progress with others in the hall; each student works at a different pace.

### Plan your time wisely

Another important strategy is staying mentally organised. Spend the first few minutes reading the entire paper carefully and planning how much time to allocate to each section. A clear plan reduces panic and ensures that no question is left unanswered due to poor time distribution. If you encounter a question you cannot solve immediately, mark it and move forward instead of losing valuable minutes worrying about it.

### Use positive self-talk

Positive self-talk is equally helpful. Replace thoughts such as "I may forget every-



thing" with "I will attempt each question calmly." This small shift in mindset improves emotional stability and prevents unnecessary stress. Keeping your posture relaxed, stretching your fingers occasionally, and sipping water when allowed can also help maintain physical comfort and focus.

Finally, remember that an examination is only one step

in a longer academic journey. Viewing it as an opportunity to demonstrate learning rather than a moment of fear helps reduce pressure. By practising breathing techniques, planning answers wisely, and maintaining steady confidence, students can remain calm, focused, and perform to the best of their abilities during the examination.

## Youth innovation takes the lead, turning ideas into action

10<sup>th</sup> edition of SolveCon 2026 sees 1,700 youth changemakers collaborate, build, and commit to real-world solutions

The 10th edition of SolveCon '26 brought youth innovation to the forefront, with nearly 1,700 young changemakers gathering at PES University, Bengaluru, to collaborate on practical solutions to real-world challenges. Hosted by Reap Benefit, the event also saw participation from representatives of 88 organisations spanning civic engagement, education, climate action, mental wellbeing, and the arts.

Throughout the day-long event, participants worked in teams to map local climate risks, design mental health awareness campaigns, debate public policy issues, and initiate cross-city



collaborations. The format encouraged hands-on problem-solving and peer learning rather than passive participation.

Organisations such as Giving Tuesday India, Science Gallery Bengaluru, TinkerHub, Teach For India, Azim Premji Uni-



versity, NIMHANS and SELCO Foundation were among those that engaged with participants. The event was supported by

partners including Rohini Nilekani Philanthropies, Rainmatter Foundation, NetApp and the MacArthur Foundation. The

gathering featured interactive sessions with leaders from diverse fields. Among them were Kailash Nadh, Chief Technology Officer at Zerodha and board member at Rainmatter Foundation; Priyanka Francis, IAS, Director of the National Gallery of Modern Art; Ashwini Hiremath, Founder of Wild Wild Women; and Deepak Dhananjaya, Founder of the Prabhava Institute of Inclusive Mental Health. Instead of traditional keynote speeches, speakers engaged in open dialogue with students. Kailash Nadh highlighted the importance of human skills in a technology-driven world, noting that curiosity, clarity of thought, and articulation re-

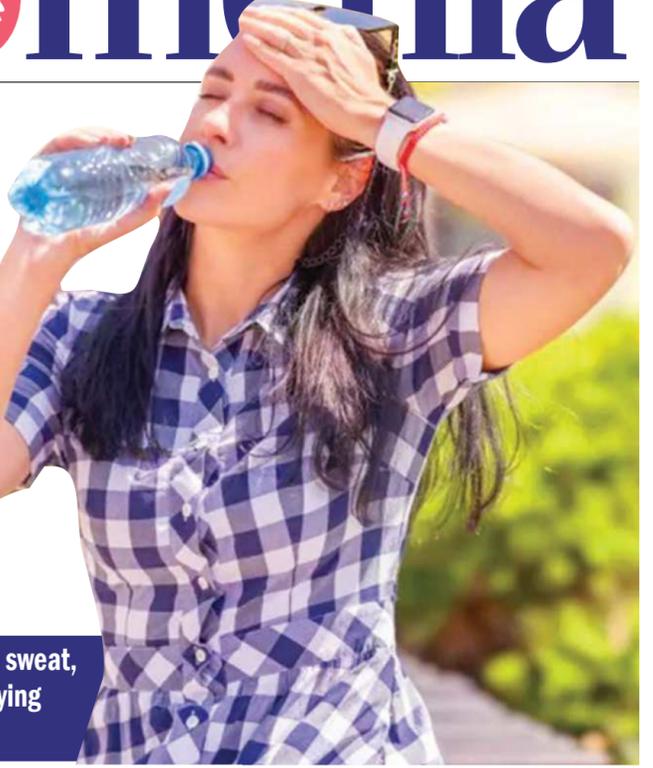
main essential even as artificial intelligence tools become widely accessible.

Kuldeep Dantewadia, Co-founder and CEO of Reap Benefit, said the national edition reflects a broader shift in youth engagement. He emphasised that the platform enables young people to question, experiment, and translate ideas into action when given the space and trust to do so.

Organisers observed strong interest in continuing engagement through follow-up programmes, indicating that the event functioned not merely as a one-day gathering but as a catalyst for sustained, youth-led innovation and collaboration.



# Dehydration, headaches and low energy: Why women are more vulnerable in summer



As temperatures rise, dehydration becomes a common yet overlooked health risk for women. Fluid loss through sweat, hormonal changes, and daily responsibilities can quietly drain energy levels. Recognising early signs and staying consistently hydrated is essential to prevent headaches, fatigue, and serious heat-related illness

DR ANURADHA H K

Summer heat can be harsh on the body, especially for women. Dehydration happens when the body loses more fluids than it takes in. During hot weather, we sweat more to cool down. Sweating leads to loss of water and important minerals like sodium and potassium. If these fluids are not replaced, the body cannot function properly. Many women do not realise they are dehydrated until symptoms become strong. Mild dehydration can start with dry mouth, tiredness, and reduced urination. If ignored, it can become serious and lead to heat exhaustion or even heat stroke.

### Why Women Are More at Risk

Women are often more



vulnerable to dehydration because of biological and hormonal reasons. The female body usually has a slightly lower percentage of water compared to men.

This means women may feel the effects of fluid loss more quickly. Hormonal changes also play a major role. During menstruation, pregnancy, or menopause,

hormone levels fluctuate. These changes can affect how the body regulates fluids. Some women experience bloating during certain phases of

the menstrual cycle, but this does not mean the body is well hydrated. In fact, dehydration can still occur even when bloating is present.

Pregnant and breastfeeding women need extra fluids because their bodies are supporting another life. If they do not drink enough water, they may feel dizzy, weak, or develop headaches more easily.

### The Link Between Dehydration and Headaches

Headaches are one of the most common signs of dehydration. When the body loses fluids, blood volume decreases slightly. This reduces the supply of oxygen and nutrients to the brain. As a result, a person may experience a dull or throbbing headache. Many

women already suffer from hormonal headaches or migraines. Dehydration can trigger these headaches or make them worse. Sometimes, a simple glass of water can reduce headache intensity if dehydration is the cause. Ignoring repeated summer headaches can affect daily productivity and mental focus. It is important to consider hydration as a possible reason before taking medication.

### Low Energy and Fatigue

Low energy is another common problem during hot months. When the body lacks enough fluids, the heart works harder to circulate blood. This makes a person feel tired and weak. Even small daily tasks can feel exhausting. Women who balance work,

household duties, and childcare may overlook early warning signs. Feeling unusually sleepy, dizzy, or irritable during summer could be linked to poor hydration.

Iron deficiency, which is common among women, can make this fatigue worse. When dehydration combines with low iron levels, the body struggles even more to maintain energy.

### Simple Steps to Stay Hydrated

Preventing dehydration is simple but requires regular attention. Women should drink water throughout the day, even if they do not feel thirsty. Keeping a water bottle nearby can act as a reminder. Including natural fluids like

coconut water, lemon water, and buttermilk can help maintain electrolyte balance. Eating water-rich fruits such as watermelon, cucumber, and oranges also supports hydration. Wearing loose cotton clothes and avoiding direct sun during peak afternoon hours can reduce fluid loss. Limiting caffeine and sugary drinks is also important, as they can increase dehydration. If symptoms like severe headache, fainting, very dark urine, or rapid heartbeat occur, medical help should be taken immediately. Staying hydrated is one of the simplest ways women can protect their health and energy during the summer season.

(The writer is a Lead Consultant - Neurology, Aster CMI Hospital, Bangalore)

## Shilpa Shetty inspires fitness fans with high-intensity full-body workout video

Actress and fitness icon Shilpa Shetty continues to motivate fitness enthusiasts with her powerful workout routines, regularly sharing inspiring fitness content across her social media platforms. Known for her disciplined lifestyle and commitment to health, the actress once again caught attention with a new video showcasing an intense full-body compound workout designed to strengthen and stabilize the entire body.



as highly effective due to their ability to activate multiple muscle groups simultaneously. Sharing the clip, Shilpa captioned it, "Full body fired up, no muscle left behind," perfectly capturing the intensity of the session. She further elaborated on the long-term benefits of the exercise, noting that it is a high-intensity movement that combines

synchronized muscle engagement with explosive propulsion. According to her, the workout is ideal for short, time-efficient fitness routines and can be performed either in repetitions or timed intervals. With consistent practice, the exercise helps build overall endurance, strength, coordination, and power.

The Dhadkan actress has become a major source of motivation for fitness lovers, often pushing her limits and encouraging netizens to do the same. Her fitness journey is not just about aesthetics but also about building functional strength and long-term wellness.

Recently, Shilpa also shared another fitness video featuring the supine contralateral stability drill, an advanced exercise that improves core stability and neuromuscular coordination. Highlighting the importance of control in strength training, she wrote, "Strength

without control is incomplete." She explained that the drill challenges core stability, inner thigh engagement, pelvic control, and overall neuromuscular coordination, proving that even minimal equipment can deliver high-impact results when performed correctly.

The Sukhee actress continues to inspire people across age groups by promoting a balanced approach to fitness that focuses on strength, flexibility, control, and consistency. Through her videos, Shilpa Shetty not only showcases advanced workout techniques but also sends a strong message about discipline, self-care, and sustainable fitness.

With every post, she reinforces her status as one of the most influential fitness role models in the entertainment industry, motivating millions to prioritize health and embrace an active lifestyle.

## Riya Munjal opens up about standing against eve-teasing

Actress Riya Munjal, who is currently earning praise for her performance in the popular television show Lakshmi Niwas, has spoken candidly about a powerful personal experience that reflects the strength of the character she portrays on screen. The actress recently opened up about standing up against eve-teasing during her college days, revealing how those real-life moments shaped her outlook and confidence.

The show is presently featuring an engaging storyline revolving around Bhoomika and Raj Bundela. Bhoomika, the youngest daughter of Srinivas and Lakshmi, is portrayed by Riya Munjal as a lively, affectionate, and emotionally expressive young woman. Her life takes an unexpected turn when millionaire Raj Bundela enters her world. Instantly drawn to Bhoomika, Raj approaches her family with a marriage proposal on the very first day they meet. His consistent support to the family during difficult times gradually earns their trust, prompting Srinivas and the rest of the family to seriously consider the alliance.

However, Bhoomika's journey is not just a romantic narrative. The character is shown navigating complex emotions and situations she is not fully prepared for. While she appears cheerful and carefree on the outside, Bhoomika's internal struggle reflects the pressure of family expectations, personal fears, and the process of finding her own voice. The ongoing track highlights her emotional maturity and



quiet resilience, making her character deeply relatable to many viewers.

Speaking about her real-life experiences, Riya shared that during her college days, she often encountered situations involving eve-teasing and inappropriate behaviour, either directed at her friends or herself. She revealed that she was never someone who could ignore such moments. Her instinct, she said, was always to speak up and confront the situation, even if she later reflected on the risks involved. According to her, in those moments, standing one's ground feels more important than fear.

Riya further explained that this instinctive courage is what connects her deeply to Bhoomika's character.

She described Bhoomika as someone who may seem bubbly and emotional but possesses a strong core of self-respect and inner strength. While the character takes time to process her emotions, she never compromises when it comes to dignity and standing up for what is right.

The actress believes that every girl carries this instinct within herself — the strength to resist, question, and stand firm — and that sometimes all it takes is the courage to act on it. With both her on-screen role and real-life voice, Riya Munjal is emerging not just as a promising performer, but also as a strong, relatable young woman audiences can connect with beyond the screen.

### CROSSWORD



- ACROSS**
- 4 A small, smooth stone (6)
  - 7 Ultimate (8)
  - 8 Finally (2,4)
  - 10 Instruments of torture (5)
  - 13 Rebuff (4)
  - 14 Jet-set jet (4)
  - 15 Kinds, types or sorts (4)
  - 16 Genetic material (3)
  - 17 Taj Mahal locale (4)
  - 19 Self-satisfied (4)
  - 21 Language of Kerala (9)
  - 23 Prefix for one thousand (4)
  - 24 Wild goat (4)
  - 26 Colourful Japanese carp (3)
  - 27 Painter Magritte (4)
  - 29 Notion (4)
  - 32 Microsoft's search engine (4)
  - 33 Affected grin (5)
  - 34 Menace (6)
  - 35 Dr \_\_\_ Prasad : First President of India (8)
  - 36 Attractive (6)

### DOWN

- 1 Found in an oyster (5)
- 2 Birthplace of Mohammed (5)
- 3 OE letters (4)
- 4 Piece of wood (5)
- 5 Incandescent lamp (4)
- 6 Being bested? (6)
- 9 Fight or wrestle (6)
- 11 Roman bronze - "sea" change? (3)
- 12 South African pen (5)
- 13 Murdering (7)
- 15 Lyricist Gerstwin (3)
- 16 Strange or odd (3)
- 18 "Oil rag" anagram for a girl (6)
- 20 Principle of conduct (5)
- 21 1002 in Roman numerals (3)
- 22 Abraham's pet name (3)
- 23 Legitimate (6)
- 25 Always in verse (3)
- 28 Way in (5)
- 30 Electronic valve (5)
- 31 Mogul emperor called the Great (5)
- 32 Not straight (4)
- 33 Procedure part (4)



Solution to February 23

### SUDOKU



Solution to February 23

For decades, India has been recognised as the pharmacy of the world, and today, under the present government, the country is transitioning toward becoming the innovator of the world, with healthcare security, manufacturing resilience and scientific excellence at the centre of the national development, he said

- J P Nadda, Union Minister

# Business

## BIZ BRIEFS

### Amazon unveils office in B'luuru

Amazon announced the opening of its second largest office in Asia in Bengaluru. The 1.1 million square feet, 12-storey campus will support over 7,000 employees across e-commerce, operations, payments, technology, and seller services in India. Built on a five-acre site approximately 15 kilometres from Kempegowda International Airport, the corporate building was officially inaugurated by Dr. M.B. Patil, Minister for Large & Medium Industries and Infrastructure Development, Government of Karnataka.

### Apollo opens 1,000<sup>th</sup> store

Apollo Pharmacy, a pharmacy network, announced the opening of its 1,000th store in Andhra Pradesh in Visakhapatnam. With this launch the store now operates across 15 districts of Andhra Pradesh, employs over 7,000 people, and provides access to over 50,000 genuine medicines. P Jayakumar, added: "Reaching 1,000 stores in Andhra Pradesh is a significant milestone in our journey to build India's most trusted and accessible pharmacy network. We are strengthening our presence across the state."

### ITC inaugurates hotel in Mohali

ITC Hotels announced the launch of its 30th Welcomhotel in Mohali, Chandigarh. The hotel with 113 keys, expands its portfolio and its presence in fast-growing Tricity region comprising of Chandigarh, Panchkula and Mohali. Anil Chadha, MD, ITC Hotels Limited, said: "The launch of Welcomhotel Mohali reflects our commitment to strengthening our presence in high-growth urban markets while delivering enriching experiences rooted in our renowned service excellence."

### SBI Life's new branches

SBI Life Insurance, a private life insurer, has strengthened its presence in Telangana with the inauguration of three new branches in Bhupalapalli, Khammam, and Nagarkurnool districts. The branches were inaugurated by Abhishek Kar Majumdar, Regional Director - Telangana, SBI Life Insurance. This expansion underscores the company's continued commitment to enhancing insurance accessibility and delivering need-based financial solutions to individuals and families across the state.

### Sankara Eye hospital's fete

Sankara Eye Hospital, Hyderabad, has successfully restored vision for two elderly patients through modern cataract surgery. Dr. Sriram Simakurthy, CMO, Sankara Eye Hospital, Hyderabad, said: "Cataract remains one of the leading causes of vision impairment among the elderly, but it is also one of the most treatable conditions today. With advanced technology and skilled surgical expertise, patients can undergo safe procedures with minimal discomfort."

## Olectra secures order for 1,085 e-buses from TGSRTC

Hyd roads to go abuzz with e-buses making city more environment friendly

HANS BUSINESS  
HYDERABAD

OLECTRA Greentech Ltd., electric commercial vehicle manufacturer and a pioneer in advanced urban mobility solutions, has secured a Letter of Intent (LOI) issued by the Telangana State Road Transport Corporation (TGSRTC) through Evey Trans Pvt. Ltd. for 1,085 electric buses under the PM E-DRIVE initiative, led by Convergence Energy Services Limited (CESL), aimed at accelerating the adoption of electric public transport across Indian cities.

The electric buses will be deployed in Hyderabad, further strengthening the city's clean, efficient, and sustainable public transport ecosystem. The company has firmly established itself as India's leading electric commercial vehicle brand, consistently holding the No. 1 market share in electric buses both year-to-date and in the last financial year. Headquar-



tered in city, Olectra has been at the forefront of India's electric mobility transition, delivering not only electric buses but also electric tippers that support sustainable urban infrastructure development. With over 3,600 electric vehicles deployed across the country and an order book exceeding 10,000 vehicles, the company is building a comprehensive zero-emission mobility ecosystem. Having clocked more than 500 million green kilometres, the company combines scale, indigenous engineering, operational reliability, and continuous innovation to drive India's shift towards

clean and future-ready transportation.

Mahesh Babu, Managing Director of the company said, "This is a defining moment for the Olectra family and a significant milestone in our journey of powering India's electric mobility transformation. Our continued commitment to the Make in India vision and to building world-class electric buses has received strong reinforcement through this prestigious order under the PM E-DRIVE programme. We are proud to bring our advanced, reliable, and indigenously developed electric mobility solutions to Telangana."

### Prism plans to add 300 hotels

HANS BUSINESS  
HYDERABAD

PRISM, the parent brand of OYO, has announced plans to add 300 company-serviced hotels across Telangana and Andhra Pradesh, with a strategic focus on Hyderabad, Warangal, Karimnagar and Khammam.

Prism said Telangana's improving infrastructure, growing air connectivity and strong domestic tourism make it a key expansion market. Ashish Saurabh, Regional Head, Prism, said: "Telangana is one of the most structurally strong hospitality markets in the country. Business hubs like Hyderabad continue to generate consistent corporate demand, while rising aspirations and improving connectivity are unlocking new leisure corridors. We are building a network that is not just larger, but stronger and more reliable for guests."

The announcement was made at a hotel partner summit in Hyderabad, outlining a 360-degree growth roadmap centred on supply expansion, improved quality standards and enhanced guest experience.

## Sebi mulls relaxations in reporting requirements for stock brokers

Brokers who are banks or primary dealers will be required to report only those bank accounts that are used for stock broking activities

NEW DELHI: To boost ease of doing business, markets regulator Sebi on Friday proposed additional relaxations to reporting norms for stock brokers, including exempting certain demat accounts held by brokers who are also primary dealers from tagging requirements. Further, brokers that are banks or primary dealers will be required to report only those bank accounts that are used for stock broking activities, Sebi proposed.

"All demat accounts maintained by stock brokers should be appropriately tagged. Further, this shall not be applicable for the demat account which are used exclusively for activities other than stock broking activities by stock brokers, which are also primary dealers. "Stock broker which is also bank or primary dealer, shall be required to report to the stock exchanges only those bank accounts that are used for their stock broking activities," Sebi said in its draft circular.

Under the current rules,



brokers are required to maintain properly named and tagged bank and demat accounts and report the opening and closure of such accounts to stock exchanges. Certain exemptions were earlier provided to brokers that are banks.

In its draft circular inviting public comments on proposed relaxations, Sebi suggested that the earlier requirement regarding reporting of certain demat accounts by brokers has been deleted. Instead, depositories will share details of demat accounts opened or closed

## Finance Minister asks banks to refocus on core business

Nirmala Sitharaman slams insurance push, mis-selling by banks

• RBI draft norms mandate refunds and compensation for mis-selling

• Public feedback on guidelines open till March 4; rules effective July 1

• FM flags regulatory gap between RBI and IRDAI

NEW DELHI: Articulating the strategic vision of the Union Budget while sharply calling out mis-selling by banks, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Monday urged lenders to refocus on their core business and place customers at the centre of financial intermediation.

Addressing the 621st meeting of the Central Board of Directors of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI), Sitharaman outlined the roadmap of the Union Budget 2026-27,



saying it was inspired by the three Kartavyas and aimed at advancing the goal of Viksit Bharat. She underlined the role of the financial sector in supporting sustainable growth amid global uncertainty and domestic challenges.

Speaking to reporters after the meeting, Sitharaman came down heavily on banks for mis-selling financial products, particularly insurance, to customers who often

do not need them. "Banks should concentrate on their core business... you're spending more time selling insurance when it is not required," she said, describing mis-selling as a long-standing concern.

She pointed to a regulatory grey area where mis-selling fell "between two stools", with the RBI earlier assuming such practices were overseen by the Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority

of India (IRDAI), while the insurance regulator viewed banks as outside its direct ambit. This gap, she said, left customers exposed.

Her remarks come close on the heels of the RBI's draft guidelines issued on February 11 to curb mis-selling. Under the proposed framework, banks would be required to refund the full amount paid for a mis-sold product and compensate customers for losses suffered. Public feedback has been invited until March 4, with the norms slated to take effect from July 1. "The message should go to banks that you cannot afford to mis-sell," Sitharaman said.

She cited instances of loan-seeking customers being compelled to purchase insurance despite already having adequate cover, stressing that banks must assess actual customer needs rather than push unnecessary products.

## Sudarshan Pharma stock slips 3% amid GST action

MUMBAI: Shares of Sudarshan Pharma Industries slipped over 3 per cent on Monday after the Goods and Services Tax (GST) department initiated an inspection and search operation at the company's registered office.

The stock fell 3.06 per cent on the BSE to hit an intraday low of Rs 25.62 per share. The shares were trading at the same level, down 3.06 per cent. Over the past year, Sudarshan Pharma's stock has declined around 19 per cent, according to the official data.

The decline in the company's share price came after it informed exchanges that the GST department had initiated an inspection, search and seizure operation at its registered office on February 21, 2026. In its regulatory filing, the company said it is in the process of collating information and responding to the authorities.

It added that the final report related to the search and seizure will be concluded as per the prescribed procedures. Despite the recent development, the company had reported improved financial performance for the December quarter.



For Q3FY26, Sudarshan Pharma posted a net profit of Rs 4.15 crore, slightly higher than Rs 3.9 crore reported in the same quarter last year. Revenue from operations rose sharply to Rs 168 crore, compared to Rs 115.65 crore a year ago.

Earnings before interest, tax, depreciation and amortisation (EBITDA) stood at Rs 23.4 crore, up from Rs 16.6 crore in the year-ago period. However, the EBITDA margin declined to 22.8 per cent from 39.9 per cent year-on-year.

In its filing, the company said it is focusing on increasing exports and expanding manufacturing sales. It also highlighted efforts to improve profit margins from the resale of active pharmaceutical ingredients (API) in domestic markets. According to the company, these initiatives helped it achieve substantial growth in profit after tax during FY25.

## Bullion prices rise around 3%

NEW DELHI: Precious metal prices climbed 3 per cent in the national capital on Monday, with silver surging to Rs 2.7 lakh per kilogram and gold advancing to Rs 1.6 lakh per 10 grams, due to strong safe-haven demand amid growing global trade uncertainties after the US Supreme Court ruling against Trump's tariffs. According to the All India Sarafa Association, silver jumped Rs 8,000, or 3.03 per cent, to Rs 2,72,000 per kilogram from Friday's closing level of Rs 2,64,000 per kg. Gold of 99.9 per cent purity also increased by Rs 3,300, or 2.06 per cent, to Rs 1,62,800 per 10 grams. It had settled at Rs 1,59,500 per 10 grams in the previous market session.

Silver and gold extended bullish momentum on Monday, with both metals trading at a three-week high, supported by renewed safe-haven demand. The rally came following a landmark US Supreme Court ruling against Trump's tariffs, which triggered sharp cross-asset volatility and prompted investors to seek safe-haven assets, Saumil Gandhi, Senior Analyst - Commodities at HDFC Securities, said.

## Mkts extend gains driven by improving global cues

Investors favoured domestic themes, with banks, power, FMCG, and consumer discretionary stocks gaining traction

### Improved Sentiment

- BSE-Sensex rose 479.95pts or (+0.58%) to 83,294.66
- NSE-Nifty advanced 141.75pts or (+0.55%) to 25,713
- Fills offloaded Rs934.61-cr; DIs purchased Rs2,637.15-cr



MUMBAI: Equity benchmark indices Sensex and Nifty closed higher on Monday, tracking gains in PSU bank, auto and financial stocks, as investors' sentiments improved after the US Supreme Court struck down the Trump administration's sweeping tariffs.

Extending its winning streak for a second consecutive session, the 30-share BSE Sensex climbed 479.95 points, or 0.58 per cent, to settle at 83,294.66. During the session, the benchmark jumped 671.44 points, or 0.81 per cent, to hit an intraday high of 83,486.15. A total of 2,435 stocks declined, while 1,894 advanced and 168 remained unchanged

on the BSE. The 50-share NSE Nifty advanced 141.75 points, or 0.55 per cent, to close at 25,713. In the intraday session, it appreciated 200.2 points, or 0.78 per cent, to hit a high of 25,771.45.

"The US Supreme Court's ruling against Trump's reciprocal tariff policy was welcomed by domestic markets. Investors are awaiting more clarity on Trump's revised strategy and the scope of renegotiations with other nations. A weaker US dollar and declining 10-year Treasury yields may add near-term caution in the global market," Vinod Nair, Head of Research, Geojit Investments Ltd, said.

Adani Ports was the biggest gainer from the Sensex pack, rising 2.98 per cent, followed by Kotak Mahindra Bank, UltraTech Cement, PowerGrid, Hindustan Unilever, HDFC Bank, Axis Bank, Bharti Airtel, State Bank of India, Titan, Mahindra & Mahindra and Larsen & Toubro were the major gainers. On the other hand, Infosys, Tech Mahindra, Trent, HCL Technologies, Bajaj Finserv, Tata Consultancy Services, ITC, Bharat Electronics Ltd, Eternal, Tata Steel, and IndiGo ended in losses.

"Sentiment improved largely in reaction to the US Supreme Court striking

down earlier import tariffs, temporarily easing trade-related concerns and boosting risk appetite across global markets. "Overall, the ongoing tussle in the index reflects prevailing uncertainty on the global front, while domestic cues remain largely muted," Ajit Mishra, SVP, Research, Religare Broking Ltd, said.

The broader indices ended on a mixed note, with the BSE Smallcap Select Index gaining 0.41 per cent, while the Midcap Select Index declined 1.56 per cent.

"Sectorally, the IT index faced pressure from unresolved concerns over AI-driven disruption. Nonetheless, investors favoured domestic themes, with banks, power, FMCG, and consumer discretionary stocks gaining traction on expectations of resilient demand and economic recovery," Nair said.

Among the sectoral indices, PSU Bank increased the most by 1.4 per cent, followed by Services by 0.97 per cent, Hospitals by 0.89 per cent, Healthcare by 0.76 per cent, Power by 0.72 per cent, Auto by 0.71 per cent, Financial Services by 0.65 per cent, FMCG by 0.54 per cent, and Utilities by 0.52 per cent.

## Small caps lead India Inc. earnings growth in Q3: Report

SMALL CAPS DELIVERED A ROBUST 22% YEAR-ON-YEAR EARNINGS, OUTPACING MID-CAPS AT 15% AND LARGE CAPS AT 14%

NEW DELHI: India Inc's earnings momentum remained resilient in Q3 FY26, with small-cap companies posting the strongest growth, a report said on Monday.

The report from Equirus Securities said small caps delivered a robust 22 per cent year-on-year earnings surge, outpacing mid-caps at 15 per cent and large caps at 14 per cent, signalling a broadening of the corporate earnings recovery. Revenue grew 10 per cent YoY, while EBITDA and PAT rose 14 per cent and 15 per cent respectively, ahead of market expectations, across companies under its coverage, the report said.

Around 36 per cent of companies saw earnings per share (EPS) upgrades, reflecting improving business fundamentals and demand resilience across multiple industries. The upgrades were led by auto, banks & NBFCs, consumer durables, FMCG, and IT, while downgrades were concentrated in building materials, cement, infrastructure, chemicals,



realty and retail, the report said. The trend indicates growing investor confidence and improving forward earnings visibility across market capitalisation segments, it added. Increasing number of firms from tier 2 and tier 3 towns have been tapping the capital markets, as founders look to grow and scale their businesses, said Ajay Garg, Managing Director, Equirus group.

"Looking into Q4FY26, key monitorable include the pace of NHA order awards for construction companies, the summer season demand cycle for consumer durables, US market dynamics and RBI rate decisions that

could influence BFSI NIM trajectories," said Maulik Patel, Director & Head of Research, Equirus Securities. Price hikes and demand momentum in cement offer near-term support, though new capacity additions may pressure utilisation rates, while logistics remains supported by EXIM recovery and Dedicated Freight Corridor (DFC) connectivity improvements, he added.

In the third quarter, financial services companies demonstrated steady asset quality trends and loan growth momentum, while consumption-linked sectors benefited from improving discretionary spending patterns.

Having seen how Brevis and Miller built their partnership, that was the approach needed from the Indian batters. The Indian batters did not do that. They came out with overconfidence, threw their bat at everything and lost wickets. South Africa clearly outsmarted India and it was a well-deserved win for them - **Batting legend Sunil Gavaskar**

# Overconfident Indian players must shed ego: Gavaskar

◆ 'You have to learn from the opposition. If they have scored well on a tricky surface like this, you have to get rid of your ego, observe and adjust.'

◆ Tilak Varma has been a very street-smart batter. But I was disappointed with his approach in this game'

AHMEDABAD

INDIA needed to take a cue from South Africa's innings, shed their ego and adapt to the conditions instead of walking out with overconfidence and throwing their bats at everything in their T20 World Cup clash, feels batting legend Sunil Gavaskar. South Africa snapped India's

12-match unbeaten streak at the T20 World Cup, handing the defending champions a heavy 76-run defeat.

"Having seen how Brevis and Miller built their partnership, that was the approach needed from the Indian batters," Gavaskar said on JioStar. "The Indian batters did not do that. They came out with overconfidence, threw their

bat at everything and lost wickets. South Africa clearly outsmarted India and it was a well-deserved win for them."

"You have to learn from the opposition. If they have scored well on a tricky surface like this, you have to get rid of your ego, observe and adjust." India lost their top three -- Ishan Kishan (0), Abhishek Sharma (15) and Tilak Varma



(1) -- inside the power play to slip to 26/3. "Tilak Varma

has been a very street-smart batter. But I was disappointed with his approach in this game. Ishan Kishan lost his wicket in the first over. The required rate was around 9.5 runs per over, not 15.

"So, Tilak could have given himself more time. At the other end, Abhishek Sharma had back-to-back ducks. So, the responsibility was on Tilak

to stick around, build a partnership, and get past the first six overs, but he failed to do that. "You don't always need to score 70 runs in the Powerplay. Even 55-60 runs would have been a good platform. But the reckless approach of the Indian batters led to their downfall in Ahmedabad." India next take on Zimbabwe and Gavaskar said he would

like to see Axar Patel return to the playing XI after missing the previous two games, with the team management opting for Washington Sundar. "I would look at bringing Axar Patel back into the playing XI, keeping in mind the lack of too many left-handed batters in Zimbabwe's line-up. You could possibly bring him in place of Arshdeep Singh.

## At least one out of form batter to be dropped

◆ The team management might have to revisit the performances of Abhishek (15 runs in four games) and Tilak (107 runs in five games at strike rate of 118)

◆ Not to forget, the designated finisher Rinku Singh's aggregate of 24 runs in 29 balls at a disastrous strike rate of 82.75 is embarrassing to say the least

KUSHAN SARKAR

THE Indian team management may drop at least one among three out-of-form batters and revisit its one-dimensional template of playing too many left-handers in the top-order, indicated head coach Gautam Gambhir's understudies Ryan Ten Doeschate and Sitanshu Kotak.

With two must-win games left, the team management might have to revisit the performances of Abhishek Sharma (15 runs in four games) and Tilak Varma (107 runs in five games at Strike Rate of 118). Not to forget, the designated finisher Rinku Sin-



gh's aggregate of 24 runs in 29 balls at a disastrous strike rate of 82.75 is embarrassing to say the least.

"If head coach and team management feels we need to do something different we will do things differently. Definitely a thought now comes if we have to change, what do we change and how do we change," batting coach Sitanshu Kotak didn't make bones about the fact that the team is indeed in a spot. "Now we have reached a point where we need to think if we need to do something different or stick with same combination," Kotak said.

Ten Doeschate was a bit more forthcoming when he admitted that it is indeed a "concern" that there are no back-up specialist batters in

the squad and Sanju Samson, despite his wretched form, might be back in the mix.

The logic could be bringing in a right hander to break the monotony. "You stick with the guys who you feel have performed really well over the last 18 months and maybe shy of a few runs now? Or do we twist and bring Sanju, who's also a fantastic player and obviously helps tactically with having a right hander at the top of the order," Ten Doeschate also echoed Kotak's sentiments but with more definitive answer that changes could be on cards. "I'm sure that (Samson's inclusion) will be a talking point over the next few days going into these two very important games (Zimbabwe and West Indies)."

And once we felt that, then we felt, OK, we've got to take him down, because he is a threat to every team that he does play against. So

## Got to take him down: David on how they tackled Varun

KUSHAN SARKAR  
AHMEDABAD

ALL it needed was a still mind, limited movement and strong intent, said South African big-hitter David Miller as he opened up about how his team successfully nullified Indian mystery spinner Varun Chakravarthy in their T20 World Cup Super Eight clash here.

The in-form Chakravarthy was expected to be India's trump card but on a wicket that didn't offer much assistance, he went for 47 runs in his four overs with both Miller (63 off 35 balls) and Dewald Brevis (45 off 29 balls) taking him to cleaners. "I think it's just about really making sure that we were on it in terms of if he bowls a bad ball we got to put it away - so a little bit more intent and it wasn't spinning too much tonight, so you can kind of trust the line," Miller said.

"And once we felt that, then we felt, OK, we've got to take him down, because he is a threat to every team that he does play against. So



it was definitely something that we did speak about," he explained. This was the first big knock of the tournament for the 36-year-old and was dotted with seven fours and three maximums. Miller said it was all about sticking to basic preparations which have given him fair amount of success and the reputation of being a game-changer in all these years. "It's about making sure that you really stick to the simple things and the basics and do that really well. Like I said, my intent always has to be up, making sure that I have limited movements, when the ball is bowled, so I'm nice and still, my breathing, running hard, all those simple things. "It's cliché, but it really does, in the heat of battle, those are the things that I clutch to."

Match starts 7pm IST



## Spinners in focus as England, Pak eye crucial Super 8 points

PALLEKELE: On a surface expected to assist slow bowlers, both England and Pakistan will lean heavily on their spin resources in their Super Eights clash in the T20 World Cup here on Tuesday. England may not have hit top gear yet, but the two-time champions have found ways to win.

They kicked off their Super Eights campaign with a commanding 51-run victory over Sri Lanka, a result that significantly boosted their net run rate and took them to the top of the standings. Defending a modest total against Sri Lanka, England played according to the conditions perfectly.

Their spinners did the bulk of the work along with pacer Jofra Archer to trigger a dramatic Sri Lankan batting collapse. The ever-reliable leg spinner Adil Rashid and left arm spinner Liam Dawson have combined well to get the wickets. Meanwhile, Will Jacks has emerged as an unlikely match-winner. His off-spin has been handy, but it is his contributions with the bat, 39 against Nepal, 16 against Scotland and 53 versus Italy, that have repeatedly bailed England out of trouble. Opener Phil Salt returned to form with a match-winning knock against Sri Lanka, as he batted beyond the powerplay for the first time in the tournament. However, Jos Buttler's form remains a concern. But the veteran batter has got the backing of his captain Harry Brook, who himself is yet to find runs.

## Ranji Trophy final begins today Star-studded K'taka hold all aces against gritty J&K

G UNNIKRIISHNAN  
HUBBALLI

JAMMU and Kashmir's entry into their maiden Ranji Trophy final is a heartwarming tale of grit and passion but to grab the title, the underdog side would need to pull off a giant-sized miracle against eight-time former champions Karnataka over the next five days, starting Tuesday.

The tag of favourites is attached to Karnataka not merely because of their rich legacy, but it is a well-earned one after a season in which they consistently rose above opponents, conditions and injuries to key players at various junctures. Karnataka have dominated teams both at home and away after a stuttering start against Saurashtra at Rajkot, where they conceded a narrow first innings lead to lose points.

However, eternal nemesis Mumbai and tricky newcomers Uttarakhand were dealt away with confidence and ease, indicating the growing belief within the side. Central to that dominance has been the form of their star batters - KL Rahul, Karun Nair, Devdutt Padik-



kal, and Ravichandran Sraman. Rahul (3 matches: 457 runs, Avg: 91.40), Karun (8 matches: 699 runs, Avg: 63.54), Devdutt (5 matches: 532 runs, Avg: 66.50), and Sraman (8 matches: 950 runs, Avg: 950) have fired on all cylinders through the season.

It has helped Karnataka overcome a middling season from Mayank Agarwal, who eventually stepped away from captaincy as Devdutt took over the team's reins. To his credit, the left-hander has led well both with the bat and his tactically sharp mind. This strong batting unit, however, will meet its match here at the KSCA Stadium in a capable Jammu and Kashmir bowling attack, led by pacer Aaquib Nabi. The team is at the biggest stage of India's domestic calendar for the first time since making its tournament debut 67 years ago.

## Sabka Saath Sabka Vikas Sabka Vishwas Sabka Prayas ?

# Ex-BJP MP takes back blanket from Muslim woman after asking her religion

Congress condemned his action, saying religious discrimination is a violation of constitutional rights. Several Congress leaders shared a video of the incident in which Jaunpuria is seen purportedly saying that those who abuse PM Narendra Modi have no right to take the blanket

JAIPUR

FORMER BJP MP Sukhbir Singh Jaunpuria kicked up a row during a blanket distribution event at Rajasthan's

Tonk, when he allegedly took back a blanket given to a Muslim woman after asking her religion.

The Congress condemned his action, saying religious discrimination is a violation

of constitutional rights. Several Congress leaders shared a video of the incident in which Jaunpuria is seen purportedly saying that those who abuse PM Narendra Modi have no right to take the blanket.

According to locals, blankets were initially handed out to women present at the event, but it was later taken back from a Muslim woman.

He also said that the programme was his personal ini-



tiative and not linked to any government scheme.

Meanwhile, a Youth Congress leader went to the vil-

lage and distributed blankets to Muslim women, and accused the BJP of doing politics of division. Villagers, along with Congress workers, also held a protest on Monday. Leader of Opposition in the Rajasthan Assembly, Tikaram Jolly, alleged discrimination and condemned the act.

"A former MP asking a poor woman her religion and then taking back the blanket is highly condemnable," Ju-

ly said. Congress MP from Tonk-Sawai Madhopur Harish Chandra Meena said that the treatment meted out to Muslim women by the former MP was the result of a "disruptive" mindset that destroys the social fabric of this country.

"Giving blankets to poor and helpless women, then asking their names and taking them back based on their religion, this is a deeply shameful and inhumane act,"

he said. "Politics is a medium of service, not of insult and discrimination. The public elects representatives so that they treat every class, every religion and every needy person equally, and not to mock anyone's poverty and helplessness," he added.

Meena asked whether the prime minister told the former MP that no one should help those who do not vote for Prime Minister Modi or his party.

## Sisters died of poisoning ahead of wedding in Raj

According to the police, the two sisters worked at a private school and were believed to be unhappy with their alliances. Their bodies were found hours before the wedding processions were scheduled to arrive

JODHPUR

THE post-mortem report of two sisters who died at Manai village has confirmed poisoning as the cause of death, police said on Monday.

The victims, identified as Shobha (25) and Vimla (23), were set to be married on Saturday, and the preparations for their weddings were in full swing on Thursday night, when the incident occurred.

According to the police, the two sisters worked at a private school and were believed to be unhappy with their alliances. Their bodies were found hours before the wedding processions were scheduled to arrive.

Soorsagar Police Station House Officer (SHO) Harishchandra Solanki said that the medical board confirmed the death due to poisoning. No poisonous substance was recovered from the scene. "Viscera samples have been preserved and sent to the Forensic Science Laboratory to identify the



exact substance consumed," Solanki said, adding that there is also suspicion of a drug overdose. As part of the investigation, the police have seized the mobile phones of both sisters to examine chats, call records and social media activity.

Police also questioned their father, Deep Singh, to ascertain if the deaths were a case of suicide or involving other factors such as family disputes or external pressure. The sisters were earlier engaged to members of a family in Bhnimal through their maternal uncle.

## Fake medicine factory unearthed in Bihar

Massive haul of spurious drugs

NEW DELHI

DELHI Police has unearthed a factory involved in manufacturing and repackaging spurious medicines and psychotropic substances near Patna, an official said on Monday. The action was taken during investigation of an FIR registered under the NDPS Act at the Crime Branch police station, he said. Po-

lice said the breakthrough came days after two similar illegal pharmaceutical units were exposed in Bihar.

Acting on information gathered from previous arrests and the interrogation of an accused identified as Arun, a team of the Crime Branch zeroed in on another suspect, Brijesh, who was allegedly running an illegal manufacturing and repackaging unit, a senior police officer said. The officer said Arun was earlier found coordinating the illegal manufacture and distribution of opioids

and operating a clandestine medicines unit. Based on his disclosure, the team with the local drug department raided the unit.

"It was found to be operating without a valid manufacturing licence and in the absence of mandatory technical staff, including manufacturing and analytical chemists. Legal proceedings have been initiated as per due process," he added. The team has seized a massive haul of spurious tablets, syrups, machinery and packaging material from the premises.



## Probe launched into toddler's death

Kerala family alleges medical negligence

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

POLICE have launched a probe after a two-and-a-half-year-old child died and her family alleged medical negligence against a private hospital in Kattakada here, officials said on Monday. The deceased has been identified as Aisha Fathima, daughter of Sidique and Fasilath of Punal, Perumkulam here.

According to police, on February 18, the child developed physical discomfort, including breathing issues and swelling near her eyebrow. She was first taken to the government hospital in Aryanad. The next day, after similar symptoms recurred, her parents took her to a private hospital in Kattakada, where, after medication, her condition improved, and she returned home, police said.

On February 20, the parents took her to an ophthalmology centre as the swelling near her eyebrow persisted. Police officials said that on Sunday, however, the symptoms re-emerged and the child was again taken



to the private hospital in Kattakada. After being given nebulisation and injections, she was referred to another private hospital, officials said.

However, upon reaching the hospital, she was declared dead after preliminary treatment, police said. The family has alleged medical negligence against the private hospital and filed a complaint at Aryanad police station on Sunday. Police officials said a case of unnatural death has been registered, and the cause of death will be ascertained after the post-mortem examination scheduled for Monday.

The father of the deceased claimed on Monday that his daughter's condition worsened after injections were administered at the private hospital in Kattakada.



Army rescues 46 tourists stuck in snowy Sikkim

SIKKIM: Indian Army troops have rescued 46 tourists stranded due to heavy snowfall in high-altitude areas of Sikkim's East district, a defence statement said on Monday. Several tourist vehicles got stuck along vulnerable road stretches in East Sikkim district on Sunday during sudden and intense snowfall in sub-zero temperatures, exposing tourists and locals to harsh climatic conditions, it said.

On learning about the situation, Army troops moved promptly to the affected areas and initiated rescue and relief measures, the statement said. "A total of 46 tourists were safely rescued and shifted to the nearest Army camp, where they were medically examined and provided with warm shelter, hot meals, heating arrangements and essential relief materials to mitigate the effects of extreme cold and altitude-related stress," it said.

## TIRUMALA LADDU GHEE ROW

# COUNCIL DEADLOCK ENDS, DEBATE SET FOR FEB 26

- Legislative Council proceedings stalled for five days amid YSRCP protests over alleged adulteration in Heritage Foods, Indapur Dairy, and Tirupati laddu
- Opposition members storm the podium, raise slogans and demand an immediate debate; TDP accused them of obstructing business
- Govt finally agrees to a detailed discussion on Feb 26, bringing relief after repeated disruptions

HANS NEWS SERVICE  
VIJAYAWADA

PROCEEDINGS of the Legislative Council were disrupted for the fifth consecutive day on Monday amid continuing protests by Opposition YSRCP members over the alleged adulteration controversy involving Heritage Foods, Indapur Dairy and the Tirupati laddu. The deadlock finally ended after the government agreed to hold a detailed discussion on the issue on February 26.

Soon after the House assembled at 10.03 am, members of the YSRCP, Dr Mondithoka Arun Kumar, Y Sivarami Reddy, and Suryanarayana Raju, submitted an adjournment motion seeking an immediate debate on the issue. However, Council

Chairman Koyye Moshen Raju rejected the notice and proceeded with Question Hour, triggering strong protests from the Opposition benches.

YSRCP members rushed into the well of the House, raised slogans, displayed placards and surrounded the Chairman's podium, demanding that the motion be admitted. Amid the uproar, health minister Y Satya Kumar Yadav completed his reply to a listed question before the Chairman adjourned the House briefly.

Before the adjournment, members of the TDP also rushed into the well of the House, alleging that the Opposition was deliberately obstructing Council proceedings. Some members attempted to display placards; however, civil supplies



minister Nadendla Manohar and finance minister Payyava Keshav intervened and asked them to return to their seats. Amid the commotion, the Chairman adjourned the House briefly.

The Opposition later staged a protest in front of the Chairman's chamber, alleging that the government was avoiding a discussion on a matter of public concern. They also demanded the release of podium CCTV footage to counter certain media reports regarding their conduct inside the House.

In an effort to resolve the stalemate, the Chairman convened a Business Advisory Committee (BAC)

meeting. During the meeting, Leader of the Opposition Botsa Satyanarayana strongly pressed for a full-fledged debate on the issue.

After nearly two hours of deliberations, the government agreed to allocate time for a detailed discussion on the Tirupati Laddu adulteration controversy on February 26. Later, Leader of the Opposition Botsa Satyanarayana conveyed the government's assurance to the media at the media point. The decision brought relief to members across party lines, as repeated disruptions had stalled legislative business for several days. Following the consensus, the House reconvened

at 2.03 pm for Special Mentions before being adjourned for the day. The Chairman expressed hope that proceedings would continue smoothly in the coming days with the scheduled debate expected to address the concerns raised by the Opposition.

Meanwhile, BAC of the Council took several key issues and finalised the schedule for discussions. The Council will take up a debate on the home department on Tuesday (February 24) and the agriculture on Wednesday (February 25). A discussion on the alleged ghee adulteration in TTD laddus has been scheduled for February 26. The Council will remain on holiday on February 28 and resume its sittings on March 4. Leader of the Opposition Botsa Satyanarayana alleged that the ruling party was making contradictory statements in the BAC meeting and in the House.

Finance minister Keshav rejected the charge, stating that the government has consistently maintained its readiness for a debate on the issue and accused Opposition members of politicising it.

## Govt positive on clemency for prisoners: Home Minister

- Says the state govt is taking a positive stand on granting clemency to prisoners and introduces amendments to the Prisons and Correctional Services Act during the Assembly Budget session
- The proposed reforms focus on rehabilitation over punishment, with improved educational opportunities for inmates and special Anganwadi centres inside prisons to support children of women prisoners



Home Minister V Anitha introducing a Bill seeking amendments to the Prisons and Correctional Services Act in the Assembly on Monday

HANS NEWS SERVICE  
VIJAYAWADA

THE state government is taking a positive stand on granting clemency to prisoners, said home minister Vangalapati Anitha on Monday.

Speaking on the eighth day of the Assembly Budget session, the home minister introduced a Bill in the Assembly seeking amendments to the Prisons and Correctional Services Act. Addressing the House, she stated that the coalition government is committed to implementing meaningful reforms aimed at the transformation and rehabilitation of inmates.

Anitha said the government has already initiated several measures to reform prisoners and is implementing changes in line with the legislation introduced by the Centre. She emphasised that efforts are being made to improve educational opportunities for inmates, enabling them to pursue studies while serving their sentences.

Highlighting the need for legislative changes to bring about behavioural transformation among prisoners, the minister said the proposed amendments would focus on rehabilitation rather than mere punishment.

She also announced that special Anganwadi centres are being set up inside prisons to cater to the children of women inmates, ensuring their welfare and early childhood care.

The home minister further explained that prisoners would be classified into categories based on their criminal history and conduct in jail. This classification would help in designing reform-oriented programmes tailored to individual needs.

To encourage psychological transformation and reintegration into society, the government is establishing open-air prisons. In these facilities, inmates will be allowed to engage in agriculture and other vocational activities, equipping them with skills for livelihood after their release.

Reiterating the government's reformatory approach, Anitha said the administration is focused on creating opportunities for change and rehabilitation, while maintaining law and order in the State.

## Govt allocated Rs 51,00 cr for BC welfare, says Savitha

HANS NEWS SERVICE  
VIJAYAWADA

BC, EWS welfare, handlooms and textiles minister S Savitha announced that the new State Budget allocates a lion's share of funds for the welfare and empowerment of Backward Classes (BCs).

Speaking during the Assembly debate on the BC Welfare Department Budget, she said Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu has accorded top priority to BC development.

Out of the total Budget exceeding Rs 3.32 lakh crore, Rs 51,020.56 crore has been

earmarked for backward classes. The Minister said Rs 250 crore has been allocated for the 'Nethanna Bharosa' scheme, under which weavers will receive Rs 25,000 annually. Another Rs 250 crore has been earmarked for the Nethanna Bharosa initiative, while Rs 150 crore has been set aside for power subsidy to weavers.

Savitha announced that 20 MJP BC residential schools will get permanent buildings at a cost of Rs 500 crore under the SASCI scheme. Six MJP schools are being upgraded into junior colleges, and IIT/NEET coaching centres will

be established at Simhachalam and Tekulodu schools. CCTV cameras, RO plants, UPS systems, mosquito-proofing, and improved food quality are being ensured in hostels and Gurukuls.

The minister said a dedicated commission under Rajiv Ranjan Mishra has been appointed to implement 34 per cent reservations for BCs in local bodies and nominated posts. The government is also finalising a BC Protection Act and has passed a resolution seeking 33 per cent reservations for BCs in legislatures.

She added that Rs 1,000



crore will be spent on Adarana 3.0, and sewing machines will soon be distributed to women trained under free tailoring programmes. Criticising the previous regime, Savitha alleged that BC welfare was neglected earlier. She asserted that BCs have received true political representation and empowerment only under Chandrababu Naidu's leadership.

## TOUGH LAW ON THE CARDS TO CURB SOCIAL MEDIA MISINFORMATION

- HM informs House that Cabinet sub-committee has been formed to study measures against false propaganda and harmful online content
- 1,384 cases registered in 20 months; over 1,000 arrests made for objectionable posts

HANS NEWS SERVICE  
VIJAYAWADA

THE Assembly on Monday held a detailed discussion on regulating misinformation and harmful content on social media platforms.

Responding to a question raised by MLA Gouthu Sirisha, home minister Vangalapati Anitha said that the gov-

ernment has constituted a Cabinet sub-committee to examine measures to curb false propaganda and objectionable content online. The minister informed the House that the sub-committee has met twice so far and held extensive discussions on various aspects of social media regulation. She said the government has reviewed the measures being implemented in states such as Tamil Nadu and Karnataka, as well as in other countries, to understand best practices.

"We are carefully examining what kind of legal and administrative measures would be most effective in our State," the Minister said. She emphasised that strict action is being taken against posts that are hateful, abusive, or intended to spread misinformation.

Providing data on enforcement, Ani-

tha revealed that 1,384 cases have been registered in the State over the past 20 months in connection with objectionable social media posts. Of these, 1,067 individuals have been arrested and produced before the courts.

The home minister further stated that the government has initiated steps to bring in a new law aimed at effectively curbing the spread of false propaganda on social media platforms. She also said that the government is considering legislation to restrict school students from using social media, with the objective of safeguarding their well-being and academic focus. Reiterating the government's commitment, Anitha said that maintaining public order and preventing the misuse of digital platforms remain top priorities.

## Over 88L unorganised workers register on e-Shram portal in AP

- Labour minister informs the Assembly that 88,16,453 unorganised workers have registered on the e-Shram portal, while 18,24,221 workers enrol with the AP Building and Other Construction Workers' Welfare Board
- Says the state govt is accelerating registrations to ensure full coverage and extending benefits including free medical care, maternity aid of Rs 20,000, marriage assistance of Rs 40,000, Rs 60,000 natural death compensation and Rs 20,000 funeral support
- Scholarships for kids of construction workers and special skill development programmes are being implemented, besides comprehensive data collection to strengthen worker welfare and social security

HANS NEWS SERVICE  
VIJAYAWADA

AS many as 88,16,453 unorganised sector workers in the state have registered on the e-Shram portal, while 18,24,221 workers have enrolled with the Andhra Pradesh Building and Other Construction Workers' Welfare Board, labour minister Vasamsetti Subhash informed the Assembly on Monday.

Responding to a question raised by MLA Dr Valmiki Partha Sarathi, the minister said the government under Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu is firmly committed to

the welfare of unorganised labourers and is accelerating the registration process across the State to ensure comprehensive coverage. He said several welfare schemes are being implemented to provide financial security and social protection to workers.

Registered beneficiaries are being provided free medical services and periodic health check-ups.

The government is extending maternity assistance of Rs 20,000, marriage assistance of Rs 40,000, and financial aid of Rs 60,000 in case of natural death. An immediate assistance of Rs 20,000 is also provided to-

wards funeral expenses.

Scholarships are being offered to children of construction workers studying from Classes I to XII.

The Welfare Board is also organising special skill development programmes to enhance the capabilities of building and construction workers and improve their employment prospects.

The minister added that the government is undertaking comprehensive data collection to ensure complete coverage and safeguard the well-being of workers and their families.



## MILK SCARE: MINISTER ORDERS PROBE, ASSURES SAFETY

HANS NEWS SERVICE  
VIJAYAWADA

IN the wake of the suspected adulterated milk incident in Rajamahendravaram, medical and health minister Y Satya Kumar Yadav directed officials to submit a detailed report on the collection and testing of milk and edible oil samples in the city.

On Monday, the minister instructed the Institute of Preventive Medicine (IPM - food safety wing) to provide comprehensive details regarding the samples collected for monitoring and the status of their laboratory results. He specifically asked IPM director Neelakanta Reddy and other senior officials to assess the functioning of the Food Safety Department in light of the recent incident.

The minister also held telephonic discussions with health secretary Saurabh Gaur, commissioner of health and family welfare Veerapandian, IPM director Neelakanta Reddy,

and other senior officials. He directed them to ensure that the victims undergoing treatment in hospitals receive the best possible medical care without any lapses. He emphasised continuous monitoring at all levels in coordination with district medical and other departmental authorities until the affected families are fully reassured. Satya Kumar informed the Assembly that samples collected from the accused milk supplier have been sent to laboratories and that results are expected within 72 hours. As a precautionary measure, blood samples have been collected from members of the 106 families supplied by the accused dairy operators. Samples from victims have been sent to laboratories in Vijayawada, Visakhapatnam, and Hyderabad for detailed analysis. He explained that the laboratory findings would help determine the nature of the chemicals mixed in the milk and the method of adulteration. Doctors are providing

appropriate treatment based on the victims' pre-existing health conditions, medications, and current symptoms.

Following the minister's directions, senior officials Veerapandian and Neelakanta Reddy rushed to Rajamahendravaram to oversee the situation. Making a special statement in the Assembly, Minister Satya Kumar said the situation in Rajamahendravaram is under control and that the government is prepared to take strict action based on laboratory findings.

He added that samples of cattle feed, water, and fodder have also been collected and sent to laboratories in Vijayawada. Post-mortem samples are being forwarded to the Regional Forensic Laboratory for further examination.

Officials from the health, animal husbandry, police and other departments are working in close coordination to address the situation and ensure public safety, the Minister affirmed.

## Inter exams begin smoothly across state

- Over 5.24 lakh students appear for First Year exams
- Board secretary Ranjith Basha inspects centres, reviews arrangements

HANS NEWS SERVICE  
VIJAYAWADA

THE Intermediate Public Examinations (IPE) March 2026 for the academic year 2025-26 commenced smoothly across the state on Monday, with no untoward incidents reported on the first day.

First-year students appeared for Second Language Paper-I at examination centres across the State. Out of a total of 5,45,028 registered candidates, 5,24,771 students attended the examination, while 20,123 were absent, according to officials.

Secretary of the Board of Intermediate Education (BIE) Ranjith Basha monitored the conduct of examinations through cameras at the State Command



Students going in to examination hall at a college in Vijayawada on Monday as Intermediate First Year examinations commence

Photo: Ch Venkata Mastan

Control Room. He also personally inspected several centres in Mangalagiri, including Vijay Jyothi Junior College and Narayana Junior College.

During the visit, he reviewed facilities provided to students, CCTV surveillance systems and the secure handling of question papers and OMR sheets in strong rooms. Officials confirmed that all centres

were under continuous monitoring. Strict security arrangements and a malpractice-free policy were enforced. Adequate drinking water and ventilation facilities were ensured for students, he added.

Furthermore, he congratulated students and staff for the successful conduct of the first day. He advised candidates to reach their respective centres at least 30 minutes

before the start of subsequent examinations.

Meanwhile, some first-year students faced difficulties in locating their respective examination centres, leading to confusion on the opening day. Heavy traffic in parts of Vijayawada further delayed movement, causing several candidates to reach their centres at the last minute.

To prevent inconvenience to students, NTR district police personnel stepped in to regulate traffic near major junctions and examination centres.

Special arrangements were made to ensure smooth vehicular movement and safe passage for candidates.

Meanwhile, the second year examinations will commence on Tuesday, February 24, with as many as 5,26,141 students expected to appear for the Language Paper-II examination.

Based on the experience of the first day of first-year exams, Board officials have advised second-year students to reach their examination centres well in advance to avoid last-minute inconvenience and ensure smooth entry procedures.



## 'Aura of Ustaad' song launch turns into a grand celebration of PSPK's legacy



The launch of the song "Aura of Ustaad" from the upcoming film Ustaad Bhagat Singh turned into a spectacular celebration of star power, music, and fandom, as the team behind the project unveiled what many are already calling a defining anthem for fans of Pawan Kalyan. The powerful hook line — "Nenu Meda Muttukunte, Toda Kottinatte" — has instantly gone viral, symbolizing the actor's iconic screen presence and unmatched mass appeal.

Director Harish Shankar described the song as more than a tribute, calling it a musical festival crafted from deep understanding rather than admiration. He revealed that the line was inspired by Pawan Kalyan's signature body language, a mannerism he has carried for over two decades. The lyrics were penned by Chandrabose, who completed the song in a single day, giving the track both literary depth and emotional power.

Music composer Devi Sri Prasad added that the song is a timeless tribute to Pawan Kalyan's personality, values, and aura. He credited the director's vision and the lyricist's writing for shaping a composition that feels both celebratory and iconic, stating that the track represents the true "Aura of Pawan Kalyan."

Chandrabose described the song as an expression of "Pawanism," reflecting the actor's principles, journey, and influence across generations. The event concluded on an emotional and festive note, with the team expressing confidence that the song and the film will strike a deep chord with audiences. Ustaad Bhagat Singh is being produced by Naveen Yerneni and Y. Ravi Shankar under Mythri Movie Makers and is scheduled for a grand theatrical release on March 26.

## 'Aaya Sher' promo from 'The Paradise' sets the internet ablaze

Ahead of Natural Star Nani's birthday celebrations tomorrow, excitement among fans has reached a fever pitch with the release of the promo for the first single "Aaya Sher" from his much-anticipated pan-world film 'The Paradise'. As promised by the makers, the full song will be unveiled on his birthday, making it a special gift for fans across the globe. The fiery promo features Rockstar Anirudh Ravichander delivering a high-octane, adrenaline-charged composition driven by thunderous beats and a powerful, roaring chorus. Visually, the promo plunges viewers into a gritty, intense world filled with sweat, smoke, chaos, and raw energy, perfectly capturing the massive scale and mood of the film.



Nani's transformation has emerged as the biggest talking point. Sporting a striking red jacket, blazing eyes, and an intimidating rugged look, the actor appears in a fierce, commanding avatar that has instantly electrified fans. Standing amid frenzied crowds, he embodies the image of a lion reclaiming his throne, with the promo's final

moments delivering a strong dose of mass elevation and cinematic high.

Director Srikanth Odela has been widely praised for his larger-than-life vision and the powerful way he translates it onto the screen. Choreographer Sudhan Master also hints at a full-scale mass spectacle, suggesting that the complete song will be a swagger-filled visual carnival.

Backed by producer Sudhakar Cherukuri's SLV Cinemas, 'The Paradise' is shaping up as a global-scale cinematic event. The film is scheduled for a grand worldwide theatrical release on August 21, further heightening anticipation for what promises to be one of Nani's most ambitious projects yet.

## Wedding of VIROSH: Rashmika and Vijay Deverakonda make it official



Ending months of speculation and fan curiosity, star couple Rashmika Mandanna and Vijay Deverakonda have officially announced their wedding, putting an end to the long-running suspense around their relationship. The couple took to Instagram to share the happy news, confirming that they are entering wedlock and beautifully christening their union as the "Wedding of VIROSH" — a name lovingly given to them by fans.

Sharing a heartfelt message, both actors posted the same story on Instagram, expressing gratitude to their supporters for naming their bond long before they did. In their emotional note, they wrote that even before they made plans for themselves, fans had already given them the identity of "VIROSH," and they were now honouring that love by officially naming their wedding after it. The announcement instantly went viral, with fans and celebrities flooding social

media with congratulatory messages. Wedding festivities have already begun and are being kept strictly private. The families have reportedly departed for Udaipur, where the ceremonies are scheduled to take place. According to sources, the haldi ceremony will be held on February 24, followed by the sangeet on February 25, and the wedding on February 26. The venue is said to be a secluded hill resort on the outskirts of the city, most likely The Mementos by ITC Hotels, ensuring privacy and exclusivity for the intimate celebrations. While the wedding itself will be a private affair, the couple is planning a grand reception for the film fraternity and distinguished guests. The lavish reception is scheduled for March 4 from 7 PM onwards at Taj Krishna, where several prominent personalities from the film and political circles are expected to attend, making it one of the most anticipated celebrity events of the year.



## Alia Bhatt shines at BAFTA 2026 Awards, debuts as presenter in London

Bollywood star Alia Bhatt made a stunning international statement by attending the BAFTA Awards 2026 ceremony in London, where she marked her debut as a presenter. Her appearance quickly became one of the most talked-about moments of the prestigious event, drawing attention from fans, fashion critics, and

global media alike.

For the red carpet, Alia chose a custom silver sequinned gown by Gucci, which reflected a soft, elegant shimmer under the lights. The outfit featured a subtle glow that enhanced her presence without being overpowering. She paired the gown with a light wrap to stay warm in the London weather and opted for minimal styling, keeping her hair neatly done and her makeup soft and refined. The understated elegance of her look was widely praised for its sophistication and international appeal.

Social media was abuzz soon after her appearance, with fans applauding her classy fashion choices and confident

presence on such a major global platform. Many admired how she avoided heavy jewellery and excessive styling, allowing the gown and her natural grace to take center stage. Her red-carpet look was hailed as a perfect blend of glamour and simplicity.

On the professional front, Alia Bhatt continues to stay busy with major film commitments. She is currently working on her upcoming projects Alpha and Love & War, keeping fans excited about what lies ahead. Balancing global appearances with big-ticket film projects, Alia continues to strengthen her position as one of India's most influential and globally recognised stars.

## Saiyami Kher embraces vulnerability in Vikram Phadnis' upcoming social drama

Actress Saiyami Kher is set to surprise audiences with a softer and more emotionally driven performance in filmmaker Vikram Phadnis' upcoming yet-untitled social drama, where she will be seen exploring a more vulnerable side of her acting journey. The film, which also stars Tahir Raj Bhasin, marks a shift from the physically demanding roles she has been known for in recent years. Speaking about the project, Saiyami shared that the film attracted her because of its emotional depth and internal storytelling.

She described the role as "softer and more emotional," adding that it focuses more on inner journeys rather than external action. According to the actress, portraying vulnerability can often be more challenging than action-heavy performances, and that challenge motivated her to take on the project. On the work front, Saiyami recently wrapped up shooting for Haiwaan, directed by Priyadarshan and starring Akshay Kumar and Saif Ali Khan. The film, also featuring Sharib Hashmi, marks the reunion of Akshay and Saif after 18 years and was shot across Kochi, Ooty, and Mumbai. She was last seen in Jaat, directed by Gopichand Malineni, alongside Sunny Deol and Randeep Hooda. From her Telugu debut Rey to Hindi projects like Mirzya, Ghoomer, and series such as Special OPS, Saiyami continues to evolve with diverse and challenging roles across cinema and streaming platforms.



## 'Killer' teaser gets a grand launch

The teaser of the upcoming Telugu film Killer was officially launched at a grand event in Hyderabad, generating strong buzz among film circles and audiences. Starring Jyoti Poorvaj and Poorvaj in the lead roles, the film also features Manish Gilada, Chandrakant Kollu, Vishal Raj, Archana Ananth, and Gautham Chakradhar Koppishetty in key roles. The project is produced by Poorvaj and Padmanabha Reddy A under the banners Think Cinema and AU & I Studios, with the blessings of Dhyanam Nannagaru and presented by Urvish Poorvaj. Directed by Poorvaj, the film is gearing up for a grand theatrical release soon.



Speaking at the event, line producer Sitarama Rao said the entire team worked tirelessly on the project and expressed confidence that audiences would extend the same love to the film as they did to the teaser. Line producer Dasarath Madhav described Killer as a content-driven film blending emotional brother-sister

sentiment with strong storytelling, adding that despite being a small film, it has the potential for big success.

Actors Manish Gilada, Gautham Chakradhar, Vishal Raj and others praised the film's technical quality and Jyoti Poorvaj's surprising transformation and action performance. Jyoti Poor-

vaj revealed that the film marks her shift from routine television roles, calling it a dream opportunity where she plays multiple characters and performs intense action sequences inspired by iconic women-centric roles like those of Vijayashanti.

Director Poorvaj stated that the script was conceived years ago and blends artificial intelligence, emotional drama, revenge, subconscious identity, and brother-sister bonding into a multi-layered sci-fi thriller. He added that the teaser reveals only part of the story, with much more to be unveiled in the upcoming trailer. The teaser launch was supported by director Anil Ravipudi, marking a confident start for the ambitious project.