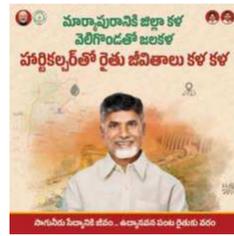


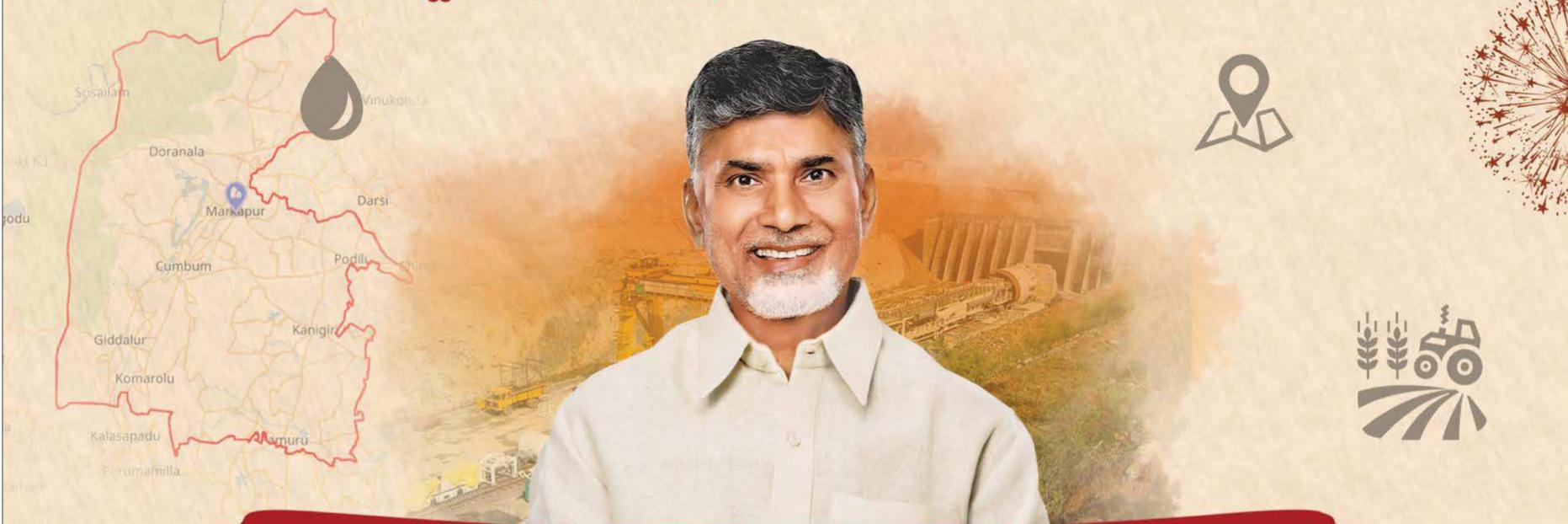
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మార్కాపురానికి జిల్లా కళ - వెలిగొండతో జలకళ హార్టికల్చర్తో రైతు జీవితాలు కళకళ



ఎన్నికల్లో మాటిచ్చినట్లు మార్కాపురం జిల్లా ఏర్పాటు చేసి... ప్రజల 5 దశాబ్దాల కలను నెరవేర్చాం. ఈ ఏడాదే వెలిగొండ మొదటి ఫేజ్ పూర్తి చేసి కరువు ప్రాంతంలో జలకళ తెస్తాం. హార్టికల్చర్ సాగుతో రైతుల జీవితాల్లో వెలుగులు నింపి జీవన ప్రమాణాలు పెంచుతాం.

ఆంధ్రప్రదేశ్ ముఖ్యమంత్రి

గౌ|| శ్రీ నారా చంద్రబాబు నాయుడు గారిచే

నేడు రూ.456 కోట్లతో చేపడుతున్న వెలిగొండ ప్రాజెక్టు ఫీడర్ కాలువ లైనింగ్ పనులకు శంకుస్థాపన కార్యక్రమం

స్థలం : గంటావానిపల్లె, పెద్దదోర్నాల మండలం | సమయం : ఉదయం 11 గంటలకు

భారీ బహిరంగ సభ

స్థలం : మార్కాపురంలోని శ్రీ సాయి బాలాజీ మోడల్ స్కూల్ ఎదురుగా
తేదీ : 25-02-2026 | సమయం : మధ్యాహ్నం 2 గంటలకు



సాగునీరు సేద్యానికి జీవం... ఉద్యానవన పంట రైతుకు వరం

జారీచేసిన తార: సంచాలకశులు, సమాచార, శివ సంచారశాల శాఖ, ఆంధ్రప్రదేశ్ ప్రభుత్వం

Heavy rains, gales flatten maize crop

HANS NEWS SERVICE
KETEPALLY (NALGONDA)

HEAVY rains accompanied by strong gusty winds wreaked havoc in Tungathri village of Ketepally mandal on Tuesday night, leaving vast stretches of maize

crop completely flattened. The sudden spell of unseasonal rain lashed the region, causing severe damage to standing crops just weeks before harvest.

According to local farmers, the intense winds uprooted and bent the maize plants to the ground, resulting in heavy losses. "Within a few hours, our entire crop was destroyed. We invested heavily in seeds, fertilizers and labour, hoping for a good yield this season," lamented a farmer from the village.

The unexpected weather has come as a major setback, as many farmers were depending on the maize harvest to repay loans and meet household expenses. With the crop flattened and soaked in rainwater, prospects of recovery



appear bleak.

Farmers have urged the state government to conduct an immediate field survey and assess the extent of the damage. They demanded adequate compensation and financial assistance to help them recover from the losses caused by the unseasonal rains.

Agriculture officials are expected to visit the affected fields soon to evaluate the damage and submit a report to higher authorities.

GOVERNMENT OF TELANGANA
Revenue (LA) Department
FORM-VII
(See sub-rule (1) of rule - 25 and section - 19(1) of the Act, 30/2013)

The Right to Fair Compensation and Transparency in Land Acquisition, Rehabilitation & Resettlement Act, 2013
COLLECTOR/ADDITIONAL COLLECTOR/ LAND ACQUISITION OFFICER & SUB-COLLECTOR
DECLARATION

No. G1/358/2025 Date: 24.02.2026
No. G/3351/2025 Date: 16.02.2026

Whereas it appears to the Government of Telangana that a total area of 30.38 3/4 gts of land is required in the Wadapally Village of Damaracherla Mandal in Nalgonda District for Public purpose, namely, acquisition of land for Construction of New Four Lane CC Road from Yadadri Thermal Power Station to Marketpally - Addanki - Medarametta Road (State Highway-2) bypassing Thallaveerappagudem and Damaracherla Villages from km 0/0 to 11/6.

Therefore declaration is made that a piece of land measuring more or less Ac. 30.38 3/4 gts of standard measurement, under acquisition for the above said project in the Wadapally Village of Damaracherla Mandal in Nalgonda District whose detailed description is as follows under acquisition.

SCHEDULE

Village: Wadapally	Mandal: Damaracherla	District: Nalgonda					
Sl. No.	Survey No.	Sub-Division No.	Dry/Wet	Type of Land	Area under Acquisition (Ac.gts)	Name of the Patta/holder and S/o or W/o	Details of the Right
1	2	4	5	6	7	8	
1	18	2	Dry	Patta	00-25 1/4	Indian Cement Pvt Ltd.	-
2	23	2	Dry	Bancharal	03-25.00	Indian Cement Pvt Ltd.	-
3	117	2	Dry	Patta	01-04 1/4	Indian Cement Pvt. Ltd.	-
4	5	2	Dry	Patta	00-30 1/4	Boddu Sambhaiah S/o. Sadulu	-
5	4	2	Dry	Patta	00-30 1/4	Boddu Srinivasulu S/o. Sadulu	-
6	4	2	Dry	Patta	00-30 1/4	Boddu Ramaiah S/o. Sadulu	-
Total:- 03-15.00							
7	118	2	Dry	Patta	00-09.00	Indian Cement Pvt Ltd.	-
8	120	2	Dry	Patta	01-08 3/4	Indian Cement Pvt Ltd.	-
9	9	2	Dry	Patta	00-21 1/4	Railway Line (existing)	-
Total:- 01-29.00							
10	125	2	Dry	Patta	00-36 3/4	Indian Cement Pvt. Ltd.	-
11	143	2	Dry	Patta	00-38 1/2	Indian Cement Pvt. Ltd.	-
12	144	2	Dry	Patta	00-21 3/4	Indian Cement Pvt. Ltd.	-
13	145	2	Dry	Patta	00-01.00	Indian Cement Pvt. Ltd.	-
14	154	2	Dry	Patta	03-01.00	Indian Cement Pvt. Ltd.	-
15	155	2	Dry	Patta	00-09.00	Indian Cement Pvt. Ltd.	-
16	165	2	Dry	Patta	00-35 3/4	Kedia Distilleries	-
17	166	2	Dry	Patta	00-06 3/4	Indian Cement Pvt. Ltd.	-
18	19	2	Dry	Patta	01-10 1/2	Kedia Distilleries	-
Total:- 01-17 1/4							
19	180	2	Dry	Patta	00-17.00	Vemula Laxamma W/o. Bhaskhar Rao	-
20			Dry	Patta	00-17 1/4	Vemula Vijay W/o. Annuhath	-
Total:- 00-34 1/4							
21	181	2	Dry	Patta	00-16.00	Bayya Bangaramma W/o. Sadulu	-
22			Dry	Patta	00-16 1/4	Bayya Sadaiah S/o. Lingaiah	-
Total:- 00-32 1/4							
23	185	2	Dry	Patta	00-03 3/4	Vemula Laxamma W/o. Bhaskhar Rao	-
24			Dry	Patta	00-03 3/4	Vemula Vijay W/o. Annuhath	-
25			Dry	Patta	00-01 1/2	Kola Narasimha Rao S/o. Venkaiah	-
26			Dry	Patta	00-24 1/2	Indian Cement Pvt. Ltd.	-
Total:- 00-33 1/2							
27	188	2	Dry	Patta	00-22 3/4	Kotika Kondaiah S/o. Venkateswarlu	-
28			Dry	Patta	00-04.00	Lottapally Naga Saidamma W/o. Venkaiah	-
29			Dry	Patta	00-26 3/4	Kotika Venkateswarlu S/o. Sathaiiah	-
Total:- 01-13 1/2							
30	208	2	Dry	Patta	00-01.00	Bellamkonda Sushila W/o. Srinu	-
31			Dry	Patta	00-01.00	Vakiti Venkateswarlu S/o. Kotikonda Rao S/o. Malliah	-
32			Dry	Patta	00-09 1/2	Gaddam Venkanna S/o. Malliah	-
33			Dry	Patta	00-07 1/4	Kasani Durgamma W/o. Malliah	-
34			Dry	Patta	00-02 1/4	Canal	-
Total:- 00-21.00							
35	209	2	Dry	Patta	00-01 3/4	Gundu Saidulu S/o. Gurvaiah	-
36			Dry	Patta	00-02.00	Canal	-
37			Dry	Patta	00-17 3/4	Un known	-
38			Dry	Patta	00-06 3/4	Kasani Durgamma W/o. Malliah	-
39			Dry	Patta	00-03 1/2	Kasani Varalakshmi W/o. Gopiah	-
40			Dry	Patta	00-08.00	Raikindi Indiramma W/o. Narayana	-
41			Dry	Patta	00-01 1/4	Gaddam Venkanna W/o. Malliah	-
Total:- 01-01.00							
42	210	2	Dry	Patta	00-20 1/2	Gaddam Venkaiah S/o. Peda Kotaiah	-
43			Dry	Patta	00-23 1/2	Narsing Eswaramma W/o. Saidulu	-
44			Dry	Patta	00-11 1/2	Bellamkonda Sushila W/o. Srinu	-
45			Dry	Patta	00-07 1/4	Vakiti Koteswar Rao S/o. Venkaiah	-
Total:- 01-22 3/4							
46	217	2	Dry	Patta	00-02 1/4	Dasani Kondaiah S/o. Srinamulu	-
47			Dry	Patta	00-10 1/4	Lottapally Gurvaiah S/o. Thirupathiah	-
48			Dry	Patta	00-14 1/4	Bayya Jeediah S/o. Lingaiah	-
49			Dry	Patta	00-00 1/2	Muvva Laxminarasamma W/o. Sathayayamma	-
50			Dry	Patta	00-02.00	Raikindi Nagaiah S/o. Venkateswarlu	-
Total:- 00-29 1/4							
51	218	2	Dry	Patta	00-33.00	Paddu Pappiah S/o. Venkaiah	-
52			Dry	Patta	00-18.00	Dasani Kanaka Rao S/o. Srinamulu	-
53			Dry	Patta	00-18 3/4	Dasani Kondaiah S/o. Srinamulu	-
Total:- 01-29 3/4							
54	219	2	Dry	Patta	00-01 1/2	Raikindi Nagaiah S/o. Venkateswarlu	-
55			Dry	Patta	00-04.00	Bellamkonda Venkanna S/o. Adinarayana	-
56			Dry	Patta	00-04.00	Raikindi Brahamma S/o. Yerra Kotaiah	-
57			Dry	Patta	00-10 1/2	Raikindi Venkanna S/o. Palleiah	-
58			Dry	Patta	00-08 1/2	Raikindi Narasiah W/o. Ramesh	-
59			Dry	Patta	00-09.00	Raikindi Narasiah S/o. Chinnna Gurvaiah	-
60			Dry	Patta	00-07 1/2	Raikindi Bixapamma W/o. Shekar	-
61			Dry	Patta	00-06 1/2	Raikindi Venkateswarlu S/o. Gurvaiah	-
62			Dry	Patta	00-13.00	Raikindi Indiramma W/o. Narayana	-
63			Dry	Patta	00-07.00	Pathulothu Ramesh S/o. Hanuma Naik	-
64			Dry	Patta	00-07.00	Raikindi Suresh S/o. Laxmaiah	-
Total:- 01-38 1/2							
65	220	2	Dry	Patta	00-17 1/4	Pathulothu Venkateswarlu S/o. Hanuma Naik	-
66	221	2	Dry	Patta	00-02.00	Pathulothu Venkateswarlu S/o. Hanuma Naik	-
67	223	2	Dry	Patta	01-05.00	Prayavula Nagaraju S/o. Peda Amaraiah	-
68			Dry	Patta	00-03 1/2	Gaddam Venkaiah S/o. Peda Kotaiah	-
Total:- 01-08 1/2							
69	donk	2	Dry	Patta	00-11.00	Naksha Objections	-
Grand Total :- 30-38 3/4							

This declaration is made after hearing or objections or objections of persons interested and due enquiry as provided U/s 15 of the Act No. 30/2013. The area for acquisition would have no displacement of people and no disturbance to the infrastructure in the vicinity, ecology and minimum adverse impact is foreseen on the affected individual's livelihood. Hence, there is no need to pass a separate R&R award in terms of Section 31 and second schedule of the R&R Act, 2013 (Act No. 30 of 2013). The Government of Telangana TR&B (R.II) Department have issued G.O.No.47, TR &B (R.II) Deptt. Dated: 18.06.2025 exempting the project "Formation of new Four lane CC Road from Yadadri Thermal Power Station to Marketpally - Addanki - Medarametta Road (SH-2)" bypassing Thallaveerappagudem and Damaracherla Villages from Km 0/0 to Km 11/6, from the application of the Provisions of chapter II and Chapter III of the R&R Act in L&R Act, 2013 to this project.

Mines of coal, iron, stone, slate or other materials lying under the said land or any particular portion of the said land, except such parts of the mines and minerals which may be required to be dug or removed or used during the construction phase of the project for the purpose of which the land is being acquired, are not needed.

A plan of the land may be inspected in the office of the Land Acquisition Officer & sub-collector, Miryalguda on any working day.

Sd/- Sd/- Sd/-
Land Acquisition Officer Additional Collector, District
& Sub-Collector, Nalgonda District
Miryalguda District Collector, Nalgonda.

DIPR No. 1222/LA/PP/ADVT/PUB/2025-26

Sports meet begins at Winfield school

HANS NEWS SERVICE
KHAMMAM

THE annual sports meet commenced at Winfield School on



Tuesday in Khammam amid enthusiasm.

Students from pre-primary to high school took part in kho-kho, kabaddi, shuttle badminton and chess competitions. The three-day event is aimed at encouraging sportsmanship and identifying young talent.

Director Manne Kishore Kumar, Polavarapu Srikanth, Gadde Pullarao, along with staff and parents, attended the inaugural programme.

Winners will be honoured on the final day.

PUBLIC NOTICE

This is to inform the general public that our client, Mr. K. Aravind Reddy, S/o. Mr. Ashok Reddy, R/o. Choudaripalli Village, Nagarkurnool District, has applied for a loan against his residential property with Title Capital, H.D. Mahabubnagar Branch. The property was gifted to him by his father through a registered Gift Deed bearing Document No. 7098/2024.

Therefore, if any person has any objection, claim, lien, or encumbrance regarding the unmentioned property (Schedule Property), they are hereby directed to submit their objections in writing, along with valid supporting documents, to the address mentioned below within 7 (seven) days from the date of this publication.

If no objections are received within the stipulated time, it will be deemed that the property is free from all encumbrances, disputes, or claims. No further objections will be entertained or considered thereafter.

PROPERTY SCHEDULE:

All that piece and parcel of the residential house bearing No. 3-48, situated at Choudaripalli Village, Nagarkurnool District, comprising an area of 498 square yards (or RCC roof area of 1462 square feet) located in Sy.No./Patta No., and bounded as follows:

Boundaries: East: Colony Road, West: Open Land belonging to Yeddu Mohan Reddy, North: House of Koteswari Vijender Reddy, South: House of Yeddu Rama Chandra Reddy and Common Lane.

Sd/- J. Narendar Reddy Advocate,
H.No.1-182, Subhash Nagar,
Kalwakurthy, Nagarkurnool District.
Cell No: 9440919973

OFFICE OF THE MUNICIPALITY DEVARAKADRA MUNICIPALITY MAHABUBNAGAR DIST. (TS)

E-Procurement Tender Notice

Tender for Construction of Storm water drains at various locations in Devarakadra Municipality Est. cost of Rs 5.00Cr & Development of Main road (Drains along the road, CC Roads, footpath, parking Beautification and Land scaping etc., under R0B in Devarakadra Municipality Est. cost of Rs 10.00Cr, have been called on "e" procurement platform Bid Document Download Start Dt: 25.02.2026, 10:30 AM, Bid Document Download end Dt: 06.03.2026, 3:30 PM. Further details can be seen @ e-procurement market place i.e. <https://tender.telanganagov.in> Office Inviting Bids: Commissioner, Devarakadra Municipality, Telangana State, Ph. 733109837, 934710284.

Sd/- COMMISSIONER,
DEVARAKADRA MUNICIPALITY

DIPR, R.O. No.: 15894-PP/CL/ADVT/1/2025-26 Dt: 24-02-26

GOVERNMENT OF TELANGANA PANCHAYATI RAJ ENGINEERING DEPARTMENT OFFICE OF THE DISTRICT PANCHAYATH RAJ ENGINEER PIU, MANCHERIAL DISTRICT NOTICE

The Government of Telangana vide State Govt.G.O.Ms.No.121, EFS&T (FOR.I) Dept., Date:29-12-2025 has issued Stage-II approval under Forest (Conservation) Act 1980, for Diversion of 4.8409 Ha of Forest land for the work improvement of existing road to BT Standard to Road from L028-Laxmipur to Baddampally of Vemanapally mandal in Mancherial District (including c/o. two (2) Bridges at 6/600 km and 8/800 km) in RFs of Chennai and Bellampally Forest Divisions of Mancherial District in favour of District Panchayat Raj Engineer, PIU, Mancherial District.

In concurrence to the above orders Principal Chief Conservator of Forests (Head of Forest Force) T.S., Hyderabad vide Rc.No.FC2/FC09/35/2022 (4557/2018/FCA2), Dt:11-01-2026 issued instruction to fulfil the following conditions & stipulated in the G.O. noted in above para.

- Legal status of the diverted forest land shall remain unchanged;
- The State Forest Department shall carry out compensatory afforestation over an extent of 4.8409 ha out of 28.45 ha NFL identified in Sy. No. 67/1 at Venkatapur Village, Mudhole Mandal of Nirmal Division in lieu of proposed diversion of forest land for various road proposals under PMGSY scheme in various Divisions and Districts of the Telangana State. The portion of non-forest land out of 59.468 ha, identified for CA purpose for the subject project, shall be demarcated properly to identify the same for monitoring purpose.
- Non-forest land and degraded forest land identified for CA purpose and CA scheme shall not be changed without prior approval of the Central Government.
- Entire non-forest land identified for raising compensatory afforestation over an extent of 28.45 ha in Sy. No. 67/1 at Venkatapur Village, Mudhole Mandal of Nirmal Division shall be transferred and mutated in favour of the State Forest Department and shall be declared as Reserved Forest under Section-4 or Protected Forest under Section-29 of the Indian Forest Act, 1927 or under the relevant Section(s) of the local Forest Act within 6 months from the date of issue of Stage-II approval. A copy of the original notification shall be submitted to this office for information and record;
- The Nodal Officer (FCA) of the State of Telangana shall instruct all the field level officers to implement the CA scheme in its entirety as per the proposal and no CA amount should be left unspent;
- Additional amount of the Net Present Value (NPV) of the diverted forest land and if any, becoming due after revision of the same by the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India in future, shall be charged by the State Government from the User Agency.
- Wildlife Mitigation Plan as approved with financial outlay of Rs.150.08 lakhs shall be implemented by the State Forest Department at the cost of the User Agency and report compliance to the Regional Office / Sub Office.
- The User Agency shall construct retaining walls and check walls wherever required, by consulting the DFO concerned, at the project cost;
- Construction of culverts / bridges, if any, over the natural streams/rivers/canals shall be done in such a manner that it does not hamper the natural course of water, does not give rise to water-logging, and also does not hamper movement of wild animals;
- Roadside cuttings and fillings which require engineering support shall be provided as per the instructions of the DFO concerned so as to stabilize the soil;
- The dug out material / overburden shall be dumped outside the forest area. Storage of any material shall not be done in the forest area;
- The layout plan of the proposal shall not be changed without the prior approval of the Central Government;
- The User Agency shall provide fire wood preferably alternate fuel to labourers working at the site to avoid damage/tree felling and no labour camp shall be established inside the forest area,
- Felling of trees shall be carried out wherever necessary under the strict supervision of DFO concerned;
- Disturbance shall be kept minimum by creating labour camps outside the forest area as far as possible and it shall be the responsibility of the User Agency to ensure that the labourers & staff engaged in execution of work do not destruct nearby forest flora & fauna;
- The total forest area utilized for the project shall not exceed 4.8409 Ha (width of the carriageway / BT portion of the road shall be restricted to 3 mtrs) and the forest area diverted shall not be used for any purpose other than those shown in the diversion proposal.
- The forest land proposed for diversion shall under no circumstances be transferred or sublet to any other agency, department or person without prior approval of the Central Government.
- Any other conditions that the Ministry of Environment, Forests & Climate Change Regional Office, Chennai/Sub Office, Hyderabad (Central) may impose from time to time in the interest of afforestation, conservation and management of flora and fauna in the area, shall be complied by the User Agency;
- Violation of any of these conditions will amount to violation of Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980 and action would be taken as prescribed in para 1.16 of Chapter 1 of the Handbook of Comprehensive Guidelines of Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980 as issued by this Ministry's letter dated 29.12.2023.
- The State Government, before issuing the final diversion order, shall ensure that the user agency has complied with all the provisions of all Acts, Rules, Regulations, Guidelines, Hon'ble Court Order(s) and NGT Order(s), including compliance of Forest Rights Act, 2006, pertaining to this project, for the time being in force, as applicable to the project; and
- The User Agency shall submit the annual self-compliance report in respect of the above stated conditions to the State Government, concerned Regional Office, Chennai/Sub Office, Hyderabad (Central) by the end of March every year regularly.
- The compliance report shall be uploaded on e-portal (<https://parivesh.nic.in/>).
- KML of the CA NFL and DFL lands shall be uploaded on the e-Green watch portal.

Sd/- District Panchayat Raj Engineer, PIU, Mancherial District

BC COMMISSION CHAIRMAN VISITS KUMMERA

KUMMERA TRAGEDY

- A team inspected the temple premises where the incident took place
- They collected detailed information from officials
- A detailed Report to be submitted to the govt after receiving all inputs

Terms infant's death 'deeply tragic'



HANS NEWS SERVICE
NAGARKURNOOL

BC Commission Chairman Niranjan termed the death of a two-month-old infant during the incident at the Shiva temple in Kummera village of Nagarkurnool mandal as extremely tragic. On Tuesday, he visited the village along with District Collector Badavath Santosh, Superintendent of Police Dr. Sangram Singh G.

Patil, and Commission members Rapolu Jayaprakash, T. Surender, and Balalakhshi.

The team inspected the Sri Mallikarjuna Swamy temple premises where the incident took place and collected detailed information from officials. DSP Buri Srinivasulu showed the Chairman a video recorded by a Home Guard during the incident. The Commission Chairman paid floral tributes at the infant's

grave, observed a two-minute silence, and later visited the residence of the child's parents, Ganesh and Mounika, to console them.

Officials informed that around 10,000 devotees had attended the Mallanna Jatara. Niranjan stated that the BC Commission has taken the matter with utmost priority and has sought comprehensive reports from the District Collector, SP, and the Endow-

ments Department. He said a detailed report will be submitted to the State Government after receiving all inputs.

He stressed that safeguarding the rights of backward and weaker sections is the Commission's responsibility and directed officials to take strict legal action against the accused, regardless of their status. He called for a transparent police investigation to uncover the truth and urged strong measures against caste discrimination to prevent recurrence of such incidents. He assured full support to the victim's family.

District Collector Badavath Santosh and SP Dr. Sangram Singh G. Patil briefed the Commission on the actions taken by the district administration over the past three days.

BRS sees graft conspiracy in Peberu market land row

HANS NEWS SERVICE
WANAPARTHY

FORMER Minister and BRS leader Singireddy Niranjan Reddy has alleged a large-scale corruption conspiracy in the name of land acquisition for the Peberu market (santha) land.

Addressing a press conference at Peberu on Tuesday, Niranjan Reddy said the dispute over Survey No. 392, pertaining to 30 acres and 19 guntas of land, has been pending for nearly three decades between private landowners and the Endowments Department. He stated that courts had delivered judgments in favour of the landowners in 2003, 2007 and again in 2022.

He alleged that during the election period, certain political leaders, ignoring the judicial process, claimed that the entire extent of land belonged to the government and accused him of attempting to encroach upon it. "They publicly declared that within a month the entire market land would be taken over by the government and a compound wall constructed. Three years have passed, but they have neither fulfilled their promise nor respected the court's verdict," he said. Niranjan Reddy maintained that in the interest of Peberu residents and traders, efforts were made to resolve the issue amicably by persuading landowners to allot 16 acres for the market in exchange for alternative agricultural land. He said a gift deed had been secured from the land-



owners in this regard, but political opponents allegedly spread misinformation during elections, accusing him of land grabbing. Criticising the present move to initiate land acquisition, he alleged that it was a pretext for large-scale corruption. Citing what he described as reliable information, he claimed that landowners were being offered highly valuable land near the Outer Ring Road outside the district as compensation and that influential persons were involved in the process. He further alleged that the arrangement could result in a scam worth thousands of crores. Questioning the silence of leaders who had earlier made strong statements about taking over the land without compensation, he said the recent court verdict reaffirming ownership rights of landowners had exposed their claims.

Niranjan Reddy demanded a public apology from those who had accused him of encroachment. "If they have moral integrity, they should apologise to me and to the people of Peberu," he said, adding that he was ready for any transparent and lawful solution that safeguards public interest.

VEERLAPALLI UNDERSCORES ROLE OF SAR



THE Hans India



WOMENIA
Aishwarya Sakhua on meeting herself without 'filters or performance'
 Aishwarya was a Miss India finalist in 2006. From 2010 to 2012, she starred in the TV show 'Saas Bina Sasural'.

EDIT
The rise and fall of El Mencho
 In Milenio Cartel, El Mencho started as a member of the assassin squad that protected the drug lord Armando Valencia Cornelio ("El Maradona"). On 12 August 2003, his boss was arrested by Mexican authorities.

BUSINESS
iQOO launches 15R; Co sees good demand in India
 iQOO, the specialised mobile brand from Vivo stable, on Tuesday launched iQOO 15R in India as it eyes more young professionals' user base in the country.

YOUNG HANS
What recruiters will truly seek from 2026 data science graduates
 Core technical skills remain essential, but expectations have advanced. Python and SQL are baseline requirements rather than differentiators.

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

TG to take up Medigadda repair works in summer

Uttam monitoring finalisation of designs

HANS NEWS SERVICE HYDERABAD

THE state government is likely to take up the repairs of the three damaged barrages under the Kaleshwaram Lift Irrigation Project - Medigadda, Annaram and Sundilla before the onset of this year's monsoon.

Following the recent assurances by Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy that the Kaleshwaram project would be functional soon, the Irrigation Department has expedited review of the technical study reports and National Dam Safety Authority (NDSA) recommendations. The department also speeded up designs for the three damaged barrages.

Officials said that the Central Water and Power Research Station (CWPRS), Pune, has already submitted its site inspection report along with a schedule of works for all three barrages. Testing works are under progress at Annaram and Sundilla barrages, while rehabilitation designs are to be prepared shortly.



Uttam monitoring finalisation of designs. "Systematic and scientific efforts are underway to salvage Medigadda, Annaram and Sundilla barrages", an official said. Officials said that Irrigation Minister N Uttam Kumar Reddy is closely monitoring the developments regarding finalisation of designs. The government's priority is to restore the barrages, for which independent, highly qualified technical institutions and consultants have been engaged. The CWC has advised that designs be prepared by well-qualified and experienced technical experts, which they will vet, approve, and guide through execution.

PM Modi's 2nd visit to Israel set to upgrade strategic ties

NEW DELHI: Prime Minister Narendra Modi will undertake a two-day visit to Israel beginning Wednesday to shore up bilateral defence and trade cooperation amid the ongoing tensions in the Middle-east including deteriorating ties between the US and Iran. Modi's engagements will include his address to Israel's parliament, wide-ranging talks with his Israeli counterpart Benjamin Netanyahu and a meeting with President Isaac Herzog. "This visit will reaffirm the deep and long-standing strategic partnership between the two countries and will present an opportunity to review the common challenges as well as realign efforts towards achieving their shared vision for a robust partnership between two resilient democracies," the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) said. It is learnt that boosting overall defence and security cooperation will be a major area of discussions during delegation level talks between the two prime ministers on Thursday.

Devuji, 3 other top Maoists surrender to TG police

DGP Shivadhar Reddy says top hierarchy of Maoist party has collapsed

HANS NEWS SERVICE HYDERABAD

TELANGANA DGP B Shivadhar Reddy on Tuesday said the top hierarchy of the banned Communist Party of India (Maoist) collapsed, as four top Maoist leaders, including Thippiri Thirupati alias Devuji, key strategist and Central Committee Member, surrendered to the Telangana police.

The other surrendered top Maoists included Malla Raji Reddy alias Sangram, Bade Chokka Rao alias Damodar and Nune Narsimha Reddy alias Ganganna. They are



DGP B Shivadhar Reddy, SIB IG B Sumathi, Addl DGP Vijay Kumar and Mahesh Bhagwat along with four surrendered Maoists Devuji, Sangram, Damodar and Ganganna at a press meet in Hyderabad on Tuesday. Photo: Ch Prabhu Das

considered among the top surviving last members of the banned outfit, and their surrender is considered a big setback to the armed revolution. On Sunday, they surrendered before the Telangana police, and this marked a major step toward peace and the strengthening of security efforts in the state. Continued on Page 5

STOCK MARKET CRASH

Investors lose ₹3L cr as Sensex plunges 1,069 points



MUMBAI: Frontline indices, the Sensex and the Nifty 50, suffered strong losses on Tuesday as investors booked profits across sectors, tracking weak global cues. The Sensex crashed 1,069 points, or 1.28%, to end at 82,225.92, while the NSE counterpart Nifty 50 fell 1.12% to close at 25,424.65. The mid- and small-cap indices also ended in the negative territory, but they still outperformed the benchmarks. The BSE 150 MidCap Index slipped 0.40%, while the BSE 250 SmallCap Index fell 0.76%. Investors lost Rs 3 lakh crore as the overall market capitalisation of BSE-listed firms fell to Rs 466 lakh crore from Rs 469 lakh crore in the previous session.

Officials said that Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy has instructed the authorities to comply with the recommendations made by the NDSA, while undertaking repairs of the barrages.



Indian exporters set to gain as US customs rolls out 10% global tariff

It's lower than Trump's threatened 15% levy

WASHINGTON/NEW DELHI

INDIA products clearing US customs from Tuesday onwards will be subject to 10% duties instead of 50% when the contracts were negotiated, opening doors for some kind of a relief even for cargoes on seas. While immediate windfall will be for the importer who would have to pay 40% less

tariffs, some of it may be passed on to Indian sellers. "Many exporters had an understanding with the buyers while negotiating contracts at a very thin margin or even loss that benefit from change in duties would be shared with them too," CEO and Director General of Federation of Indian Export Organisations (FIEO) Ajay Sahai said. Continued on Page 5

No full land resurvey in Telangana even as Andhra braces for 2nd one

TG farmers express concern over delay in resurvey

KOLISHETTY VENKATESHWARLU HYDERABAD

While Andhra Pradesh is gearing up to undertake its second comprehensive land resurvey, Telangana is yet to begin its first full-fledged survey since the formation of the state over a decade ago!

During the 71st Independence Day celebrations on August 15, 2017, at Golconda Fort, then Chief Minister K Chandrashekar Rao (KCR) announced a comprehensive land resurvey, describing it as the first such exercise since the 1936 survey conducted under the Nizam's rule. He



said the initiative would curb corruption and resolve land disputes. However, the exercise was largely confined to what the government termed "comprehensive land records cleansing" and the proposal of comprehensive land survey remained on the paper. In 2021, KCR revived the proposal, calling for a state-wide digital survey alongside the launch of the 'Dharani'

portal. He stated that fixing precise coordinates for agricultural lands would prevent encroachments and boundary disputes. Despite these announcements, a full resurvey did not materialise. Critics allege that disputes and informal settlements increased after the portal's introduction. The Congress party made the Dharani portal a major election issue in 2023. Leaders, including Rahul Gandhi, promised to scrap the portal. After coming to power, Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy replaced Dharani with a new platform named 'Bhu Bharathi'. Continued on Page 5

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Cabinet raises raw jute MSP to ₹5,925

NEW DELHI: The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA), chaired by Narendra Modi, has approved a Rs 275 per quintal increase in the Minimum Support Price (MSP) of raw jute for the 2026-27 marketing season, reinforcing income support for jute farmers. The MSP for raw jute (TD-3 grade) has been fixed at Rs 5,925 per quintal, ensuring a margin of 61.8 per cent over the all-India weighted average cost of production. The pricing decision remains aligned with the government's policy of fixing MSP at a minimum of 1.5 times the cost of production, as outlined in Budget 2018-19.

Kerala is now Keralam

Union Cabinet okays renaming the state

NEW DELHI

THE Union Cabinet on Tuesday approved a proposal to alter the name of the state of Kerala to 'Keralam' and initiated the constitutional process required to amend the First Schedule of the Constitution for renaming the state.

The decision was taken at a Cabinet meeting chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi. Following the



approval, the President of India will now refer the proposed Kerala (Alteration of Name) Bill, 2026 to the Kerala Legislative Assembly to seek its views under Article 3 of the Constitution. Under Article 3 of the Constitution, parliament has the power to alter the name of an existing State by law. Continued on Page 5

POLITICKLE by MANJUL

I CAN'T TAKE YOUR CALL RIGHT NOW. PLEASE LEAVE YOUR MESSAGE AFTER THE BEEP

SOB... SOB... O LORD! A MAN WHO WORSHIPS A DIFFERENT GOD REFUSED ME A BLANKET TODAY. HELP ME

PLEASE LEAVE YOUR MESSAGE AFTER THE BEEP...

DEAR LORD, I PUNISHED A WOMAN TODAY. SHE WORSHIPS A DIFFERENT GOD AND TRIED TO TAKE MY BLANKET. I REFUSED. REWARD ME

SAME SERVER



SHIRTLESS PROTEST

ICY chief arrested

NEW DELHI: Youth Congress president Uday Bhanu Chib was arrested on Tuesday after questioning in connection with T-shirt protest at the 'India AI Impact Summit', immediately inviting criticism from the Congress with Leader of Opposition in Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi calling the police action "proof of dictatorial tendencies and cowardice". The Youth Congress leader, who the police claimed was the 'main conspirator and mastermind', was picked up for questioning on Monday afternoon for the second time in connection with the protest at Bharat Mandapam on the last day of the AI summit. Police have already arrested seven Youth Congress activists, including three from Gwalior on Monday in the case. Police also claimed that Chib's associates raised "anti-national slogans" and "tried to incite riot-like situations" at the venue. They also claimed Chib did not cooperate with the probe and did not disclose names of other co-accused and the source of printing T-shirts used in the protest. Continued on Page 5

MAKING WATER FROM AIR

A Nobel laureate makes Modi's vision a reality

NEW DELHI

IN October 2020, during a virtual interaction with Danish wind energy giant Vestas, Prime Minister Narendra Modi suggested that wind turbines could suck moisture from the air to generate clean drinking water.

Fast-forward to February 2026, and science has achieved that very goal through the work of a Nobel laureate.

As first reported by The Guardian, the Nobel laureate has unveiled an industrial machine that harvests

water from the driest air on Earth. Professor Omar Yaghi, the 2025 Nobel Prize winner in Chemistry, has turned the tide with his company Atoco, a California-based deep-tech firm specialising in atmospheric water harvesting and carbon capture using atomic-scale precision. Put simply, Yaghi has built a company that creates molecular traps to grab water and carbon directly from the sky with extreme accuracy. By using a breakthrough called reticular



Nobel laureate Prof Omar Yaghi, the pioneer of reticular chemistry, whose invention harvests clean water from the world's driest air

chemistry, the Nobel laureate is transforming what was once a subject of political mockery into a vital lifeline for a thirsty planet. The heart of this breakthrough lies in reticular chemistry, a discipline that involves stitching together molecular building blocks into expansive, crystalline structures known as Metal Organic Frameworks (MOFs). Think of these as the world's most advanced molecular sponges, but instead of cleaning a kitchen counter, they are designed to soak up invisible gases and moisture from the air. Their internal architecture is so intricate that a single gram of the material, which is hardly the weight of a paperclip, possesses an internal surface area large enough to cover several

football fields. These are nano-engineered materials, which means scientists have designed them at a scale 1,00,000 times smaller than the width of human hair. At this microscopic level, they can build custom-made chemical pockets that act like tiny rooms specifically sized to fit water molecules. Unlike traditional atmospheric water generators (AWGs) that rely on energy-intensive cooling to reach the dew point, Yaghi's materials use adsorption.

IRREGULAR by MANJUL

Not a 'naked protester'... A Dalal Street player

Major eviction drive: 600 families now homeless

- 1,500 police personnel from Khammam and neighbouring districts deployed at the site
- Eviction drive was carried out in Velugumatla area
- 600 families had reportedly been residing on about 60 acres of Bhoodan land
- Authorities state land belongs to the govt
- They said notices had been issued on multiple occasions asking the occupants to vacate

HANS NEWS SERVICE
KHAMMAM

TENSION prevailed in Khammam town on Tuesday after revenue authorities, backed by a heavy police force, demolished huts erected on Bhoodan land in the outskirts of the town.

The eviction drive was carried out in Velugumatla area, where nearly 600 families had report-

TENSION IN KHAMMAM AS POLICE DEMOLISH HUTS ON BHOODAN LAND



edly been residing on about 60 acres of Bhoodan land for the past several years. According to official sources, around 1,500 police personnel from Khammam and neighbouring districts were deployed at the site in the early hours to prevent any law and order issues.

Earthmovers were pressed into service to clear the huts. Residents, including women and elderly persons, attempted

to resist the demolition, leading to tense scenes. Police, however, brought the situation under control and ensured that no major untoward incident occurred, officials added.

Authorities maintained that the land belongs to the government and that notices had been issued on multiple occasions asking the occupants to vacate. "As they allegedly failed to comply, the administration proceed-

ed with the eviction as per due process," they said.

The displaced families expressed anguish over the action, alleging that they were not provided alternative accommodation. They claimed to have been living there for nearly a decade and had even approached the courts seeking regularisation and house site pattas.

The district unit of the Communist Party of India (Marxist)

demanding that the government immediately allot alternative house sites to the affected families.

Meanwhile, the Bharat Rashtra Samithi strongly condemned the demolition. BRS Parliamentary Party Deputy Leader and Rajya Sabha member Vaddiraju Ravichandra termed the action "unjust and inhuman" and alleged that poor families who had been seeking pattas were

rendered homeless.

In a statement, he urged the government to halt the demolitions and grant pattas to eligible beneficiaries. He further alleged that influential persons and real estate interests were eyeing the

land and that using police force against the poor reflected an "authoritarian approach".

Heavy police deployment continued in the area as a precautionary measure, officials said.

Lands taken over as per Board orders: AC

HANS NEWS SERVICE
KHAMMAM

THE district administration said that lands in Velugumatla were taken into government possession as per the directions of the Telangana Bhoodan Yagna Board, and clarified that only unauthorised constructions were removed.

Addressing a press conference on Tuesday, Additional Collector P. Srinivasa Reddy, along with Law and Order Additional DCP Prasad Rao, said the action was taken following due process and in compliance with the Board's orders.

The Additional Collector said that in 1953, Kalvala Raja Ramarao had donated 31 acres and 7 guntas of land in Survey Nos. 147, 148 and 149 under the Bhoodan movement. Over the years, the land had allegedly been encroached upon.

He said that notices were first issued in 2019 by the Khammam Urban Tahsildar asking encroachers to vacate the land. The notices were challenged in the High Court, which observed that the Tahsildar lacked

Temporary shelter arranged for displaced persons



jurisdiction in matters concerning Bhoodan lands and granted interim relief, while making it clear that the nature of Bhoodan land should not be altered.

"In 2023, certain petitioners approached the High Court seeking protection from demolition of structures constructed on the land. The court issued status quo orders with regard to specific constructions of

the petitioners and directed that no new constructions be taken up on the remaining land," he said.

Srinivasa Reddy said the Bhoodan Yagna Board conducted an inquiry and, on January 17, 2026, concluded that no allotments had been made to the petitioners.

He clarified that five acres each had been earmarked for a Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya (KGBV)

and a Model School, and no other allocations were made.

According to the Additional Collector, the Board issued notices on January 17, 2026, directing 308 encroachers to vacate the land. He stated that claims circulating on social media that the government had allotted house sites to the occupants were not supported by official records.

The Additional Collector said the government had not made any allotments in the Velugumatla Bhoodan lands and that the land would be utilised for public purposes as per government directions in future.

He added that temporary shelter had been arranged for displaced persons at the Kammaravari Sangham building and that belongings of the occupants were safely stored at Ambedkar Bhavan. The items would be handed over to the respective persons upon request.

Additional DCP Prasad Rao said cases had also been registered against individuals who allegedly collected money from people illegally in the name of land allotments.

BJP condemns demolition

"Where should they go without being shown alternative land or temporary shelter?"

HANS NEWS SERVICE
KHAMMAM

THE Bharatiya Janata Party condemned the demolition of huts belonging to poor families residing on Bhoodan land in Velugumatla area of Khammam, terming the action "unjust and inhuman".

Bharatiya Janata Party state treasurer Devaki Vasudeva Rao said hundreds of poor families who had been living on the land for nearly a decade were evicted with heavy police deployment and their huts razed.

In a statement on Tuesday, he expressed anger over the authorities allegedly demolishing houses built by the poor "with their hard-earned money" without providing alternative accommodation. "Asking families who have been living there for ten years to vacate overnight is not justified. Where should they go without being shown alternative land or temporary shelter?" he asked.

Rao said that when a similar situation arose earlier in the Gollapadu channel area, the BJP had intervened and ensured that eligible families were provided alternative housing under the leadership of former National BC Com-



mission chairman Tallozu Achari.

He asserted that the BJP has always stood by the poor in safeguarding their housing rights.

Alleging that several double-bedroom houses constructed in the state were lying vacant, he said it was unfortunate that the government had failed to distribute them to eligible beneficiaries while demolishing huts of the poor. Rao demanded that the Congress government immediately change its approach towards the poor and allocate house sites to all eligible families. He also urged the authorities to provide temporary shelter, food and drinking water to those who had lost their homes.

The BJP leader called upon the government to act with humanity and address the concerns of the affected families without delay.

Self-Governance Day celebrated

HANS NEWS SERVICE
NAGARKURNOOL

SELF-Governance Day was celebrated in a grand manner at Sripuram Primary School in Nagarkurnool mandal. On this occasion, students took charge of school administration and showcased their leadership qualities.

According to Headmistress V. Sujatha, Saikiran served as DEO, Meenakshi as MEO, Oliva Grace as Complex HM, and Lasya as HM, taking up administrative responsibilities for the day.

MEO Bhaskar Reddy attended the programme as the chief guest and appreciated the performance of the students. Along with HM Sujatha, teachers Chalapathi Rao, Prasanna Lakshmi, Prance-



tha, and the students actively participated and made the event successful.

Speaking on the occasion, the chief guest said that such programmes help develop leadership, responsibility, self-confidence, and decision-making skills among students. He advised students to actively participate not only in academics but also

in co-curricular activities to become responsible citizens in the future.

As part of the programme, students conducted mock meetings, supervised classes, and shared their experiences in school administration. Teachers guided them and explained the importance of discipline, teamwork, and self-governance.

Advocates launch relay hunger strike

HANS NEWS SERVICE
WANAPARTHY

Demand ups for implementation of Advocates' Protection Act

THE Wanaparthi Bar Association launched a relay hunger strike at the District Court premises on Tuesday, demanding the enactment of the Advocates' Protection Act to curb attacks on members of the legal fraternity.

Speaking at the protest camp, Bar Association President D. Kiran Kumar said the agitation would be intensified until the Act is implemented. He urged the government to respond promptly to what he described as a legitimate and long-pending demand of advocates across the State.

Kiran Kumar recalled that advocates had earlier undertaken a padayatra from the Jogulamba Temple in Alampur, which was halted



at Bhoothpur due to unavoidable reasons. He said the march resumed on the 23rd of this month from Bhoothpur under the call of "Chalo Secretariat." In solidarity with the advocates participating in the padayatra, the Wanaparthi Bar Association has organised relay hunger

strikes that will continue until the 27th.

Expressing concern over recurring attacks on lawyers, he said the proposed Advocates' Protection Act would not create any difficulty for either the Central or State governments. However, he alleged that the government

has not taken concrete steps toward its enactment.

He appealed to the government to introduce and pass the Advocates' Protection Act in the forthcoming Assembly sessions. Failing this, he warned that advocates across the State would continue peaceful and united

protests until the legislation is achieved.

On the first day of the relay hunger strike, Bar Association President D. Kiran Kumar, Secretary Venkataramana, and advocates Brahmam, Ashok Rao, Dhara Venkatesh, Shyam, Narendra Babu, Trinath, Raghuvamsi, Rahul, and others participated.

Senior advocates Vanaganti Nageshwar, Mohan Goud, Mohan Kumar, Venkateshwar Reddy, Umamaheshwar Reddy, Tirupatayya Goud, Krishnavardhan Reddy, Chandrasekhar Rao, Manmohan Rao, Shashibhushan, Dinesh Reddy, Tirupatayya, along with women advocates Pushpa Latha, Kalyani, Renuka, Lakshmi, junior advocates, and others, were present.

Drainage works draw flak in Nizampet

Locals alleged that the drain was constructed at a higher level than the road surface, preventing rainwater from flowing into it and instead causing water to stagnate on the road

HANS NEWS SERVICE
KHAMMAM

RESIDENTS of Nizampet 42nd Division in Khammam have alleged official apathy over faulty side-drain construction that has led to severe waterlogging and traffic inconvenience on a key stretch of road in the locality. The problem has surfaced



Residents allege official apathy

on the busy road leading towards Rohith Test Tube Baby Hospital, where the municipality recently undertook side-drain works. Locals alleged that the drain was constructed at a higher level than the road surface, preventing rainwater from flowing into it and in-

stead causing water to stagnate on the road. As a result, even light showers have been leading to water accumulation, turning the road into a virtual pond and causing inconvenience to motorists and pedestrians. Residents said the stretch is frequently used as a diver-



sion route during protests or traffic disruptions on the main road, making it a crucial link for commuters.

They further alleged that the drain construction has reduced the effective width of the road, leading to increased congestion. Two-wheelers, autos and cars have report-

edly been skidding due to slippery conditions, raising safety concerns. With stagnant water remaining on the road, locals fear an increase in mosquito breeding and potential health issues in the area.

Residents claimed that complaints were earlier lodged through the municipal grievance mechanism, but no corrective action has been taken so far.

They demanded that authorities reconstruct the road in alignment with the drain's height and ensure proper levelling to facilitate smooth water flow. The residents urged municipal officials to intervene immediately and resolve the issue before the road becomes completely unusable.

Khammam girl selected for nat'l volleyball tourney

HANS NEWS SERVICE
KHAMMAM

GD Hansini, a resident of Guttala Bazar, Khammam, and a student of 12th grade at Harvest Public School, has been selected to participate in the 46th National Sub-Junior Volleyball Championship. The tournament, organized by the Volleyball Federation of India, will be held in Hooghly, West Bengal, from February 24 to March 1.

Hansini has been training in volleyball since her childhood under

coach Akbar Ali at Sardar Patel Stadium. Over the years, she has steadily showcased her talent and has participated in three consecutive national-level competitions, earning recognition as a promising national-level player.

Speaking on the occasion, Khammam District Youth Services and Sports Officer Tumburu Sunil Kumar, Harvest Public School Principal Parvathi Reddy, correspondent Ravi Marut, stadium coaches, and local dignitaries congratulated Hansini on her achievement.



Will not relinquish Krishna waters, vows Minister Uttam

MINISTER INSPECTS JAWAHAR JANPAHAD LIFT IRRIGATION PROJECT IN JANPAHAD VILLAGE

HANS NEWS SERVICE
HUZURNAGAR

CIVIL Supplies and Irrigation Minister N Uttam Kumar Reddy declared that Telangana would not give up even a single drop of water from the Krishna River. On Tuesday, he visited Janpahad village in Palakeedu mandal to inspect the Jawahar Janpahad Lift Irrigation Project, which is being constructed at a cost of Rs 650 crore. He reviewed the progress and quality standards of the works with officials.

Addressing the gathering, the Minister said the irrigation projects on the Krishna River must be completed within the stipulated time-frame. He clarified that the scheme was conceived with the sole aim of providing irrigation water to the region, not for political gain.

Recalling the past, he said there was once no safe drinking water even at the Janpadu Dargah, after which a pipeline was laid from the Krishna



Minister Uttam Kumar Reddy along with officials examining Jawahar Janpahad lift irrigation project works

na River to supply drinking water. He warned that negligence in project execution would not be tolerated.

Expressing gratitude to the people of Huzurnagar for electing him five times as MLA and once as MP, he reaffirmed the government's

commitment to farmers' welfare. The project, with an additional Rs 100 crore allocation, is targeted for completion by May-end to irrigate 18,095 acres in 15 villages for two crop seasons. Contractors, irrigation officials, and farmers attended

the programme. Later, Uttam announced that 2,160 Indiramma houses are being constructed at one location and will be distributed to the poor, marking a first in the state's history. He inspected the housing project spread across 110 acres at Ramas-

wamy Gutta in Huzurnagar, along with State Housing Corporation Managing Director Gautam and District Collector Tejas Nand Lal Pawar. The project is being built at a cost of Rs 125 crore.

Addressing the media at his camp office, the Minister said that in 2011, when he served as Housing Minister, he had purchased 110 acres of temple land at market rate to provide shelter for the poor, agricultural labourers, and rice mill workers in Huzurnagar constituency. However, after state bifurcation, the then government stalled the construction midway and turned the area into a dumping yard.

In the first phase, 1,000 beneficiaries holding white ration cards will receive houses in early March through Chief Minister Revanth Reddy. Strict action will be taken against any irregularities in beneficiary selection, he warned. Senior officials and public representatives attended the meeting.

Electricity dept intensifies safety measures after student's death

HANS NEWS SERVICE
NAGARKURNOOL

THE Electricity Department has intensified safety measures across Nagarkurnool district following a recent incident in Indrakal village of Tadoor mandal, where a student died due to an electric shock after stepping out during a school interval. Senior officials took the matter seriously and initiated action against those found responsible.

As part of the preventive measures, officials conducted inspections at educational institutions in the district headquarters. Safety checks were carried out at electric poles and transformers located within school and college premises, and any deficiencies were immediately rectified. SE Narsimhareddy stated that this safety drive will continue on a regular basis and urged the public to report any electrical issues to the concerned department without delay.

In view of the upcoming summer season,



precautionary steps are being taken to avoid disruptions in power supply and ensure public safety.

Trees that had grown around transformer locations during the rainy and winter seasons were cleared. Anticipating strong winds during summer, advance measures are being implemented to prevent power interruptions, said SE Narsimha Reddy.

The safety inspections were conducted by SE Narsimha Reddy, DE Sridhar Shetty, AE Manya Naik and Ramachandra Naik, along with linemen and other electricity department staff.

Collector inspects chief planning officer's office in Asifabad

KUMURAM BHEEM ASIFABAD: District Collector K. Haritha conducted a surprise inspection of the office of the Chief Planning Officer in Kumaram Bheem Asifabad district on Monday. During her visit, she thoroughly examined the attendance register and verified the presence of staff members to ensure that office procedures were being properly followed.

The Collector reviewed the functioning of the depart-



ment and interacted with the officials present. She stressed the importance of maintaining punctuality and adhering strictly to prescribed office timings. She warned that any negligence in following time rules would not be tolerated,

as it directly affected the efficiency of public service delivery. Addressing the staff, K. Haritha emphasised that government offices must function in a disciplined and transparent manner. She instructed employees to remain committed to their responsibilities and to provide prompt and effective services to the public. The inspection aimed to strengthen accountability and improve the overall functioning of the department.

Vamsi Reddy Foundation inspires students to pursue higher goals

DHARMASAGAR: Director of the Vamsi Reddy Foundation, Kancherakunta Muralidhar Reddy, said that determination was the true key to success and assured students of training support for higher education and employment opportunities.

He was addressing a Class X preparatory camp organised at ZP High Schools in Dharmasagar and Narayanagiri, where he motivated students to set clear goals and work persistently towards achieving them. He emphasised that strong willpower, discipline and proper guidance could help students secure success in competitive examinations and professional careers. Encouraging the students to broaden their horizons, Muralidhar Reddy advised them to explore career opportunities in civil administration and emerging fields such as Artificial Intelligence and other modern technologies.



He said that with the right preparation and dedication, students from rural backgrounds could excel at national and international levels.

On the occasion, competitive examination books worth Rs 50,000 were distributed among the students to aid their preparation.

Mandal Education Officer (MEO) Ram Dhan, Headmaster Murali, teachers and a large number of students attended the programme.

BID TO BOOST COORDINATION WITH STATE POLL BODIES

ECI holds first nat'l roundtable in 27 years

NEW DELHI

THE Election Commission of India (ECI) on Tuesday convened a National Roundtable Conference with State Election Commissioners at Bharat Mandapam in New Delhi, marking the first such meeting in 27 years.

The previous conference of this kind was held in 1999.

The day-long conference is being chaired by Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar in the presence of Election Commissioners Sukhbir Singh Sandhu and Vivek Joshi.

State Election Commissioners (SECs) from all States

and union Territories are participating in the deliberations along with their legal and technical experts.

Chief Electoral Officers (CEOs) from all 36 States and union Territories are also in attendance. According to the ECI, the primary objective of the conference is to foster greater synergy between the Commission and State Election Commissions in managing electoral processes and logistics within their respective legal frameworks. "This conference provides a vital institutional platform for dialogue and coordination between national and state-level election management

bodies," a senior Commission official said. "At a time when technological integration and legal harmonisation are key priorities, strengthening cooperative federalism in electoral governance is essential." The discussions are focused on sharing best practices in technology, the use and management of Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs), and improving the accuracy and robustness of Electoral Rolls. Senior Commission officials are making presentations on key technological and operational initiatives, including the recently launched ECINET digital platform.

AMID US STRIKE FEARS...

Iran set to buy Chinese anti-ship cruise missiles

TEHRAN: Iran is close to a deal with China to purchase antiship cruise missiles, according to six people with knowledge of the negotiations, just as the United States deploys a vast naval force near the Iranian coast ahead of possible strikes on the Islamic Republic.

The deal for the Chinese-made CM302 missiles is near completion, though no delivery date has been agreed, the people said. The supersonic missiles have a range of about 290 kilometres and are designed to evade shipborne defences by flying low and fast. Their deployment would significantly enhance Iran's strike capabilities and pose a threat to US naval forces in the region, two weapons experts said.

Negotiations with China to buy the missile weapons systems, which began at least two years ago, accelerated sharply after the 12-day war between Israel and Iran in June, according to the six people with knowledge of the talks, including three officials who were briefed by the Iranian government as well as three security officials. As talks entered their final stages last summer, senior Iranian military and government officials travelled to China, including Massoud Orai, Iran's deputy defence minister, according to two of the security officials. Orai's visit has not been previously reported.

"It's a complete game-changer if Iran has supersonic capability to attack ships in the area," said Danny Citrinowicz, a former Israeli intelligence officer and now senior Iran researcher at Israel's Institute for National Security Studies think tank. "These missiles are very difficult to intercept."

Reuters could not determine how many missiles were involved in the potential deal, how much Iran had agreed to pay, or whether China would go through with the agreement now given heightened tensions in the region. "Iran has military and security agreements with its allies and now is an appropriate time to make use of these agreements," an Iranian foreign ministry official told Reuters.

The Chinese delegation to the United Nations directed Reuters to seek comment from the Foreign Ministry in Beijing.

The foreign and defense ministries did not respond to requests for comment. The White House did not directly address the negotiations between Iran and China over the missile system when asked by Reuters.

US President Donald Trump has been clear that "either we will make a deal or we will have to do something very tough like last time," a White House official said, referring to the recent standoff with Iran.

Indian exporters set to gain as US customs rolls out 10% global tariff

Continued from front page

The transit time for the US ports ranges from 45-60 days. So, at any given point of time one-eighth of annual exports to the US of \$10-12 billion are on seas so the benefit could be considerable if importers share the benefit of lower duties, he added.

Tariffs on India remained at 50% from last week of August 2025 to February 6 this year. Both sides issued a joint statement that removed 25% tariffs related to Russian oil purchases and agreed to bring down reciprocal tariffs to 18% from 25%. Before the order of Indian reciprocal tariffs came, the US Supreme Court struck down all country-specific tariffs.

The US Customs and Border Protection notified 10% additional duties on imported articles from all countries for a period of 150 days under the Section 122 of the Trade Act of 1974 just hours before the new rates came into force at 12:01

am eastern standard time on Tuesday (February 24).

Following the Supreme Court judgement the US President Donald Trump announced 10% global tariffs and hours later announced that they will be raised to 15%. The notification, however, operationalised only 10% tariffs.

Meanwhile a White House spokesperson quoted by NBC News said that the administration is preparing a separate order to raise additional tariffs to 15%.

There is no word from the US administration on the refund of tariffs paid before the Supreme Court struck down country-specific duties. The refunds, if any, will also be collected by importers. Sharing them with Indian suppliers will depend on the understanding reached while negotiating contracts. Exporters are not expecting cash to flow to them if refunds materialise but adjustments in future contracts.

A Nobel laureate makes Modi's vision a reality

Continued from front page

Most machines use the dew point, which is the exact temperature where air gets so cold that it can no longer hold moisture, forcing it to turn into liquid droplets, much like the fog we see on a cold window or a chilled soda can. This takes a massive amount of electricity.

Adsorption, however, is a much more natural and elegant process. Instead of forcing the air to get cold, the water molecules are simply glued to the surface of a material because they are chemically attracted to it. This shift in approach is the secret to the efficiency of Yaghi's technology.

By removing the need to refrigerate massive amounts of air, the system avoids the huge energy bills and heavy, noisy machinery that make old-school water harvesters impractical. Instead, these molecular sponges do the work for free, using their natural hunger to pull in water even when the air feels bone dry. It turns a forced, high-energy mechanical struggle into a quiet, natural chemical process. The true struggle of previous atmospheric water generators has been their dependence on high humidity. Most fail when relative humidity drops below 45 per cent, leaving desert

communities stranded. However, Atoco has designed its technology to be resilient, functioning efficiently even in environments with less than 20 per cent humidity. This means it can produce water in places where it almost never rains and where the air feels like a furnace.

Closer to home, the same vision is being driven by AKVO, an Indian cleantech company that pioneered indigenous Atmospheric Water Generators. Unlike Yaghi's deep-tech molecular sponges, AKVO utilises advanced condensation technology to provide sustainable water security across India.

IYC chief arrested

Continued from front page

Chib, who was not present at the venue during the protest last Friday, was produced before a court here, which sent him to four days police custody after rejecting his counsel's argument that he had cooperated with the probe and was not on the run. Police argued that the conspiracy went beyond printing the T-shirts with slogans against Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

Devuji, 3 other top Maoists surrender to TG police

Continued from front page

These leaders had reportedly been active in underground activities for three to four decades.

On Tuesday, Shivadhar Reddy said that Devuji had been underground for 44 years, Raji Reddy for 46 years, Damodar for 28 years and Narsimha Reddy for 36 years. The surrender of the Politburo and Central Committee members has effectively led to the collapse of the organisation's last surviving apex structure. The DGP said the Central Committee of the CPI (Maoist) has now been reduced to just one active member.

The DGP said: "The cadre have chosen to prioritize their health, personal dignity, and future by embracing rehabilitation and reintegration, committing themselves to a peaceful, law-abiding life and contributing to the bet-

terment of society within the legal framework."

Under the Telangana government's rehabilitation policy, Thippiri Thirupati and Malla Raji Reddy carried cash rewards of Rs 25 lakh each, while Bade Chokka Rao and Nune Narsimha Reddy carried rewards of Rs 20 lakh each. The total eligible reward amount of Rs 90 lakh has been disbursed to them through demand drafts/cheques as part of the state and Central governments' relief and rehabilitation policies.

The DGP also recalled the appeal made by Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy in October 2025, urging Maoist cadre to shun violence and join the development process in the state. He said that since 2024, a total of 591 Maoists of different ranks have surrendered before the Telangana police. They include four Central

Committee members, 15 State Committee members, 25 Divisional Committee Secretaries, 63 Area Committee members and 437 party members.

Further, the DGP urged remaining members to join mainstream life, as around 11 Maoist members from Telangana are still absconding and the DGP appealed to them to surrender and benefit from rehabilitation schemes.

According to police, Thippiri Thirupati (62), a native of Korutla in Jagtial district, has been a Central Committee member, Politburo member and in-charge of the Central Military Commission. He joined the CPI (ML) People's War in January 1982 and was sent to Dandakaranya in April 1984.

Malla Raji Reddy (76), who hails from Shastrulapalle village in Peddapalli district, served in various capacities,

including as Central Committee member and later as a member of the Politburo. He was earlier arrested in December 2007 and released in October 2009, after which he resumed underground activities.

Bade Chokka Rao (47) from Kalvapalli village in Mulugu district joined the movement in December 1998 and rose to become State Committee member in 2015. In January 2025, he was elevated as Secretary of the Telangana State Committee.

Nune Narsimha Reddy (62), a native of Guntur district in Andhra Pradesh, joined the movement in 1987 and served in multiple committees, including the Andhra-Odisha Border Special Zonal Committee and the Dandakaranya Special Zonal Committee. In May 2025, he was shifted to Telangana.

No full land resurvey in Telangana even as Andhra braces for 2nd one

Continued from front page

Revanth Reddy also promised to revive Jamabandi, restore manual pahanies, and undertake a comprehensive land survey before elections. Although the Congress government completed two years in power, the state is still conducting pilot surveys, and full-scale implementation is yet to begin.

Under the pilot phase, around 70 villages per district have been proposed for survey. District Collectors identified villages with less than 200 acres and minimal disputes. The resurvey will use Differential GPS (DGPS) technology, with data uploaded through QGIS into the Bhu Bharathi portal. Each land parcel will receive a unique 'Bhudhaar' number, similar to Aadhaar. After evaluating the pilot, the government plans a phased statewide rollout, possibly beginning next year. However, officials indicate that the pilot has not commenced uniformly across all mandals.

In contrast, Andhra Pradesh complet-

ed a statewide resurvey during the tenure of former chief minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy. The process included installation of new boundary stones with YS Jagan's portrait on stones, even though the move faced criticism from the then Opposition Telugu Desam Party (TDP). After returning to power, Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu announced plans for another resurvey, alleging irregularities in the previous exercise. Farmers and other landowners in Telangana have expressed concern over inordinate delays in taking up the resurvey, stating that prolonged uncertainty benefits encroachers and fraudsters. They lament that successive governments in the state have made grand announcements but have been slow in execution. Observers say farmers' situation has worsened after the formation of Telangana. Will the Revanth Reddy government address concerns of farmers and other landowners by taking up comprehensive land resurvey without much delay?

Kerala is now Keralam

Continued from front page

However, any such Bill can be introduced in parliament only after it is referred by the President to the concerned State legislature for its views. Once the Assembly's views are received, the Union government may proceed to obtain the President's recommendation and introduce the Bill in parliament. The Cabinet approval marks the first formal step toward the proposed constitutional amendment. In its 2024 resolution, the Kerala Assembly noted that the State was formed on linguistic lines on November 1, 1956, and that the name "Keralam" has long been used in Malayalam and during the independence movement to refer to a unified Malayalam-speaking region. The Assembly unanimously urged the Central government to take steps to modify the First Schedule to the Constitution to reflect the name "Keralam". Following the resolution, the Kerala government formally requested the Union government to initiate the constitutional process. The Ministry of Home Affairs examined the proposal after which the draft cabinet note was circulated to the Department of Legal Affairs and the Legislative Department of the Ministry of Law and Justice. Both departments concurred with the proposal.

NMP 2.0 is a bold step; it can unlock resources for reinvestment

THE government has done well to set a target of Rs 16.7 lakh crore for National Monetisation Pipeline (NMP) 2.0. The objective is to monetise assets of more than 2,000 projects in 12 sectors till 2029-30. The Prime Minister-headed NITI Aayog, after consultation with infrastructure ministries, has developed NMP 2.0, which Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman launched on Monday. A NITI Aayog paper said in 2021, "Asset monetisation, based on the philosophy of 'Creation through Monetisation', will tap institutional investment and long-term patient capital into stable mature assets, in turn generating financial resources for new infrastructure asset creation. This will enable economic growth, generating employment opportunities and better prospects for the

country's growth." At the launch, the Finance Minister complimented all ministries and departments and NITI Aayog for meeting nearly 90 per cent of the target of Rs 6 lakh crore, which was set for four years in the implementation of NMP 1.0. On the face of it, praise for falling short of the target seems awkward. However, if the polarised political situation and the perverted public discourse (which equates processes like privatisation and asset monetisation as cheaply selling off national treasure) are considered, we find that her comments are not off the mark.

Highlighting the significance of asset monetisation, she rightly pointed out that NMP enables recycling of productive public assets, thereby unlocking resources for reinvestment in new projects and

capital expenditure. She noted that this approach facilitates efficient mobilisation of funds for capex in public assets while minimising the budgetary outgo of the government. While the Centre has the courage to go ahead with the programme, it must ensure that it doesn't result in corruption and monopolies. Six points need to be considered regarding this. First, the government must ensure transparency in valuation. Public assets must be priced realistically and competitively. Independent advisors, transparent bidding processes, and robust disclosure norms are essential. All contracts should be made public, barring commercially sensitive details, so that citizens and oversight bodies can scrutinise them. The credibility of NMP 2.0 will rest on the perception that assets are neither under-

valued nor selectively awarded. Second, competitive bidding must be genuine, not cosmetic. If a handful of large conglomerates dominate most sectors, the risk of concentration increases. This can lead to a situation where the state replaces a public monopoly with a private one. Third, the contract design must balance investor incentives with public interest safeguards. Concession agreements should include performance benchmarks, service quality standards, and penalty clauses for non-compliance. For instance, toll road operators must adhere to maintenance and safety norms; power transmission operators must ensure reliability; airport operators must maintain passenger service standards. Regulatory oversight cannot be lax once assets are monetised. The objec-

tive is efficiency, not abdication. Fourth, revenue-sharing and user charges need careful calibration. While private operators must earn a fair return, excessive user fees can generate public resentment and fuel political backlash. Transparent tariff-setting mechanisms, ideally overseen by independent regulators, can mitigate such risks. Fifth, strong audit and accountability mechanisms are indispensable. Institutions such as the Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) and parliamentary committees should periodically review monetisation outcomes. And, finally, the government must effectively explain the difference between monetisation and privatisation, emphasising that ownership remains public and that funds raised are earmarked for new infrastructure.

LETTERS

'Keralam' was long overdue

REchristening of Kerala as Keralam following an unanimous resolution to that extent by the State Assembly and Centre's approval is a cause for great rejoicing. It is only a matter of time before it gets parliamentary approval. It is an emphatic reaffirmation of the State's distinct cultural and linguistic identity. In fact, it restores the original name found in Malayalam and its literature. Literally, Keralam means the 'land of coconuts'. Etymologically, Keralam could have been a derivative of 'Chera-alam', meaning 'land of the Cheras'. According to Dr Herman Gundert, "keram" is the Canarese (Kannada) form of "cheram" and Cheram. Keralam extended from Gokarna to Kanyakumari. The move is unlikely to pay electoral dividends to any political party as the demand for a change of name has been made by all parties. It is hoped that north Indians will now stop referring to the state as "Keral" and start calling it "Keralam".

G David Milton, Maruthancode (TN)

MPs, MLAs must work for people's welfare

THE Sri Lankan government presently in financial dol-drum has found a way out, by way of regulating the salaries and perks of its MPs and MLAs. This is a welcome move whereas Indian MPs and MLAs continue to seek enhanced pensions reflecting the purpose for which the individuals have entered the 'political arena' - not to serve, but to be served, to ensure that their lives are safeguarded by way of unhindered pensions and perks. The lawmakers must understand the responsibilities for which they are elected. It is imperative to bring legislation in this direction. The 'will' of the people, must not merely end after casting of the vote, but go in for course correction, when the lawmakers err in their duty.

Sakunthala KR, Hyderabad

India should emulate the Lankan example

THIS has reference to your editorial 'Sri Lankan Parliament shows the way for India'. It is time India implements the Sri Lankan model about salaries and perks of MPs and MLAs. In fact, this is an issue dominating the minds of the people of the country for a long time. The lawmakers unabashedly and unilaterally attempt to enhance their perks and salaries, forgetting the purpose for which they have been elected. The situation assumes significance when these elected members have no compunctions to stall the proceedings in the Parliament for no reason at all - except to score brownie points. The Sri Lankan model can infuse a sense of responsibility and purpose in the minds of Indian lawmakers, once it is implemented.

K V Raghuram, Wayanad

TSSPDCL's chatbot is a timely move

THE Southern Power Distribution Company of Telangana Limited (TSSPDCL) has done well by launching its own WhatsApp chatbot, which is aimed at providing faster, more convenient, and accessible power-related services to consumers. Through this platform, users can easily register complaints, check billing details, and obtain power supply information on 8712441912. This initiative reflects a thoughtful adoption of modern technology to enhance customer service. The chatbot reduces the need to make countless calls or office visits. Such forward-thinking measures highlight TSSPDCL's commitment to efficiency, transparency, and the digital transformation of public utility services in the state. This development is not only a practical improvement for everyday users but also a significant step toward building a more user-friendly, technology-driven public service ecosystem.

Dr Krishna Kumar Vepakomma, Hyderabad-45

Adulterated milk is the new killer

It is quite ironic that incidents of adulterated milk have become light even as there are unending debates over adulterated Tirumala laddu. It is reported that 106 families from Rajamahendravaram, who get milk from a private dairy located in Narasapuram, have developed 'anuria' (absence of urine). In an unfortunate development, four persons died and several others are undergoing treatment in various hospitals. It is a known fact that milk is wholesome food and so it is one of the staple items in the plate in various forms. Presently, private dairies are resorting to different ways to adulterate the milk to capitalise on the demand. At the same time, monitoring by agencies like FSSAI has been inactive and, as such, there is no quality check. The government must toughen its stand and ensure uncontaminated milk, which is ever in demand and by almost all households.

Pratapa Reddy Yaramala, Tiruvuru (AP)

thehansreader@gmail.com

BENGALURU ONLINE

K'taka CM blames BJP as Dharwad protests intensify

BENGALURU: As protests by government job aspirants intensified in Dharwad, with many taken into preventive custody, Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah on Tuesday blamed the previous BJP regime for the large backlog of vacant posts. According to protesters, who staged a massive demonstration in Dharwad earlier in the day, around 2.8 lakh posts remain vacant across various government departments in Karnataka, while fewer than 5,000 recruitments have been made in the last three years. In a press statement, Siddaramaiah said that when the Congress assumed office in 2023, over 2.64 lakh government posts were vacant. He said the backlog was the result of "prolonged inaction under the previous BJP government, which failed to initiate timely recruitment or create a structured roadmap to fill vacancies." "It is deeply unfortunate that BJP leaders are choosing to mislead innocent students even now to serve their narrow political interests," the CM said. He alleged that, instead of encouraging aspirants to stay focused on their preparation and future, opposition leaders were "attempting to instigate unrest." The chief minister said the current situation was largely due to recruitment irregularities and alleged corruption during the BJP regime between 2019 and 2023, which eroded trust in the system and led to a significant backlog.

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

Rich brats cause fatal accidents but go scot-free

DR HYMA MOORTY

A rich 'brat' in Pune, son of a construction tycoon, killed two young IT professionals snatching away their promising careers. Another rich 'brat' was arrested from Virar, Mumbai, after mercilessly and consciously murdering a mother of two young children, while a third killed two promising young boys. In the recent Lamborghini hit and run case in Kanpur, the spoilt brat at the wheel brought the car driver to the driving seat. It was the presence of mind of the socially conscious by-passers that ensured that the rich guy responsible for the accident was booked. In Delhi's Dwaraka locality, a juvenile boy was speeding a Scorpio without a license, and his sister was filming a social-media 'reel' and the vehicle killed a 23-year-old and severely injured a cab driver. His mother, a single parent, was devastated.

Looking back, one finds that such reckless incidents are happening too often, especially with young drivers hungry for social media fame. All these 'killers' brazenly wear up their sleeve tattooed inscriptions like 'Mera baap amir hai'. These are offspring of stinking rich parents, who drive high-end cars and question the law by flaunting the clout of their

father. The list is long and endless. Justice hinges on courts where cases are overly delayed. The system is in cahoots to help relieve the accused of any punishment.

It is a harsh reminder of how money and power can call the shots, leaving the victims powerless. It's a serious issue and needs more awareness and stricter enforcement.

But public outcry and media pressure often push authorities to act, collective vigilance matters. It is not easy to cope with the sudden loss of a family member.

These recent cases of drunk driving involving youngsters and unlicensed juvenile drivers, often referred to as 'rich brats' by the media and society, have been alarming. It highlights the pressing issue of underage drinking and its fatal consequences. Drivers aged between 21 and 24 years, under the influence of alcohol, account for most fatal accidents.

This trend calls for strict enforcement of laws and public awareness campaigns on responsible drinking. It's a common concern that wealth and influence can lead to unequal treatment under the law, with ordinary citizens facing harsher consequences for similar of-

PARENTS MUST BE HELD RESPONSIBLE



After all, money can 'fix' almost everything these days. Power always twists, and when money becomes absolute, it smothers conscience. Compassion, pity, help, fear and support get buried deep while ego, pride and wealth surface and dominate. No rules and regulations can resolve such problems.

fences. Cases like the Lamborghini one in Kanpur often spark public outcry and intense calls for justice highlighting the need for unbiased accountability in investigation.

Let us analyze the reasons why many of these rich 'brats' fall and flash their 'borrowed' riches. The most important reason is to have the privilege of growing up in affluent surroundings. This leads to reckless behaviour, including excessive drinking and reckless driving unmindful of the consequences.

The social circles they move around normalises excessive drinking and un-

heeding conduct, be it at home or on road, creating an environment where such actions are seen as acceptable or even as status symbols. They experience a high-stress environment despite external perceptions of luxury; the pressures and expectations placed on wealthy individuals can lead to stress and coping mechanisms that lead them to substance abuse. Lack of responsibility towards themselves, family and society and personal accountability add to the intoxication. Parents are to be held accountable and answerable to varying extents for accidents and killings caused by their juveniles

and addict children. If they fail to spend some time and educate their children about the damage of drinking and driving, they are morally and ethically responsible. They are supposed to supervise their children, especially when they are underage and not legally allowed to drink or drive. If they are aware of their child's brash and erratic behaviour but fail to take any timely action, they should be held liable for the consequences. Parents have a significant role in shaping their children's behaviour.

Most of the accidents in our country are caused by human error, carelessness and being casual at the wheel. It is necessary to be cautious and sincerely obey traffic rules, irrespective of who and what you are.

Meanwhile, some accidents are caused even if one is careful, especially at choked traffic interjections like Ameerpet junction in Hyderabad, where the bikers squeeze to cross and hit the waiting vehicle. While driving, distraction is the worst thing to happen and nowadays everyone is super pleased with their distracted driving, which has been on the rise for the last 15 years or so. The worst distractions include being under the influence of drugs or alcohol

THE RISE AND FALL OF EL MENCHO

B V KUMAR

NEMESIO Oseguera Cervantes, known as "El Mencho", died on Sunday while being taken to the capital Mexico City, after being seriously injured in clashes between his supporters and the Mexican army. Four CJNG members were killed in the town of Tapalpa, the central-western Jalisco state. Three army personnel were also injured. The US had given Mexico tactical intelligence that assisted the operation.

Over the past year, Claudia Sheinbaum Pardo, President of Mexico has come under intense pressure from US President Donald Trump, who threatened military intervention and higher import tariffs if Mexico fails to demonstrate concrete gains in curbing drug trafficking. However, Sheinbaum has rejected the notion of US strikes in Mexico, characterizing them as a violation of Mexico's sovereignty and territorial integrity.

According to its 2023 Annual Threat Assessment, the US intelligence community cited Mexico-based Transnational Criminal Organizations (TCOs) as the dominant producers and suppliers of various illicit drugs destined for the domestic U.S. market. Mexican TCOs, particularly the Sinaloa Cartel and the Jalisco Nueva Generacion (CJNG) remain the most predominant and sophisticated groups overseeing the transportation and distribution routes from Mexico to the United States.

Both groups have consolidated control over drug corridors from Mexico and are heavily involved in trafficking of fentanyl, methamphetamine, cocaine, heroin, and marijuana. Both have a history of establishing drug trafficking hubs, strong criminal partnerships, and using violence and corruption to gain control over the territory where they operate.

The Sinaloa and Jalisco Cartels pose the greatest criminal drug threat the United States has ever faced. These ruthless, violent, criminal organizations have associates, facilitators, and brokers in all 50 states in the United States, as well as in more than 100 countries around the world. The Sinaloa Cartel, the Jalisco Cartel, and their affiliates



'EL MENCHO', THE LEADER OF ONE OF MEXICO'S MOST POWERFUL CARTELS, DEAD AFTER MILITARY OPERATION

control most of the fentanyl global supply chain, from manufacture to distribution.

The Jalisco Cartel maintains illicit drug distribution hubs in Los Angeles, Seattle, Charlotte, Chicago, and Atlanta. Internationally, the Jalisco Cartel has a presence and influence through associates, facilitators, and brokers on every continent, except Antarctica.

In Milenio Cartel, El Mencho started as a member of the assassin squad that protected the drug lord Armando Valencia Cornelio ("El Maradona"). On 12 August 2003, his boss was arrested by Mexican authorities. Around the same time, a rival criminal group known as Los Zetas, with the backing of the Gulf Cartel, carried out an armed offensive against the Milenio Cartel in Michoacán. The attack forced the Valencia family to exile in Jalisco.

El Mencho relocated to the state capital, Guadalajara, with his father-in-law José Luis González Valencia (alias "El Quini") and Román Caballero Valencia. In Jalisco, El Mencho and the Milenio Cartel formed an alliance with the Sinaloa Cartel subgroup headed by Ignacio "Nacho" Coronel, a high-ranking drug lord and ally of Joaquín "El Chapo" Guzmán. Under Coronel, El Mencho and his group managed the Sinaloa Cartel's drug operations, finances, and murder activities in the states of Colima and Jalisco.

The Milenio Cartel split into two. One

Part of El Mencho's success in the drug trade had to do with his ability to strategize market and consumer changes. Initially, the CJNG produced methamphetamine, but then he moved to heroin production when the consumer demand changed. In a series of highly coordinated tactics to prevent El Mencho's arrest, the CJNG blocked several highways and roads by setting at least 37 vehicles on fire. The purpose was to place them as blockades and give him ample time to escape

side was known as La Resistencia (The Resistance), the other was Los Mata Zetas (The Zeta Killers), headed by El Mencho. La Resistencia accused Los Mata Zetas of turning in Oscar Orlando to the authorities. A war ensued, and the two groups fought for the drug smuggling turf in Jalisco.

As leader of the CJNG, El Mencho consolidated his position and strengthened his organization through territorial expansion and established himself as one of Mexico's most-wanted criminals. His rise to fame was due to several factors, including the aggressive and sensationalist displays of public violence by CJNG. The direct attacks of the CJNG against Mexico's security forces earned El Mencho a reputation among authorities as "principal enemy" of the state and as a dangerous criminal. In addition, the fall of Mexico's former top crime bosses cleared the way for El Mencho to gain visibility and status.

He consolidated his operations in Jalisco and its adjacent states by fighting off incursions from criminal groups like Los Zetas and the Knights Templar Cartel. According

to government sources, he was responsible for overseeing the CJNG's entire drug trafficking operations in the states of Jalisco, Colima, and Guanajuato, where he created a bastion for methamphetamine production and trade.

Between 2014 and 2016, the only region in the country where the CJNG lost its territorial presence was in Mexico City. Internationally, the CJNG reportedly has ties with criminal groups in the U.S., the rest of Latin America, Europe, Asia, and Africa. On an international scale, CJNG is mainly focused on trafficking cocaine and methamphetamine.

The government estimated that El Mencho's group has about \$50 billion in total assets. Part of El Mencho's success in the drug trade had to do with his ability to strategize market and consumer changes. Initially, the CJNG produced methamphetamine, but then he moved to heroin production when the consumer demand changed.

In a series of highly coordinated tactics to prevent El Mencho's arrest, the CJNG blocked several highways and roads across the Guadalajara Metropolitan Area by setting at least 37 vehicles on fire. The purpose was to place them as blockades to impede the security forces from traveling across Jalisco's capital and giving El Mencho ample time to escape. The blockades were placed in strategic routes to prevent police reinforcements from coming in or leaving Guadalajara. After the attacks were over, the government confirmed that El Mencho was in the area and had evaded capture. The US government announced US\$ 10 million as reward to capture El Mencho, which was increased to US\$ 15 million.

Sheinbaum has pursued a direct approach to combating organized crime by increasing cooperation with the US security agencies. In a major operation launched by the Mexican Army the most wanted man and the leader of the feared Jalisco New Generation (CJNG) drug cartel have been killed during a security operation to arrest him, the Defence Ministry has said.

(The writer is a former DG of DRI and NCB)



What recruiters will truly seek from 2026 data science graduates

RECRUITERS NOW PRIORITISE STRATEGIC THINKING, ETHICAL AI AWARENESS, AND PRODUCTION-READY SKILLS OVER TECHNICAL BASICS ALONE

DR. ABHIJIT DASGUPTA

The data science landscape is not merely evolving; it is undergoing a profound transformation. The graduate of 2021, equipped with Python, SQL, and regression models, no longer represents the ideal profile for 2026. As artificial intelligence becomes deeply embedded across industries, regulations tighten, and business challenges grow more complex, recruiters are redefining expectations. For the class of 2026, securing a leading role will depend not only on technical expertise but on adaptability, ethical judgment, and strategic business understanding.

The foundational bedrock: Mastery of the modern stack

Core technical skills remain essential, but expectations have advanced. Python and SQL are baseline requirements rather than differentiators. Recruiters increasingly expect familiarity with orchestration tools such as Dagster and Prefect, MLOps platforms like MLflow and Kubeflow, and cloud ecosystems including AWS SageMaker, Google Vertex AI, and Azure ML. The ability to transition a model from experimentation to a scalable, monitored production environment is now fundamental.

Large Language Models



(LLMs) are reshaping the field. While pre-training massive models is not mandatory, graduates must understand transformer architecture, retrieval-augmented generation (RAG), and fine-tuning methods such as LoRA. Beyond simple API usage, recruiters value candidates who can customise LLMs for business workflows while understanding cost, limitations, and bias implications.

The strategic shift: Problem discovery and translation

The role of a data scientist has expanded beyond technical execution. Recruiters now prioritise "problem discovery." Graduates must demonstrate the ability to navigate ambiguity in business contexts, identify high-impact opportunities, and collaborate with domain experts across functions.

Equally important is "executive fluency"—the ability to translate model performance into business value. Communicating improvements in terms of revenue growth, risk reduction, or customer experience distinguishes strong candidates. While tools like Tableau and Power BI support visualisation, the core capability lies in articulating measurable business outcomes.

Ethics and governance as core competencies

As AI systems influence high-stakes decisions, ethical awareness has become integral. Recruiters increasingly assess knowledge of regulatory frameworks such as the EU AI Act and practical approaches to fairness, accountability, and transparency. Graduates should be



prepared to explain how they evaluate bias, ensure reproducibility, and maintain data lineage. Familiarity with explainability tools like SHAP and LIME, along with human-in-the-loop design principles, demonstrates readiness to build trustworthy systems rather than isolated algorithms.

Systems thinking and collaboration

The era of standalone models has passed. Data scientists must adopt a systems mindset, recognising that models operate within broader ecosystems involving pipelines, deployment frameworks, user interfaces, and feedback loops. Awareness of data quality, retraining cycles, and performance monitoring is critical.

Cross-functional collaboration is equally essential. Successful candidates show experience working with engineers on CI/CD processes, product managers on defining KPIs, and designers on user-centric solutions. Evidence of multidisciplinary teamwork strengthens

employability.

Learning agility in a rapidly changing field

With the rapid pace of technological advancement, learning agility has become one of the most valued traits. Recruiters seek individuals who continuously update their knowledge, experiment with new tools, and critically assess emerging trends.

A dynamic portfolio often speaks louder than a resume. GitHub repositories showcasing evolving projects, engagement with new research, or contributions to open-source initiatives reflect adaptability and initiative.

The graduate portfolio: A blueprint

- Portfolio Over Resume: A dynamic GitHub with well-documented projects, including a production-like end-to-end pipeline, an LLM application addressing a real problem, and a clear analysis of ethical considerations.
- The "T-Shaped" Depth: Deep,

hands-on expertise in one or two advanced areas complemented by broad business and communication skills.

- Narrative-Driven Interviews: Prepared not just to solve a coding test, but to articulate the "why" behind past projects, the trade-offs made, the business impact achieved, and the lessons learned from failure.

The ideal 2026 graduate presents a holistic profile: a well-documented project portfolio, deep expertise in selected areas, and strong communication skills. Beyond solving technical problems, they articulate the reasoning behind decisions, the trade-offs considered, the measurable impact delivered, and lessons drawn from challenges. In this transformed landscape, success belongs to those who combine technical excellence with strategic insight, ethical responsibility, and continuous learning.

(The author is Director – Bachelor of Data Science, SP Jain School of Global Management)



CBSE Class 12 Accountancy Exam Analysis

Accountancy exam rated moderate, balanced

The CBSE Class 12 Accountancy board examination was rated moderate in difficulty and largely aligned with the prescribed syllabus, according to feedback from teachers and students.

Rajan Dutta, PGT Accountancy at Silverline Prestige School, said the question paper reflected a balanced mix of theory and practical components. Most questions were drawn from the NCERT textbook and topics emphasised during classroom teaching. The paper included case-based and application-oriented questions designed to assess conceptual clarity rather than rote learning. Numerical questions were generally straightforward, though a few required careful calculations and step-by-step presentation.

"The Accountancy paper was fair and tested students' understanding of core concepts. Those who practised consistently and revised class materials found it manageable," Dutta said.

Students described the examination as moderate overall. While many found the structure familiar and manageable, some noted that certain case-study questions were slightly time-consuming. Overall, the paper was viewed as a well-balanced assessment that effectively evaluated students' conceptual understanding, analytical ability, and application skills in Accountancy.

CIM 2026 highlights AI, research ethics and industry-ready methodologies

The International Conference on Contemporary Issues in Management (CIM) 2026, hosted by the International School of Management Excellence in Bengaluru, brought together academicians, researchers and industry professionals to deliberate on artificial intelligence, research ethics and evolving industry expectations. The conference was the conferring of the Lifetime Achievement Award on T. V. Rao, a pioneer in human resource development and co-founder of the National HRD Network. In his address, Dr. Rao emphasised the need to balance technological advancement with human judgment. He noted that while AI can perform tasks efficiently, creativity and contextual decision-making remain uniquely human strengths.

Panel discussions throughout the conference examined how AI is reshaping research practices in management education. Speakers observed that AI tools are increasingly being used for literature reviews, data organisation and drafting support. However, concerns were raised about unverified outputs, fabricated references and plagiarism risks. Participants stressed that AI should serve as an aid rather than a substitute for independent analysis and



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critical thinking.

Ethical considerations emerged as a central theme. Faculty members highlighted the importance of transparency in AI-assisted research and the responsibility of academic supervisors in ensuring originality and integrity.

The conference also reflected changing research trends among students. Session chairs noted a shift from traditional statistical tools such as ANOVA and

regression towards advanced techniques including structural equation modelling (SEM), confirmatory factor analysis (CFA), and machine learning models like Random Forest and XGBoost.

Another recurring discussion focused on bridging the gap between academia and industry. Panelists underscored the need to align research methodologies with practical business applications to enhance employability and relevance.



IIT Roorkee to develop AI-driven BMS for energy storage

Indian Institute of Technology Roorkee has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with MaxVolt Energy to collaborate on the development of Artificial Intelligence (AI)-driven Battery Management Systems (BMS) for energy storage and electric mobility applications.

The partnership will focus on integrating AI and Machine Learning (ML) algorithms into next-generation BMS platforms. The proposed systems aim to enable real-time monitoring, predictive diagnostics, adaptive charging protocols, and improved thermal management for lithium-based batteries.

According to officials, the research initiative will also work on enhancing the accuracy of State-of-Charge (SoC) and State-of-Health (SoH) estimations. The objective is to improve battery lifecycle management, reduce degradation, and support performance under varying operational and climatic conditions.

A key component of

the collaboration includes incorporating predictive maintenance features. By analysing battery performance data and estimating remaining life cycles, the system is expected to assist in decisions related to battery reuse, refurbishment, or recycling. The research will be aligned with Indian grid and environmental conditions.

The joint programme will involve faculty members, research scholars, and engineering teams from both institutions. The teams will work on designing, prototyping, and validating AI-enabled BMS solutions. Vishal Gupta, Co-Founder and Technical Director at MaxVolt Energy and MaxVolt ReEarth, stated that the collaboration aims to strengthen research and development efforts in advanced battery technologies. He also indicated that a Centre of Excellence is proposed to be set up at the IIT Roorkee campus to support research on second-life battery reusability detection using BMS technologies.

HOW TO MASTER MOCK TEST ANALYSIS

How structured analysis can sharpen accuracy, speed, and exam strategy

Taking mock tests is an essential part of exam preparation, but their true value lies in how effectively they are analysed. Many students focus only on the final score, overlooking the deeper insights that mock tests provide. A structured analysis can transform mistakes into learning opportunities and significantly improve overall performance.

The first step in analysing a mock test is to go beyond marks and examine accuracy. Identify how many questions were attempted correctly, incorrectly, and left unanswered. This helps in understanding whether the issue lies in conceptual clarity, careless errors, or poor time management. A high number of incorrect answers may indicate guesswork or gaps in understanding, while too many unattempted questions may suggest slow problem-solving speed.

Next, conduct a topic-wise analysis. Break down performance according to subjects and chapters. This will reveal strengths and weak areas clearly. For instance, you may perform well in theory-based questions but struggle with numerical or application-based ones. Recognising such patterns allows you to plan targeted revision rather than revisiting the entire syllabus. Time analysis is equally



important. Review how much time was spent on each section or question. Did you spend too long on difficult problems? Did you rush through easier ones and make careless mistakes? Effective time allocation is crucial in competitive exams, and mock tests provide the perfect opportunity to refine this strategy.

Another critical aspect is reviewing mistakes carefully. Do not just note the correct answer — understand why your response was wrong. Was it due to a conceptual gap, misinterpretation of the question, calculation error, or overconfidence? Maintaining an error log can help track recurring mistakes and ensure they are not repeated in future tests.

Comparative performance tracking also plays a role. Instead of focusing on one test score, observe trends over multiple mocks. Consistent improvement in accu-

racy and percentile ranking indicates progress, while stagnation signals the need for strategy adjustments.

Practical tips for effective mock test analysis

- Analyse the test within 24 hours while the paper is still fresh in your mind.
 - Categorise mistakes into conceptual, calculation, and time-management errors.
 - Revise weak topics immediately after identifying them.
 - Reattempt incorrectly answered questions without time pressure.
 - Track progress through a performance journal or spreadsheet.
- When approached systematically, mock test analysis becomes a powerful tool for improvement. It shifts preparation from random practice to strategic learning, helping students steadily convert effort into measurable success.

Ramadan cooking made effortless

Freeze everyday cooking essentials in ice cube trays to save time, reduce stress, and simplify Ramadan meal preparation

ASKARI JAFFER

The holy month of Ramadan is a time of reflection, prayer, and togetherness. However, for many families, it also brings the added responsibility of preparing elaborate suhoor and iftar meals daily. Balancing work, household chores, children, and fasting can quickly become exhausting, especially when hours are spent chopping, grinding, and sautéing in the kitchen. To make daily cooking more manageable, a simple yet highly effective kitchen hack is gaining popularity — using ice cube trays to store pre-prepared essentials. This practical approach helps cut down cooking time significantly and ensures that meals can be prepared quickly without compromising on flavour.



Why Ice Cube Trays Work So Well

Ice cube trays are not just for freezing water. They are perfectly portioned, compact, and ideal for storing small quantities of frequently used

ingredients. By preparing and freezing basic cooking components in advance, you can avoid repetitive prep work every day.

The best part? These frozen cubes can be added directly

to hot pans without thawing, making the cooking process seamless and stress-free.

Lemon Juice Cubes For Instant Freshness
Lemon juice is a staple



in many households during Ramadan, whether for refreshing drinks, salads, marinades, or curries. Instead of squeezing lemons every day, you can extract juice from 10 to 12 fresh lemons at once and pour it into ice cube trays.

Once frozen, these cubes can be stored in airtight containers in the freezer. Whenever needed, simply drop a cube into your lemonade, curry, or dressing. It saves time and ensures you always have fresh lemon flavour ready to use.

Ginger-Garlic Paste Ready In Seconds

Ginger and garlic form the base of countless Indian and Middle Eastern dishes. Peeling, chopping, and grinding them daily can be time-consuming, particularly during fasting hours.

A convenient solution is to blend ginger and garlic into

a smooth paste with a small amount of olive oil. The oil helps preserve the paste and maintain its texture. Pour the mixture into an ice cube tray and freeze. These ready-to-use cubes can instantly enhance curries, gravies, stir-fries, and marinades.

Flavour Boosters For Curries And Kebabs

To elevate everyday dishes, you can prepare a flavour-packed mixture using Thai chillies, mint, and cilantro. Blend them into a smooth paste and freeze in small portions. This vibrant mix works beautifully in curries, kebabs, chutneys, and even as a quick marinade base.

Having these flavour cubes prepared in advance eliminates the need to wash and grind herbs daily, making meal prep far more efficient.

Tomato Base Without The Hassle

Tomatoes are another essential ingredient used in gravies and masalas. Instead of cooking them from scratch each day, you can prepare a thick tomato paste in advance by cooking fresh tomatoes over medium heat until they break down.

Once cooled, pour the paste into ice cube trays and freeze. These cubes can be added straight to hot oil while preparing curries or rice dishes, cutting down preparation time significantly.

Golden Fried Onions For Instant Biryani

Sautéing onions until perfectly golden brown requires patience and constant attention. During Ramadan, when energy levels may dip, this task can feel especially demanding.

By frying a large batch of sliced onions in advance and freezing them in cubes, you can save valuable time. These cubes are ideal for biryani, gravies, and festive dishes often prepared during Ramadan gatherings.

More Time For What Truly Matters

This simple freezer hack transforms daily cooking into a quicker, more organised process. Instead of spending long hours in the kitchen, you can focus on prayers, family time, and rest.

While this method is especially helpful during Ramadan, it can be adopted throughout the year for efficient meal planning. A few hours of preparation can save countless minutes every day — making cooking less stressful and far more enjoyable.

Deepti Naval enjoys tour of Punjab fields, shares pictures



Veteran actress Deepti Naval is currently soaking in the rustic charm of Punjab and was seen spending some good time in the fields, while also attending a literary festival in Chandigarh.

Sharing glimpses from her visit, Deepti captioned one of her posts, "In the fields of Punjab." The actress in the pictures shared, seems to be enjoying a quiet and scenic getaway amid her professional commitments.

The actress recently was in Chandigarh to attend a literary festival, where she participated

in a book session. In the first picture shared on her social media, Deepti is seen standing in the fields, amidst blooming crops and is seen surrounded by rows of trees. Dressed in a long, earthy-toned coat paired with a scarf and sunglasses, the veteran actress looks stylish and chic.

In another post shared by Deepti features a photograph with singer Sunaini Guleri and wrote, "With singer Sunaini Guleri in Chandigarh during my book session."

Known for her meaningful cinema and

literary pursuits, Deepti Naval has been a part of the Bollywood industry for almost four decades.

The actress despite being a popular face in the industry, believes in living a grounded and simple life. A few months ago, Deepti had treated netizens with her selfie picture and revealed that she was riding in an auto rickshaw.

Sharing the simplicity of the ride, Deepti mentioned that she was headed to a plush luxury hotel in Mumbai for lunch. She wrote, "No car, no driver, sitting in an auto going to the Marriott for lunch!"

Aishwarya Sakhuja on meeting herself without 'filters or performance'

Actress Aishwarya Sakhuja shared a profound reflection on self-growth, saying she is learning to meet herself without "filters or performance."

Taking to Instagram, the actress opened up about healing, restraint and quiet strength. She also spoke about the intimacy of embracing one's truth without rushing the process or shrinking her thoughts, adding that sometimes, simply being honest with oneself is enough.

"Becoming someone who doesn't rush her healing. Becoming someone who doesn't shrink her thoughts. Becoming someone who knows that strength doesn't always look like fire,

sometimes it looks like restraint," she wrote as the caption.

The 41-year-old actress spoke about the intimacy of meeting oneself without any filters or performance.

"There's a certain intimacy in meeting yourself like this. No filters. No performance. Just truth, staring back. And maybe that's enough," she added.

Aishwarya was a Miss India finalist in 2006. From 2010 to 2012, she starred in the TV show 'Saas Bina Sasural'. She was also seen in other fictional shows, including 'Main Naa Bhoolungi', 'Trideviyaan', and 'Rishta.com'.

The actress is primarily known for her role as Ahaana Khurana in 'Yeh

Hai Chahatein' and as air hostess Shilpa Shrivastava in 'Zyada Mat Udd'. She was also a contestant on reality shows 'Nach Baliye 7' and 'Fear Factor: Khatron Ke Khiladi 7'.

On the film front, she was last seen in 'Ujda Chaman' (2019), directed by Abhishek Pathak. The film stars Sunny Singh, Maanvi Gargro, Saurabh Shukla, Karishma Sharma and Aishwarya Sakhuja. It is an official remake of the 2017 Kannada dramedy 'Ondu Motteya Kathe'. The film revolves around a balding 30-year-old bachelor searching for a wife under a strict deadline.

On the personal front, Aishwarya married her longtime beau in December 2014.



CROSSWORD

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ACROSS

- Medicinal amount (6)
- Vigour, energy (3)
- Against (4)
- "Return of the Jedi" creature (4)
- Uproar (6)
- Gujarat city (9)
- Coup d' - : change of Govt. (4)
- Greek letter (3)
- Mineral used as a gem (5)
- Firefighter Red (5)
- Bashful (3)
- First three alphabets (3)
- Final authority (3-2)
- Follower of major Indian religion (5)
- A can (3)
- Fret and fume (4)
- Bride and groom, you'll agree? (9)
- Swelling of big toe (6)
- Middy (4)
- Foretell, predict (4)
- Intestine (3)
- Be dazed; not fully conscious (6)

DOWN

- Tizzy (6)
- Compassion (8)
- Festive occasion (4)
- Spellbind (7)
- "V" in VCR (5)
- Big, as prefix (4)
- Wandering (7)
- Frequency unit (3)
- Playthings (4)
- Fathers (4)
- Bordering on? (8)
- Seasoned pork sausage (7)
- Pretentious talker (7)
- Hasten (3)
- Stylish (6)
- Surprise ending (5)
- Extended (4)
- One who prefers charges (4)

Solution to February 24

SUDOKU

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Solution to February 24

ICRA has maintained a Stable outlook for the Indian aviation industry, supported by expectations of modest growth in domestic air passenger traffic and a gradually improving operating environment, despite near term challenges

-Kinjal Shah, Senior VP and Co Group Head, ICRA

Business

BIZ BRIEFS

CSMVS' initiative

Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Vastu Sangrahalaya (CSMVS) unveiled 'Networks of the Past: A Study Gallery of India and the Ancient World' in Mumbai. Over 300 archaeological objects from more than 15 leading Indian and global museums will be showcased for three years until 2028. According to CSMVS: "These tell stories from the ancient cultures of India, Egypt, Mesopotamia, Greece, Rome, Persia, and China, alongside treasures from undivided India."

Nikon unveils new product

Nikon India Pvt. Ltd., has announced the release of the NIKKOR Z 70-200mm f/2.8 VR S II, a fast telephoto zoom lens compatible with full-frame/FX-format mirrorless cameras. The first NIKKOR lens to support the use of Arca-Swiss tripod heads, for smoother tripod mounting and dismounting. The tripod collar of this lens can be attached to Arca-Swiss screw-type quick-release clamps. However, please avoid using lever-type clamps, as they may not fix the lens firmly in place.

Projects Today launches platform

Projects Today introduced AI-Driven business opportunity platform to strengthen India's project ecosystem. The new positioning brings project lifecycle context, tenders and L1/order updates, and stakeholder intelligence into one convenient workflow - helping organisations engage the right projects at the right time. The upgraded platform introduces an AI-enabled evolution focused on practical outcomes, including BOQ search, sub-project tracking, tender-to-order journey visibility, bidder and participation insights, opportunity estimation tools, credibility and analytics dashboards, and richer stakeholder relationship mapping.

Harpic rolls out new product

Harpic, a home hygiene solutions provider has announced the launch of its latest product - New Harpic Bathroom Ultra Cleaner. The company also onboarded Bollywood Film-maker Rohit Shetty as brand ambassador. Rohit Shetty said, "I know what it's like when people associate you with a certain style, it means they trust you to deliver every single time. And that trust pushes you to do more, do better and to raise the bar."

Policybazaar logs milestone

Since 2018, Policybazaar has facilitated over ₹2,069 crore in term insurance claims across 2,660 cases. This milestone strengthens consumer confidence in an underpenetrated market often hindered by claim concerns. By leveraging a digital-first model, the platform ensures speed and transparency, partnering with insurers to transform the stressful claims experience into a seamless, empathetic, and guided process for nominees during their most critical time of need.

iQOO launches 15R; Co sees good demand in India

It has been six years for iQOO in India and the company has been launching flagship products

Flagship Features

- Slimmest smartphone with a 7600 mAh battery
- Powered by the Snapdragon 8 Gen 5
- Has SuperComputing Chip Q2 with the 144 FPS gaming

HANS BUSINESS BENGALURU



Nipun Marya, CEO of iQOO



iQOO 15R smartphone

iQOO, the specialised mobile brand from Vivo stable, on Tuesday launched iQOO 15R in India as it eyes more young professionals' user base in the country.

The iQOO 15R has several innovative features that enable young professionals to seamlessly switch between work, gaming, and entertainment, the company said at the launch event in Bengaluru.

The new variant of the brand is powered by the Snapdragon 8 Gen 5, ensuring higher processing power,

speed and efficiency. iQOO 15R is India's slimmest smartphone with a 7600 mAh battery. It also used the company's proprietary SuperComputing Chip Q2 with the 144 FPS gaming. It is also equipped with a Sony LYT-700V OIS camera, a 1.5K 144Hz AMOLED EyeCare Display, along with IP68 & IP69 dust and water resistance, the company said.

"The new launch is the second one in the iQOO 15 series. We already have the flagship product iQOO 15, which has received good response. Given the kind of features in the new phone and the pricing, we believe

that the new variant is also going to get a very good response," Nipun Marya, CEO of iQOO told the BizzBuzz on the sidelines of the launch event.

"This is fastest smartphone in the market. It has a Snapdragon 8 Gen 5 processor. So, it is very fast and powerful. On the battery side, this is India's slimmest phone with 7600 mAh battery. It means, you can use your phone all day, do heavy tasks the whole day and there will be no issues with the phone at all. All of this, along with the camera, we believe that the price range of ₹40,000 to ₹45,000 for iQOO 15R is an amazing offer for our Indian users," Marya added.

Markets in red as tariff fears rattle IT stocks

Infotech stocks plunge nearly 5% as renewed US tariff concerns dent risk appetite

MUMBAI

EQUITY benchmark indices Sensex and Nifty tumbled more than 1 per cent on Tuesday, dragged down by heavy losses in IT stocks amid concerns over artificial intelligence-led disruption and renewed trade-related uncertainties. Rising global crude prices amid escalating US-Iran tensions and sluggish global cues also hit investor sentiment, traders said. Snapping its two-session rally, the 30-share BSE Sensex plummeted 1,068.74 points, or 1.28 per cent, to settle at 82,225.92. During the day, the benchmark plunged 1,359.93 points, or 1.63 per cent, to hit an intraday low of 81,934.73. A total of 2,802 stocks declined, while 1,422 advanced and 143 remained unchanged on the BSE.

The 50-share NSE Nifty fell 288.35 points, or 1.12 per cent, to close at 25,424.65. In the intraday session, it



depreciated by 385.4 points, or 1.49 per cent, to hit a low of 25,327.60. As many as 32 of its components ended in the red while 18 settled in the green territory. "Investor sentiment weakened amid renewed concerns over global trade developments and rising geopolitical tensions, which kept crude oil prices elevated. Moreover, continued pressure on global technology stocks and fears of AI-led disruption further dragged domestic IT shares, amplifying the decline in the benchmark indices," Ajit

Mishra SVP, Research, Religare Broking Ltd, said. Tech Mahindra emerged as the biggest laggard, declining by 6.6 per cent, followed by HCL Technologies, Eternal, Infosys, Tata Consultancy Services, Larsen & Toubro, Trent, Bharti Airtel, HDFC Bank, Bharat Electronics Ltd and ICICI Bank. On the other hand, NTPC, Hindustan Unilever, Tata Steel, PowerGrid, Titan, Reliance Industries, Axis Bank, and Sun Pharmaceuticals were among the gainers. "Domestic markets registered a sharp decline, led

by significant weakness in IT stocks amid renewed global concerns over AI-driven disruption and margin pressures for traditional service providers. Global trade and tariff worries resurfaced as well, with additional pressure arising from Trump's warnings on trade deals and reports of possible national-security tariffs. "Meanwhile, escalating US-Iran tensions, marked by embassy staff evacuations and Iran's warnings of wider regional escalation, intensifying risk aversion. Overall, markets remain highly sensitive to geopolitical risks and sector-specific pressures, driving investors toward defensive, domestically focused segments," Vinod Nair, Head of Research, Geojit Investments Limited, said. Broader indices also ended in the negative territory, with the BSE Smallcap Select Index falling 0.68 per cent, while the Mid-cap Select Index slipped 0.54 per cent.

Cabinet enhances equity investment limit of Powergrid to ₹7,500 cr per subsidiary

The approval will enable the Maharatna to expand its investment in its core business and support the evacuation of renewable energy capacity

NEW DELHI: The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA), chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, on Tuesday approved enhanced delegation to Power Grid Corporation of India Limited (POWERGRID), enhancing the permissible equity investment limit of the company from the current threshold of Rs 5,000 crore per subsidiary to Rs 7,500 crore per subsidiary -- while retaining the existing cap of 15 per cent of the company's net worth.

The approval came under the extant guidelines dated February 4, 2010, of the Department of Public Enterprises (DPE) on the delegation of powers applicable to Maharatna CPSEs.

According to an official statement, the approval will enable POWERGRID, the largest and most experienced transmission service provider in the country, to expand its investment in its core business and support the evacuation of renewable energy capacity, helping achieve the target of 500 GW from non-fossil-based sources.

The statement further said that POWERGRID can now participate in the bids for capital-intensive transmission projects, such as Ultra High Voltage Alternating Current (UHVAC) and High Voltage Direct Current (HVDC) transmission networks.

Additionally, it will broaden competition in the Tariff-Based Competitive Bidding (TBCB) for the selection of bidders for critical trans-



POWERGRID logo and infrastructure

mission projects. "This ensures better price discovery, and ultimately leads to the availability of affordable and clean energy for consumers," the CCEA said.

The POWERGRID, the central transmission utility, recently announced its unaudited financial results for the third quarter of this fiscal. The public sector company reported robust growth in profitability.

Standalone profit after tax (PAT) stood at Rs 4,160.17 crore -- a 6.8 per cent increase from Rs 3,894.09 crore in Q3 FY25. Standalone revenue from operations was Rs 11,005.28 crore, up year-on-year from Rs 10,120.72 crore. The Board of Directors approved several significant proposals, including a second interim dividend of Rs 3.25 per equity share (32.5 per cent on the face value of Rs 10) for FY 2025-26. The dividend will be paid on February 27, 2026.

Clean Max's ₹3K-cr IPO subscribed 45% on day 2

NEW DELHI: The initial public offering (IPO) of Clean Max Enviro Energy Solutions, a commercial and industrial renewable energy provider, received 45 per cent subscription on the second day of share sale on Tuesday. The company's IPO got bids for more than 97 lakh (97,59,106) shares against over 218 lakh (2,18,23,329) shares on offer, according to the NSE data. The qualified institutional buyers' category was subscribed 1.21 times, while the quota for non-institutional investors was booked 41 per cent. Retail Individual Investors part fetched a 4 per cent subscription. Clean Max Enviro Energy Solutions raised Rs 921 crore from anchor investors on Friday. The public issue will close on February 25. The company has fixed a price band of Rs 1,000-1,053 per share, valuing it at Rs 12,325 crore at the upper end. The proposed issue comprises a fresh issue of shares worth up to Rs 1,200 crore and an offer-for-sale (OFS) of shares valued at Rs 1,900 crore by promoters and an investor shareholder.

World shares trade mixed after heavy selling in AI scrips hit Wall Street

BANGKOK: World shares were mixed on Tuesday after US stocks slumped on heavy selling of shares in companies that could be losers in the artificial-intelligence boom. A report by Citirini Research, a New York-based financial services company, that outlined a future scenario in which AI's dominance caused the "human-centric consumer economy," to wither away with dire consequences for employment, was the latest hit to confidence for companies that might be displaced by fast expanding use of the technology. "Policy response has always lagged economic reality, but lack of a comprehensive plan is now threatening to accelerate a deflationary spiral," the report says. Still, Tuesday brought gains for computer-chip makers and other companies that profit from development of AI. In early European trading, Germany's DAX edged 0.2 per cent lower to 24,952.11 and in Paris the CAC 40 was down less than 0.1 per cent at 8,491.94. Britain's FTSE 100 also lost less than 0.1 per cent, to 10,673.99. The



futures for the S&P 500 and Dow Jones Industrial Average were up less than 0.1 per cent. In Asian trading, Tokyo's Nikkei 225 index surged 0.9 per cent to 57,321.09. Chip testing equipment maker Advantest rose 4.5 per cent, while machinery maker Disco Corp. added 2.1 per cent. Markets in mainland China advanced as they reopened following a weeklong holiday, but Hong Kong's Hang Seng fell as traders locked in profits from recent gains, slipping 1.8 per cent to 26,590.32. The Shanghai Composite index rose 0.9 per cent to 4,117.41. In South Korea, the Kospi picked up 2.1 per cent to 5,969.64, setting fresh records on gains for memory chipmaker Samsung Electronics, which jumped 3.6 per cent. SK Hynix, another chipmaker, closed 5.7 per cent higher.

India's CV industry clocks robust sales in Jan

NEW DELHI: THE Indian commercial vehicle (CV) wholesale volumes reported a robust 27 per cent year-on-year (YoY) growth to 99,544 units in January, along with a sequential growth of 1.9 per cent over 97,682 units recorded in December 2025, a report showed on Tuesday. The year-on-year growth was primarily driven by the reduction in Goods and Services Tax (GST) rate to 18 per cent from 28 per cent, effective September 22, 2025 and was further supported by increased freight activity in the goods segment, according to ICRA.

Retail volumes in the medium and heavy commercial vehicle segment (M&HCV) witnessed a healthy growth of 15.4 per cent on a YoY basis in January while recording a sequential growth of 22.1 per cent.

The retail volume growth in the M&HCV segment during the 10 months of FY26 stood at 6.3 per cent, indicating improving volume momentum following the implementation of GST rate cuts.

Moreover, according to the report, retail volumes in the light commercial vehicle



Commercial vehicle (CV) parked

(LCV) segment grew by 14.9 per cent YoY in January.

The YoY growth in retail volumes of the LCV segment during 10 months of FY26 stood at 11.1 per cent.

Overall, the domestic CV wholesale volumes grew by 11.3 per cent (on-year) "during 10M FY2026, while retail volumes registered an 8.5 per cent growth during the same period", said the report.

The domestic CV industry is expected to register a moderate YoY growth of 7-9 per cent in wholesale volumes in FY26. Domestic CV wholesale volumes are further projected to register a moderate YoY growth of 4-6 per cent in FY2027.

The M& HCV (trucks) and LCV (trucks) segments are expected to witness YoY volume growth of 7-9 per cent and 9-11 per cent, respectively.

Gold rises ₹400; silver stays flat

NEW DELHI: Gold prices rose by Rs 400 to Rs 1,63,200 per 10 grams in the national capital on Tuesday amid persistent buying by stockists and a weaker rupee, according to the local marketmen. The precious metal of 99.9 per cent purity had closed at Rs 1,62,800 per 10 grams on Monday. However, silver prices remained unchanged at Rs 2,72,000 per kilogram (inclusive of all taxes). Traders said increased offtake by local jewellers and stockists supported gold prices in the domestic market, even as international precious metal rates declined. In the international markets, spot gold was trading 1.35 per cent lower at USD 5,157.16 per ounce, while silver traded flat at USD 88.19 per ounce. Analysts said weakness in the rupee made gold costlier for holders of other currencies, offsetting the impact of a decline in global prices.



Gold and silver bars and coins

Cos should be cautious on AI usage claims: Sebi whole-time member

MUMBAI

SEBI'S whole-time member Amarjeet Singh cautioned against 'artificial washing', or the use of exaggerated claims as a marketing tactic, warning that such instances can erode the public's trust in the markets.

"We have seen instances of market participants making overstated claims about using AI to deliver exceptional returns," Singh said, addressing an event jointly organised by IIMK and NSE here.

Asking companies to be mindful of how they communicate claims on usage of AI, Singh warned, "exaggerated claims, or selective disclosures, the so-called AI washing can mislead markets and erode trust". He acknowledged that AI is a powerful tool for education, research and accessibility, but advised for certain care to be taken as adoption of AI grows because of its ability to generate "convincing misinformation at scale".

"Can we confidently say that today's true and fair reports truly reflect economic reality?" he asked, adding that such questions are more relevant in the current times.



Amarjeet Singh says such claims can erode the public's trust in the markets

There are newer forms of a shift to "narrative-led communication including purpose-washing and green-washing", Singh said, pointing out that the aspirational language used in such efforts can sometimes run ahead of "verifiable action and measurable outcomes".

There is a historic capital shift from "financial to intellectual capital" as seen in the explosive growth in the stock prices of seven tech giants in the US, he said, underlining that the intangibles are driving market value.

Singh rued that our reporting systems have not

kept pace and underlined the need for reviewing the ways in which the reporting captures the intangible aspects of value creation, including advantages of algorithm usage, human capital prowess and societal impact. "Until we do, we are navigating the future with yesterday's map," Singh said.

No one should be systematically disadvantaged by opacity, manipulation, hidden conflict or engineered confusion, Singh said, adding that there is a possibility for information acting as a bridge between households and capital markets, and savings and productive investments if we get it right. "At stake is not just market efficiency, but public trust in finance as a force for good," he concluded.

ADB commits \$108 mn to Aavas Financiers

NEW DELHI: Asian Development Bank on Tuesday said it has signed a senior secured debt financing package of up to \$108 million (about Rs 983 crore) with NBFC Aavas Financiers to expand access to affordable housing loans for lower-income households and business loans for MS-MEs in underserved states across India. The package includes concessional debt financing of \$8 million (in Indian rupee equivalent) through the Canadian Climate and Nature Fund for the Private Sector in Asia (CANPA), Asian Development Bank (ADB) said in a statement.

The financing will support housing loans for self-built and green-certified homes, promoting climate-resilient and energy-efficient housing solutions for lower-middle-income borrowers, it added. The transaction is also supported by up to \$1,50,000 in technical assistance to build institutional capacity and boost market awareness of green housing solutions, it said.

"Giving Sachin Tendulkar out leg before wicket, and it's a matter of knowing that it was a mistake, but until this day, every day, people talk about it. "Why did I give him out? Was he out and so on? But then in life, mistakes happen. I have accepted that it was a mistake, and life goes on,"

-Steve Bucknor, legendary umpire

Bucknor regrets wrong LBW call against Tendulkar after 22 years

NEW DELHI

MORE than two decades after making what was then widely seen as a "dreadful" decision against Indian cricket icon Sachin Tendulkar, legendary umpire Steve Bucknor has finally expressed regrets and accepted that "it was a mistake."

2009, was one of the most respected umpires in world cricket for over two decades. However, he did a make a few contentious calls involving Tendulkar, the most shocking being an LBW dismissal during an India-Australia Test match at Brisbane's Gabba 22 years ago.

In an interview with the West Indies Cricket Umpires' Association, when Bucknor was asked about one of the



Association, when Bucknor was asked about one of the

most difficult decisions he had to live with as an umpire, he said, "Giving Sachin Tendulkar out leg before wicket, and it's a matter of knowing that it was a mistake, but until this day, every day, people talk about it. "Why did I give him out? Was he out and so on? But then in life, mistakes happen. I have accepted that it was a mistake, and life goes

on." In that match at Gabba in the 2003-04 series, Tendulkar was given out LBW by Bucknor following a loud appeal from Australian fast bowler Jason Gillespie and his teammates. Batting on 3, Tendulkar had attempted to leave the ball, which struck him high on the pads, but Bucknor was convinced by the Australian appeal. Television replays

later confirmed the ball was clearly going over the stumps. In the commentary box, the late Tony Greig had referred to it as "a dreadful" decision and he was not the only one who thought that way at the time. The match, the first of a four-match series and in which India skipper Sourav Ganguly struck a fluent 144, ended in a draw. That was

not the only instance when Bucknor gave Tendulkar out wrongly. In a match against Pakistan at Eden Gardens in 2005, the Jamaican adjudged Tendulkar caught behind off Abdul Razzaq despite a half-hearted appeal. Replays, however, showed a wide gap between the bat and the ball.

During an interactive session with fans in 2024, Ten-

dulkar was asked about his relationship with Bucknor, and in lighter vein, he had said, "When I am batting, give him boxing gloves to wear (so he can't raise his finger)." Bucknor, 79, officiated in 128 Test matches between 1989 and 2009 and also holds the record for standing in five consecutive World Cup finals from 1992 to 2007.

T20 WC Super 8s India pushed to brink after WI's win rock Group 1

NEW DELHI: India's Super 8 campaign at the T20 World Cup 2026 has hit turbulence early, leaving them with no room for missteps in the matches to come. A crushing 76-run loss to South Africa in Ahmedabad on Sunday has pushed them onto the back foot in Group 1, where they are competing alongside South Africa, the West Indies and Zimbabwe.

Sunday has pushed them onto the back foot in Group 1, where they are competing alongside South Africa, the West Indies and Zimbabwe.

While India were reeling from that setback, the West Indies tightened the screws further with a commanding 107-run victory over Zimbabwe. The result reshaped the standings: West Indies climbed to the top, South Africa slotted into second, and India slipped to third, with their net run rate taking a severe blow in the process.



wald Brevis. Jasprit Bumrah delivered a standout spell of 3/15, but the remainder of the attack struggled to apply consistent brakes.

The chase never gathered traction. Wickets fell at regular intervals, partnerships failed to materialise, and scoreboard pressure mounted quickly. Marco Jansen's four-wicket burst dismantled the middle order, sealing India's collapse for 111.

Beyond the loss of two points, the damage to their Net Run Rate, now a troubling -3.800, could prove decisive.

With two fixtures left in the Super 8 stage, India's equation is starkly simple: they must win both to stay alive.

Two wins: Victories over the West Indies and Zimbabwe would take India to four points. If South Af-

rica also win their remaining games, both sides would progress. However, if South Africa drop one match, three teams could be locked on four points, pushing qualification down to Net Run Rate.

Should South Africa lose both, India and the West Indies would advance.

One win or fewer: Anything short of back-to-back wins will end India's campaign, regardless of other outcomes in the group. The margin for error has vanished. India's semi-final hopes now hinge not only on results but also on improving a Net Run Rate that has already taken a substantial hit.

T20 WC SUPER 8S TABLE					
TEAM	P	W	L	PT	NRR
GROUP 1					
WI	1	1	0	2	+5.350
RSA	1	1	0	2	+3.800
IND	1	0	1	0	-3.800
ZIM	1	0	1	0	-5.350
GROUP B					
ENG	1	1	0	2	+2.550
PAK	1	0	0	1	0.000
NZ	1	0	0	1	0.000
SL	1	0	1	0	-2.550

Lanka eye turnaround in must-win clash vs NZ

COLOMBO: Sri Lanka will need to improve their batting against slower bowlers when they take on New Zealand in a must-win Super Eight game of the T20 World Cup here on Wednesday.

The home team batters failed to chase a below par 147 against England on a slow turner in Pallekele. The pitches in Sri Lanka have been tougher for batting compared to co-hosts India and the trend is likely to continue at the Premadasa where bigger boundaries make six-hitting difficult.

Some of the shot selection was questioned following the heavy loss in the Super Eight opener and Sri Lanka will need to learn from their mistakes.

"It's a T20 game, so obviously you come into a game, so you are looking to score as many runs as you can. So when the ball is not coming on to the bat, it's easier said than done," Sri Lanka's Indian batting coach Vikram Rathour reflected on the side's poor performance.

"Are there better options? Yes, definitely could have been taken. I thought on a wicket where the ball is stopping, so pushing is not a great idea. A couple of our wickets lost out on guys pushing for a single. I don't think that was a great option in these conditions," he added.

While batting has been led by Pathum Nissanka, left-arm spinner Dunith Wellalage has been impressive with the ball. To be fair, even the pacers have delivered thus far in the competition. New Zealand, who had to share a point with Pakistan following the wash-out at Premadasa, too have good spinners in their ranks including captain Mitchell Santner. With rain unlikely, both teams would be pushing for their first win of the Super Eight stage.

New Zealand's opening duo of Finn Allen and Tim Seifert showed ominous form during the league stage and would be looking to extend that run. More runs are expected from the bat of Rachin Ravindra who got a much-needed fifty in his previous innings against Canada.



Semis, final tickets to go live amid venue uncertainty

NEW DELHI: The tickets for the semi-finals and final of the T20 World Cup 2026 will go live at 7 pm IST on Tuesday, as announced by the International Cricket Council (ICC) in a release.

Cricket fans can book seats for the first semi-final on March 4, the second semi-final on March 5 and the highly anticipated final on March 8 through the official booking sites.

However, the venue for Semi-final 1 remains subject to a floating arrangement. The match will be held either at the R Premadasa Stadium in Colombo or at the Eden Gardens in Kolkata. While Semi-final 2 is confirmed to take place at the Wankhede Stadium in Mumbai.

As per tournament guidelines, if the Pakistan cricket team qualify for the semi-finals, they will play semi-final 1 in Colombo on March 4. If Pakistan fail to qualify but the Sri Lanka team reach the super 4 and are not drawn against India, then the match will be played in Colombo.

Australia outplay India in opening Women's ODI

BRISBANE: Australia produced a clinical all-round performance to defeat India by six wickets in the opening ODI at Allan Border Field on Tuesday, chasing down a modest target of 215 with authority to take a 1-0 lead in the three-game ODI series and also level the overall multifarmat series' tally to 4-4.

After bowling India out for 214, the hosts made light work of the chase, riding on half-centuries from captain Alyssa Healy and the ever-reliable Beth Mooney. India had promised more at different stages, but ultimately fell short on a surface that offered seam movement early and grip for the spinners as the innings progressed.

TG PECET-2026 notification to be released today

HYDERABAD: The Telangana Physical Education Common Entrance Test-2026 (TG PECET-2026) notification for admissions into Bachelor of Physical Education (B.P.Ed) and Diploma in Physical Education (D.P.Ed) courses will be released on February 25, 2026. The entrance test is being conducted by Satavahana University under the aegis of the Telangana Council of Higher Education for the academic year 2026-27.

TG PECET-2026 is meant for admission into B.P.Ed and D.P.Ed courses offered by State Universities in Telangana and their affiliated colleges. Eligible candidates can apply online through the official website <https://pecet.tgche.ac.in>

According to the schedule, online registration and submission of application forms will commence from March 2, 2026. The last date to submit applications without a late fee is May 5, 2026. The Physical Efficiency and Skill Tests, which form part of the entrance examination, will be conducted at Satavahana University, Karimnagar, from May 31 to June 3, 2026.

Candidates aspiring to pursue professional courses in physical education are advised to go through the detailed notification carefully and adhere to the timelines. Authorities have appealed to the media to give wide publicity to the TG PECET-2026 schedule to ensure maximum reach among eligible students across Telangana.

Kanpur, Prayagraj at risk of severe damage if quake strikes: IIT study

Buildings can tilt or sink, roads and railway tracks may crack, and underground utilities can rupture. Riverbank and low-lying areas are particularly vulnerable: Dr Nihar Ranjan Patra

KANPUR

A 17-year study by the Indian Institute of Technology-Kanpur (IIT-K) has warned that parts of Kanpur and Prayagraj could face severe damage if an earthquake of magnitude 6.5 or higher strikes the region. The research led by Dr Nihar Ranjan Patra, a

professor at IIT-K's civil engineering department, highlights the high liquefaction potential of the alluvial soil along the Ganga river belt -- a factor that can sharply amplify ground shaking and destabilise buildings.

The IIT-K research team analysed soil samples collected over nearly two decades

from Gujarat, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh and Bihar. Samples were taken from 43 locations, with boreholes drilled up to 30 to 40 metres and 80 metres deep at two locations in Kanpur and Prayagraj in select areas - far deeper than the usual 10-30 metres used elsewhere. In several parts of Kanpur and Prayagraj,

the top 8-10 metres of soil is loose, sandy and water-saturated - conditions highly prone to liquefaction during strong tremors.

The findings are concerning as in some pockets, the effect could extend as deep as 30-40 metres. Liquefaction occurs when intense shaking causes waterlogged soil

to temporarily lose strength and behave like a liquid, Patra told PTL. Buildings can tilt or sink, roads and railway tracks may crack, and underground utilities can rupture. Riverbank and low-lying areas are particularly vulnerable, he added.

Localities identified for detailed soil analysis include

Bithoor, Mandhana, Panki, Barra, Chakeri, Ratanlal Nagar, Naramao and areas around IIT-K, among others. Parts of Varanasi were also found to have similar soil behaviour. According to India's seismic zoning map, sections of Kanpur and Prayagraj fall under Zones III and IV - denoting moderate to high risk.



Copter carrying 7 crashes into sea, all rescued

SRI VIJAYA PURAM

A Pawan Hans helicopter carrying seven people, including two crew members, crashed into the sea just 300 metres away from its scheduled landing at Mayabunder helipad in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands on Tuesday, and all of them were rescued, officials said. The crash occurred around 9.30 am, after the chopper took off from Rangat in the North and Middle Andaman district, they said.

All five passengers and the two crew members, rescued from mid-sea, have been admitted to a hospital, one of the officials said.

"The helicopter crashed into the sea around 9.30 am. A preliminary inquiry revealed that there was some technical snag, and the pilot made a crash-landing on the sea," a senior Civil Aviation official said. An inquiry has been initiated, he said. "On February 24, 2026, PHL Dauphin N3 helicopter (VT PHY) took off from Sri Vijaya Puram (Port Blair) at around 8.30 am for a passenger flight from Sri Vijaya Puram (Port Blair) to Rangat and fur-



Did plane carrying 7 pax crash due to bad weather?

RANCHI: Authorities are looking into the main factors, including weather conditions, that could have led to the fatal crash of an air ambulance that killed seven people in Jharkhand on Monday evening, according to officials.

Redbird Airways Pvt Ltd's Beechcraft C90 aircraft VT-AJV enroute from Ranchi to Delhi crashed soon after takeoff. There were five people and two crew members onboard. One of the officials said a conclusion on what could have led to the crash is yet to be reached and from initial inputs, and the weather conditions at the time of the crash would also be looked into.

ther to Mayabunder. "The helicopter landed at Rangat helipad around 9.05 am. It further took off from Rangat to Mayabunder at around 9.10 am. The helicopter ditched about 300 metres short of Mayabunder helipad in the sea (shallow water) at around 9.30 am," Pawan Hans Ltd, a central public sector undertaking based in Noida, said on X. Five passengers and two crew members were on board, it said.

Meat shops near schools promote violence: Bihar Dy CM

PATNA: Bihar Deputy Chief Minister Vijay Kumar Sinha has vowed



to clamp down on shops selling meat, fish and poultry in the vicinity of religious and educational institutions, claiming that these offend "purity of sentiments" and promoted "violent tendencies" among children. The senior BJP leader, who holds the urban development portfolio in the Nitish Kumar government, made a statement to this effect a couple of days ago when his views were sought on a recent circular issued by the department. "We are making a new Bihar and this is being reflected in all the steps we take. I issued directions to strictly implement the rules in a recent departmental meeting, which have been framed to ensure proper hygiene and social harmony," he said. "We are not against people's right to have food of their choice. But, selling such items in the open, especially in the vicinity of religious institutions, adversely affects the purity of our sentiments. Similarly, these need to be kept away from educational institutions to prevent violent tendencies among children," Sinha said.

U'KHAND EDN DIRECTOR ASSAULTED EMPLOYEES DEMAND BJP MLA'S ARREST

'Employees closed education department offices across the state, except for the Uttarakhand Board of School Education in Ramnagar'

DEHRADUN

EMPLOYEE organisations, insisting on the arrest of BJP MLA Umesh Sharma Kau in connection with the assault on Uttarakhand Director of Elementary Education Ajay Naudiyal, have issued an ultimatum to close all state offices from Wednesday if their demands are not met.

On Monday, Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami directed the chief secretary to develop a Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for the safety of employees. Meanwhile, police arrested four accused, including a

history-sheeter, involved in the vandalism and assault incident at the Directorate of Elementary Education on Saturday.

Members of a joint front formed to protest the assault on Naudiyal met CM Dhami on Monday and demanded that SOPs be established for their safety and police deployment in the offices. Following this, Dhami directed Chief Secretary Anand Bardhan to prepare the SOP and DGP Deepam Seth to ensure adequate security arrangements in government offices.

Meanwhile, as per the Morcha's previously an-

nounced programme, employees closed education department offices across the state, except for the Uttarakhand Board of School Education in Ramnagar. "Like today, education department officials and employees will continue their work boycott on Tuesday, and if no solution is found to our demand by Tuesday, all offices across the state will be closed from Wednesday," said Sanjay Bhaskar, front's media in-charge. Bhaskar alleged that the MLA had brought a history-sheeter with him to the director's office.



Seer moves All HC seeking anticipatory bail in POCSO case

PRAYAGRAJ: Swami Avimukteshwaranand Saraswati on Tuesday moved the Allahabad



High Court seeking anticipatory bail after being booked for alleged sexual harassment of minor children and other offences. A notice has been sent to the office of the government advocate in this regard, before filing the application in court, sources said. The FIR was lodged at the Jhansi police station in Prayagraj against Saraswati and his disciple Mukundanand Brahmachari over allegations of sexual abuse of two persons, including a minor, over the past year.

According to the FIR, the complainants included Ashutosh Brahmachari Maharaj and two other persons, one of them a minor, who alleged sexual abuse by the accused at a gurukul and during religious congregations, including the recently concluded Magh Mela in Prayagraj.

The action on Saturday followed an order passed by the special judge (POCSO Act), Prayagraj, directing that a case be registered on the application moved by Ashutosh Brahmachari and others.

TIRUMALA GHEE ROW

Pawan Kalyan targets Jagan, questions silence on TTD Board

HANS NEWS SERVICE
VIJAYAWADA

DEPUTY Chief Minister Pawan Kalyan on Tuesday sharpened the attack on former chief minister Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy during a short discussion in the Andhra Pradesh Assembly on the alleged use of adulterated ghee in the preparation of Tirumala laddu prasadam.

Pawan questioned why Jagan was "shielding" members of the then Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams (TTD) board.

"It would have been enough if he had said an investigation should be conducted and action taken," Pawan said. "If you are holding them back, then are you not involved?"

He accused the YSRCP of misleading the public by claiming there were no chemicals in the ghee used for Srivari laddu prasadam.

- Cites SIT, NDDB reports; says contracts were relaxed
- 'If you shield them, are you not involved' he asks former CM

"That is why they are now forced to give explanations," he said.

The Deputy CM alleged that the Special Investigation Team (SIT) had concluded there was a conspiracy behind the supply of adulterated ghee. He claimed tender rules were relaxed to award contracts to favoured firms and said the then TTD governing body failed to discharge its responsibility. "We are not accusing blindly. The lapse occurred during the tenure of the board appointed then," he said.

Referring to investigation findings, Pawan said the NDDB report indicated the presence of animal-



related substances in the ghee. He also cited the CBI-monitored SIT probe, stating that the report concluded the product supplied was not genuine ghee.

He alleged that laddus were prepared using the adulterated ghee and claimed that about one

lakh such laddus were sent to Ayodhya. "Only Srivari knows what was mixed in that ghee," he said, adding that anyone found guilty must face strict punishment. "If something like this had happened to any other religion, the entire country would have reacted strongly," he said.

Council witnesses clash over crime and women's safety

HANS NEWS SERVICE
VIJAYAWADA

A heated debate unfolded in the Legislative Council on Tuesday during a short discussion on law and order, with the treasury and opposition benches trading sharp charges over women's safety, crime statistics and the alleged spread of drugs.

Home minister V Anitha told the House that crimes against women have fallen by 4.4 per cent since the formation of the NDA coalition government. She asserted that the government has adopted a zero-tolerance policy towards crimes against girl children.

According to her, overall crime in the state has declined by 6.6 per cent in the past 20 months due to measures initiated by Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu. She said POCSO cases dropped by 8 per cent, murders of women fell by 45 per cent and gang rape cases declined by 64 per cent.

- Home minister Anitha claims overall crime fell 6.6% in 20 months, citing sharp drops in POCSO, murders of women, and gang rape cases
- Accuses the previous YSRCP gov't of law-and-order failure, highlighting lost Central funds and pledging one lakh CCTV cameras plus anti-drug drives
- Opposition MLC Kalyani counters with data showing harassment cases and rising NDPS cases, linking violent crimes to drugs and illicit liquor



Anitha blamed the previous YSRCP government for what she described as a breakdown of law and order. She alleged that industries and investments retreated during that period and claimed there was a time when families feared for the safety of women stepping out of their homes.

The minister also alleged that Rs 180 crore in central

funds was lost earlier due to the absence of a proper action plan. She said the present government plans to install one lakh CCTV cameras across the state to strengthen surveillance. Under a special anti-drug drive, 96,940 kg of marijuana has been seized so far, she added.

Anitha further stated that SC and ST atrocity cases have come down by

25 per cent and accused the previous regime of politicising such cases. She also referred to the arrest of a village sarpanch belonging to YSRCP in a theft case at the residence of a TDP MLA.

However, YSRCP MLC Varudu Kalyani contested the government's claims. Citing official data, she said 16,288 women were reportedly subjected to harassment and alleged that crimes against women had increased in 10 districts, including Guntur, Nellore, Vizianagaram and Tirupati.

She linked violent crimes to ganja, drugs and illicit liquor, and pointed to a recent case in Madanapalle involving the rape and murder of a minor girl. Kalyani also claimed NDPS cases had risen sharply in districts such as Srikakulam and Nellore.

As the debate grew heated, the Chairman repeatedly urged members to maintain decorum and stick to the subject.

₹6,000-cr scam alleged in 'Housing for All' under YSRCP rule

HANS NEWS SERVICE
VIJAYAWADA

REVENUE minister Anagani Satya Prasad on Tuesday alleged in the Assembly that massive irregularities amounting to nearly Rs 6,000 crore took place during the previous YSRCP government under the 'Housing for All' scheme.

Responding to a question raised by TDP MLA Maddipati Venkata Raju, the minister said that although the previous government claimed to have distributed 22 lakh house site pattas, nearly seven lakh beneficiaries did not even take conveyance deeds. He alleged that lands unfit for habitation — including low-lying areas, burial grounds, remote locations far from villages, and flood-prone lands — were acquired at two to three times the market price for distribution under the scheme.

Due to the non-habitable nature of these lands, nearly 2.5 lakh beneficiaries reportedly refused to accept house site pattas, he said. The minister further stated that upon inquiry by the present coalition government, 43,948



Revenue minister Anagani Satya Prasad speaking on housing in the Assembly on Tuesday

- Revenue minister Satya Prasad says nearly Rs 6,000 cr irregularities took place under the previous YSRCP regime with unfit lands being acquired at inflated prices and seven lakh beneficiaries did not take conveyance deeds

ineligible beneficiaries were identified in the distribution process. Additionally, another 1,11,037 beneficiaries are still under verification.

After assuming office, the coalition government decided to allot three cents of land in rural areas and two cents in urban areas under the housing scheme, he said, pointing out that the previous government had allotted only 1.5 cents or even one cent in some cases.

Satya Prasad revealed that

a total of 4,08,876 fresh applications have been received for house site pattas. Of these, 1,03,494 applications have been approved, 1,41,928 rejected, and 1,56,454 are currently under scrutiny.

He asserted that the present government is committed to ensuring transparency and providing genuinely eligible poor families with proper, habitable land for housing, unlike the alleged irregularities during the previous regime.

SYNTHETIC MILK THREAT PROMPTS TIGHT CHECKS

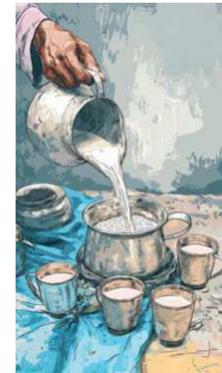
PRADEEP VENNELAKANTI
TIRUPATI

THE suspected link between adulterated milk and the recent deaths of four persons in Rajamahendravaram has triggered a wave of caution across AP's dairy-rich Rayalaseema region, with officials tightening checks in Tirupati and Chittoor districts.

Authorities say the tragedy has raised fresh concerns about synthetic milk entering regular supply chains, particularly through informal and cross-border routes. Tirupati and Chittoor, known for their strong dairy base after agriculture, witness heavy milk procurement for both domestic consumption and bulk supply to chilling centres and private dairies. The steady movement of milk across the Andhra Pradesh-Karnataka border has further heightened vigilance.

The alert follows recent enforcement action near Ballagiri in Karnataka, close to the Kuppam border, where officials reportedly uncovered a synthetic milk preparation unit. Three in-

- Inspections are underway in key dairy producing districts with large-scale milk movement in Tirupati and Chittoor districts



dividuals — two from Santhipuram mandal and one from Ramakuppam mandal in Chittoor district — were allegedly found producing artificial milk by blending expired milk powder with palm oil, urea and water. Investigators said the mixture was designed to imitate the thickness and fat content of genuine milk before being circulated in local markets.

Food safety officials explained that adulteration often involves adding substances such as urea, starch, detergents, maltodextrin and vegetable fats to enhance whiteness and density.

Preservatives and neutralisers may also be used to prolong shelf life. In extreme cases, officers said, a single litre of pure milk can be stretched into two litres of synthetic product, significantly boosting illegal profits. Authorities also flagged the

sumers to be alert to basic warning signs. Nearly 90 percent of locally produced milk in the region is cow milk, which typically carries a slight yellowish tinge, whereas buffalo milk appears whiter.

If milk sold as cow milk looks unusually white or excessively thick, adulteration should be suspected. Changes in taste, smell or fat consistency are also considered red flags. Simple household tests, such as adding iodine drops to check for maltodextrin or observing the texture of heated milk when rubbed between fingers, may provide preliminary indications of tampering.

Testing facilities are available at the College of Dairy Technology in Tirupati, where milk samples can be examined scientifically. Officials have advised dairies, bulk purchasers and consumers to utilise these services and promptly report suspicious supplies, stressing that public cooperation will be vital to safeguarding the integrity of the dairy sector in the wake of the Rajamahendravaram incident.

Officials have urged con-

Pensions to be distributed on February 28

HANS NEWS SERVICE
VIJAYAWADA

THE state government will distribute NTR Bharosa pensions on February 28, a day in advance, as March 1 falls on a Sunday, minister for MSMEs, SERP and NRI empowerment and relations Kondapalli Srinivas said in a statement on Tuesday.

The government will disburse Rs 2,725.79 crore to a total of 62,76,322 pensioners across various categories. The amount will be delivered at the doorsteps of beneficiaries by Swarna Gramam and Swarna Ward staff.

Of the total beneficiaries, 8,977 are newly sanctioned widow (spouse) pensioners, for whom Rs 3.59 crore has been released. The minister stated that pensions will be distributed on February 28, and any remaining payments will be completed on March 2, 2026, with Secretariat staff ensuring doorstep delivery.

He further said that since the coalition government assumed office, a total of Rs 57,808.68 crore has been spent on pensions, reflecting the State government's commitment to social security and welfare.

CPI criticises 'laddu' obsession in Assembly session



HANS NEWS SERVICE
VIJAYAWADA/NEW DELHI

CPI national secretary K Ramakrishna strongly criticised the Andhra Pradesh Assembly and Legislative Council budget session, stating that they have been reduced to endless debates over the 'laddu controversy' instead of meaningful discussions on the Rs 3 lakh crore state budget.

Addressing the media in the national capital on Tuesday, he expressed concern that both ruling and opposition parties — including TDP, Jana Sena, BJP, and YSRCP members — spent hours debating the laddu issue while ignoring pressing matters such as welfare schemes, development projects, and public grievances. Ramakrishna noted that allegations of adulteration and corruption in laddu distribution are widely known. He insisted that if corruption is proven, those responsible must face strict legal action and imprisonment. "Only then will people appreciate the government's seriousness," he said.

AP pushes green investments with ₹408 cr energy projects

HANS NEWS SERVICE
VIJAYAWADA

APGENCO In-charge managing director (MD) and chief executive officer of the AP State Energy Conservation Mission (APSECM), P Pulla Reddy, emphasised that timely action is crucial for sustainable growth. He urged industries and financial institutions to actively mobilise public and private capital for energy-efficiency projects.

Addressing an Investment Bazar Workshop held at Hotel Murali Fortune in Vijayawada on Tuesday, he called upon stakeholders to convert the state's identified technical potential into bankable, time-bound investments that would enhance industrial competitiveness while advancing climate and energy-efficiency goals.

The workshop brought together senior officials, representatives from industries and MSMEs, financial institutions, and technology providers to accelerate green investments across the state. Among those present were NREDCAP vice-chairman and Managing Director M Kamalakar Babu and Bureau of Energy Efficiency (BEE),



AP State Energy Conservation Mission CEO P Pulla Reddy addressing the Investment Bazar Workshop on energy-efficiency projects in Vijayawada on Tuesday

Government of India, Director P Shyam Sunder. Around 50 industries and banking institutions participated in the workshop.

Pulla Reddy said the state has already identified over Rs 408 crore worth of viable energy-efficiency projects through five earlier Investment Bazar events and stressed the need for swift financial closure and implementation. Referring to the State Energy Efficiency Policy 2024-2028, he noted that compliance with the Energy Conservation Building Code (ECBC) 2017 has been mandated across 123 Urban Local Bodies, with more than 1,800 ECBC-compliant

buildings already approved. He also encouraged industries to utilise the ADEETIE scheme, which offers interest subvention of 5% for micro and small enterprises and 3% for medium enterprises across 14 key sectors, including fisheries and glass and refractory clusters in East and West Godavari districts. Stating that this was the sixth Investment Bazar event under BEE's Energy Efficiency Financing Platform initiative, he said the State has achieved energy savings of 1.356 million tonnes of oil equivalent across 59 industries under the Perform, Achieve and Trade (PAT) mechanism up to Cycle VI.

He said that the APSECM has also formed a Financial Institutions Committee comprising 11 banks and two NBFCs to facilitate project financing. He added that Andhra Pradesh recently received the National Energy Conservation Award 2025 (First Prize) for the fourth consecutive time. He said Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu, Energy minister Gottipati Ravi Kumar and chief secretary K Vijayanand are committed to maintaining the state's leadership in energy efficiency through coordinated and result-oriented efforts.

BEE Director P Shyam Sunder interacted with MSME representatives and explained the benefits of the ADEETIE scheme, including interest subvention, technical support from audit to implementation, and facilitation through a nodal bank and project management unit. NREDCAP VC & MD Kamalakar Babu highlighted the synergy between renewable energy and energy efficiency, outlining plans to develop green industrial clusters powered by clean energy and modern efficient systems.

Illegal dairy unit sealed after fatal milk adulteration incident

HANS NEWS SERVICE
RAJAMAHENDRAVARAM

THE adulterated milk tragedy in Rajamahendravaram has escalated, with police registering murder charges against trader Addala Ganeswara Rao after five deaths and 16 cases of severe kidney complications. Investigations linked the crisis in Chowdeswari Nagar and Swaroop Nagar to contaminated milk supplied by his Varalakshmi Dairy, which was sealed for operating without mandatory permissions.

DSP Devakumar said preliminary findings revealed adulteration with urea, detergent powder, and oil to thicken milk, compounded

by coolant oil leakage from a refrigerator. Officials believe financial distress and profit motives drove the practice.

Health authorities reported a surge in acute renal failure cases among residents consuming milk from the Korukonda dairy chain. A contaminated batch is suspected to have caused widespread toxicity. Three victims — Radhakrishnamurthy, N. Seshagiri Rao, and Tadi Ramani — died on Monday, raising the toll to five. Controversy surrounds the exclusion of B Kanakaratham, whose family insists her death was linked to the incident.

Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu ordered a comprehensive inquiry, directing district collec-

tor Kirthi Chakuri and SP Narasimha Kishore to probe thoroughly. Eluru range IGP Ashok Kumar confirmed severe charges, elevating the case from food safety violation to criminal act.

Health commissioner Veerapandian announced government coverage of treatment expenses and urged residents with symptoms to seek immediate care. Forensic analysis of seized samples is underway, while citizens demand stricter monitoring of dairy operations to safeguard public health.

Meanwhile, district collector Kirthi Chakuri along with MLA Adireddy Srinivas handed over cheques of Rs 10 lakh each to the bereaved families.



District collector Kirthi Chakuri along with MLA A Srinivas distributes cheques to bereaved families in Rajamahendravaram on Tuesday



Mahesh Babu heads to Georgia for next schedule of SS Rajamouli's 'Varanasi'

Superstar Mahesh Babu's next ambitious project Varanasi is shaping up as one of the biggest pan-world ventures in Indian cinema. Mounted on a monumental scale, the film is being directed by global blockbuster filmmaker S. S. Rajamouli, best known for Baahubali and RRR.

Mahesh Babu was spotted leaving Hyderabad from Rajiv Gandhi International Airport earlier today, heading to Georgia for the next major shooting schedule. This is a work trip, as the actor is set to join the upcoming international schedule of the film. Reports suggest that Priyanka Chopra and Prithviraj Sukumaran are

also expected to join the Georgia leg of the shoot, making this schedule one of the most crucial phases of production.

Music maestro M. M. Keeravani recently revealed that background score work will begin in September, after the entire shoot wraps up in June. The film also features Prakash Raj in key role. Produced by K. L. Narayana and S. S. Karthikeya, the massive pan-world action-adventure is being made on a grand budget and scale. Varanasi is officially slated for a worldwide theatrical release on April 7, 2027, and is already being positioned as one of the most ambitious Indian films ever made.

What is your beef?

'Kerala Story' released in 2023 and claimed many things that were wrong with Kerala, including the theory of "Love Jihad." The state largely looked away. The film is back in the news as the makers release a trailer for Part 2; this time they have targeted beef curry. And now Kerala refuses to take the misrepresentation lying low, crying foul at what it sees as an attempt to fracture the secular fabric of society

RAJESHWARI KALYANAM

'Kerala Story 2' and the politics and propaganda around it, along with the hilarious reels mocking the beef scene in the trailer, take me back to my recent visit to Kochi. The port city—with its art, architecture, layered history, and melting pot of cultures—leaves an indelible mark. The sea, the fish, and most importantly the warmth of its people stay with you.

Our quest for authentic Kerala parota with some help from an auto driver led us to a simple but bustling hotel in Mattancherry. The owner sat



at the counter while we shared a table with two students waiting for their meal. First came pathimukham—the special Kerala root boiled water served hot. We were spoilt for choice: the menu included appam, stew, kadala curry, square parota, even Indian Chinese. The clientele was a mixed bag—foreign tourists, local businessmen, executives, college students, families. People of all classes and creeds sat together, united by love for food. And guess what was the most ordered dish—Beef Roast.

Beef is today in the news thanks to the recently released trailer of the film 'The Kerala Story 2'.

In the trailer, a jihadi is shown force-feeding a girl beef curry. The scene appears conceptualized with little understanding of local culture or culinary habits, seemingly

to shock and provoke. Instead, it led to widespread indignation, with Malayalees across religions proclaiming their love for beef curry. The internet is filled with memes and reels mocking what many see as a scene created in poor taste and poorer research.

The story of 'The Kerala Story' goes back to 2023 when Part 1 was released. It was widely accused of being propaganda, given its premise. The film tells the story of a Malayalee Hindu girl lured into conversion by her lover, married, and taken to a terrorist camp. It suggests that "Love Jihad" is widely prevalent in Kerala, quoting unverified numbers to substantiate the claim. In a technically weak film, several scenes present conspiracy theories and questionable information as fact.

Kerala did not agree with

'The Kerala Story.' A state that produces some of the finest films considered it too trivial to take seriously. "No one will watch it here," was the general consensus—and they were not wrong. The film failed to make an impact in Kerala, though it provided WhatsApp fodder elsewhere.

Now the team has released the trailer for Part 2. This time, among other things, they have targeted Kerala's most popular dish—beef curry. And that has clearly backfired.

"In Kerala, everyone has 'Left' blood regardless of religion or politics," shared Father Augustine Vattoly, whom I met during the Kerala visit. He was referring to a shared social conscience that reflects in how people respond to issues. You see it in small but telling incidents—like the recent viral video of

an elderly woman stopping a scooter rider from using the sidewalk. A responsible citizen taking a stand.

Augustine is a Catholic priest who supported Sister Ranit, who spoke against a Bishop and faced ostracism and legal battles. He convened "Save Our Sisters" (SOS) to stand by protesting nuns during the 2018 agitation. His experiences reflect Kerala's courage in expressing dissent. Sister Ranit and a few nuns now survive through tailoring and stitching cotton bags, sustained by community support. That solidarity, he says, is heartening.

The 'Me Too' movement from late 2017 and 2018 was an eye-opener across India. But perhaps only in Kerala did it trigger deep introspection in the film industry, leading to the dissolution of AMMA (Association of Malayalam Movie Artists) after the Hema Committee report. The Women in Cinema Collective (WCC), formed after the abduction case involving actor Dileep, continues to grow stronger.

Actor Rima Kallingal, an active WCC member, said at a National Women in Media conference in Thiruvananthapuram that directors and writers sometimes reach out to check if their scripts represent women appropriately. Even occasional instances like these signal a shift in perspective.

The industry and society in the state remain male dominated. But when power is pitted against the powerless, a strong section speaks up for

the wronged.

Popularly known as God's Own Country, Kerala is in many ways People's Own Country—fiercely protective of its collective identity. People are proud of their clean roads, greenery, heritage, culture, and cuisine—and yes, the beef roast and curry enjoyed with parota or puttu.

Today, the response is not just about a beef scene. It reflects awareness of attempts to fracture a secular fabric where shared history takes precedence over divisive narratives. Onam, for instance, is celebrated by all communities. King Mahabali is welcomed with fervour, followed by the Onam sadhya—vegetarian in tradition, though some homes add non-vegetarian variations.

A case has now been filed in a Kerala court against the release of the film. As we await judgment, one wonders if 'The Kerala Story 2' will succeed in polarizing Kerala.

The film is being strategically released ahead of elections. It is worth recalling that on more than one occasion BJP candidates in Kerala have promised better quality beef in their manifestos. Hilarious but true.

Looking back at municipal elections in Thiruvananthapuram, BJP did see some success. Whether beef had a role is debatable—but the irony is unmistakable.

After all, if anything could sway a Kerala voter, it might just be the promise of good quality beef.

'Emi Raa Balaraju' from 'Vishnu Vinyasam' strikes a chord as breakup anthem

Actor Sree Vishnu, known for his effortless comic timing and relatable performances, is gearing up to entertain audiences with his upcoming film Vishnu Vinyasam, an out-and-out entertainer directed by debutant Yadunaath Maruthi Rao. Starring Nayana Sarika as the female lead, the film has already built strong buzz with its first two singles, especially the Valentine's Day release, which became a chartbuster.

Adding to the momentum, the makers have now unveiled the third single, Emi Raa Balaraju, a quirky breakup number that blends heartbreak with humour. Designed as a tribute to love failures who choose laughter over pain, the song opens on a playful note with comedian Satya counting numbers, setting the tone for the protagonist's comic rant on love, heartbreak, and emotional chaos. The



narrative humorously reflects a man's frustration with romance, wrapped in satire and relatable sarcasm, making it instantly connect with younger audiences.

Producer Sumanth Naidu also makes a fun appearance, adding extra humour to the track. Composer Radhan delivers a groovy, punchy composition, while Sarath Santos's vocals bring a smooth flow to the song. Lyricist Ramajogayya Sastry

cleverly transforms the hero's misery into mischievous fun through witty lines. Sree Vishnu's energetic lungi dance steps, choreographed by Bhanu Master, add mass appeal and crowd-pleasing moments. With music creating strong pre-release buzz, Vishnu Vinyasam is set to hit theatres on the 27th of this month, promising a laughter-filled entertainer with fresh flavour and youthful energy.

'D/O Prasad Rao Kanabadutaledhu' holds grand preview event

The Telugu web series D/O Prasad Rao Kanabadutaledhu is all set to premiere on ZEE5 from February 27, creating strong buzz ahead of its digital release. The series stars Rajeev Kanakala, Udaya Bhanu, Vasanthika, and Sriram Venkat in prominent roles. Produced by K.V. Sriram under the South India Screens banner and directed by Krishna Poluru, the series recently held a special media preview, followed by a grand launch event attended by the cast and crew.

Rajeev Kanakala described his role as one of the most defining performances of his career, stating that the character demanded emotional depth, modulation, and transformation unlike anything he has done before. He credited director Krishna Poluru for presenting him in a refreshing and intense new space, adding that the narrative maintains gripping tension and emotional engagement till the very end. Director Krishna Poluru revealed that the story evolved over nearly two years, shaped carefully to balance emotional depth with thriller elements. He thanked ZEE5 for supporting the vision and trusting the project's long-form storytelling approach.

Udaya Bhanu shared that she connected deeply with her role, especially the emotional layers, calling the character both strong and vulnerable. Producer K.V. Sriram expressed confidence that the series would resonate strongly with families and fathers, praising Rajeev's immersive performance and the consistent intensity across episodes.

ZEE5 Telugu Senior Vice President Jayanth Raghavan said the series adds emotional depth to the platform's Telugu originals, while the team also highlighted the strong contribution of cinematography by Mahesh and dialogues by Shruti.

Positioned as an emotionally intense thriller, D/O Prasad Rao Kanabadutaledhu promises a layered, suspense-driven narrative that blends family emotions with gripping storytelling.



'Haiku' wraps first schedule, targets September release

Vision Cinema House has officially announced the successful completion of the first shooting schedule of its upcoming film Haiku, marking a confident start to the project's production journey. The opening schedule was wrapped up smoothly and on time, giving the team strong momentum as the film moves forward.

The first phase of filming featured key sequences involving lead actors Aegan and Sridevi, along with impactful performances by Adrichi Arun and Kalaivani Baskar. According to the makers, the cast delivered emotionally layered performances that added depth and authenticity to the narrative right from the opening schedule.



Haiku is written and directed by Yuvaraj Chinnasamy, with additional screenplay contributions from Hariharan Ram. The creative collaboration has resulted in a script that blends sensitivity, realism, and strong cinematic storytelling, raising expectations within industry circles.

The production team has also expressed satisfaction with the visuals

captured so far, particularly praising cinematographer Priyesh Guruswamy for establishing the film's emotional tone and visual mood. The footage from the first schedule is said to have exceeded expectations.

Produced by Dr. D. Arulanandhu and Mathewo Arulanandhu under the Vision Cinema House banner, the film is progressing as planned. The next shooting schedule will begin shortly in Chennai, where major portions of the story will be filmed.

With strong creative energy and steady production progress, Haiku is slated for a grand worldwide theatrical release in September 2026.

Mrunal Thakur grabs fashion lovers attention

Bollywood actress Mrunal Thakur's latest release Do Deewane Seher Me, produced by celebrated filmmaker Sanjay Leela Bhansali and co-starring Siddhant Chaturvedi, has opened to a modest response at the box office. The film reportedly collected around Rs 1 crore on its opening day, followed by a slight growth on day two with earnings of approximately Rs 1.60 crore. Despite the marginal improvement, overall collections remain below industry expectations.

Even as the film faces a slow theatrical run, Mrunal has remained upbeat and focused, choosing to stay positive about her journey rather than dwell on numbers. The actress continues to engage her fans through social media, where she recently shared a set of stunning new pictures that quickly caught attention online. In the latest photos, Mrunal is seen in a chic white one-shoulder top paired with grey wide-leg trousers, creating a modern yet elegant silhouette. The outfit's soft drapes added a graceful touch, while her styling—straight open hair, bold eye makeup, and nude lips—gave her a confident and contemporary look. Keeping her accessories minimal with a statement ring and a sleek bangle, the actress let her outfit take centre stage, earning praise from fans and fashion lovers alike. On the professional front, Mrunal has a promising lineup ahead. She will next be seen in the upcoming film Dacoit, which is scheduled for release on April 10. The film stars Adivi Sesh in the lead role and is already generating buzz among audiences. While Do Deewane Seher Me struggles at the box office, Mrunal Thakur's confidence, consistent screen presence, and upcoming projects continue to keep her firmly in the spotlight.

