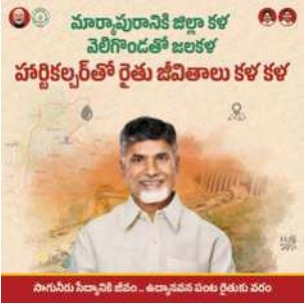
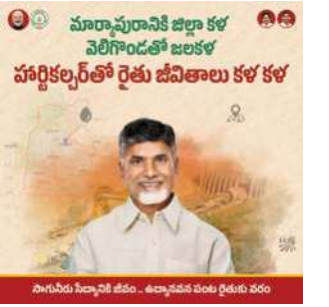
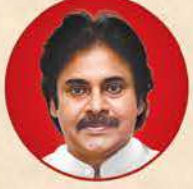




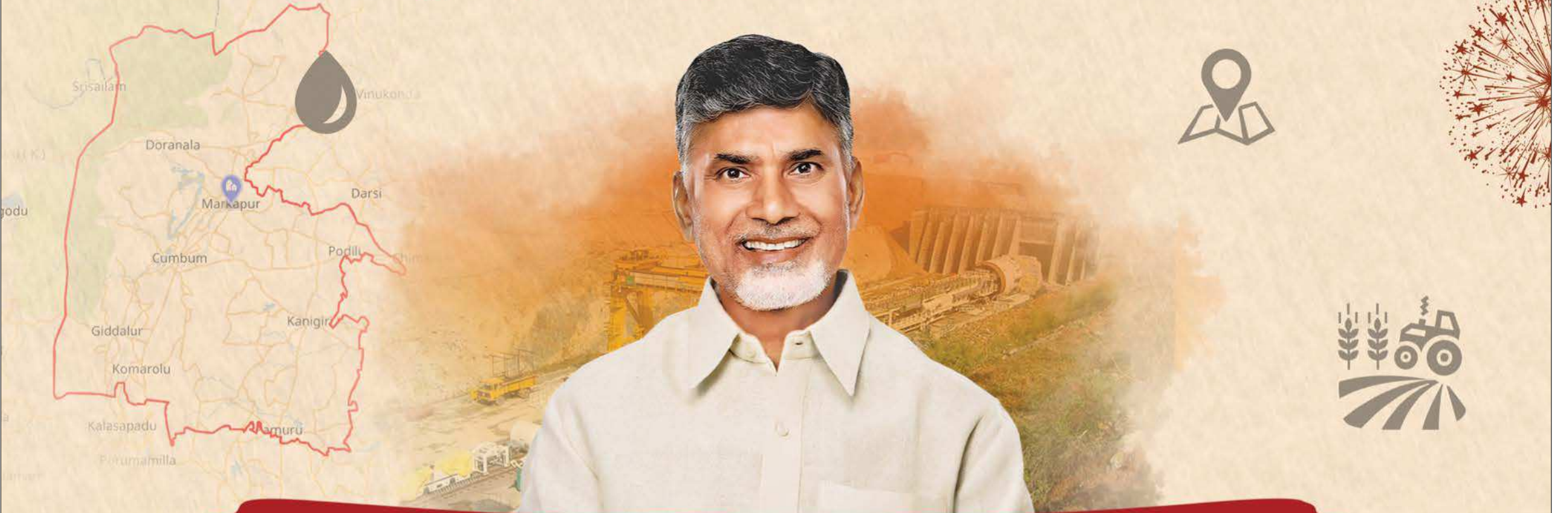
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మార్కాపురానికి జిల్లా కళ - వెలిగొండతో జలకళ హార్టికల్చర్తో రైతు జీవితాలు కళకళ



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.

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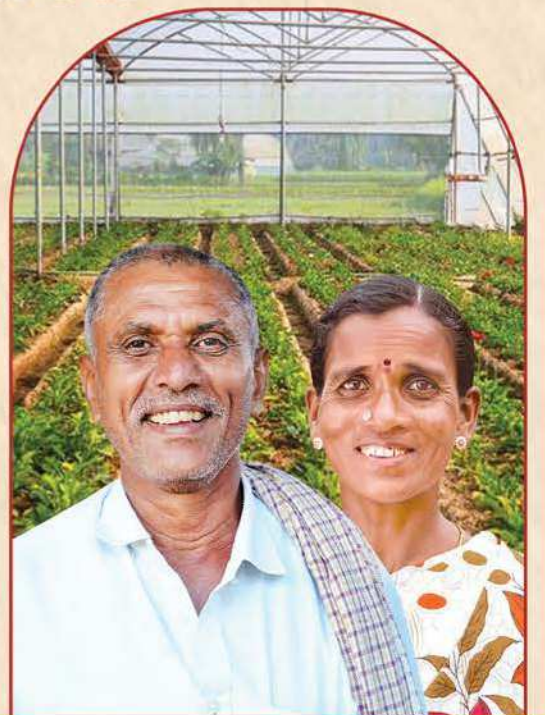
గౌ|| శ్రీ నారా చంద్రబాబు నాయుడు గారిచే

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

Joint Secy commends Kendriya Vidyalaya for following PM Shri objectives

HANS NEWS SERVICE
KURNOOL

DR. Ishitha Ganguli Tripathy, Joint Secretary, Government of India, conducted a review inspection of PM SHRI Schools at Kendriya Vidyalaya, Kurnool as part of the nationwide assessment of the Pradhan Mantri Schools for Rising India initiative on Tuesday. The visit aimed at evaluating the effective implementation of academic, infrastructural, and co-curricular components envisaged under the PM SHRI framework.

During the inspection, Dr. Tripathy reviewed key facilities including science laboratories, computer labs, the library, and the Innovation and Skill Development



Dr. Ishitha Ganguli Tripathy, Joint Secretary, at a meeting in Kurnool on Tuesday

Centre. She also examined the digital infrastructure and recent upgrades provided under the scheme. A primary section demonstration class, conducted using an interactive panel, drew special appreciation for showcasing

technology-enabled teaching, student participation, and activity-based learning aligned with modern pedagogical practices.

Addressing students and staff, Dr. Tripathy commended the school for

translating the objectives of the PM SHRI initiative into classroom practice and encouraged students to embrace experiential and skill-oriented learning.

Principal Payal Priyadarshani highlighted the holistic focus of the scheme, citing support from the Government of India in strengthening infrastructure, introducing interactive learning tools, organising exposure visits, and conducting self-defence training. The programme, attended by senior education officials and academicians, concluded with appreciation for the institution's commitment to quality education, innovation, and all-round student development under the PM SHRI vision.



KVR college holds seminar on drone tech

HANS NEWS SERVICE
KURNOOL

A three-day training seminar on drone technology was conducted at KVR (Women's) Degree College under the joint auspices of the Departments of Physics and Biotechnology, with financial support from the Central Government.

IIIT-DM Professor Krishna Nayak, the chief guest,

highlighted the growing career prospects in drone technology, tracing its origins from Australia in 1849 to its military use in the US and later by DRDO in India in 1995. Principal Dr K Venkat Reddy said drones are transforming sectors such as agriculture and disaster management. Participants received certificates. Faculty members and students attended the programme.

YSRCP opposes shifting of R&B div office from Kalyandurg



YSRCP Anantapur district president Anantha Venkatarami Reddy addresses a press conference in Anantapur on Tuesday

HANS NEWS SERVICE
ANANTAPUR

YSRCP Anantapur district president Anantha Venkatarami Reddy has opposed the proposed shifting of the Roads and Buildings (R&B) Divisional Office from Kalyandurg to Sri Sathya Sai district. Addressing a press conference at the party's district office on Tuesday, along with Kalyandurg constituency coordinator Talari Rangayya, he said the R&B Divisional Office was established in Kalyandurg during the tenure of former Chief Minister Y.S. Rajasekhara Reddy to ensure administrative accessibility for the people of Kalyandurg and Rayadurg constituencies.

He recalled that key offices, including those of the DSP and RDO, were also set up in

Kalyandurg headquarters to strengthen governance. Additionally, he noted that the Sriram Reddy drinking water scheme was implemented through a dedicated pipeline from PABR to serve Kalyandurg, Rayadurg and Madakasira constituencies during that period, when he was serving as MP and Raghuvendra Reddy as Minister.

Criticising the move to relocate the R&B office and staff to Hindupur, he said that instead of shifting existing facilities, the government should consider establishing additional offices if necessary. With the Assembly session underway, he urged Minister Keshav and the MLAs of Rayadurg and Kalyandurg to intervene and take appropriate steps.

He demanded that the R&B Divisional Office should not be shifted from Kalyandurg under any circumstances.

Accurate census forms backbone of devpt: Collector

Systematic data collection will provide clear direction, she says

HANS NEWS SERVICE
NANDYAL

ACCURATE and reliable census statistics form the backbone of national development planning, said District Collector G Rajakumari. She was addressing officials as the chief guest at a census training programme held at SVR Engineering College, Ayyalur Metta, in Nandyal town on Tuesday. Emphasising transparency and completeness, the Collector said systematic data collection would provide clear direction for effective implementation of government welfare schemes.

Speaking on the occasion, the Collector underlined that census data directly influences policy formulation in key sectors such as education, healthcare, employment, housing and infrastructure. She instructed all officials involved in the exercise to discharge their duties with utmost responsibility and to record household-level information strictly in accordance with government guidelines. Any scope for error must be



Collector Rajakumari addressing a meeting in Nandyal on Tuesday

eliminated, she said, as even minor inaccuracies could adversely impact planning and resource allocation.

Detailing operational guidelines, the Collector stressed the need to prevent duplication by ensuring that every individual is enumerated only once, particularly students and employees residing away from their native places. Residents of hostels, ashrams and NGO-run shelters should be covered under institutional enumeration. She advised field staff to accord census training the same importance as election training and to clearly ex-

plain the questionnaire comprising 33 questions while collecting information on housing type, drinking water sources, sanitation, cooking gas connections, and socio-economic conditions. Caste details, she clarified, must be recorded strictly as stated by respondents, without seeking any documentary proof.

The Collector further directed that data collection be carried out with complete coverage, ensuring no individual or habitation is left out, including remote hamlets and Chenchu habitations. Each unit of approximately 1,000 population should be

systematically mapped and enumerated within the stipulated timeline, while maintaining confidentiality of personal information.

She assured that honorarium and admissible expenses would be paid to staff as per norms upon completion of duties.

Senior census officials, including Joint Director and Chief Principal Census Officer Jagannath Majhi and Deputy Director Dibakar Barhi, along with district and divisional officers, participated in the training programme and extended guidance to field-level personnel.

Albendazole distributed to children as part of National Deworming Day



HANS NEWS SERVICE
ANANTAPUR

PROGRAMME Officer Dr. S.B. Vishnu Murthy visited the RBSK District Early Intervention Centre (DEIC) in Anantapur on Tuesday and reviewed the ongoing health services and outreach programmes. He inspected facilities and issued necessary instructions to medical staff.

As part of the National Deworming Day mop-up cam-

paign, Albendazole 400 mg tablets were administered to follow-up cases at the DEIC centre, benefiting several children. At Sri Chaitanya English Medium School, Albendazole tablets were distributed to 51 students out of a total strength of 1,231 as part of the drive. District Immunisation Officer Dr. Naga Shashibhushan Reddy participated in the programme.

ROP (Retinopathy of Prematurity) screening was also

conducted at the DEIC centre. A total of 28 cases were examined, including 15 new and 13 follow-up cases. Two children requiring advanced care were referred to Pushpagiri Eye Hospital, Kadapa, for further treatment.

Additionally, 10 students from Dr. B.R. Ambedkar Gurukula School, Korrapadu, were transported to the DEIC centre through the Child Health Transport Vehicle. They were provided free medical services and safely returned to their school. Other referred cases were also examined and treated accordingly.

Officials stated that such initiatives will continue to ensure comprehensive healthcare and early intervention services for children in the district.



Steps Initiated to develop tourism facilities at Gollapalli reservoir

HANS NEWS SERVICE
GOLLAPALLI

THE district administration has initiated measures to promote tourism at the scenic Gollapalli Reservoir.

District Tourism Officer K N Narasayya, along with his team, conducted a field inspection at the reservoir on Tuesday to assess the feasibility of developing tourism infrastructure.

Officials examined the potential for establishing a boating facility to attract visitors. Suitable locations were also identified for constructing modern resorts and accommodation facilities to enable tourists to stay at the site. The government aims to transform the naturally picturesque reservoir area into a major tourist destination in the district.

During the visit, tourism department staff and local officials reviewed the existing infrastructure and discussed the improvements required to enhance visitor amenities. Emphasis was laid on ensuring sustainable development while preserving the natural surroundings of the reservoir.

Officials stated that a comprehensive proposal outlining the development plan, infrastructure requirements and estimated costs will be prepared and submitted to the government shortly for approval.

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Short Tender Notice Nos. 100 & 101/CE-C/APIC/2025-26, Dt: 20.02.2026
Short Tender Notice No. 100:

Providing Integrated Audio-Visual and Digital Communication Ecosystem in the corporate office of the Andhra Pradesh Economic Development Board (APEDB), Mangalagiri, Guntur District (2nd Call)

Short Tender Notice No.101: Supply, installation and interior works of Modular Furniture at Andhra Pradesh Economic Development Board (APEDB) Office (5th Floor), Mayuri Tech Park, Mangalagiri, Guntur District under deposit contribution work. (2nd call). The details of tender notice and bid documents can be downloaded from www.approcurement.gov.in

Sd/-CHIEF ENGINEER-C, APIC LTD., Mangalagiri
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CHITTOOR URBAN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY,
Roc.No.15/2025/CHUDA **CHITTOOR** Date:24.02.2026

APPENDIX DRAFT NOTIFICATION

The following Draft Variation to the Master Plan which was sanctioned in G.O.Ms.No. 122, MA&UD, Dt:24-08-2022 is proposed to make in exercise of the powers conferred by Sub-section (1) of Section (15) of Andhra Pradesh Metropolitan Region and Urban Development Authorities Act, 2016.

Notice is hereby given that the draft will be taken into consideration after expiry of fifteen (15) days from the date of publication of the notification in the Andhra Pradesh Gazette and that any objections or suggestions which may be received from any person with respect thereto before expiry of said period will be considered by the Government of Andhra Pradesh. Objections or suggestions should be addressed to the Chittoor Urban Development Authority/Municipal Administration and Urban Development Department, Andhra Pradesh Secretariat, Velagapudi.

DRAFT VARIATION

The site in Sy. No. 356/1 (LPM No.1299) of Jangalapalle Revenue Village, Yadamarri Mandal with an extent of net proposed area is Ac. 4.74 cents. The boundaries of which are given in the schedule below, which was earmarked as Protected use (Green) zone in the Master Plan of Chittoor Municipal Corporation and its vicinity areas sanctioned vide in G.O.Ms.No. 122, MA&UD, Dt:24.08.2022 is now proposed to be designated as Public & Semi-Public land use by variation of change of land use in the revised part proposed land use Map of M.M.P No. 03/2025/CHUDA of Chittoor Urban Development Authority and is available in the office of the Chittoor Urban Development Authority, Chittoor.

SCHEDULE OF BOUNDARIES

North: Gutta (Sy. No. 359) LPM No.1400, LPM No.1298) of Jangalapalle, South: Existing 12M Wide Road, East: Existing 12M Wide Road, West Gutta (Sy. No. 338/1) LPM No.1365, LPM No.1367) of Jangalapalle.

Sd/-Vice Chairperson,
Chittoor Urban Development Authority, CHITTOOR.

Hans India Classifieds

CHANGE OF NAME
I, Challa Sreenivasulu, hereby declare that my spouse's name has been wrongly mentioned as BHARATHI BOMINENI in Passport. The correct name of my spouse is BHARATHI BOMMINENI. Henceforth, I declare that my spouse's name shall be written as BHARATHI BOMMINENI for all passport purposes.
(TH_3135)

CHANGE OF SURNAME
I, BOCHU. SANKARAIAH S/o B. PED-DAKULLAYAPPA, now residing at Bathalapalli, Sri Satya Sai district, Pin-515661 BOCHU. SANKARAIAH have changed my name from to BACHA. SANKARAIAH for all future purposes. I am being called as BOCHU. SANKARAIAH all purpose.
(TH_HEERALA)

CHANGE OF NAME
I, DASARI SWETHA BINDU (Old Name) W/o YERUVA MAHENDRANATH, R/at Flat No.202, Sri Sai Raja Rajeswar Nivas, Srinagar Colony, Ananthapuramu Dist-515001, A.P changing my name from DASARI SWETHA BINDU to DASARI SWETA BINDU (New Name). Henceforth, I am being called as DASARI SWETA BINDU for all purposes.
(TH_RJP)

CHANGE OF NAME
I, BOYA RAMESH S/o Boya Vannurappa, Resident of D no. 2-215, B C Colony, Rayadurg, Veparalla VTC & PO, Ananthapuramu (Dist)-515867, Andhra Pradesh, I have changed my Minor Son name, BOYA KUMAR Age 08 Years, and He shall hereafter be known as BOYA MANOJ KUMAR.
(TH_HEERALA)

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CC road to be laid at a cost of Rs 5L

HANS NEWS SERVICE
KURNOOL

GROUND BREAKING ceremony for the construction of a cement concrete (CC) road was held at Budaga Jangala Colony in Devanakonda, with works estimated at Rs 5 lakh. Alur Assembly constituency in-charge Ternakal Venkappa speaking to The Hans India on Tuesday has said the CC road works are being taken up under the National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (NREGS) with an allocation of Rs.1.10 lakh in the mandal. As part of the initiative spearheaded by the Jana Sena Party, similar road works are being launched in Devanakonda, Kothapeta, Kunkunuru and Ternakal villages.

Venkappa said CC road works worth Rs 3.80 lakh are being initiated across



Alur Assembly constituency in-charge Ternakal Venkappa participated at the groundbreaking ceremony at Devanakonda

the Alur Assembly Constituency. He stated that discussions are being held with the Chief Minister, Deputy Chief Minister and district officials to secure additional funds, assuring that sustained efforts are underway to strengthen basic infrastructure and ac-

celerate development in the constituency.

Referring to the larger development agenda, he said Andhra Pradesh is emerging as one of the fastest-developing states in the country under the coalition government, with progress on the Super Six

programmes, large-scale investments, job creation for youth, completion of the Polavaram project, metro planning, port construction and rapid development of the capital city.

The groundbreaking ceremony programme was attended by Andhra Pradesh

Valmiki Corporation Chairperson Bojjamma, MPDO Jyothi, Divisional Engineer Manohar, TDP mandal convener Vijayabhaskar Goud, market yard director Saroja, and leaders from the TDP and Jana Sena Party, besides local representatives and residents.

Sunitha seeks funds for drinking water

HANS NEWS SERVICE
AMARAVATI/RAPTADU

RAPTADU MLA Paritala Sunitha met Deputy Chief Minister Konidela Pawan Kalyan during the ongoing Assembly sessions and submitted a memorandum seeking urgent funds for drinking water and road infrastructure in her constituency.

Highlighting the worsening summer water crisis,

Sunitha requested ₹50 crore for 52 villages under Anantapur Rural and Atmakur mandals, which continue to depend on the decades-old Sathya Sai water scheme. She also sought ₹55 crore for summer storage tanks, pipeline repairs, and the replacement of 2 MLD slow sand filters with 6 MLD rapid sand filters in Anantapur Rural. Additionally, she urged sanction of ₹180 crore for a CPWS project



from Gollapalli reservoir to supply drinking water to villages in Ramagiri, Kanaganapalli and Chenekothapalli mandals of Sri Sathya Sai district.

For badly damaged roads in Ramagiri, Kanaganapalli, CK Palli, Rapthadu and Atmakur mandals, she sought ₹11.50 crore.

The Deputy CM responded positively, assuring action to address drinking water needs and approvals

for pending road works, including those under Jal Jeevan Mission.

Separately, Sunitha met Ministers Nara Lokesh, Mandal Ramprasad Reddy and Janardhan Reddy, seeking funds for educational institutions, sports infrastructure and major road projects.

The ministers assured support after reviewing the proposals with concerned officials.



Aishwarya Sakhuja 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'.

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.

Pawan Kalyan targets Jagan, questions silence on TTD Board

The Dy CM alleged that the 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, said the then TTD governing body failed to discharge its responsibility.

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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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.

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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.



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

Well-organised 'syndicate' behind ghee scam: Naidu

HANS NEWS SERVICE
AMARAVATI

CHIEF Minister N Chandrababu Naidu on Tuesday launched a blistering attack in the Andhra Pradesh Assembly, alleging that a well-organised "syndicate" operated during the previous government's tenure to supply adulterated ghee to the Tirumala-Tirupati Devasthanams (TTD).

Making a detailed PowerPoint presentation during a short discussion on the Tirumala laddu controversy, Naidu claimed that 59.71 lakh kgs of adulterated ghee was procured at a cost of Rs 234 crore. He alleged that the ghee was used to prepare nearly 20.01 crore Tirumala laddus offered as Srivari prasadam.

He accused those involved of manipulating tender rules, ignoring lab standards and submitting fake quality cer-

- ▶▶ Former PA to the then TTD chairman took Rs 4.5 cr bribe to facilitate contracts
- ▶▶ SIT seized chemicals and documents detailing alleged kickbacks
- ▶▶ Complaints surfaced in 2022; CFTRI report allegedly suppressed by previous board
- ▶▶ CM rejects attempts to link controversy with Heritage Dairy
- ▶▶ This is not just about ghee. It is about faith and sanctity of Tirumala, says CM



tificates. "Sacred Prasadam meant for devotees was compromised," he said. "This is not just corruption. It is an assault on faith," he added.

Naidu alleged that a former personal assistant to the then TTD chairman accepted a Rs 4.5 crore bribe to facilitate contracts. He claimed the Special Investigation Team (SIT) seized chemicals such as monoglycerides and acetic acid, along with documents

detailing alleged kickbacks.

According to the Chief Minister, complaints about ghee quality surfaced as early as 2022. He said a report by the Central Food Technological Research Institute (CFTRI) that flagged adulteration was suppressed at the time. After his government assumed office, fresh samples were tested. A July 23, 2024, report from the National Dairy Development Board

(NDDB), he said, detected the presence of animal fat.

Naidu told the House that the matter reached the Supreme Court. The court directed that there should be no political interference and allowed a probe under central supervision. The SIT has since filed cases against those allegedly involved, he added.

The Chief Minister also rejected attempts to link the

controversy with Heritage Dairy, a company promoted by his family. "No government department has purchased ghee from Heritage," he asserted. He clarified that Indapur Dairy in Pune, which does co-manufacturing for multiple brands, has no connection with the alleged supply to TTD.

Expanding the attack, Naidu accused the previous regime of weakening temple governance, altering tender norms between 2020 and 2022, and failing to act on repeated complaints. He alleged that over 2,000 temples faced attacks between 2019 and 2024 and claimed that several incidents went uninvestigated.

He also defended Deputy Chief Minister Pawan Kalyan's remarks on protecting Hindu traditions and said places of worship must respect established customs.

Continued on Page 7

Data of Andhra University students, staff on dark web

Over 46,000 records have allegedly been breached and leaked online



NARESH NANDAM
VIJAYAWADA

IN a major cybersecurity concern, the personal data of 46,160 individuals associated with Andhra University has allegedly been compromised and leaked online. The breach reportedly came to light after a user on a dark web cybercrime forum claimed to have posted a database containing sensitive information belonging to students and staff of the university.

According to details shared on the forum, the leaked dataset includes a wide range of personal and academic information.

The exposed records allegedly contain full names, dates of birth, phone numbers, email addresses, enrollment

numbers, programme names, father's names, residential addresses, batch details, and academic validity periods. In addition, links to student photographs and digital signatures were also reportedly part of the data dump, raising serious concerns about identity theft and misuse.

Cybersecurity observers noted that the breach was publicly exposed online on Tuesday, although preliminary indications suggest that the actual compromise may have occurred last month. The delay between the suspected breach and its public disclosure has heightened concerns about the potential misuse of the data during the intervening period.

Continued on Page 7



Screen shot of the post on a cybercrime forum

SHIRTLESS PROTEST

IYC 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 af-



ternoon 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.

Continued on Page 7

40% TARIFF DROP

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 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 7

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.

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.

The change has its origins in a unanimous resolution passed by the Kerala Legislative Assembly on June 24, 2024, requesting the Union government to modify the State's name from 'Kerala' to 'Keralam', the matter being the name used in the State's native language, Malayalam.

Under Article 3 of the Constitution, parliament has the power to alter the name of an existing State by law.

Continued on Page 7

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 life-

line 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.

Continued on Page 7



Iran set to buy Chinese anti-ship cruise missiles

Iran is close to a deal with China to purchase anti-ship 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.

P7

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 percent 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 percent and gang rape cases declined by 64 percent.

- 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 govt 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 percent 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 Madhipati 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



reported misuse of oxytocin injections in cattle in some areas to artificially increase milk yield.

Medical experts have warned that adulterated milk can have serious health consequences. The liver and kidneys are among the first organs affected, while children may experience vomiting, diarrhoea and digestive complications. Long-term exposure to chemically altered milk could lead to more severe complications, doctors cautioned.

Officials have urged con-

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.

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 Kamalakara 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 Kamalakara 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 Chekuri 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 Chekuri along with MLA Adireddy Srinivas handed over cheques of Rs 10 lakh each to the bereaved families.



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



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 ambiguous 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 confering 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



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. 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 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.

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.

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

and conversing on the mobile.

The rich have money to pay the penalties. They can afford highly specialized counsel and top-tier expert witnesses, independent crime scene investigators and many skilled attorneys. A few wealthy people have high influence, and it becomes difficult for individuals to come forward and testify against them. As a result, prosecution cannot build a strong case. Witnesses and victims of crimes can all be paid to not testify or change the narrative totally.

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. The mentality of the public needs to change. Better sense should prevail. We start acting human again when we notice this shift and choose humility over greed, restoring empathy before it’s completely erased.

Drinking and driving doesn’t just take your life; it shatters the lives of those who love you. It will be good if every youngster and the elders remember this and change their mindset accordingly.

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 come to 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)

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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>

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



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)

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.

Enthusiasm marks legislators' sports meet

HANS NEWS SERVICE VIJAYAWADA

THE Andhra Pradesh Legislators' Sports and Games 2026, titled 'Aatavidupu', commenced on a grand note on Tuesday at the Indira Gandhi Municipal Corporation (IGMC) Stadium in Vijayawada.

A total of 156 legislators, including MLAs and MLCs — among them several women representatives — are participating in athletics, indoor games and team sports. The competitions are designed to foster fitness, camaraderie and unity among elected members. Residents of Vijayawada turned up in good numbers to witness their representatives showcase sporting talent beyond the legislative arena.

The games will continue until February 26 at the IGMC Stadium and the Dandamudi Rajagopal Rao Municipal Corporation Indoor Stadium.



Assembly Speaker Ch Ayyanna Patrudu, Deputy Speaker K Raghurama Krishna Raju, Council Chairman Koyye Moshen Raju and others inaugurating the AP State Legislature Sports Meet—2026 at IGMC stadium in Vijayawada on Tuesday

The inaugural ceremony was attended by Assembly Speaker Chintakayala Ayyanna Patrudu, Legislative Council Chairman Koyye Moshen Raju, Deputy Speaker K Raghurama Krishna Raju, chief whips G V Anjaneyulu and Panchumarthi Anuradha, Saap chairman A Ravi Naidu, vice-chair-

man and managing director S Bharani, and Legislative Secretary Prasanna Kumar, among others.

Vijayawada East MLA Gadde Rammohan Rao and MLC Kavali Greeshma carried the sports torch into the stadium. The dignitaries unveiled the 'Kreedha Jyoti' and declared the games

Atchanna flays YSRCP, vows veterinary revival

- Minister alleges YSRCP left animal husbandry in collapse, with hospitals lacking medicines, equipment, and staff
- Says 3,176 centres became ineffective; 485 new buildings built under coalition, but 826 institutions still in poor condition
- Govt plans phased Rs 302.5 cr programme (2026–29) to rebuild veterinary infrastructure for farmers and livestock-rearers



HANS NEWS SERVICE VIJAYAWADA

AGRICULTURE and animal husbandry minister K Atchannaidu on Tuesday launched a sharp attack on the previous YSRCP government, alleging that all departments were virtually “locked up” during its five-year rule, pushing the state into administrative disorder.

Replying to questions raised by MLAs in the Assembly regarding the lack of facilities and appointments in veterinary hospitals, the minister said the animal husbandry department was systematically weakened under the previous regime.

He stated that essential infrastructure for farmers and

livestock rearers was neglected, with veterinary hospitals reduced to mere namesake institutions. “There were no medicines, no modern equipment, buildings were in dilapidated condition, and staff shortages were rampant,” he said.

Although 3,176 centres function under the animal husbandry department across the state, many became ineffective due to alleged negligence. Even buildings constructed through farmers’ contributions were not maintained, he added.

The minister asserted that revival efforts began only after the coalition government assumed office. He revealed that 485 new buildings have been constructed so far with

Agriculture minister K Atchannaidu answering a question in the Assembly in Amaravati on Tuesday

assistance from RIDF–NABARD and ESVD funds. However, 826 institutions still remain in poor condition. Of these, 400 require new buildings at an estimated cost of ₹265.10 crore, while 426 need urgent repairs costing Rs 37.40 crore.

He said the government has prepared a phased plan under the RIDF–NABARD budget from 2026–27 to 2028–29 to strengthen veterinary infrastructure. The coalition government’s goal, he emphasised, is to rebuild the department to genuinely serve farmers and livestock rearers.

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 Con-

stitution 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.

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).

IYC chief arrested

Continued from front page

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.

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.

Well-organised ‘syndicate’ behind ghee scam: Naidu

Continued from front page

Naidu also referred to past controversies, including allegations about a “pink diamond” and claims of religious propaganda on RTC bus tickets to Tirumala. He said these were part of attempts to defame both TTD and his government. “This is not just about adulterated ghee,” he said. “It is about faith, governance, and the sanctity of Tirumala.”

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 defenses 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 12day 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 Oraei, Iran’s deputy defence minister, according to two of the security officials. Oraei’s visit has not been previously reported.

“It’s a complete gamechanger if Iran has superperson 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 current standoff with Iran.

Offsite mock drill to enhance industry safety standards



HANS NEWS SERVICE VISAKHAPATNAM

WITH an aim to further strengthen the safety standards of industries and enhance the ability to respond in a coordinated manner in emergency situations, a level-3 Emergency Response and Disaster Management Plan offsite mock drill was carried out at Narava village.

Jointly conducted by HPCL-Visakh Refinery, Visakhapatnam Dispatch Station, the mock drill included real-time situations.

As part of it, response measures were demonstrated by simulating situations like fire and product leakage technically. Immediate identification of incident information and implementation of alert system, control of the affected area, fire control measures, evacuation of personnel and local people to safe areas were coordinated.

Fire services, district administration, police



An Emergency Response and Disaster Management Plan offsite mock drill carried out at Narava village in Visakhapatnam

department, medical department, industrial safety teams and other emergency services departments coordinated in the drill, showcasing their response capacity.

Providing first aid to the injured, testing the effectiveness of communication systems and further improving coordination between various departments were demonstrated at the site.

Speaking on the occasion,

officials said that level-3 offsite mock drills will enhance the preparedness of organisations to effectively deal with emergencies and strengthen coordination between departments.

HPCL chief general manager L.V. Nageswara Rao, HPCL deputy general manager Vikram Singh, Joint Chief Inspector of Factories J. Shiva Shankar, deputy chief inspector of factories B Suresh and other staff participated.

Data of Andhra University students, staff on dark web

Continued from front page

The leaked information is believed to have originated from the Edusphere Platform, which is understood to be a technology partner providing digital services to Andhra University. Investigators and cybersecurity analysts pointed to the alleged vulnerability of the platform’s website, edusphere.in, whose SSL certificate had reportedly expired some time ago. An expired SSL certificate can make a website more susceptible to cyberattacks, data interception, and

unauthorised access if not promptly renewed.

If confirmed, the breach could have serious implications for thousands of students, alumni, and staff members. Experts warn that exposed personal and academic data can be exploited for phishing scams, financial fraud, impersonation, and other forms of cybercrime.

As of now, there has been no detailed official statement confirming the extent of the breach or clarifying the immediate steps being taken to secure affected systems.

Cybersecurity professionals emphasise the need for a thorough forensic audit, immediate containment measures, password resets, and enhanced data protection protocols.

The incident underscores the growing vulnerability of educational institutions to cyber threats and highlights the urgent need for robust digital infrastructure, regular security audits, and strict compliance with data protection standards to safeguard sensitive academic records.

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.

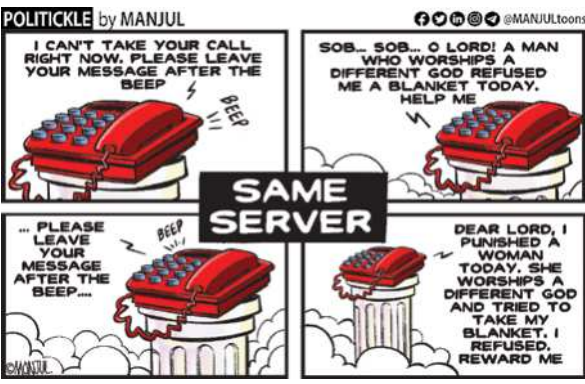
Adsorption, however, is a much more natural and elegant process. Instead of forcing the air to get cold, the water molecules are simply glued to the surface of a material because they are chemically attracted to it.

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.



Cabinet clears ₹2,387-cr chip project

Continued from front page

Compressed biogas plants and battery energy storage systems were also approved, reinforcing the state’s clean energy expansion plans. In the tourism sector, ultra-mega hospitality and convention centre projects were cleared in Amaravati, Visakhapatnam, Rajamahendravaram and Tirupati.

Incentives were extended to leading hospitality brands to strengthen tourism infrastructure and generate employment.

To support small enterprises, the Cabinet approved the AP Sick and Stressed MSME Revival Policy (4.0) 2026-31, aimed at reviving distressed units and promoting entrepreneurship under a “One Family, One Entrepreneur” model. Amendments to the AP Leather & Footwear Policy 2025-30 were also cleared.

On governance reforms, the government decided to reorganise Higher Education and Skill Development departments for better inte-

gration and establish a dedicated Science, Technology & Innovation Department. Administrative sanctions of Rs 424.34 crore and Rs 556 crore were approved for works related to the Assembly and High Court buildings in Amaravati.

Naidu emphasised faster project grounding and a shift from “Ease of Doing Business” to “Speed of Doing Business,” urging officials to adopt AI-driven tools to improve transparency and execution.

-Steve Bucknor, legendary umpire

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 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

While batting has been led by Pathum Nissanka, left-arm spinner Dunieth 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.

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.

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.

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

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

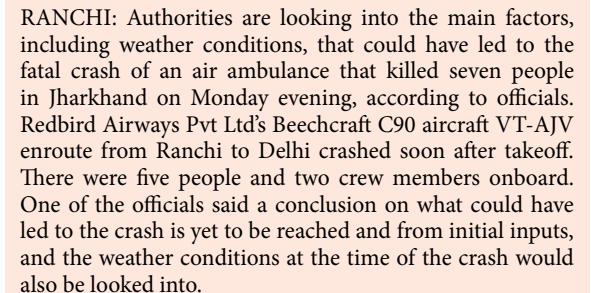
to temporarily lose strength and behave like a liquid, Patra told PTI. Buildings can tilt or sink, roads and railway tracks may crack, and underground utilities can rupture. Riverbank and low-lying areas are particularly vulnerable, he added.

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.



“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 Puraam (Port Blair) at around 8.30 am for a passenger flight from Sri Vijaya Puraam (Port Blair) to Ratnag and Dur-



“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.

to clamp down on shops selling meat, fish and poultry in the vicinity of religious and educational institutions, claiming that these offended "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.

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 Dharam Singh on Monday and demanded that SOPs be established for their safety and police deployment in the offices. Following this, Dharam 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.



PRAYAGRAJ:
Swami Avimuk-
teshwaranand
Saraswati on

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.



IN BRIEF

Dakshina Kannada to hold 48-hr traffic survey from tomorrow

MANGALURU: The Public Works Department (PWD), Government of Karnataka, will conduct a two-day traffic census on state highways and major district roads across Dakshina Kannada district from 6 am on February 26 to 6 am on February 28.

According to the Mangaluru Division of the PWD, 139 enumeration centres have been identified on key road stretches in the district for the exercise. The survey is part of the state-wide road traffic assessment for 2026 and aims to gather data for infrastructure planning and road development. Authorities have appealed to motorists and the public to cooperate with officials during the survey period.

Seminar on writer Niranjana's birth centenary on Feb 27

MANGALURU: A seminar marking the birth centenary of noted Kannada writer and journalist Niranjana will be held on February 27 at Mangalagangothri campus here. The programme is being organised jointly by the Sahitya Akademi and the S.V.P. Kannada Study Centre of Mangalore University. Vice-Chancellor P.L. Dharma will inaugurate the event. Scholars and postgraduate students from various colleges in coastal Karnataka and neighbouring Kerala are expected to participate.

Women-centric music concert in Mangaluru



MANGALURU: A unique women-themed music concert was held at Ambedkar Auditorium, Urwa, under the aegis of Sangeet Bharati Foundation, showcasing classical excellence by leading women artistes. The programme was inaugurated with a ceremonial lamp lighting by music gurus Smt Basti Kavita Shenai, Smt Vibha Nayak and Smt Srilatha Prabhu. Foundation president Ustad Rafiq Khan, vice-president Narendra L Nayak, secretary Dr Usha Prabha N Nayak, trustee Ramesh KG, Treasurer Karunakara Balkoor and member Soumya Kamath were present. The first half featured a classical jugalbandi by Vibha Hegde and Shivani Mirajkar, accompanied by Medha Bhat (harmonium), Vijeta Hegde (tabla), Prateeksha Prabhu (tanpura) and Shaavari. The second half presented a violin trio recital by Sangeeta Shankar, Nandini Shankar and Ragini Shankar, with tabla support by Anuradha Pal. The event was sponsored by Union Bank of India, the Tourism Department, Canara Bank, Dr Dayananda Pai, Karnataka Bank and Mudra Printers.

AESL, Indian Army sign MoU to offer scholarships to soldiers' families

BELAGAVI

AAKASH Educational Services Limited (AESL) has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Indian Army to provide scholarships and academic support to serving personnel, veterans and their families across the country.

The agreement aims to extend educational welfare benefits to wards of serving and retired Army personnel, gallantry awardees, personnel with disabilities and families of soldiers who died while in service. Officials said the initiative seeks to ease financial barriers and expand access to qual-



ity test preparation services nationwide.

Under the MoU, Army wards enrolling in AESL's programmes at centres

across India will be eligible for a range of fee concessions. Families of personnel who died while in harness will only need to pay the

registration fee, with a 100 per cent waiver on all other fee components. Wards of personnel with more than 20 per cent disability and

Aakash Educational Services Limited signs MoU with Indian Army, offering fee waivers, scholarships and mentoring support for serving personnel, veterans, gallantry awardees and families of soldiers who died in service

gallantry awardees will receive a full tuition fee waiver. Children of serving and retired personnel will be eligible for a 20 per cent tuition fee concession, applicable after adjusting other scholarships.

The agreement was signed by a senior representative overseeing ceremonial and welfare functions on behalf of the Army and Dr Yash Pal, Chief Academic and Business Head (Delhi-NCR), AESL.

Chandra Sekhar Garisa Reddy, Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer of AESL, said the partnership reflects the institution's commitment to honouring the sacrifices of defence personnel by investing in the education of their children.

"Education is the strongest foundation for a brighter future. Through scholarships, mentoring and coun-

selling, we aim to empower the wards of Army personnel to realise their full potential," he said.

In addition to financial support, AESL will provide structured mentoring and career counselling through virtual and physical platforms during the tenure of the MoU.

The company had earlier entered into a similar understanding with the Central Reserve Police Force Family Welfare Association to offer academic assistance and scholarships to families of CRPF personnel, expanding its outreach to the armed and paramilitary forces community.

Boseraju pushes for BRICS Quantum Summit

Seeks deeper tech ties with Brazil



BENGALURU

KARNATAKA Minister for Minor Irrigation, Science and Technology N.S. Boseraju on Tuesday called for closer cooperation among BRICS nations in quantum technology and proposed convening a dedicated BRICS Quantum Summit to accelerate collaboration in emerging technologies.

Speaking after a high-level bilateral meeting at Vidhana Soudha with a Brazilian delegation led by Esther Dweck, Brazil's Minister of Management and Innovation in Public Services, Boseraju said structured global partnerships were essential to harness the transformative potential of quantum technologies.

He noted that other international blocs such as Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) have begun organising dedicated quantum forums, and said BRICS countries should adopt a similar approach.

"As BRICS nations, we must collaborate to apply quantum technologies in agriculture, pharmaceutical research, water resource management, climate forecasting and flood

mitigation," Boseraju said. "A BRICS Quantum Summit could serve as a strategic platform to jointly address shared developmental challenges."

Highlighting Karnataka's progress, the minister said the state is home to India's first indigenously built commercial quantum computer and is positioning itself as a national hub for advanced technology research.

He pointed to the state government's announcement of a \$100 million Quantum Innovation Fund and plans to establish a dedicated Quantum City in Bengaluru. "Our goal is to build a \$20 billion quantum economy by 2035 and generate two lakh jobs in the sector," he said, adding that quantum applications are being explored in agriculture, flood management and healthcare delivery.

Beyond quantum computing, discussions between the two sides also covered Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI), artificial intelligence and space technologies.

Boseraju highlighted the implementation of a Digital Water

Karnataka Minister N S Boseraju calls for a BRICS Quantum Summit during talks with Brazilian delegation, outlines state's \$100 million quantum fund and plans for a \$20 billion quantum economy by 2035

Stack under the Minor Irrigation Department, which integrates satellite surveillance and AI tools to monitor water bodies, prevent encroachments, assess water quality and track groundwater levels.

The Brazilian delegation included senior technology leaders such as Rodrigo Assumpção, President of Dataprev, and representatives of the Brazilian AI Observatory.

On Monday, Boseraju also held talks with a Bolivian delegation led by Omar Alfredo Peñalosa Escalera, Vice Minister for Science and Technology, to explore cooperation in AI and quantum computing for improving education, healthcare and public services. Senior state officials, including IT/BT Secretary N. Manjula, were present at the meetings.

Upcoming Bellandur Metro station

BMRCL signs Rs 90-cr naming rights deal with Prestige Group

HANS NEWS SERVICE
BENGALURU

BANGALORE Metro Rail Corporation Limited (BMRCL) has signed a Rs 90-crore agreement with Prestige Group for the naming rights and associated facilities of the upcoming Bellandur Metro station on the Outer Ring Road.

Under the agreement, the station will be officially named "Prestige Bellandur Metro Station" for a period of 30 years from the date of commencement of commercial operations, BMRCL said in a statement.

The total value of the agreement stands at Rs 90 crore. Of this, Rs 80 crore is allocated towards naming rights and other associated facilities within the station premises.

An additional Rs 10 crore will be paid for the construction of a dedicated skywalk connecting the Metro station to the Prestige campus.



BMRCL clarified that provisions have been included in the agreement to allow for design modifications to the skywalk at the project stage, if required.

Advertising and Commercial Space

As part of the deal, Prestige Group will receive 1,000 sq. ft. of advertising

rights inside the station premises, 3,000 sq. ft. of commercial space within the station campus.

However, BMRCL emphasized that the station will remain an asset under its ownership and control. Speaking on the occasion, Prestige Group Executive Director Jaggi Marwaha said, "We are committed

to supporting Bengaluru's rapidly growing transport network and contributing to the city's infrastructure development."

The agreement marks one of the significant naming rights deals undertaken by BMRCL as it seeks to boost non-fare revenue streams while expanding metro connectivity across the city.

Cyber fraud aided via mule accounts

Engineering student among two arrested

HANS NEWS SERVICE
DAYANAGERE

IN a major breakthrough against mule account operators supporting cyber fraud, the city's Cyber Crime Police have arrested two individuals, including a 19-year-old engineering student. The duo allegedly opened fake bank accounts using forged documents and helped fraudsters siphon off large sums by acting as intermediaries.

The first arrest involved Parashurama from Kunkuv village in Honnali taluk. He had set up a firm named Talented Squad Solution in Bengaluru's Rajajinagar, posing as a job placement agency. Investigations revealed he opened six bogus accounts across nationalised and private banks.

These mule accounts were used to transfer crores of Rupees obtained through online



cheating. As many as 95 cases linked to these six accounts have been registered across the country. Parashurama is now in custody, with cyber police continuing detailed interrogation.

In a separate but related case, officers nabbed the 19-year-old engineering student who maintained mule accounts in two different banks. Scrutiny of his accounts exposed details of his involvement.

Fraudsters, using a Telegram ID named "Bhumika", first contacted the student

and lured him with promises of easy earnings through an "Earn While You Learn" scheme. They assigned him the task of receiving money into his account and immediately forwarding it to UPI IDs provided by them.

The young man carried out these transfers regularly and received a commission for each transaction. Driven by greed, he later opened additional bank accounts to handle more volume. Eight cases from various parts of the country have now been traced to these accounts.

Boy killed in Shivamogga, 7 minors held



SHIVAMOGGA

A 16-year-old boy was murdered outside a government school in Sulaebailu here, sparking tension in the area, police said on Tuesday. Following the incident, a large police force was deployed in the city.

The incident occurred after Sanketh (16), an SSLC student of the Government High School at Uragadooru, attended a special class ahead of examinations.

Superintendent of Police Nikhil B told reporters that Sanketh intervened in an argument involving a group of boys outside his school. They were discussing a cricket match.

"Some friends who were known to him - they had earlier studied in the same school - were involved. They are also minors. They hit him with their hands. Immediately after being struck, he collapsed. After he fell, by the time he was taken to the hospital, we came to know that he had died."

"... he was struck near the chest. Due to that blow, he collapsed on the spot," the SP said. All seven minors involved in the incident have been taken into custody in this connection, he said. On the possible motive, the SP said the exact cause is yet to be ascertained.

"We do not have complete information about that. Once we conduct a detailed inquiry, we will know. Some people are saying it may have been over a trivial matter. However, we cannot confirm that at this stage," he said.

Narayana Health City crosses 10K orthopaedic surgeries, says senior specialists

HANS NEWS SERVICE
KALABURAGI

SENIOR orthopaedic specialists at Narayana Health City on Tuesday said the hospital has completed 10,000 orthopaedic surgeries over the past three years, marking a significant milestone in advanced joint, spine and reconstructive care in the region.

Addressing reporters, Dr Suman M Byregowda, Senior Consultant, Orthopaedics, said the achievement reflects the growing need for high-end musculoskeletal care in Kalaburagi and neighbouring districts.

"We are seeing increasingly complex revision cases, including failed joint re-

placements with severe bone loss. Our focus has been on combining surgical expertise with technologies such as customised 3D-printed implants to restore mobility at the earliest," Dr Byregowda said. He cited the example of a 70-year-old patient who had undergone total hip replacement decades ago but later developed implant loosening and metallosis, a rare reaction to metal debris that caused extensive bone damage.

The team performed a staged revision procedure, first removing the failed implant and diseased tissue, and later reconstructing the hip with a customised prosthesis. The patient was able to stand and walk with support soon

Senior orthopaedic specialists at Narayana Health City say the hospital has completed 10,000 surgeries in three years, driven by robotic navigation and customised implants for complex spine, joint and oncology cases

after surgery, he added. Dr Vinu Raj, Consultant-Spine, Department of Orthopaedics, said the integration of robotic-assisted navigation and real-time neuromonitoring has strengthened outcomes in complex spinal deformity surgeries.

"In severe congenital scoliosis and other deformities,



precision is critical. Robotic-assisted navigation allows pre-operative planning and highly accurate implant

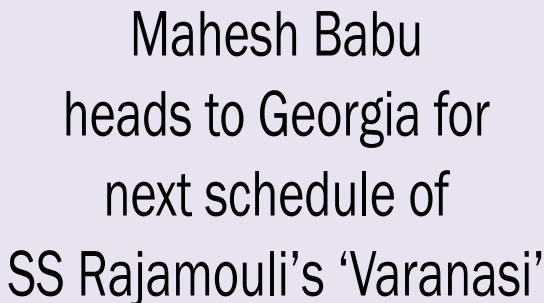
placement during surgery, while neuromonitoring enhances patient safety," Dr Raj said. He referred to a recent

case of a 13-year-old girl with a spinal curvature exceeding 80 degrees who underwent robotic-assisted correction

surgery. She was mobilised on the second post-operative day and discharged with significantly improved alignment and balance.

The hospital has also handled complex orthopaedic oncology cases, including limb-salvage surgery for a 19-year-old diagnosed with Ewing's sarcoma. Following chemotherapy, surgeons removed the affected bone and reconstructed the shoulder with a metallic prosthesis.

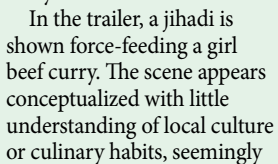
Both doctors said the milestone underscores the institution's emergence as a regional referral centre for advanced orthopaedic and spine care, enabling patients to access specialised treatment closer to home without travelling to metropolitan cities.



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.

RAJESHWARI KALYANAM

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



Kerala did not agree with

"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

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

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

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.

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

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.

