



# THE Hans India



**Awesome Debut: Diya Pathak's Kathak Arangetram Mesmerises Hyderabad**  
A graceful celebration of rhythm, devotion, and classical excellence unfolded at Ravindra Bharati as young dancer Diya Pathak marked her Kathak Arangetram.

**TG Speaker's order on anti-defection petitions is a tricky constitutional test**  
It seems like the Anti-Defection Law is a defective law or a totally defective conclusion on the judgment of the Speaker of Telangana, Gaddam Prasad Kumar, on March 11.

**Markets rebound over 1% on bargain buying after 3-days fall**  
Stock market benchmark indices Sensex and Nifty rebounded by over 1 per cent on Monday after facing a massive drubbing in the past three trading days, driven by value-buying in blue-chip banking counters.

**13-year-old Hyderabad student develops multi-system AI architecture**  
In an unusual example of young innovation, a 13-year-old student from Hyderabad has designed an artificial intelligence ecosystem that is attracting attention in technology and research circles.

Simultaneously published from Hyderabad | Warangal | Tirupati | Vijayawada | Visakhapatnam | Khammam | Kurnool | Delhi  
For Advertisement PI Call: 8096967713 Follow @ / thehansindia / thehansindiaweb / thehansindia / TheHansIndiaWeb / thehansindia Book your Copy: 97055 55551

**WINDOWS**  
**RAMZAN TIMINGS**  
IFTAR (Tue) 6.32 PM  
SEHAR (Wed) 5.00 AM

**OSCAR AWARDS**  
Jessie Buckley and Michael B. Jordan took home the awards for Best Actress and Best Actor on Sunday night

**'One Battle After Another' named Best Picture**

NEW DELHI: It was 'One Battle After Another's' night. Paul Thomas Anderson's action-thriller took home six Oscars at the 98th Academy Awards on Sunday, including Best Supporting Actor, Best Directing and Best Picture. The film also won awards for Best Editing and Best Adapted Screenplay, as well as the first-ever Oscar for Best Casting. Upon accepting his award, Anderson — who had previously been nominated for an Oscar around a dozen times — joked, "You make a guy work hard for one of these, I really appreciate it." Sinners also had a big night, bringing home four Oscars, including Best Actor for Michael B. Jordan's role as twins Smoke and Stack.

**Political slugfest over transfer of Bengal CS, DGP**

NEW DELHI: The Election Commission's move to transfer West Bengal's chief secretary and DGP soon after the announcement of the Assembly poll dates triggered a political slugfest on Monday. While the opposition parties accused the poll panel of acting at the behest of the BJP at the Centre, the saffron party hit back, alleging that the opposition was attempting to malign constitutional institutions. Speaking to reporters inside the Parliament House complex, Samajwadi Party chief Akhilesh Yadav alleged that officers are routinely removed in states where the BJP is not in power. "Whenever elections are held, and if the state government is not run by the party ruling in Delhi, the first thing they do is remove the DGP and the chief secretary."

**IRREGULAR BY MANJUL**  
If there was no shortage of LPG, as you claimed, why do you want credit for restoring the supply?

**CM TO OFFICIALS**

## 'TAKE STEPS TO PREVENT LPG BLACK MARKETING'

- CM enquires about LPG supply to Anna Canteen kitchens
- Orders daily monitoring of stocks, bookings and supply

HANS NEWS SERVICE AMARAVATI  
CHIEF Minister Nara Chandrababu Naidu on Monday reviewed the LPG stock, booking and supply situation in the state in the backdrop of the ongoing war-related global uncertainties. The review was conducted from the Real Time Governance Society (RTGS) with representatives of various gas supply companies participating in the meeting. Senior officials informed the Chief Minister that 17,209 metric tonnes of LPG stock is currently available in the state. They said LPG cylinders are being supplied through 1,154 agencies belonging to Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited, Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Limited and Indian



CM N Chandrababu Naidu reviews the LPG supply in the Secretariat on Monday

Oil Corporation Limited. The Chief Minister sought details on the measures being taken to prevent black marketing of LPG cylinders and instructed officials to ensure that cylinders are not diverted or misused during delivery. He directed authorities to take steps to remove any

public concerns regarding LPG availability and ensure transparency in the supply process. Naidu also enquired about LPG supply to Anna Canteen kitchens, and officials assured him that there are no issues in providing gas for their operations. He emphasised that there should be no confusion or panic among the public regarding LPG supply and asked officials to normalize cylinder delivery timelines as soon as possible. The Chief Minister ordered daily monitoring of LPG stocks, bookings and supply to ensure uninterrupted distribution. He also directed officials to ensure that essential services such as hospitals, schools and temples do not face any disruption due to gas shortages.

Continued on Page 7

## True tribute to Amarajeevi lies in all-round growth of state: Naidu

HANS NEWS SERVICE AMARAVATI  
CHIEF Minister Nara Chandrababu Naidu has asserted that the National Democratic Alliance government in the state has been balancing development and welfare, while working towards building a healthy, wealthy, and happy society. Referring to the national leadership, Naidu said Prime Minister Narendra Modi has been working with the vision of Viksit Bharat and that Andhra Pradesh should strive to become the number one state in the country. The Chief Minister made these remarks after inaugurating a 58-foot bronze



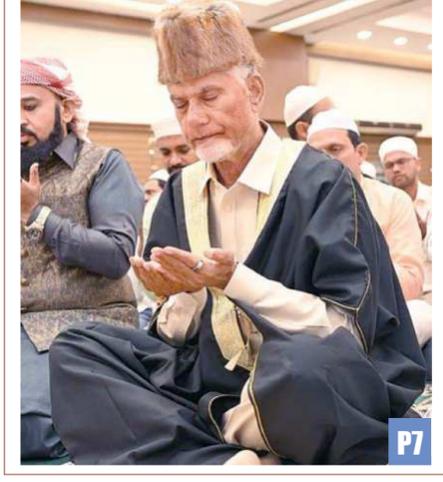
Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu at the inauguration of the statue of Potti Sreeramulu at Shakamuru Park in Amaravati on Monday

statue of Potti Sreeramulu at Shakamuru Park in Amaravati on Monday, marking the freedom fighter's 125th birth anniversary. The statue, named the 'Statue of Sac-

rifice', has been erected to commemorate Sreeramulu's historic 58-day 'fast unto death' for the formation of Andhra State.

Continued on Page 7

## Naidu: Haj House in Amaravati soon



P7

## Global energy crisis deepens as Iran keeps hold on Hormuz

### Allies snub Trump's call to send warships to keep Hormuz open

BEIRUT: Fears of a global energy crisis rose Monday as the war in the Middle East raged on, with more U.S.-Israeli strikes on the Iranian capital and Israel's bombardment of Lebanon. An Iranian drone strike temporarily shut Dubai's airport, a crucial global travel hub, underscoring the threats to the world economy. Since the United States and Israel attacked Iran more than two weeks ago, Tehran has regularly fired on Israel, American bases in the region, and Gulf Arab countries' energy infrastructure with drones and missiles. It has also effectively stopped shipping traffic in the Strait of Hormuz, through which a fifth of the world's oil is transported, dramatically increasing the price of oil and putting pressure on Washington to do something to ease the pain consumers are feeling. Brent crude, the international standard, remained stubbornly over \$100 a barrel on Monday. It was at \$104 in early trading, up nearly 45% since the US and Israel attacked Iran on Feb. 28. It has spiked as high as about \$120 during the conflict. US President Donald Trump said he has demanded that about seven countries to send warships to keep the Strait of Hormuz open, but his appeals have been snubbed by the Allies. Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi called claims that his country may be seeking a negotiated end to the war "delusional", saying in a social media post early Monday that Iran was seeking neither "truce nor talks."



### US Prez Trump accuses Iran of spreading lies

Blasts media for disinformation, fake news

WASHINGTON

United States President Donald Trump accused Iran of resorting to 'disinformation' and 'fake news' by using AI and blasted "radical left-wing" media for spreading 'lies' about the Iran war. Accusing media outlets, including the Wall Street Journal, of "spreading lies" and using American Airwaves for anti-US propaganda, he said such media outlets should be booked for "Treason." Trump maintained that Iran is being 'decimated.' He described Iran as "master of media manipulation and public relations," and said that they (Iran) are militarily ineffective and weak but are really good at "feeding" the very appreciative "fake news media" false information.

Continued on Page 7

## INDIA RULES OUT TALKS WITH US ON HORMUZ

P7

### PNG and CNG supply uninterrupted: Govt

NEW DELHI: The supply of piped natural gas (PNG) and compressed natural gas (CNG) remains uninterrupted across India, the government said on Monday, while reaffirming efforts to shift households from LPG to piped gas in areas with existing pipeline infrastructure.

Continued on Page 7

### FAILURE TO ANSWER MLAS' QUESTIONS

## Karnataka Speaker raps govt

BENGALURU  
IN an embarrassment to the Congress government, Karnataka Assembly Speaker, UT Khader, on Monday adjourned the House, sharply criticising it for failing to provide answers to unstarred questions of the MLAs despite repeated warnings from the Chair.



Karnataka Speaker UT Khader

Expressing strong dissatisfaction, Khader said the government had been

warned multiple times to ensure that replies to legislators' questions were prepared in time. "If the government fails to answer questions of MLAs, why should they even come to the Assembly? How is this fair? I have already issued strict orders four times, and this is the fifth time," he said.

Continued on Page 7

## 10 KILLED IN CUTTACK ICU FIRE

CUTTACK: Ten patients died, and at least 11 hospital staff members suffered burn injuries after a fire broke out at the trauma care ICU of the SCB Medical College and Hospital in Odisha's Cuttack on Monday morning. The staff were injured while rescuing the patients, Odisha Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi said.

Continued on Page 7

### 'DISTORTED PICTURE OF INDIA'

## MEA slams US report recommending sanctions on RSS

NEW DELHI  
THE Ministry of External Affairs on Monday rejected the annual report of the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom for 2026, which recommended targeted sanctions on the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) and Research and Analysis

(USCIRF). We categorically reject its motivated and biased characterization of India. For several years now, USCIRF has persisted in presenting a distorted and selective picture of India, relying on questionable sources and ideological narratives rather than objective facts. Such repeated misrepresentations only undermine the credibility of the Commission itself," Jaiswal said.



Wing for violations of religious freedom. MEA spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal, in a statement, said the commission has persisted in presenting a distorted, selective picture of India by relying on questionable sources and ideological narratives rather than objective facts. "We have taken note of the latest report of the US Commission on International Religious Freedom

with selective criticism of India, USCIRF would do well to reflect on the disturbing incidents of vandalism and attacks on Hindu temples in the United States, selective targeting of India, and growing intolerance and intimidation of members of the Indian diaspora in the United States, which merit serious attention," he added.

Continued on Page 7

# 57.78 crore Jan Dhan accounts opened

NEW DELHI  
A total of 57.78 crore Jan Dhan accounts with a deposit balance of Rs 2,94,702 crore have been opened (as on February 25) under the Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana (PMJDY), Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman said on Monday. Out of these, 32.21 crore (55.8 per cent) Jan Dhan accounts belong to women, and about 45.17 crore (78.2 per cent) PMJDY accounts have been opened in rural and semi-urban areas, she said in the Lok Sabha. The Finance Minister further stated that under the

Pradhan Mantri Jeevan Jyoti Bima Yojana (PMJJBY), 26.88 crore cumulative enrolments (as on February 25) have been made to provide life insurance cover of Rs 2 lakh for death due to any reason. "Under Pradhan Mantri Suraksha Bima Yojana (PMSBY), 57.11 crore cumulative enrolments (as on 25.02.2026) have been done to provide a one-year accidental cover of Rs 2 lakh (death or permanent total disability) and Rs 1 lakh (permanent partial disability) respectively," she said. Under the Atal Pension Yojana (APY), 8.84 crore

### 55.8 PC BELONG TO WOMEN, SAYS FM SITHARAMAN



cumulative enrolments have been made to provide a monthly pension to eligible subscribers till February 25 this year. Moreover, under the

Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojana (PMMY), 57.26 crore loans amounting to Rs 39,48 lakh crore have been sanctioned to provide collateral-free institutional finance to micro/small business units up to Rs 20 lakh for income-generating activities in manufacturing, trading, and services sectors, including activities allied to agriculture (as on February 27). "Under the Stand-Up India Scheme (SUPI), 2.75 lakh cumulative loans amounting to Rs 62,790 crore have been sanctioned to Scheduled Caste/Schedule Tribe and Women

entrepreneurs for setting up greenfield projects in the sectors such as manufacturing, trading, services and activities allied to agriculture (as on 31.03.2025)," Sitharaman said. The Finance Minister said that a robust financial inclusion platform, namely JAM - Jan Dhan Aadhaar Mobile pipeline for linking of Jan Dhan account with mobile number and Aadhaar -- has been created, which is being extensively leveraged by various Ministries and Departments for the delivery of various welfare benefits like Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT), etc.

# Tributes paid to Amarajeevi on 125th birth anniversary

HANS NEWS SERVICE  
VIJAYAWADA

RICH tributes were paid to Amarajeevi Potti Srimamulu

across NTR and Krishna districts on Monday on the occasion of his 125th birth anniversary, with public representatives, officials and

citizens remembering the freedom fighter's historic sacrifice for the formation of a separate Andhra State and his unwavering commitment to the self-respect of Telugu people.

At the NTR District Collectorate in Vijayawada, collector Dr G Lakshminsha, along with district officials, garlanded the portrait of Potti Srimamulu and paid floral tributes. Speaking on

the occasion, the Collector described Amarajeevi Potti Srimamulu as a symbol of the Telugu people's self-respect and linguistic pride.

Meanwhile, the birth anniversary celebrations were also held at the Krishna District Collectorate in Machilipatnam, where Collector DK Balaji, along with APSRTC Chairman Konakalla Narayana, district officials, representatives of various political parties and members of the public paid floral tributes to the portrait of the freedom fighter at a programme held in the Zilla Parishad meeting hall.

## Amarajeevi Potti Srimamulu's sacrifice for the formation of Andhra State will remain unforgettable

In Vijayawada, the birth anniversary was observed at the Vijayawada Municipal Corporation headquarters. Mayor Rayana Bhagya Lakshmi and Municipal Commissioner HM Dhyana-chandra garlanded the portrait of Potti Srimamulu and paid homage.

On the occasion, SV Rajasekar Babu, Commissioner of Police of NTR District, also paid floral tributes and said the martyr's sacrifice remains a landmark event in India's democratic history.

On the other hand, the 125th birth anniversary of Potti Srimamulu was observed at the headquarters of the Sports Authority of Andhra Pradesh on the



Vijayawada Mayor Rayana Bhagya Lakshmi and Municipal Commissioner HM Dhyana-chandra paying floral tributes to Potti Srimamulu on his 125th birth anniversary at the Vijayawada Municipal Corporation headquarters in Vijayawada on Monday

premises of Indra Gandhi Municipal Corporation Stadium in Vijayawada. SAAP Vice-Chairman and Managing Director S Bha-

rani, Administrative Officer R Venkata Ramana Naik, and others paid rich tributes by garlanding the portrait of the freedom fighter.

**SRI KODANDARAMA SWAMY TEMPLE**  
Julakallu (V), Piduguralla (M), Palnadu District.

**E-PROCUREMENT TENDER NOTICE**

Tenders have been invited for the reconstruction of Sri Kodandarama Swamy Temple, Julakallu (Village), Piduguralla (Mandal), Palnadu district. Bidders may visit the official website <https://tender.approcurement.gov.in> for detailed information, eligibility criteria and submission guidelines.

Sd/- Executive Authority  
Sri Kodandarama Swamy Temple, Julakallu(V), Piduguralla (M), Palnadu District.

**Canara Bank**  
ARM Branch, Circle Office, D.No. 54-15-4B, Ground Floor, Lakshmi Avenue, Srinivasanagar Bank Colony, Ring Road, Vijayawada, AP-520008. Ph: 8331011695, E-mail: armvij@canarabank.com

**AUCTION SALE NOTICE FOR SALE OF IMMOVABLE PROPERTIES**

E-Auction Sale Notice for Sale of Immovable Assets under the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 read with proviso to Rule 8(6) of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002.

Notice is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the Borrower(s) and Guarantor(s) that the below described immovable properties mortgaged to the Secured Creditor, the possession of which has been taken by the Authorized Officer of branches mentioned below of the Canara Bank, will be sold on "As is where is", "As is what is", and "Whatever there is" on 06.04.2026, for recovery of amounts mentioned below due to the ARM Branch, Vijayawada of Canara Bank from the below mentioned Borrower(s) and Guarantor(s). Description of the immovable properties with no encumbrances to the knowledge of the bank.

**DATE & TIME OF E-AUCTION: 06.04.2026 at 02.00 PM to 4.00 PM** (With unlimited extension of 5 minutes duration each till the conclusion of the sale) **LAST DATE FOR SUBMISSION OF EMD: 06.04.2026 by 12.00 pm**

EMD amount of 10% of the Reserve Price is to be deposited in E-wallet of M/s. PSB Alliance Private Limited (baanknet) portal directly or by generating the challan therein to deposit the EMD amount through RTGS/NEFT in the account details as mentioned in the said challan on or before 06.04.2026 at 12.00 P.M.

Borrower/Guarantors & Branch Details (All Accounts Transferred to ARM, Vijayawada Branch)	DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPERTIES	Reserve Price (in Rs.)	EMD (10% of Reserve Price)
<b>Chataparru Branch</b> <b>Sri Kambhampati Rammoan Rao, S/o Chinna Kanniah</b> Total Liabilities as on 12-03-2026: Rs. 97,59,348.85/- + Interest + Other expenses	All that part and parcel of land in an extent of 175 sq. yds. out of total land of 700 sq. yds. in T.S.No.1820 & 1821 in 6th Division, Eluru Corporation, Eluru comprising of following three items.	Rs. 86,65,000/-	Rs. 8,66,500/-

Item No.1: A land of 132.6 sq. yds. in D.No.4-18-4. Item No.2: A 1/4th undivided joint share of 27.75 sq. yds. out of 111.11 sq. yds. Item No.3: A 1/4th undivided joint share of 14.75 sq. yds. out of 58.88 sq. yds. Boundaries as per deed.

A total land of 175 Sq. yds including all buildings thereon and all machinery therein.

Date & Time of Inspection of the Property: 04-04-2026 at 11.00 AM to 4.00 PM.

For detailed terms and conditions of the sale please refer the link "E-Auction" provided in Canara Bank's website [www.canarabank.com](http://www.canarabank.com) or may contact Authorized Officer, ARM Branch, Vijayawada, Canara Bank, Ph No: 8331011695 during office hours on any working day.

\* Dues/taxes, if any, known/not known to the Bank are to be borne by the auction purchaser and the same is exclusive of the final bid amount.

Bidders shall improve their offers in multiples of Rs 50,000/- for reserve price above Rs.50 lacs and up to Rs.100 lacs. The bidder who submits the highest bid (above the Reserve price) on closure of 'Online' auction shall be declared as successful bidder.

E-Auction Process and Terms & Conditions, contact Service Provider: M/s PSB Alliance (baanknet), web portal: "https://baanknet.com/eauction-psb" (Contact No. 7046612345 / 6354910172 / 8291220220 / 9892219848 / 8160205051, Email: support.baanknet@psballiance.com / support.ebkraj@procure247.com)

Date : 12.03.2026, Place: Vijayawada Sd/- Authorised Officer, Canara Bank

**Canara Bank**  
ARM Branch, Circle Office, D.No.54-15-4B, Ground Floor, Lakshmi Avenue, Srinivasa Nagar Bank Colony, Ring Road, Vijayawada, AP - 520008. Ph: 8331011695, E-mail: armvij@canarabank.com

**E-AUCTION SALE NOTICE FOR SALE OF IMMOVABLE PROPERTIES**

E-Auction Sale Notice for Sale of Immovable & Movable Assets Properties under the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 read with proviso to Rule 8(6) of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002.

Notice is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the Borrower (s) and Guarantor(s) that the below described immovable properties mortgaged to the Secured Creditor, the symbolic/physical possession of which has been taken by the Authorized Officer of branches mentioned below of the Canara Bank, will be sold on "As is where is", "As is what is", and "Whatever there is" on 06.04.2026, for recovery of amounts mentioned below due to the ARM Branch, Vijayawada of Canara Bank from the below mentioned Borrower(s) and Guarantor(s). Description of the immovable properties with no encumbrances to the knowledge of the bank.

**DATE & TIME OF E-AUCTION: 06.04.2026 at 2.00 PM to 4.00 PM** (with unlimited extension of 5 minutes duration each till the conclusion of the sale) **LAST DATE FOR SUBMISSION OF EMD: 06.04.2026 before 12.00 Noon**

EMD amount of 10% of the Reserve Price is to be deposited in E-wallet of M/s. PSB Alliance Private Limited (baanknet) portal directly or by generating the challan therein to deposit the EMD amount through RTGS/NEFT in the account details as mentioned in the said challan on or before 06.04.2026 at 12.00 Noon.

Borrower/Guarantors & Branch Details (All Accounts Transferred to ARM, Vijayawada Branch)	DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPERTIES	Reserve Price (in Rs.)	EMD (10% of Reserve Price)
<b>Gannavaram Branch</b> <b>Smt. Matta Leela Rani, W/o Raghuram Matta</b> Total Liability : Rs.29,33,572.47 Pps as on 12.03.2026 + interest + other expenses	(Registered Sale Deed No:10064 standing in the name of Smt. Matta Leela Rani W/o Raghuram); All that piece and parcel of an extent of 14096.96 sq. yds site bearing R.S.No. 139/2A, 139/2B, approved plan from APCRDA vide File No. RCC2-660/2014, BP. No. 111/2015 situated at chinnoutapalli Village, Chinnoutapalli Gramapanchayat, Krishna District within the jurisdiction of Gannavaram Sub Registrars office, Vijayawada East District Registrar's office being Boundaries: As per Deed.	Rs. 21.90 Lakhs	Rs. 2.19 Lakhs

in the above four boundaries and extent of 14096.96 sq. yds or 11786.468 sq. mts site in which undivided joint share 59 sq. yds or 49.33 sq. mts site.

Item No.2: in the above item No.1 Constructed an apartment in the name and style of (ADITYA HEIGHTS) PLATINUM ENTITY in which H. Block, Fourth Floor, Flat No. 401, being Boundaries: As per Deed.

in between four boundaries 983 sq. ft. plinth area of Flat, 246 sq. ft. of common area, 100 sq. ft. of Car Parking area. CERSAI Id of the above mentioned property : 400058900237

Borrower/Guarantors & Branch Details (All Accounts Transferred to ARM, Vijayawada Branch)	DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPERTIES	Reserve Price (in Rs.)	EMD (10% of Reserve Price)
<b>Gannavaram Branch</b> <b>Borrower: Sri. Raghuram Matta S/o Kasi viswanadha Rao, Guarantor: Smt. Matta Leela Rani W/o Raghuram</b> Total Liability : Rs.29,75,727.85 Pps as on 12.03.2026 + interest + other expenses	(Registered Sale Deed No:10066 standing in the name of Sri Raghuram Matta S/o Kasi viswanadha Rao); All that piece and parcel of an extent of 14096.96 sq. yds site bearing R.S.No. 139/2A, 139/2B, approved plan from APCRDA vide File No. RCC2-660/2014, BP. No. 111/2015 situated at chinnoutapalli Village, Chinnoutapalli Gramapanchayat, Krishna District within the jurisdiction of Gannavaram Sub Registrars office, Vijayawada East District Registrar's office being Boundaries: As per Deed.	Rs. 21.90 Lakhs	Rs. 2.19 Lakhs

in the above four boundaries and extent of 14096.96 sq. yds or 11786.468 sq. mts site in which undivided joint share 59 sq. yds or 49.33 sq. mts site.

Item No.2: in the above item No.1 Constructed an apartment in the name and style of (ADITYA HEIGHTS) PLATINUM ENTITY in which H. Block, Fourth Floor, Flat No. 409, being Boundaries: As per Deed.

in between four boundaries 983 sq. ft. plinth area of Flat, 246 sq. ft. of common area, 100 sq. ft. of Car Parking area. CERSAI Id of the above mentioned property : 400058900237

Date & Time of Inspection of the Property : 04.04.2026 at 11.00 AM to 4.00 PM.

For detailed terms and conditions of the sale please refer the link "E-Auction" provided in Canara Bank's website ([www.canarabank.com](http://www.canarabank.com)) or may contact Chief Manager, ARM Branch, Vijayawada, Canara Bank, Ph. No. 8331011695 during office hours on any working day.

\* Dues/taxes, if any, known/not known to the Bank are to be borne by the auction purchaser and the same is exclusive of the final bid amount. Bidders shall improve their offers in multiples of Rs. 10,000/- for Reserve Price up to Rs.25 lakhs, in multiples of Rs.25,000/- for reserve price above Rs.25 lacs and up to Rs.50 lacs. The bidder who submits the highest bid (above the Reserve price) on closure of "Online" auction shall be declared as successful bidder.

E-Auction Process and Terms & Conditions, contact Service Provider : M/s. PSB Alliance (baanknet), web portal : "https://baanknet.com/eauction-psb" (Contact No.7046612345/6354910172/8291220220/9892219848/8160205051, E-mail: support.baanknet@psballiance.com).

Date : 12-03-2026, Place: Vijayawada Sd/- Authorised Officer, Canara Bank

**Chola**  
CHOLAMANDALAM INVESTMENT AND FINANCE COMPANY LIMITED  
Corporate Office : Chola Crest, C54 & 55, Super B-4, Thiru Vi Ka Industrial Estate, Guindy, Chennai- 600 032, T. N.

**E-AUCTION SALE NOTICE (Sale Through e-bidding Only)**

SALE NOTICE OF IMMOVABLE SECURED ASSETS ISSUED UNDER RULE 8(6) AND 9(1) OF THE SECURITY INTEREST (ENFORCEMENT) RULES 2002.

Notice is hereby given to the PUBLIC IN GENERAL and in particular to the Borrower(s) and Guarantor(s) indicated in the below described immovable property(ies) described in COLUMN (C) Mortgaged / Charged to the secured creditor the POSSESSION of which has been taken as described in COLUMN (D) by the Authorized Officer of Housing CHOLAMANDALAM INVESTMENT AND FINANCE COMPANY LIMITED Secured Creditor, will be sold on "As is Where is", "As is what is" and "Whatever there is" as per details mentioned below. - Notice is hereby given to Borrower / Mortgagee(s) / legal heir, legal representatives (Whether Known or unknown), executor(s), administrator(s), successor(s) & assign(s) of the respective Borrower(s) / Mortgagee(s) (Since deceased) as the case may be indicated in COLUMN (A) U/s. 8(6) of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules 2002. For detailed terms & conditions of the sale, please refer to the link provided in CHOLAMANDALAM INVESTMENT AND FINANCE COMPANY LIMITED secured Creditor's website i.e. <https://www.cholamandalam.com> & [www.auctionfocus.in](http://www.auctionfocus.in)

Sr. No.	Loan Account No./ Names Of Borrower(s) / Mortgagee(s) / Guarantor(s)	O/S. Dues to be recovered (Secured by the Debtor)	Description of the Immovable Property / Secured Asset	Type of Possession	Reserve Price (in Rs.)	Date of Auction & Time
1	Loan A/c. No(s) : HL04ULY000017109 1. Mr/Mrs. Gangadhara Ora Pinnamaneni 2. Mr/Mrs. Sudha Rani Pinnamaneni Add For Sr. No. 1 & 2: 2-42/A, Main Road, Allipalli, Allipalli, West Godavari, Near Charchi, West Godavari, Telangana - 534460 Add For Sr. No. 1 & 2 : Syn. 92-2, H. N.S-172 Allipalle Chintalapudi (Sewer Only) As On 17-12-2025	Rs. 27,89,447/- (Rupees Twenty Seven Lakh Eighty Nine Thousand Four Hundred Forty Seven Only) As On 17-12-2025	All that newly constructed Residential Home site within Allipalli Revenue Survey No.92-2, an extent of 400Sq.yards, Place Situated at Allipalli Village of Chintalapudi Mandal West Godavari District, Under Sro. Chintalapudi, Doc No.6723 of 2020, (And bounded by North: R & B Road, South: Place of Kalidindi Ramaraju, East: Dari, West: Bandi Dari,	RESIDENTIAL POSSESSION	Rs. 37,21,200/- (Rupees Thirty Seven Lakh Twenty One Thousand Two Hundred Only) Rs. 3,72,120/- (Rupees Three Lakh Seventy Two Thousand One Hundred Twenty Only)	20-04-2026 from 02.00 P.M. to 04.00 P.M. (with automated extensions of 5 minutes each in terms of Tender Document),

INSPECTION DATE & TIME : 17.04.2026 BETWEEN 11.00 a.m. to 4.00 p.m. MINIMUM BID INCREMENT AMOUNT : Rs. 10,000/-

LAST DT. OF SUBMISSION OF BID / EMD / REQUEST LETTER FOR PARTICIPATION : 18.04.2026 before 05.00 p.m.

\* Together with further interest as applicable in terms of loan agreement with, incidental expenses, costs, charges etc. incurred up to the date of payment and / or realisation thereof. For any assistance related to inspection of the property, or for obtaining the Bid document and for any other queries, please get in touch with 1. Chola Mukula, Mobile Number : 9000127308 & Email : [nukalasadulu@chola.murugappa.com](mailto:nukalasadulu@chola.murugappa.com), 2. Shaik Altair, Mobile Number : 996867687 & Email : [shaikau@chola.murugappa.com](mailto:shaikau@chola.murugappa.com), official of CHOLAMANDALAM INVESTMENT & FINANCE COMPANY LIMITED to the best of knowledge and information of the Authorized Officer of CHOLAMANDALAM INVESTMENT & FINANCE COMPANY LIMITED there are no encumbrances in respect of the above immovable properties / secured Assets.

Date : 16.03.2026 Place : West Godavari, Andhra Pradesh Sd/- AUTHORIZED OFFICER, FOR CHOLAMANDALAM INVESTMENT AND FINANCE COMPANY LIMITED

## High alert as tiger moves near Annavaram

HANS NEWS SERVICE  
RAJAMAHENDRAVARAM

FOREST officials have intensified efforts to track and capture a tiger that has been moving near Annavaram hill and surrounding villages in Kakinada district, prompting authorities to alert devotees and residents in the area. On Sunday evening, the tiger was spotted moving near Annavaram hill and close to the Pampa reservoir, raising concern among pilgrims visiting the temple. Following the sighting, temple authorities warned devotees staying in accommodation on the hill not to venture out at night. Staff attending duties on Monday were instructed to reach the hill only through temple buses from the toll gate. As a precautionary measure, devotees were not allowed to use the footpath route to the hill. Forest officials confirmed that the tiger crossed the Sankhavaram-Kathipudi road and moved through agricultural fields towards Mandapam village. Earlier, drone cameras deployed by the forest department detected the



Drone camera captured the tiger near Mandapam village in Sankhavaram mandal

animal in an open field near the forest stretch between Sankhavaram and Annavaram. Though the tiger's presence was confirmed through VHF tracking equipment and the officials attempted to surround the area, the animal unexpectedly changed its route and moved away.

According to officials, the tiger has been creating concern among residents in Kakinada and Polavaram districts for the past 17 days. The animal had earlier caused panic in several villages in East Godavari district for nearly ten days before it was finally trapped near Kurmapuram. It was later released into the Papikonda forest region by forest authorities, but it appears

to have strayed out of the forest area again and returned to nearby habitations. Efforts are under way to capture the tiger and shift it safely back into the forest. The operation is being carried out under the supervision of Divisional Forest Officer N Ramachandra Rao. Nearly 100 personnel, including forest staff, rescue teams and tranquiliser dart specialists, have been deployed for the operation with the help of drone surveillance and VHF tracking systems. Chief Conservator of Forests Srikantha Nath Reddy is personally monitoring the operation as officials continue their search in the surrounding forest and agricultural areas.

## YSRCP hails Amarajeevi as a symbol of Telugu pride



MLC Lella Appi Reddy, former minister Vellampalli Srinivas, Sake Sailajanath, former MLA Malladi Vishnu and others pay tributes to the portrait of Amarajeevi Potti Srimamulu on the occasion of his 125th birth anniversary at YSRCP Central office at Tadepalli on Monday

- Jagan says Srimamulu is a symbol of Telugu self-respect and sacrifice for Andhra statehood
- Leaders recall his 58-day fast that paved the way for linguistic states in India

HANS NEWS SERVICE  
GUNTUR

YSRCP president Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy on Monday said Potti Srimamulu symbolises the self-respect

of Telugu people and that his supreme sacrifice for a separate state for Andhra continues to inspire generations.

YSRCP leaders paid rich tributes to the legendary freedom fighter on the occasion of his 125th birth anniversary at the party's central office in Tadepalli. Floral tributes were offered as leaders recalled his historic sacrifice for the creation of a separate state for Telugu-speaking people. Speaking on the occasion, party leaders said the name of Potti Srimamulu would remain immortal as long as the Telugu community exists. They remembered his 58-day fast unto death demanding a separate state for Telugu people, which ultimately paved the way for the formation of linguistic states in India.

MLC Lella Appi Reddy said such a selfless sacrifice for a linguistic state was unparalleled in world history. He added that the

ideals of Potti Srimamulu are reflected in the leadership and governance approach of Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy, who, he said, has upheld values of integrity, credibility and commitment towards the state and its people.

Former MLA Malladi Vishnu recalled that inspired by Mahatma Gandhi, Potti Srimamulu undertook several fasts in his life, including the historic fast that eventually led to the formation of linguistic states in the country. Former minister Vellampalli Srinivas said the previous YSRCP government restored the celebration of Andhra Pradesh Formation Day on November 1 and honoured Potti Srimamulu's legacy. He criticised the present coalition government for allegedly neglecting his memory, including failing to allocate funds for the construction of a 58-foot statue while spending heavily on other projects. Former minister Sake Sailajanath said the life and dedication of Potti Srimamulu should inspire people to work with similar determination for the pride and unity of Telugu society.

## DGP pays tributes

HANS NEWS SERVICE  
AMARAVATI

ON the occasion of the 125th birth anniversary of freedom fighter and proponent of linguistic state of Andhra Potti Sreeramulu, Director General of Police Harish Kumar Gupta paid rich floral tributes by garlanding his portrait at the Andhra Pradesh Police Headquarters on Monday. Speaking on the occasion, the DGP said that Amarajeevi Potti Sreeramulu played a crucial role in India's freedom struggle by following the ideals and path of Mahatma Gandhi. He noted that Sreeramulu's immense sacrifice for the formation of linguistic states remains a permanent chapter in the nation's history.

Harish Kumar Gupta said



DGP Harish Kumar Gupta paying tributes to 'Amarajeevi' Potti Sreeramulu by garlanding his portrait

that Potti Sreeramulu's historic fast unto death for the creation of a separate Andhra state stands as an extraordinary episode in India's history and symbolises the self-respect and aspirations of the Telugu people. His 58-day hunger strike ultimately led to the formation of Andhra State and became a turning point in the reorganisation of states on linguistic lines in the country.

**ANDHRA PRADESH GRAMEENA BANK**  
(Scheduled Bank Owned by Government)  
CHEBROLE(G) BRANCH (7058), Chebrole Village, Guntur Dist, Andhra Pradesh, Ph: 9390478358.

**POSSESSION NOTICE**  
(RULE 8 (1) OF SECURITY INTEREST (ENFORCEMENT) RULES, 2002) (For Immovable Property)

Whereas the undersigned being the Authorized Officer of the Andhra Pradesh Grameena Bank, Chebrole(G) Branch under the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 (Act 54 of 2002) and in exercise of powers conferred under Section 13 (12) of the read with Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002, issued a Demand notice dated 09-12-2025 calling upon Borrowers: 1. Movva Bullaiah, S/o. Pappiah, R/o. 8-5, Muttur, Vatticherukuru Mandal, Guntur Dist-522212. 2. Movva Lakshmi Kalyani, W/o. Bullaiah, R/o 8-5, Muttur, Vatticherukuru Mandal, Guntur Dist-522212. Co-obligant/Guarantor: 3. Gogineni Sitaravamma, W/o. Venkata Satyanarayana, R/o. 7-104, Muttur, Vatticherukuru Mandal, Guntur Dist-522212. Mortgagee: 4. Movva Bullaiah, S/o. Pappiah, R/o. 8-5, Muttur, Vatticherukuru Mandal, Guntur Dist-522212, to repay the amount mentioned in the notice being Rs.12,85,019.37 (Rupees Twelve Lakhs Eighty Five Thousand Nineteen and paise Thirty Seven only) within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notice.

The Borrowers/Legal heirs of the deceased having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the Borrowers/Legal heirs and the public in general that the undersigned has taken possession of the property described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him/her under Section 13 (4) of the said Act read with Rule 8 of the said Rules, on this 10th day of March of the year 2026.

The Borrowers/Legal heirs in particular and the public in general is hereby cautioned not to deal with the property and any dealings with the property will be subject to the charge of the Andhra Pradesh Grameena Bank, Chebrole(G) Branch for an amount Rs.12,85,019.37 (Rupees Twelve Lakhs Eighty Five Thousand Nineteen and paise Thirty Seven only) with subsequent interest and other charges thereon from 22-11-2025.

The Borrowers/Legal heirs attention is invited to provisions of sub section (8) of Section 13 of the Act in respect of time available to the Borrowers/Legal heirs to redeem in the secured assets.

**SCHEDULE OF THE PROPERTY**

All that part and parcel of the property consisting of

Item No.1: Property Particulars : Site Along with Ground and First Floor Residential Building, Location: Muttur Village, Vatticherukuru Mandal, Guntur(Dt), Survey No. : D.No.129 & Door No. 8-19, Extent: 244 Sq. Yds, Owner's Name: Movva Bullaiah, Boundaries: East: Site belongs to Punati Venkata Rao- 93.6 ft, South : Galli Bazaar - 19.4 ft, West : Site belongs to Kapa Ramulu - 92.0 ft, North: Wall belongs to RCM Church - 28.0 ft.

Place : Chebrole Sd/- Authorized Officer, Andhra Pradesh Grameena Bank, Date : 10-03-2026

**ANDHRA PRADESH STATE FINANCIAL CORPORATION**  
(Incorporated under the State Financial Corporation Act, LXIII of 1951)  
VISAKHAPATNAM BRANCH # 52-14-771, New Resavanipalem, Near Bullayya College, Visakhapatnam-530013. Ph: 0891-2747661 & 9490824955; e-mail: vizag@apsfc.com

**POSSESSION NOTICE (For Immovable Property)**  
(Appendix-IV under the Act Rule-8(1))

Whereas, the undersigned being Authorized officer of Andhra Pradesh State Financial Corporation under Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 (54 of 2002) and in exercise of powers conferred under section 13(2) of the act read with rule of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002, issued a Demand notice dated 23.10.2025 and abridged version of demand notice published in newspaper on 08.01.2026 calling upon the Borrower: M/s. Averx Drugs Pvt. Ltd, Plot No.27A31A & 27A32, APIIC Industrial Park, Lalam Koduru Village, Rambilli Mandal, Anakapalli District-531061 to repay the amounts mentioned in the notice being Rs.397.89 Lakhs (Rupees Three Crore Ninety Seven Lakhs Eighty Nine Thousand Only) along with further interest and other expenses within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notice.

The borrower having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the borrower and the public in general that the undersigned has taken possession of the property described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him/her under Section 13(4) of the said Act read with rule 8 of the said rules on this 13<sup>th</sup> Day of March of the year 2026

The borrower of the property in particular and the public in general are hereby cautioned not to deal with the property and any dealings with the property will be subject to charge of the Andhra Pradesh State Financial Corporation, Visakhapatnam Branch for an amount of Rs.397.89 Lakhs (Rupees Three Crore Ninety Seven Lakhs Eighty Nine Thousand Only) and interest thereon, costs etc.

**Description of Immovable Property:**

Property-1: Land admeasuring 600 Sq.yds with residential building bearing D.No.70-14-11 covered by Plot No.134 part in Sy.No.127, Jayendranagar, Ramanayyapeta, Kakinada, Sarvaparam, Kakinada District belonging to Smt.N.Adiakshmi and Bounded by: North : D.No.70-14-11/1 belonging to N.Satyanarayana in Plot No.133, South : Sri Sairam Residency Apartment D.No.70-14-12 in Plot No.135, East : Open Site in Plot No.141, West : Road.

Property-2 : Land admeasuring 172.22 Sq.yds covered by Plot No.62 in Sy.No.220/4B situated at Sowjanya nagar, SuryaraoPET, Kakinada Municipal Corporation, Kakinada, Kakinada District belonging to Smt. Burra Umarani and Bounded by: North : 33' Road, South : Remaining site belongs to Matta Ramesh in Plot No.62, East : Plot No.63, West : 33' Road.

Property-3: Land admeasuring 481.37 Sq.yds covered by Plot No.3 & Plot No.5 part in Sy.No.195, Ward No.29, Block No.69 situated at Ramanayyapet, Kakinada Municipal Corporation, Kakinada, Kakinada District belonging to Smt. Tirupathi Dhanalakshmi and Bounded by: North : Others site, South : Plot No.4, East : Plot No.4, West : 33' Road.

Date : 13.03.2026 Sd/- Authorised Officer  
Place : Visakhapatnam Andhra Pradesh State Financial Corporation

# WORKS WORTH Rs 575 Cr TAKEN UP IN 5 YRS: MAYOR

- Mayor of Vijayawada Municipal Corporation Rayana Bhagya Lakshmi thanks corporators, municipal officials, public representatives and citizens for their cooperation in implementing development initiatives
- Development activities were carried out across all three Assembly constituencies in the city

HANS NEWS SERVICE  
VIJAYAWADA

MAYOR of Vijayawada Municipal Corporation Rayana Bhagya Lakshmi said that development works worth about Rs 575 crore were carried out in the city during her five-year tenure with the support of corporators, municipal officials and citizens.

The present elected body of the civic corporation will complete its five-year tenure on March 17, after which Special Officer rule will come into effect from March 18. Bhagya Lakshmi assumed office as Mayor on



Vijayawada Municipal Corporation Mayor Rayana Bhagya Lakshmi addressing the media at her chamber on Monday

March 18, 2021.

Addressing the media at her chamber at the VMC premises in Vijayawada on Monday, the mayor said the funds were utilised for laying Black Top (BT) roads, Cement Concrete (CC) roads, underground drainage (UGD), drainage systems, drinking water supply, development of parks and city beautification works. Several projects were also implemented under schemes such as the Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation (AMRUT) and grants from the 14th and 15th Finance Commissions. Expressing satisfaction over

the achievements during her tenure, the mayor thanked corporators, municipal officials, public representatives and citizens for their cooperation in implementing development initiatives. She said development activities were carried out across all three Assembly constituencies in the city, covering roads, drainage, sanitation and drinking water supply.

Highlighting civic achievements, Bhagya Lakshmi said Vijayawada secured third rank in the Swachh Survekshan rankings in 2021 in the category of cities with a population above 10 lakh. In 2022,

the city ranked fifth and achieved a four-star rating along with the Water Plus certificate under the Swachh Bharat Mission (Urban). The city also received a five-star rating in the Garbage-Free City category and recognition under the Climate Smart Cities Assessment Framework 2.0.

Providing details of works taken up, she said Rs 91.47 crore was spent on BT roads and Rs 101.37 crore on CC roads, while Rs 19.51 crore was utilised for steps, drains, ramps and other works in hill areas. Infrastructure projects such as development of Payakapuram tank with Rs 3.25 crore, extension of UGD lines, drainage pumping stations and improvement of drinking water supply were also taken up. About Rs 67 crore was spent under the AMRUT scheme between 2021 and 2025.

Other works included construction of overhead tanks, reservoirs and new pipelines. A Rail Under Bridge (RUB) at Madhuranagar was constructed at a cost of Rs 17.42 crore, while Rs 12.10 crore was spent on sports infrastruc-

ture, swimming pools and parks. Additionally, she said a retaining wall was constructed along the banks of the Krishna River in Phase II at a cost of Rs 7.78, along with the development of a retaining wall plaza and an entry plaza adjacent to the protective wall at Rs 7.78 crore.

The mayor said the corporation also cleared several old dues inherited from previous administrations. She added that development works were continued through the corporation's own resources using a green channel mechanism. She also said that the civic body rejected Rs 450 crore Public-Private Partnership drainage project proposal as it would have placed a financial burden on the corporation.

Responding to allegations by some political leaders, Bhagya Lakshmi said the claims were baseless and invited critics to verify the development works carried out in the city. She said several projects were implemented without imposing any additional tax burden on the people during her five-year tenure.

## SSC exams begin smoothly

- The DEO inspected open school examination centres being conducted at Nirmala High School and Sri Balaji Vidyalayam
- NTR district recorded an attendance of 99.24 per cent on the first day of the examination

HANS NEWS SERVICE  
VIJAYAWADA/  
MACHILIPATNAM



Krishna District Educational Officer UV Subba Rao inspecting an SSC Public Examinations centre in Machilipatnam on Monday

THE Secondary School Certificate Public Examinations (March 2026) commenced smoothly across Krishna and NTR districts on Monday, with both districts recording more than 99% attendance on the first day.

According to official data, in Krishna district 21,272 regular candidates registered for the examination, of whom 21,080 appeared while 192 were absent, recording an attendance of 99.10 per cent. Among private (once-failed) candidates, 166 registered, of whom 93 appeared and 73 were absent, registering an attendance of 56.02 per cent.

In total, 21,438 candidates registered for the examination in the district, including both regular and private candidates. Of them, 21,173 appeared while 265 were absent,

indicating a high turnout of students on the first day. Meanwhile, Krishna District Educational Officer U V Subba Rao visited several examination centres in Machilipatnam to review the conduct of the examinations. He inspected centres at CPM High School, Chilakalapudi, Nirmala High School, Hynny High School, Sri Balaji Vidyalayam, and MEK Balabhanu High School.

The DEO also inspected open school examination centres being conducted at Nirmala High School and Sri Balaji Vidyalayam, and reviewed the facilities and arrangements made for students.

On the other hand, NTR district recorded an attendance of 99.24 per cent on the first day of the examinations. A total of 27,249 candidates regis-

tered for the exams across 149 examination centres, of whom 27,043 appeared while 206 were absent. G Lakshmi, Collector of NTR district, along with District Educational Officer L Chandrakala, visited CVR Municipal High School in Vijayawada and inspected the arrangements at the examination centre.

District Level Observer Krishna Mohan also inspected seven examination centres, while DEO Chandrakala personally visited eight centres to ensure that the examinations were conducted smoothly and in accordance with the prescribed guidelines.

Officials said strict monitoring and arrangements were in place across both districts to ensure fair, transparent and peaceful conduct of the SSC examinations.

## Four get life imprisonment for gang-rape, murder

- The case was investigated by South Zone DSP S Bhavya Kishore, who filed the charge sheet
- Court also imposed a fine of Rs 2,000 on each of the convicts

HANS NEWS SERVICE  
RAJAMAHENDRAVARAM

THE VIII Additional District Judge Court here has sentenced four accused to life imprisonment for the gang rape and murder of a woman, Routhu Kasturi, from Burrilanka village in Kadiyam mandal. District Superintendent of Police D Narasimha Kishore disclosed the details of the case to the media on Monday. According to the police, Kasturi had left her house around 2 pm on October 15, 2024, to work at a nursery owned by Patamsetti Ramudu near the Burrilanka bridge. When she did not return home by evening, her husband tried calling her phone, but it was switched off. Family members and villagers searched the surrounding areas but could not find her.

A complaint was lodged at Kadiyam police station on October 16, following which police registered a case of a missing woman under Crime No 314/2024 and began an investigation.



SP D Narasimha Kishore addressing the media in Rajamahendravaram on Monday

On October 17, Kasturi's body was found in a canal near Choppella locks. The body was shifted to the Government General Hospital in Rajamahendravaram for post-mortem examination. During the investigation, police identified four suspects, Devara Yesu (26), Velubudi Praveen (21), Lokina Jayaprasad (19) and Dasari Suresh (22), all residents of Burrilanka and nearby areas. They were arrested on October 30, 2024. Police investigation revealed that the accused were consuming alcohol among the nursery plantations around 5.30 pm on October 15. When Kasturi was returning home after completing her work, they allegedly dragged her into the nursery area, sexually assaulted her and later murdered her. The accused then dumped the body in a nearby canal to conceal the crime.

The case was investigated by South Zone DSP S Bhavya Kishore, who filed the charge sheet against

the accused under relevant provisions of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, including Sections 70(1), 103(1), 238 read with 3(5). After hearing the arguments from both sides, the VIII Additional District Judge Court at Rajamahendravaram delivered its verdict on March 16, 2026, sentencing all four accused to life imprisonment.

The court also imposed a fine of Rs 2,000 on each of the convicts, with an additional six months of imprisonment in case of default. The SP appreciated the efforts of Assistant Public Prosecutor K Radhakrishna Raju, investigating officer DSP S Bhavya Kishore, Kadiyam SI B Naga Durga Prasad, court constable K Srinivas and other police personnel who assisted in the investigation and ensured the presence of witnesses in court. SP announced rewards also for the officers and staff involved in successfully securing the conviction.

## Sriramulu a source of inspiration: CPI

HANS NEWS SERVICE  
GUNTUR

CPI national executive member Muppalla Nageswara Rao praised Potti Sriramulu as a great martyr, prominent freedom fighter, and the architect of Andhra State. On the occasion of the 125th birth anniversary of Potti Sriramulu, CPI leaders paid floral tributes to his statue at Hindu College Centre in Guntur on Monday. The programme was organised by the CPI city committee under the leadership of city secretary Akiti Arun Kumar. Nageswara Rao, along with CPI State secretary Jangala Ajay Kumar and other party leaders, garlanded the statue and paid tributes.

Speaking to the media on the occasion, Nageswara Rao said that Potti Sriramulu dedicated his life to the upliftment of Dalits, Adivasis, and weaker sections of society. Ajay Kumar described Potti Sriramulu as a source of inspiration.

He said that Sriramulu undertook a historic 58-day fast unto death for the formation of Andhra State. He praised him as a great freedom fighter who followed the path of Mahatma Gandhi and participated in many struggles for justice, enduring police repression during the freedom movement. CPI Guntur district assistant secretary Meda Hanumantha Rao, Chinni Tirupatayya were among those who participated.

## Stress on youth's role in shaping economic future

- Artha Veda 2K26 - Reviving the Roots of Economics, an academic event was organised
- The programme aims to connect students with both classical and contemporary dimensions of economics

HANS NEWS SERVICE  
VIJAYAWADA

EMPHASISING the crucial role of youth in shaping the country's economic future, Manchala Sai Sudhakar Naidu, chairman and managing director of No 1 news channel, said students should cultivate analytical thinking, entrepreneurial spirit and awareness of socio-economic issues to contribute to national development. He said that effective communication of economic realities through media and research can play a vital role in strengthening the nation.

He was speaking as the chief guest at Artha Veda 2K26 - Reviving the Roots of Economics, an academic event organised by the Department of Economics of Andhra Loyola College here on Monday. The programme aimed to connect students with both classical and contemporary dimensions of economics and highlight its relevance in everyday life, aligning with the Indian Knowledge System (IKS). Deputy General Manager of NRED-



CAP G Nani Babu, who was the guest of honour, spoke about sustainable development and economic planning. Earlier, Correspondent A Rex Angelo welcomed the gathering and described economics as a powerful pathway that can transform societies from poverty to prosperity. Principal S Melchior highlighted the enduring relevance of Arthashastra by Kautilya, noting its continued influence on modern concepts such as trade, taxation and public welfare.

The event featured several engaging academic and cultural activities including Chanakya Niti Quiz, Arthapreneur, Artha Kala, Artha Lekhana, Artha Charcha and Kautilya Darbar, with participation from around 150 students representing various colleges. The programme was convened by Head of the Department of Economics B Baby Rani and concluded successfully with enthusiastic student participation, showcasing the relevance of economic thought from ancient wisdom to modern applications.

## YSRCP's 'legal terrorism' criticised

HANS NEWS SERVICE  
GUNTUR

CHAIRMAN of the Andhra Pradesh State Biodiversity Board Neelayapalem Vijay Kumar accused the YSR Congress Party of engaging in what he called "legal terrorism" aimed at sabotaging job opportunities for Andhra Pradesh's youth.

In a statement, he pointed out recent negotiations last week led by IT Minister Nara Lokesh with Capgemini CEO Aiman Ezzat, which expanded potential job creation from an initial 5,000 to 15,000-20,000 positions. He claimed the YSRCP filed a Public Interest Litigation in the High Court the same time, seeking to block incentives for new companies like Google. He referenced Google's planned \$15 billion investment—the largest foreign direct investment in India—as a prime

example. "Our Prime Minister aims for a \$5 trillion economy, and here we have a \$2 trillion company ready to invest, but the YSRCP wants to chase it away with cases. How absurd is that?"

He warned that the YSRCP's strategy seems designed to stall progress, especially with elections in mind, by spreading negative propaganda about the government's competence.

Kumar accused the party of a "Stall, Sue, and Sabotage" policy, citing instances where big firms backed out of pre-2019 MoUs due to similar obstructions. In Visakhapatnam, he said, land allotments for Google at just 99 paise per acre—tied to promises of 500 jobs per acre and clauses for reclamation if unmet—have faced a PIL from YSRCP's Tirupati MP Maddela Gurumurthy, despite no direct connection to the area.

## Siddhartha students shine at youth festival

HANS NEWS SERVICE  
VIJAYAWADA

STUDENTS of PB Siddhartha Arts and Science College here brought laurels by winning several prizes at the 39th National Inter-University Youth Festival held at Sathyabama Institute of Science and Technology in Chennai from March 10 to 14. The students participated in the festival representing Krishna University and secured awards in various competitions for the fourth consecutive time. On the occasion, the Siddhartha Academy of General and Technical Education (SAGTE) felicitated prize winners at the college webinar hall in the city on Monday.

SAGTE secretary Paladugu Lakshmana



Students of PB Siddhartha Arts and Science College addressing a press conference in the college in Vijayawada on Monday

Rao, joint secretary Nimmagadda Lalitha Prasad, principal Dr Meka Ramesh, Director Vemuri Baburao, Cultural Convener Dr PTRSK Prasad Rao and former cultural convener Dr B Jayaprakash congratulated the students for their achievements.

Speaking on the occasion, they said the students had earlier excelled in the South Zone cultural

competitions titled "Kalai Kodam" and were selected to represent the university at the national-level youth festival, "Kalai Saaral." In the festival, which saw participation from 2,963 students representing 142 universities from across the country, Siddhartha students won prizes in all the events they participated in, they added.

Student Malladi Sindhu

**Hans India Classifieds**

**CHANGE OF SURNAME**  
I, MEDARAMITTA VENKATARAJO (Old Name) S/O MEDARAMETLA SRINIVASULU, residing at 1-78, Budawada, Chimakurthy, Prakasam District -523253, Andhra Pradesh, India. I have Changed my Surname as MEDARAMETLA VENKATARAJO (New Name) S/O MEDARAMETLA SRINIVASULU. Hereafter my surname is known as MEDARAMETLA VENKATARAJO (New Name) S/O MEDARAMETLA SRINIVASULU.

(TH\_BSR)

**CHANGE OF NAME**  
I, SANGALA V V SATYANARAYANA S/o Veera Nageswara Rao (Old Name), R/o D.No. 11-27, Venkatadripuram Village, H/o Annaram Post, Nuzvid Mandal, Krishna District (now Eluru District), Andhra Pradesh-521201, have changed my name to SANAGALA VEERA VENKATA SATYANARAYANA (New Name), S/o Venkata Nageswara Rao, for all purposes.

(TH\_RAJARAO)

**CHANGE OF SURNAME**  
I, MEDARAMITTA SREENIVASULU (Old Name) my wife name MEDARAMETLA ESWARAMA residing at 1-78, Budawada, Chimakurthy, Prakasam District -523253, Andhra Pradesh, India. I have Changed my Surname as MEDARAMETLA SREENIVASULU (New Name) my wife name MEDARAMETLA ESWARAMA (New Name) Hereafter my surname is known as MEDARAMETLA SREENIVASULU (New Name) my wife name MEDARAMETLA ESWARAMA.

(TH\_BSR)

**CHANGE OF NAME**  
I, SHAIK SAYYAD BAJI, (New Name), S/O Shake Akhalish, Previously Called SHAKE SIDHBAGI (Old Name), Resident of D.No:16-13-19, Mutupalli Vari Street, Bhimavaram, West Godavari District, Andhra Pradesh-534201. I have changed my name from SHAKE SIDHBAGI (Old Name) to SHAIK SAYYAD BAJI (New Name) for all practical purposes.

(TH\_SIVA PRASAD)

**CHANGE OF SURNAME**  
I, MEDARAMITTA ESWARAMA (Old Name) my husband name MEDARAMETLA SRINIVASULU, residing at 1-78, Budawada, Chimakurthy, Prakasam District -523253, Andhra Pradesh, India. I have Changed my Surname as MEDARAMETLA ESWARAMA (New Name) my husband name MEDARAMETLA SRINIVASULU. Hereafter my surname is known as MEDARAMETLA ESWARAMA (New Name) my husband name MEDARAMETLA SRINIVASULU.

(TH\_BSR)

**CHANGE OF NAME**  
I, SHAIK SHARFUNNISA BEGUM (New Name), W/O Shaik Sayyad Baji, Previously Called SHARIF MUNNISHA (Old Name), Resident of D.No:16-13-19, Mutupalli Vari Street, Bhimavaram, W.G.D., Andhra Pradesh-534201. I have changed my name from SHARIF MUNNISHA (Old Name) to SHAIK SHARFUNNISA BEGUM (New Name) for all practical purposes.

(TH\_SIVA PRASAD)

**CHANGE OF SURNAME**  
I, MEDARAMITTA LAKSHMI (Old Name) my husband name MEDARAMETLA VENKATARAJO, residing at 1-78, Budawada, Chimakurthy, Prakasam District -523253, Andhra Pradesh, India. I have Changed my Surname as MEDARAMETLA LAKSHMI (New Name) my husband name MEDARAMETLA VENKATARAJO. Hereafter my surname is known as MEDARAMETLA LAKSHMI (New Name) my husband name MEDARAMETLA VENKATARAJO.

(TH\_BSR)

**CHANGE OF NAME**  
I, CHELLUBOINA RAMESH S/O VENKATESWARA RAO, D.NO.: 5-97, RAMALAYAM ROAD, BHAGESWARAM, PALAKOLLU MANDALAM - 534 260, WEST GODAVARI DISTRICT, ANDHRA PRADESH. I HAVE CHANGED MY NAME FROM CHELLUBOINA RAMESH (OLD NAME) TO CHELLUBOINA RAMESH (NEW NAME) HENCE FORTH I AM BEING CALLED AS CHELLUBOINA RAMESH (NEW NAME) FOR ALL PURPOSES.

(TH\_SIVA PRASAD)

**CHANGE OF NAME**  
I, PARBATHI DEVI, is legally wedded Wife of No: 13878908A, Rank: EX NAIK (TS), Name: RAM CHANDRA REDDY presently resident of H.No.5-16, Akkapalli Village, Basinipelli Post, Bestawaripeta Mandal & Tetsisi, Prakasam District, Andhra Pradesh -523346. I have changed my name from PARBATHI DEVI to CHILAKALA PARVATHI as per affidavit dated 16-03-2026 before Ptl. Judd. Magistrate of 1st Class, Giddalur.

(TH\_BSR)

**CHANGE OF SURNAME**  
I, DEVDAR BONTU, (OLD NAME) S/O RANA BONTU, R/O. FLAT-FF5, SAI LAKSHMI APARTMENT, KOTIAPETA, GUNTUR, Andhra Pradesh-522501, here by I declare that I have changed my surname as DEVDAR BONTU (New Name) S/o. RANA BONTU here after my name is known as DEVDAR BONTU (New Name) S/o. RANA BONTU (New Name) S/o. RANA BONTU (TH\_44949)

**HELPLINE**

7

THE HANS INDIA

NEED YOUR FAVOURITE NEWSPAPER

Call: 9705555551

**NOTICE:**

Readers are advised to make appropriate enquiries while responding to advertisements in these columns. THE HANS INDIA (Hyderabad Media House PVT Ltd) does not vouch for any claims made by the advertisers. Hyderabad Media House PVT Ltd. shall not be held responsible/liable for any consequences in case such claims are found to be false.

# Disruption in LPG supply hits hotels

- Some restaurants have restricted service to a single meal a day, while small eateries and biryani stalls have started cooking on firewood stoves due to lack of gas cylinders

- Officials acknowledge that LPG bookings have increased sharply in the undivided East Godavari district over the past 15 days



Hotel workers cooking biryani on firewood at Quarry Market area in Rajamahendravaram

have nevertheless caused anxiety among families. Earlier, urban consumers could book the next cylinder 21 days after receiving one. The interval has now been extended to 25 days. In rural areas, consumers can place the next booking only after 45 days. Many households say this restriction is difficult to manage. M Krishnaveni, a homemaker, said families with four to six members often finish a cylinder within about 20 days, making it difficult to wait for the next booking window. Shortage of commercial cylinders has also led some businesses to use domestic LPG cylinders illegally in restaurants and food stalls. Following complaints, officials conducted inspections at several hotels during the past four days and seized 45 domestic cylinders being used for commercial purposes. Cases were registered against 22 persons under the relevant provisions.

The situation has prompted people to look for alternatives. Traders in Rajamahendravaram say sales of induction stoves and electric cookers have increased significantly as households prepare for possible supply delays. A dealer on Main Road, Satish, said demand for these appliances

has risen so sharply that many models are currently out of stock. Meanwhile, the effects of the conflict are also being felt in the edible oil market. Consumers allege that traders are increasing prices by citing supply disruptions. Over the past ten days, prices of various cooking oils have risen by up to Rs 20 per litre. A sunflower oil packet that previously sold for around Rs 165 is now priced at about Rs 180. Retail traders say wholesale suppliers are providing only half the quantity requested, claiming reduced availability. According to wholesale dealer Janardhan, the undivided district consumes nearly 75 tonnes of cooking oil every day, with more than half of the supply dependent on imports.

Palm oil raw material is largely imported from Singapore and Malaysia, while sunflower oil raw material comes mainly from Indonesia through sea routes. These shipments reach ports such as Kakinada and Krishnapatnam, where the oil is refined, packed and then distributed to markets across the Godavari districts. Traders say any disruption in imports quickly affects local availability and prices.

# 'Statue of Sacrifice' puts Telugu pride on global stage: Lokesh

HANS NEWS SERVICE  
VIJAYAWADA



Minister Nara Lokesh addressing the gathering at the unveiling of Potti Srimamulu's statue in Amaravati on Monday

MINISTER for education and IT Nara Lokesh said the installation of the 58-foot bronze statue of Potti Srimamulu in Amaravati has taken the greatness of the Telugu people from the state capital to the international stage. He said the "Statue of Sacrifice" symbolises the pride and self-respect of Andhra Pradesh and stands as a living reminder of Srimamulu unparalleled sacrifice.

Lokesh participated in the unveiling ceremony of the 58-foot bronze statue of Amarajeevi Potti Srimamulu in the people's capital Amaravati along with Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu on the occasion of Srimamulu's 125th birth anniversary. The statue has been erected to commemorate his historic 58-day fast unto death demanding the formation of a separate Andhra State.

Paying tributes at the memorial, Lokesh said he felt proud to say that he is a Telugu citizen of Andhra Pradesh and that this sense of pride was given to the Telugu people by Potti Srimamulu. "He is not just an individual but a symbol of Telugu honour. His sacrifice gave us our state, and his birth anniversary is like a festival for

every Telugu person," he said. Lokesh recalled that during his Yuva Galam padayatra, he had promised members of the Arya Vaishya community that a grand statue of Amarajeevi would be installed in Amaravati. "It gives me immense satisfaction that we were able to fulfil that promise in a short time," he said.

He noted that the foundation for the statue was laid on September 3, 2025, and the project was completed within 194 days, reflecting the commitment of the coalition government, the memorial trust, officials, workers and donors who contributed to the initiative. Lokesh described Potti Srimamulu as a tireless freedom fighter and social reformer who fought selflessly for society without seeking power or political positions. Inspired by Mahatma Gandhi, Srimamulu joined the Sabarmati Ashram,

participated in the freedom movement, and even went to jail during the Satyagraha struggle. He also led movements for Dalit temple entry in Nellore and fought against untouchability, undertaking several hunger strikes for social justice. Lokesh explained that Srimamulu began his historic fast on October 19, 1952, at the residence of Bulusu Sambamurthy in Madras and continued it for 58 days, sacrificing his life for the cause of a separate Andhra State. His death stirred the nation and ultimately led to the formation of Andhra State with Kurnool as its capital on October 1, 1953. He also referred to historian Ramachandra Guha, who wrote that Potti Srimamulu had a profound impact on India's history and geography, as his sacrifice paved the way for the reorganisation of states on linguistic lines.

# APCRDA wins 'Economic Times GovTech Award 2026'

HANS NEWS SERVICE  
VIJAYAWADA

THE Andhra Pradesh Capital Region Development Authority (APCRDA) has received national recognition for its innovative digital planning initiative for the development of the people's capital, Amaravati. The authority's "Amaravati Integrated Digital Urban Planning and Governance Platform" has been selected for the Gold Award at The

Economic Times GovTech Awards 2026.

The award has been announced by The Economic Times, which informed APCRDA Commissioner K. Kannababu about the honour and congratulated the authority for its achievement.

The digital platform, developed based on the Amaravati Master Plan, integrates advanced technologies such as Amaravati Digital Twin and ICT platforms

to support efficient urban planning and governance. The project has been selected for the Gold Award under the "Smart Cities & Urban Tech Leadership" category, recognizing its role in enabling technology-driven city development.

The Economic Times GovTech Awards aim to identify and honour innovative technology projects implemented in the government sector across India. The winners were selected

by a distinguished jury comprising experts and former senior government officials.

The awards will be formally presented at a ceremony scheduled to be held Thursday at the Hyatt Regency in New Delhi.

Officials said the recognition highlights the growing emphasis on digital governance and smart urban planning in Amaravati and strengthens the state's efforts to build a modern, technology-driven capital city.

# SRIRAMULU REMEMBERED

HANS NEWS SERVICE  
ONGOLE



District officials and public representatives paying tributes to Potti Srimamulu in Ongole on Monday

SOCIAL Welfare Minister Dr Dola Sree Bala Veeranjanya Swamy paid tributes to Potti Srimamulu, the freedom fighter who sacrificed his life for a separate state for Telugu people, on the occasion of his 125th birth anniversary, and described Srimamulu's fighting spirit as an enduring inspiration for generations. The celebrations were held in Ongole, where Minister Swamy, along with Collector P Raja Babu, Joint Collector Kalpana Kumari, MLA Damachala Janardhana Rao, Mayor Gangada Sujatha, AP Tourism Development Corporation Chairman

Dr Nukasani Balaji, and other dignitaries garlanded Srimamulu's statue near CVN Reading Room. Speaking at the event, the minister announced that the state government is installing a 58-foot bronze statue of Potti Srimamulu in Amaravati, honouring his immense

contribution to the Telugu people. The Collector said that Srimamulu's historic fast-unto-death laid the foundation for the formation of linguistic states, leading to the establishment of Andhra State. MLA Janardhana Rao emphasised that it is the responsibility of every citizen to pass Srimamulu's legacy to future generations and announced plans to install a bronze statue at the CVN Reading Room Centre.

The event concluded with a special programme at Prakasam Bhavan, where attendees watched a live broadcast of the bronze statue unveiling in Amaravati, attended by the Chief Minister, Deputy Chief Minister, and other ministers.

# 29 bonded labourers rescued

HANS NEWS SERVICE  
ONGOLE

TWENTY-nine bonded labourers belonging to Chenchu tribal families from VY Colony of Kurichedu Mandal were rescued after being forced to work at a coal kiln near Kalvakurthy Road of Telekapalli Mandal in Nagarkurnool district, for nearly a decade.

The rescue was initiated by the Dalit Bahujan Resource Centre (DBRC), whose representatives visited the site upon receiving information and alerted the Nagarkurnool District Revenue Divisional Officer in coordination with India Labour Line. A special team led by Telekapalli Tahsildar Vijay Kumar, along with SI Naresh, District Labour Officer Rajkumar, and DCPU Officer Srisailem, rescued all 29 individuals, including men, women, and children



Collector P Raja Babu and other officials with those rescued from bonded labour in Ongole on Monday

from six families.

Kiln owner Lalu faces criminal charges under relevant bonded labour laws. The rescued workers were subsequently brought to Ongole and presented before collector P Raja Babu, who assigned rehabilitation responsibilities to Joint Collector Kalpana Kumari.

In a heartwarming gesture, a two-month-old baby born to rescued couple Shiva and Parvathi was named

'Prerana' (Inspiration). DBRC Project Director Al-ladi Deva Kumar noted that this is Prakasam district's second bonded labour rescue case this year. District Labour Officer Gayatri Devi, DBRC state coordinator Hemalatha, area coordinator Darla Koteswara Rao, India Labour Line Guntur in-charge Suresh Kumar, Prakasam in-charge Kiran Kumar, and others participated in the programme.

# Reply sought on bringing back artifacts to India

NARASARAOPET: Narasaraopet MP Sri Krishnadevarayalu raised a question in the Lok Sabha regarding the steps being taken by the Central Government to bring back India's historical and cultural heritage artifacts that were taken abroad on Monday.

It was recalled that in 2003, when Narendra Modi was serving as Chief Minister, he visited Geneva and brought back the mortal remains of freedom fighter Shyamji Krishna Varma to India. After becoming Prime Minister in 2014, Modi also facilitated the return of around 600 historical and cultural artifacts from countries such as the United States and Australia. Speaking about the Narasaraopet parliamentary constituency he represents, he noted that several archaeological and heritage objects belonging to the ancient Amaravati civilization and Buddhist stupas from the period of Acharya Nagarjuna had been taken abroad.

He asked the government to clarify what concrete steps are being taken to bring back such heritage objects currently held by foreign institutions such as the Victoria and Albert Museum in London.

Responding to the question, Union Tourism Minister Gajendra Singh Shekhawat stated that many of India's historical and cultural artifacts were taken abroad during the period of colonial rule. He explained that under international agreements among countries worldwide, if artifacts belonging to one nation—especially those dating prior to the 17th century—are located in another country, they can be returned to their country of origin. Shekhawat acknowledged that many artifacts related to the Buddhist stupas established by Acharya Nagarjuna, as well as several other Indian antiquities, are housed in the Victoria and Albert Museum in London.

# Uninterrupted LPG supply assured

HANS NEWS SERVICE  
ONGOLE

PRAKASAM Collector P Raja Babu assured the residents that adequate measures have been taken to ensure an uninterrupted cooking gas supply across the district, despite the ongoing conflict between Iran and Israel in the Middle East.

Addressing a press conference at the Collectorate on Monday alongside Joint Collector Kalpana Kumari, the Collector urged citizens not to believe social media rumours claiming that gas stocks would deplete and



Collector P Raja Babu and joint collector Kalpana Kumari speaking at a press meet in Ongole on Monday

prices would rise due to the Middle East war situation. He revealed that Prakasam district has 551759 domes-

tic LPG connections served by 39 gas agencies, while Markapuram district has 322279 connections served

by 25 agencies. Against the daily requirement of 9875 cylinders, dealers currently hold 11542 cylinders, distributed on a First-In-First-Out basis, with no shortages anywhere.

Joint collector Kalpana Kumari stated that a Control Room has been established under the Civil Supplies Department to address public grievances. Officials are conducting daily inspections of hotels and restaurants to prevent the misuse of domestic cylinders for commercial purposes, while monitoring dealers' stock registers, she added.

# GMC passes budget for FY 2026-27

HANS NEWS SERVICE  
GUNTUR

GUNTUR Municipal Corporation council special meeting held on Monday passed an estimated budget of Rs 1,700 crore for the financial year 2026-27. GMC showed opening balance of Rs 7,74,28,13,058 and receipts of Rs 926,33,68,007. It allotted funds for the development of infrastructure in the city. Mayor Kovelamudi Ravindra presided over the meeting. The council held detailed discussions on the development works undertaken in the city and the implementation of various welfare schemes.

Speaking on this occasion, Ravindra stated that several development works have been undertaken in the corporation during the last ten months. He said that under the leadership of chief minister N Chandrababu Naidu, he learned the importance of welfare and development. Development



Mayor K Ravindra addressing GMC Council meeting on Monday. GMC commissioner K Mayur Ashok, MLA Galla Madhavi are also seen

works have been carried out in all 57 divisions without any discrimination of caste or religion, he said. He said, the budget is useful for the development of Guntur. Everyone cooperated with him in terms of administration and governance. He said works worth Rs 200 crore have been sanctioned in the East zone, while development work Rs 279 crore has been taken up in the West zone. He said that

the works that were initiated are being completed as planned before March 31. Special focus has been given to roads and drainage works and many of them have been completed. Regarding the third phase of the Inner Ring Road, he said compensation was paid to those who lost their houses soon after he assumed office. The Sankar Vilas Bridge will be completed by March 31, he said.

# 3 killed in road mishap

HANS NEWS SERVICE  
MARKAPURAM

THREE persons were killed and five others severely injured in a tragic road accident in Markapuram district on Monday. A mini lorry carrying a load of bananas collided head-on with a Force Toofan vehicle on

the road between Mittameedipalli in Markapuram Mandal and Jangamguntla village in Cumbum Mandal. The injured were initially rushed to Government Hospital in Cumbum for first aid and were shifted to District Hospital in Nandyal for advanced medical treatment. Police identified the deceased as residents

of Chikodi village, Belgaum district, Karnataka. They were reportedly returning from Srisailem and heading towards Mahanandi when the accident occurred. One person travelling in the banana-laden mini lorry was also seriously injured.

The collision scattered bananas across the Amaravati-Anantapur National Highway, disrupting traffic. Police reached the scene and launched an investigation into the accident.

# Jal Jeevan Mission 2.0

# Safe water supply to villages through taps

HANS NEWS SERVICE  
AMARAVATI

THE Central government has launched Jal Jeevan Mission 2.0 with an estimated outlay of Rs 8.69 lakh crore to ensure safe and sustainable drinking water supply to every rural household in the country. The mission aims to provide tap water connections to all villages, protect public health, and support the vision of building a healthy and developed Viksit Bharat.

Addressing the media at the Secretariat here on Monday, Chairman of Twenty Point Programme Implementation (Viksit Bharat - Swarna Andhra Pradesh) Lanka Dinakar said that in Andhra Pradesh, the coalition government



L Dinakar

led by Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu is working to strengthen the implementation of the mission and address the gaps that occurred during 2019-2024. The state government has set a target to ensure safe drinking water through tap connections to all rural households by December

2028, supported by sustainable water sources and improved infrastructure.

Deputy Chief Minister Pawan Kalyan is overseeing corrective measures to expand the scheme and ensure safe drinking water for around 96 lakh rural households across the state. Due to earlier administrative issues, the estimated project cost in Andhra Pradesh has now increased to about Rs 81,000 crore.

The Union Cabinet has also extended the Jal Jeevan Mission timeline to December 2028 to enable states to complete pending works. Nationally, the mission has already provided tap water connections to over 15.8 crore rural households, significantly improving access to safe drinking water.

# State to be developed as East-West cargo corridor

- CM orders faster cargo operations at Mulapeta, Machilipatnam, and Ramayapatnam ports, targeting hinterland cargo from six neighbouring states
- Machilipatnam and Ramayapatnam ports slated for completion by December; Ramayapatnam to gain prominence with BPCL refinery and dedicated rail link to Kadapa Steel Plant
- Port townships, industrial corridors, and fishing harbour expansions planned to position Andhra Pradesh as a logistics hub on India's east coast amid global shipping disruptions

HANS NEWS SERVICE  
VIJAYAWADA

CHIEF Minister N Chandrababu Naidu has directed officials to develop the state as a major East-West cargo corridor by strengthening cargo handling operations at ports across the state.

During a review meeting held at the Secretariat on ports and fishing harbours, the Chief Minister stressed the need to expedite cargo operations at the newly constructed ports of Mulapeta, Machilipatnam and Ramayapatnam. He instructed officials to take necessary steps to ensure cargo movement

from the hinterland regions of neighbouring states such as Odisha, Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Telangana and Karnataka through these ports.

Officials informed the Chief Minister that construction of Machilipatnam and Ramayapatnam ports is expected to be completed by December 2026. Naidu said that once the refinery of Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited is established, Ramayapatnam will emerge as a major container and bulk cargo port.

The Chief Minister also revealed that the Railway Ministry has approved a dedicat-



Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu holds a review on works on ports and fishing harbours with officials at the Secretariat on Monday

ed rail connectivity project from Ramayapatnam to the Kadapa Steel Plant, which will significantly improve cargo transportation.

Naidu suggested developing port townships near the three ports to boost commercial activity and said industrial corridors are also likely to emerge in these regions due to improved infrastructure.

He further directed officials to accelerate the second phase of fishing harbour construction at Budagatlapa-

lem Fishing Harbour, Pudidamadaka Fishing Harbour and Kothapatnam Fishing Harbour. Highlighting the state's strategic location, the Chief Minister said Andhra Pradesh is poised to become a logistics hub on India's east coast, with ports and fishing harbours planned roughly every 50 kilometres along the coastline. He emphasized that the state's ports should emerge as game changers in cargo handling.

Naidu also pointed out that due to the ongoing glob-

al conflicts affecting ports in Dubai and Gulf countries, there is a growing perception that ports on India's east coast are safer. He urged officials to take advantage of this opportunity to strengthen Andhra Pradesh's maritime infrastructure and attract greater cargo traffic. The review meeting was attended by Special Chief Secretary for Investments and Infrastructure M. T. Krishna Babu and Maritime Board CEO Abhishek Kumar, among other officials.

## AP fixes Rs 2.39 lakh unit cost for PMAY-Gramin 2.0 houses

- Interest subsidy on SHG loans to be reimbursed from 2026-27 to 2028-29
- State housing corporation directed to implement scheme across the state

HANS NEWS SERVICE  
VIJAYAWADA

THE Andhra Pradesh government has fixed the unit cost at Rs.2.39 lakh for construction of houses under the Pradhan Mantri Awaas Yojana Gramin 2.0 (PMAY-G 2.0). Housing special chief secretary Ajay Jain issued GO Rt No 20 to this effect on Monday.

According to the government order, the revised unit cost includes convergence funds and Self-Help Group (SHG) loans. The order also provides for reimbursement of interest subsidy on SHG loans by the state government for the financial years from 2026-27 to 2028-29.

Officials said the decision was taken after examining proposals submitted by the managing director of the Andhra Pradesh State Housing Corporation Limited (APSHCL). The proposal



was prepared in accordance with guidelines issued by the ministry of rural development, Government of India, for the implementation of PMAY-Gramin 2.0. Under the scheme, the Centre provides assistance of Rs 1.2 lakh per house, which includes a central share of Rs.72,000 (60 per cent) and a state share of Rs 48,000 (40 per cent). In addition, beneficiaries will be eligible for an SHG loan of Rs 80,000 at an interest rate of 3 per cent, with the state government reimbursing the interest component.

The funding structure also includes convergence components such as wage support under the Viksit Bharat-Guarantee for Rozgar and Ajevika Mis-

sion - Gramin (VB-G-RAM-G) Scheme and the National Rural Livelihood Mission, amounting to Rs 27,000, and Rs 12,000 for sanitation support for construction of Individual Household Toilets (IHHLT) under the Swachh Bharat Mission. With these components, the total unit cost per house has been fixed at Rs 2,39,000.

The government has directed the managing director of APSHCL to take necessary steps for implementation of the scheme across the state. Officials said the revised unit cost would enable beneficiaries to construct better quality houses with additional financial support through convergence schemes and SHG loans.

### DRIVER'S MURDER CASE

## MLC Anantha Babu's wife appears before SIT

- Lakshmi Durga was questioned by SIT in Kakinada after High Court directive, linked as second accused in 2022 Dalit youth murder
- MLC Anantha Uday Bhaskar, first accused, allegedly staged driver Subrahmanyam's death as a road accident; later released on default bail

HANS NEWS SERVICE  
KAKINADA

STATE Legislative Council member Anantha Uday Bhaskar's wife Lakshmi Durga, on Monday appeared before the Special Investigation Team (SIT), probing the murder of his former driver.

She appeared before the investigating officer in Kakinada at the direction of the Andhra Pradesh High Court. Anantha Uday Bhaskar dropped her at the office of Sub-Divisional Police Officer (SDPO), where investigating officer Manish Patil Devraj questioned her.

The High Court had directed her to appear before SIT between March 16 and March 30 from 10 am to 5 pm. The order was passed on her petition seeking cancellation of a non-bailable war-



File picture of Anantha Babu and his wife Lakshmi Durga

rant against her issued by the Special SC/ST Court in Rajamahendravaram. The SIT, in the supplementary charge sheet filed last month, had stated that Lakshmi Durga had a role in the 2022 murder of Dalit youth Veedhi Subrahmanyam. Following this, she was named a second accused in the case and a non-bailable warrant was issued a week ago.

MLC Anantha Uday Bhaskar, also known as Anantha Babu, is the first accused in the case. He is accused of killing his former driver, Subrahmanyam, and later delivering the body to the victim's house. Sub-

rahmanyam (34) was found dead under suspicious circumstances in Kakinada on May 19, 2022. The MLC of the then-ruling YSR Congress Party had personally transported the body to the victim's parents' residence around 2 a.m. in his own car, claiming it was a road accident.

The family, however, suspected foul play and refused to accept the body. The murder had sparked protests by the victim's relatives and Dalit organisations.

Anantha Babu had allegedly pushed the deceased during an argument, resulting in his fall and death. The

legislator allegedly inflicted additional injuries on the body to make it appear as though the death resulted from a road accident.

The MLC was subsequently arrested, and the YSRCP suspended him from the party.

With the investigating officer unable to submit the charge sheet within 90 days, Anantha Babu was released on default bail in December 2022.

After coming to power in June 2024, the TDP-led coalition government decided to re-investigate the case. Indian Police Service (IPS) officer and incumbent Kakinada DSP Manish Devraj Patil was appointed as the investigation officer. In July 2025, the SC/ST Special Court ordered a re-investigation into the case. The MLC had challenged the order in the High Court, but it granted a stay on a lower court's order, which had also directed that a supplementary chargesheet be filed within 90 days.

Last month, the Supreme Court observed that there was a clear "nexus between police and power" in the case and that the police had attempted to help Anantha Uday Bhaskar secure bail.

Following this, the state government suspended four police officers over the lapses in the investigation that led to the release of the MLC.

## KANIPAKAM TEMPLE TO GET RS3.4 Cr PUSHKARINI

- The existing temple tank to be shifted forward by 80-90 ft to create open space in front of temple
- Akhilandam to be developed on Tirumala model for coconut breaking and lamp lighting rituals
- Two Kalyana Mandapams and a guest house to be constructed with Rs 25 cr TTD funds

PRADEEP VENNELAKANTI  
TIRUPATI

THE historic Sri Varasiddhi Vinayaka Swamy temple at Kanipakam is set to witness a major transformation with temple authorities launching a series of development initiatives aimed at improving pilgrim amenities and ensuring the smooth conduct of religious rituals and festivals. The plans form part of a comprehensive master development programme being implemented for the temple town.

A key highlight of the initiative is the construction of a new Pushkarini near the Supatha Mandapam at an estimated cost of Rs 3.40 crore. The existing temple tank located in front of the shrine



A view of the Kanipakam temple

has been creating difficulties during major processions, particularly Vahana Sevams conducted as part of the annual Brahmotsavams, as it restricts the movement of temple chariots and vehicles despite the presence of Mada streets on three sides.

Devasathanam Chairman V Surendra Babu popularly known as Mani Naidu said permissions for the project had already been secured from the Endowments Department and the temple administration was moving ahead with the execution schedule.

He told The Hans India that, land transfer process from a private hotel owner will be completed in the next 10-15 days after which tenders will be called for. The target is to complete the new

Pushkarini before the Brahmotsavams this year.

Officials stated that the new Pushkarini would be constructed with the same dimensions as the existing one, measuring about 140 feet in length and width and 12 feet in depth. Stones from the present tank will be re-used, preserving traditional elements while introducing improved facilities.

The structure will feature stone pillars sourced from older temple architecture, along with a centrally located stone Neerajana Mandapam housing an idol of Lord Vinayaka. Steps for devotees, barricades, water purification systems and modern lighting arrangements will also be installed.

The redesign will effectively shift the Pushkarini for-

ward by nearly 80 to 90 feet, creating a spacious open area in front of the temple.

According to the Chairman, this change will significantly improve the movement of the Lord's Utsava Murthy idols during festivals and provide better convenience for devotees visiting the shrine in large numbers.

As part of the expansion, the Devasathanam is also planning to establish an Akhilandam in front of the temple on the lines of Tirumala, enabling devotees to break coconuts and light lamps as part of fulfilling their vows. The existing TTD building and a nearby police station will be relocated, and alternative locations have already been identified. Meanwhile, the Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams has sanctioned Rs 25 crore for the overall development of the temple town. With this, two air-conditioned Kalyana Mandapams will be constructed at an estimated cost of Rs 16 crore, including one dedicated to conducting mass weddings, the Chairman revealed.

A guest house costing around Rs 9 crore will also be built by TTD. These facilities will be maintained by the Kanipakam Devasathanam, and the revenue generated from them will accrue to the temple administration.

## TTD announces schedule for June ticket quota

- Arjita Seva tickets will be released online at 10 am today
- Rs 300 Special Entry Darshan tickets will be released on March 24

HANS NEWS SERVICE  
TIRUMALA

THE Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams (TTD) will release the quota for various Srivari darshan tickets and accommodation for June 2026 in phases starting March 18.

According to TTD, tickets for Srivari Arjita Sevams - Suprabhatam, Thomala, Archana and Ashtadala Pada Padmaradhana - will be released online at 10 am on March 18. Devotees can register for the electronic dip for these sevams until 10 am on March 20.

Those allotted tickets through the electronic dip must complete payment between March 20 and March 22 before 12 noon to confirm their bookings.

Tickets for other Arjita Sevams such as Kalyanotsavam,

Unjal Seva, Arjita Brahmotsavam, Sahasra Deepalankara Seva and Jyeshthabishekam will be released online at 10 am on March 21.

The quota for Virtual Sevams along with their darshan slots will be made available online at 3 pm on March 21. TTD will release Angapradakshinam tokens online at 10 am on March 23, while the quota for Srivani Trust darshan tickets will be released at 11 am on the same day. The quota of free special darshan tokens for senior citizens, differently-abled persons and devotees suffering from chronic illnesses will be released online at 3 pm on March 23.

Special Entry Darshan tickets will be released online at 10 am on March 24. On the same day, the accommodation quota for Tirumala and Tirupati will be made available online at 3 pm.

TTD has advised devotees to book Srivari Arjita Sevams and darshan tickets only through its official website: <https://ttdevasthanams.ap.gov.in>

## SSC exams begin smoothly across state

- Over 6.22 lakh students appear on Day 1; attendance recorded at 98.90%
- Authorities conduct 1,753 inspections to ensure fair conduct of exams

HANS NEWS SERVICE  
VIJAYAWADA

THE Secondary School Certificate (SSC) public examinations began smoothly across the state on Monday, with authorities reporting peaceful conduct of the examinations at all centres.

According to the Board of Secondary Education (BSE), a total of 6,29,109 regular candidates had registered for the examinations. Of them, 6,22,217 students appeared for the first-day examination, while 6,852 candidates were absent. The exams were conducted at 3,415 centres across the state. Officials said the overall attendance on the first day stood at 98.90 per cent, reflecting a high turnout of candidates.

To ensure smooth and transparent conduct of the examinations, the Board of Secondary Education put in place a comprehensive monitoring mechanism.

As part of these arrangements, various authorities conducted 1,753 inspection visits to examination centres across the state. The inspections were carried out by



SSC students attending the public examinations at a centre in Vijayawada on Monday

Photo: Ch Venkata Mastan

district collectors, district-level observers, district educational officers, assistant commissioners of government examinations, district monitoring coordinators, flying squads and other officials.

Director of Government Examinations KV Srinivasulu Reddy said that four invigilators were found negligent in discharging their duties during the examination. Two invigilators in YSR Kadapa district, one in Anantapur district, and another in Palnadu district were reported

for lapses. He said the matter was taken seriously and strict action would be initiated against the concerned invigilators as per the rules governing the conduct of examinations.

He also instructed district educational officers, chief superintendents, departmental officers and invigilators to maintain strict vigilance and adhere to examination protocols to ensure the smooth conduct of the remaining SSC examinations.

## APA India launches tele-counselling for Class 10 students during exams

HANS NEWS SERVICE  
VIJAYAWADA

THE Advanced Psychological Services Association launched a free tele-counselling initiative to support Class 10 students appearing for public examinations in the state.

Announcing the initiative, association national working president Krishna Bharat said the organisation has decided to extend psychological support to students facing stress and anxiety during the examination period. As part of the programme, 55 psychologists from across the state have volunteered to provide tele-counselling services.

Krishna Bharat explained that a special poster listing the psychologists, their availability timings and contact numbers district-wise has been prepared and steps are being taken to circulate it widely among students across the state. Students

experiencing examination stress can directly call the listed psychologists and receive counselling support.

He added that the number of psychologists participating in the tele-counselling service will be increased further if required, depending on the demand from students.

The tele-counselling initiative will be coordinated by Krishna Bharat along with Dr Varalakshmi, State president of the AP Committee, and MP Janakiram.

Students or psychologists facing any issues related to tele-counselling can contact the organisers at 9985428261, the association said. Association leaders including honorary president of the AP Committee Dr. Puli Srinivas appealed to Class 10 students across Andhra Pradesh to make use of the free counselling facility to manage stress and approach their examinations with confidence.

## TG govt should curb drug menace with iron fist

In a shocking incident, Putta Mahesh Kumar and 'Pilot' Rohith Reddy tested positive for drugs. They are not ordinary men on the street. One of them is a lawmaker in Parliament while the other is a former lawmaker from Telangana. And they are nouveau riche as well. Mahesh Kumar is a member of Lok Sabha from Eluru in Andhra Pradesh. Representing Telugu Desam Party (TDP), he became an MP in 2024, at the young age of 36 years. His father Putta Sudhakar Yadav is a legislator from Mydukur in YSR Kadapa district. Sudhakar Yadav also served as the chairman of Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanam (TTD) between April 28, 2018, and June 19, 2019. As an MP, Mahesh Kumar's primary role is to take part in enacting laws that govern the

country. Rohith Reddy, who calls himself 'Pilot' Rohith Reddy, was also a lawmaker in the past, albeit at the state-level. In 2018, he won on a Congress ticket as an MLA from Tandur, now in Vikarabad district, but shifted loyalties to Bharat Rashtra Samithi (BRS) which was in power then. However, he lost elections from the same Assembly segment in 2023 on the BRS ticket.

Today, the two have been found consuming drugs! Does this incident show the callous attitude of these two politicians? Or are they not afraid of law enforcement agencies in Telangana?

Incidentally, the duo was allegedly caught red-handed when a team from Elite Action Group for Drug Law Enforcement (EAGLE), on a tip-off, raided a farm-

house owned by Rohith Reddy in Moinabad area. While a liquor party was underway, one of the accused even opened fire at the police team when it entered the farmhouse. A drug test was conducted on 11 people and five of them, including the MP and the ex-MLA, tested positive. Surprisingly, the MP was given a station bail, a police action which is likely to kick up a row nationally, while Rohith Reddy and others were remanded to judicial custody. This incident clearly indicates how fast drug menace is spreading in and around Hyderabad. Drug usage has reached menacing proportions, primarily due to ever-growing pub culture and widespread growth of farmhouses. It is said that there are over 2,000 farmhouses around Aziznagar in

Moinabad mandal alone. Incidentally, the same Rohith Reddy's farmhouse was the place where a plot to buy four BRS MLAs was uncovered in 2022. That incident also rocked Telangana politics as did the Sunday's drug bust.

Nevertheless, strict vigilance on pubs, farmhouses and colleges will reduce the drug threat significantly. Besides, stringent punishment for both drug peddlers and consumers can be a strong deterrent. Coming back to the latest drug bust, it is good that TDP, which is in power in Andhra Pradesh, acted swiftly, served a notice on Mahesh Kumar seeking his explanation, and decided to keep him away from party activities till he comes clean on the allegations. AP Chief Minister Nara Chandrababu Naidu

also condemned the irresponsible behaviour of the young MP, while ordering for an immediate action. But BRS has remained silent on Rohith Reddy! A few months back, Telangana Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy directed the police to act tough against drug peddlers and consumers. He called for zero-tolerance towards drug usage. He was also instrumental in setting up EAGLE for eliminating the drug menace from the state. The name looks menacing, but EAGLE's action on the ground seems to be lackadaisical. Will this latest sensational drug case spur it into action? Unless the Telangana government acts tough and deals with the narcotics issue with an iron hand, the state will continue to face drug threats day in and day out.

## LETTERS

### Bring a law on euthanasia

The Hans India reader Datta Prasad Shirodkar has rightly stated that the debate about whether mercy killing is right or wrong, ethical or unethical, is likely to continue in the society (THI March 16). There are many families who have exhausted all medical avenues and resources in the treatment of their ailing family member, whose condition is permanently irreversible. They just pray to God to put an end to the suffering of their loved one quickly. It is time the government takes cognizance of the Supreme Court's landmark verdict and enact a law on euthanasia.

Dinanath Shenolikar, Hyderabad

### A touching tribute to Potti Sriramulu

It is a fitting tribute to erect a 58-foot bronze statue of Potti Sriramulu at Shakhmuru in Amaravati as the height of the statue symbolises the number of days he was a fast-unto-death. The statue was unveiled on Friday commemorating his 125th birth anniversary. It is reported that a park is coming up on 6.80 acres of land at an estimated cost of ₹150 crore. His fast-unto-death not only helped create Andhra Pradesh on linguistic lines but also paved the way to forming states like Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Kerala, Maharashtra, Gujarat, Bihar and Punjab, among others. Though Sriramulu hailed from a humble family, he protested twice before independence for the rights of Dalits and another two times after independence for the same. He sat on a protest for the fifth time for a separate state for Telugu people. His determination and attitude towards public issues made Mahatma Gandhi remark that he would have achieved independence much earlier if he had 10 followers like Sriramulu. The Smrutivanam in his memory will guide future generations.

Pratap Reddy Yaramala, Tiruvuru (AP)

### Naidu backing criminals

Hailed as the youngest MP, Putta Mahesh Kumar Yadav, representing TDP in the Lok Sabha, did the unthinkable by consuming cocaine unmindful of the repercussions, if caught. Forgetting his position, he behaved like any other Gen-Z and is now repenting whereas his party boss Nara Chandrababu Naidu, as is his wont, simply issued a show cause notice to the MP seeking a reply within 48 hours. Naidu knows how best to circumvent laws and hush up any case filed against his party leaders, including himself. It is a shame that 'criminals' are masquerading as political 'leaders' in our country and rulers, leaving the people high and dry. Naidu himself is "involved" in several white-collar crimes. A past master in managing the entire system including the judiciary, he "managed" to get an interim bail for himself on medical grounds in the Skill Development Scam case after 53 days in jail as a remand prisoner.

Govardhana Myneedu, Vijayawada

### E-waste recycling and safe disposal

This refers to "GHMC collects 15 tonnes of E-waste during mega drive" (March 16). This highlights the urgent need for continuous action. Establishing e-waste collection bins in every residential complex would ensure regular disposal. The collected material can then be recycled, with residues safely handled by GHMC through certified facilities. E-waste recycling recovers valuable metals, plastics, and glass, while safe disposal prevents toxic substances like lead, mercury, and cadmium from contaminating soil and water. The benefits are manifold—conserving resources, reducing pollution, creating green jobs, and supporting a circular economy. It also minimizes landfill waste and lowers the carbon footprint of new electronics production. The challenges include informal recycling practices that expose workers to hazards, limited infrastructure, weak regulation, and rising volumes of e-waste driven by rapid technological change. Stronger policies, global cooperation and consumer responsibility are essential to make e-waste management sustainable.

Dr O Prasad Rao, Hyderabad

### Go for a contingency fund

Propos the editorial "Prudent fiscal situation gives govt headroom to tackle crisis" (March 16). The Rs one lakh crore Economic Stabilisation Fund is a wise move to cushion global shocks, but a crisis corpus cannot substitute for fixing structural flaws. The recent Rs 19,230 crore additional fertiliser outlay exposes this reality. Subsidising manufacturers rather than farmers encourages waste, leakages, and soil damage from imbalanced urea use. Genuine fiscal prudence demands shifting to direct benefit transfers, promoting sustainable farming, and diversifying import sources. A contingency fund should address genuine emergencies, not mask the absence of long-overdue reforms. Creating new corpus without tackling inefficiencies is not consolidation, it is cosmetic comfort.

K Chidanand Kumar, Bengaluru

thehansreader@gmail.com

## BENGALURU ONLINE

### Lack of growth strategy impedes globally popular Mysuru silk industry

BENGALURU: Mysore Silk Saree is not just a garment but a symbol of pride for Mysuru and the entire state of Karnataka. Known for its elegance, purity and rich heritage, the saree enjoys enormous demand not only within India but also among buyers abroad. Yet, despite its popularity and economic potential, the industry continues to struggle due to traditional administrative approaches and lack of a progressive growth strategy.

Industry observers say the demand for authentic Mysore silk sarees is so high that influential people in Mysuru often receive calls from customers in other cities and even overseas requesting help in purchasing the premium saree. However, the inability to scale production and modernise the sector has prevented the industry from tapping its full potential.

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

# TG Speaker's order on anti-defection petitions is a tricky constitutional test



PROF. MADABHUSHI SRIDHAR ACHARYULU

It seems like the Anti-Defection Law is a defective law or a totally defective conclusion on the judgment of the Speaker of Telangana, Gaddam Prasad Kumar, on March 11. This has intensified a debate on whether the Speaker's decision was based on a strictly legal interpretation or influenced by political considerations.

The controversy surrounding the alleged defection of ten Members of the Legislative Assembly (MLAs) in Telangana has once again placed India's anti-defection law, legislative ethics, and constitutional accountability under intense public scrutiny. What began as a political dispute has now evolved into a significant constitutional question involving the powers of the Speaker, the limits of judicial review, and the integrity of representative democracy. The recent (March 13) directions of the Supreme Court of India in the matter have not decided the merits of the dispute but have highlighted a critical issue: transparency and procedural fairness in the Speaker's adjudication of disqualification petitions. The matter was heard by a two-judge bench, comprising Justice Sanjay Karol and Justice

Augustine George Masih.

During the proceedings, senior advocates appearing for the Speaker's office and the State government submitted that the Speaker had already completed the inquiry and had passed the final orders in all the disqualification petitions.

The controversy arose after ten MLAs, who were elected to the Telangana Legislative Assembly on the Bharat Rashtra Samithi (BRS) ticket, were accused of joining the ruling Congress party. Alleging that these MLAs had voluntarily given up their party membership, BRS leaders, including its working president K T Rama Rao (KTR) and Padi Kaushik Reddy, along with BJP MLA Yeleeti Maheshwar Reddy, approached the Supreme Court seeking directions regarding the disqualification petitions.

The petitions challenged the delay and the Speaker's alleged inaction in deciding the disqualification complaints under the anti-defection law. According to the Speaker's decision, the 10 MLAs had not defected from the BRS, and hence the disqualification petitions were dismissed. However, the petitioners raised a serious objection before the Court: copies of the Speaker's orders and records of the proceedings were not furnished to them.

#### SC's directions:

Taking note of these concerns, the Supreme Court questioned why the Speaker's office had not supplied the relevant documents to the petitioners, especially when they were parties to the proceedings. The court directed that certified copies of the



When voters elect a candidate based on the platform and ideology of a particular party, they are essentially endorsing that political programme. If the elected representative later switches allegiance, the voters' mandate is arguably compromised. The anti-defection law was meant to protect this mandate

Speaker's orders must be provided within 24 hours, while the depositions, statements, and other documents recorded during the proceedings had to be furnished within four days. At the same time, the court closed the present batch of petitions, observing that since the Speaker had already delivered his decisions, the appropriate remedy available to the petitioners would be to challenge those decisions through judicial review before the High Court. Thus, while the Supreme Court did not examine the correctness of the Speaker's verdict, it ensured that the petitioners would have access to the necessary documents to pursue further legal remedies.

#### The controversial findings:

The Speaker's ruling that the 10 MLAs had not defected triggered widespread criticism from political opponents and constitutional commentators. Several facts cited in the public domain have raised doubts about this conclusion. For instance, Khairatabad MLA Danam Nagender reportedly contested the Lok

Sabha elections from Secunderabad as a Congress candidate. Meanwhile, records on the Election Commission's website list him as a Congress nominee.

Similarly, Station Ghanpur MLA Kadiyam Srihari had been seen participating in Congress meetings and public programmes. His daughter contested the Warangal Lok Sabha seat as a Congress candidate and won. Given these developments, critics argue that it is difficult to reconcile the Speaker's finding that these MLAs continue to remain members of the BRS.

#### Constitutional Framework

The issue of defections in India is governed by the Tenth Schedule of the Constitution, introduced by the 52nd Constitutional Amendment in 1985. Under the Tenth Schedule, a legislator may be disqualified if:

1. They voluntarily give up membership of the political party on whose ticket they were elected;
2. They vote or abstain from voting against the party whip without permission;

3. An independent member joins a political party after being elected;
4. The authority to decide disqualification petitions rests with the Speaker (or Chairman) of the legislature.

#### Judicial review of the decisions:

The question of whether the Speaker's decisions can be reviewed by courts was settled in the landmark case of Kihoto Hollohan v. Zachillu. In that judgment, the Supreme Court upheld the validity of the anti-defection law but ruled that the Speaker's decisions are subject to judicial review. The court held that judicial intervention may be justified if the Speaker's decision:

- a. Violates constitutional provisions;
- b. Breaches the principles of natural justice;
- c. Is vitiated by mala fides or perversity.

Thus, the Speaker's decision is not beyond scrutiny. This principle is likely to be central if the Telangana matter reaches the High Court. Another recurring problem in anti-defection cases is the delay in deciding disqualification petitions. In the Telangana case, critics argue that not only was there a delay in deciding the petitions, but there was also a reluctance to provide certified copies of the orders, which further obstructed judicial review.

#### Natural justice:

At the heart of the controversy lies the issue of natural justice. Two core principles govern fair adjudication: Audi alteram partem, both sides must be heard, and reasoned decisions, the par-

ties must know the basis on which a decision has been made.

#### Democratic mandate:

Beyond legal technicalities, the issue of defections raises deeper questions about democratic morality. The Supreme Court's latest order does not conclude the controversy. Instead, it marks the beginning of the next phase of legal scrutiny. Once the Speaker's orders and related records are obtained, the petitioners are likely to approach the Telangana High Court seeking judicial review.

#### The High Court may examine several crucial questions:

1. Whether the MLAs had effectively given up their party membership;
2. Whether the Speaker's inquiry was fair and impartial;
3. Whether the decision is consistent with the constitutional principles governing defections.

Depending on the outcome, the matter could eventually return to the Supreme Court.

The Telangana episode also revives a broader institutional debate: Should the power to decide defection cases remain with the Speaker? Several constitutional scholars have suggested that this responsibility should instead be entrusted to an independent tribunal or the Election Commission of India to ensure impartiality. Until such reforms are undertaken, controversies like the present one are likely to recur.

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

## The silent thunder: When Vajpayee, the poet-PM, recalibrated the global order

NOMULA SRINIVAS RAO

We have the capacity for a big blast. Ours is not a cry of despair; it is a challenge to the world - Atal Bihari Vajpayee

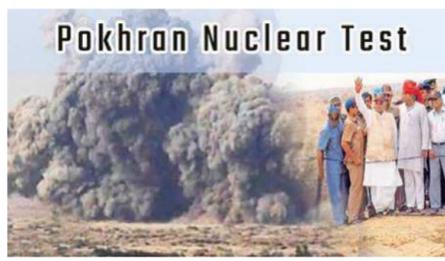
In the blistering, white-hot heat of the Thar Desert on May 11, 1998, the very sands of Pokhran didn't just shift; they shook the foundations of a geopolitical hierarchy that had long sought to keep India in a state of perpetual "strategic restraint." As the ground buckled and the sensors registered a seismic tremor of 5.3 on the Richter scale, a coded message flashed across the high-security corridors of New Delhi: "The Buddha has smiled again."

It was a moment of supreme audacity, orchestrated by a man who was as much a master of silence as he was of the spoken word. Bharat Ratna Atal Bihari Vajpayee, the poet-statesman, had just led India across the nuclear Rubicon, transforming a "post-colonial entity" into a "formidable power."

#### Anatomy of a secret: Defying the eye in the sky:

The 1998 Pokhran-II tests, codenamed 'Operation Shakti', were not merely a scientific achievement; they were a masterclass in clandestine leadership and psychological warfare. Vajpayee understood a chilling reality: the world's superpowers—armed with billion-dollar KH-11 "Keyhole" spy satellites—were watching India's every move from the heavens. The CIA had successfully blocked previous attempts by detecting heat signatures and soil movement. To succeed, Vajpayee knew he didn't just need scientists; he needed shadows.

Under his unwavering direction, the mission was shrouded in a "cloak of invisibility." He empowered the duo of Dr APJ Abdul Kalam and Dr R Chidambaram to operate with total autonomy, bypassing the traditional, leak-prone bureaucracy. Scientists wore army fatigues to blend in with the local units, worked only during the brief "black



spots" when satellites were positioned elsewhere, and moved heavy equipment under the cover of swirling sandstorms.

Vajpayee's leadership was the steady, invisible hand on the tiller. He took the ultimate gamble with India's economy, knowing that the fallout—draconian economic sanctions and diplomatic isolation—would be immediate. Yet he remained resolute. While the West slept, a poet was preparing a symphony of fire. He chose the nation's long-term dignity over the world's short-term approval, proving that true sovereignty cannot be requested—it must be taken.

#### The nuclear paradox-Iron fist, a velvet heart:

Vajpayee was a walking paradox, a leader who authorized the creation of world-ending weapons while penning verses about the fragility of a dewdrop. His decision to "go nuclear" was not born of warmongering or a thirst for conquest, but of a deep-seated, civilisational desire for peace through strength. He famously remarked that weapons are not for war, but to ensure that war never happens.

He believed that a weak India could never be a truly peaceful India but a vulnerable one. By declaring India a nuclear-weapon state, he wasn't seeking a tool for ag-

gression; he was building a "Minimum Credible Deterrent." His strategic foresight was prophetic. He anticipated the two-front threat from neighbours long before it became a staple of modern defense journals.

The "poet's resolve" was visible even as he faced the wrath of the Clinton administration. He remained unfazed in the face of global condemnation, famously stating in Parliament that India would never use these weapons against non-nuclear states—the No First Use (NFU) policy. This was his hallmark: the heart of a poet who wept for the fallen soldier, but the spine of a warrior who ensured that no mother would ever have to weep because her country was defenseless against nuclear blackmail.

#### From 1998 to a global power:

Estimates are that India possesses an arsenal of approximately 180 nuclear warheads. Vajpayee transformed India from a "suppliant" state, constantly asking for

permission, into a "deciding" power. He proved that India could withstand global sanctions and emerge stronger, eventually forcing the world to sign the Civil Nuclear Deal and recognize India as a responsible nuclear state.

He led with a smile that carried the weight of a thousand suns and a voice that could silence a storm. He showed that you could be a man of peace while holding the ultimate deterrent, and that a poet's vision is often clearer than a politician's calculation.

As we look back at the 1998 explosions, we remember not just the fire in the sky, but the calm in the heart of the man who ignited it. He was Bharat's true Ratna—a bridge between the ancient wisdom of the Buddha and the modern necessity of the missile.

My poetry is a declaration of war against defeat, not a song of surrender - Atal Bihari Vajpayee.

(The writer is a former OSD to Union Civil Aviation Minister)

# Minister assures adequate LPG supply, warns against rumours

- Civil supplies minister Manohar says state is delivering nearly 3 lakh cylinders daily, exceeding bookings
- States strict action is underway against black marketing; 616 cases filed, 2,500 cylinders seized
- OTP verification and digital booking promoted to curb misuse and ease consumer access

HANS NEWS SERVICE  
VIJAYAWADA

CIVIL supplies minister Nandendra Manohar on Monday assured that there is no shortage of LPG cylinders for domestic consumption in the state and urged people not to panic or believe rumours circulating on social media.

Addressing a press conference at the Secretariat, the minister said the government is taking strict measures to prevent black marketing and artificial shortage of LPG. He warned that strict action would be taken against those involved in illegal sale or diversion of domestic cylinders.

The minister explained that the review meeting on



Civil supplies minister Nandendra Manohar along with officials addressing a press conference at the Secretariat on Monday

LPG supply conducted by Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu confirmed that the state has sufficient stock and delivery systems are functioning normally. He said people should avoid standing in queues at gas agencies out of fear and instead use online booking methods such as mobile apps, phone calls, WhatsApp, missed calls and digital payment platforms.

According to the minister, the state normally records about 2.81 lakh LPG bookings per day, while gas companies have been delivering an average of 2.92 lakh cyl-

inders daily in the past five days, with deliveries touching three lakh cylinders on some days.

Manohar said the sudden surge in bookings due to rumours had temporarily affected servers, but supply remains adequate. As per central guidelines, a new booking can be made after 45 days in rural areas and 25 days in urban areas.

To curb misuse and black marketing, the government has made OTP verification mandatory for cylinder delivery. Officials have also been directed to ensure that domestic LPG cylinders are

not diverted for commercial use. He revealed that 616 cases have been registered and about 2,500 LPG cylinders seized in the last five days during enforcement drives. District-level call centres have been set up under the supervision of Joint Collectors to assist consumers.

The minister further assured that schools, hospitals, temples and welfare hostels will receive uninterrupted gas supply, adding that gas companies have also assured the government that there will be no shortage of domestic LPG in the state.

# Continuous Annaprasadam launched at Vontimitta temple

- TTD chairman says a German shed is installed to provide comfortable seating for pilgrims to take Annaprasadam
- CM Chandrababu Naidu will take part in Sri Sitarama Kalyanam on April 1

HANS NEWS SERVICE  
VONTIMITTA  
(YSR KADAPA DISTRICT)

TTD chairman B R Naidu on Monday announced that Annaprasadam will be distributed continuously to devotees visiting Sri Kodandarama Swamy temple in Vontimitta. He inaugurated the Annaprasadam distribution centre set up opposite the temple premises.

Speaking on the occasion, Naidu said the facility was established following the directions issued by the Chief Minister last year to ensure uninterrupted serving of free meals to devotees. A German shed has been installed at the centre to provide comfortable seating for pilgrims while partaking of Annaprasadam.

The chairman said Sri Kodandarama Swamy Brahmotsavams will be conducted for nine days from March 27 to April 5 with elaborate arrangements. Special preparations are being made for Sri Sitarama Kalyanam sched-



TTD chairman B R Naidu serving food to devotees after inaugurating Annaprasadam distribution programme at Vontimitta on Monday

uled on April 1. On behalf of the State Government, Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu will offer Pattu Vastrams to the deities during the ceremony.

Devotees attending the Sri Sitarama Kalyanam will be provided free Srivari Laddu Prasadam worth Rs 50. Arrangements are also being made to distribute Annaprasadam, drinking water, and buttermilk packets to pilgrims. The district administration and Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams (TTD) are jointly overseeing the arrangements for the annual festivities.

Sri Sitarama Kalyanam will be telecast live worldwide through SVBC. Electrical illumination, LED lighting, and a public address system are being arranged at an estimated cost of Rs 4 crore for the celebrations.

Naidu further said steps are being taken to construct a 108-foot statue of Jambavan-

tha at a cost of Rs 20.17 crore. Under the temple master plan, 100 rooms will also be built at an estimated cost of Rs 37 crore to improve accommodation facilities for devotees. He added that, as per the directions of Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu, free Annaprasadam will now be served three times a day to devotees at Vontimitta.

Earlier, the TTD chairman visited Sri Kodandarama Swamy Temple and offered prayers. Temple priests and officials welcomed him with traditional honours, and he was presented Theertha Prasadam after darshan.

Later, he inspected the arrangements being made for the Sri Sitarama Kalyanam. District Collector Dr Cherukuri Sridhar, Additional EO Ch Venkaiah Chowdary, SP Shelke Chakraborty, JEO V Veerabrahmam, CVSO KV Murali Krishna and other officials were present.

# US PREZ TRUMP ACCUSES IRAN OF SPREADING LIES

Continued from P1

"Now, AI has become another Disinformation weapon that Iran uses, quite well, considering they are being annihilated by the day," he said on his social media platform on Monday. Trump said Iran showed "phony Kamikaze Boats," shooting at various ships at sea, which looks "wonderful, powerful, and vicious." "But these boats don't exist — It's all false information to show how tough they already defeated Military is!"

The five US refuelling planes that were supposedly struck down and badly damaged, according to the "Wall Street Journal's false reporting," and others, are all in service, except for one, which will soon be flying the skies, Trump claimed. "Buildings and Ships that are shown to be on fire are not — It's FAKE NEWS, generated by AI."

# Karnataka Speaker raps govt

Continued from P1

Stating that there had been no improvement from the government side, the Speaker questioned how the House could function smoothly if such lapses continued. "If this is the attitude of the government, how are we supposed to run the House in a manner agreeable to all?" he asked. Khader further declared that the proceedings would not continue until the ministers and officials concerned explained the reason for the delay in answering questions. "Until the ministers and officials concerned come to me and explain what the issue is, I will not conduct the House. I am adjourning the House," he said. Earlier, after Question Hour, Home Minister G. Parameshwara informed the House on behalf of the government that out of the 230 questions that were to be answered in written format, the government had responded to 84.

# Chandrababu: Haj House in Amaravati soon

Releases Rs 45 crore honorarium dues for imams and muezzins

HANS NEWS SERVICE  
AMARAVATI

CHIEF Minister Nara Chandrababu Naidu announced here on Monday that the Andhra Pradesh government will construct a new Haj House in Amaravati and immediately release Rs 45 crore in pending honorarium dues for imams and muezzins. He pointed out that the coalition government has implemented several welfare initiatives for Muslims over the past 21 months.

The Chief Minister made these remarks while participating in an iftar hosted by the state government here. He joined the prayers and extended Ramzan greetings to the Muslim community.

Addressing the gathering, the Chief Minister said the incomplete Haj House in Kadapa would soon be made operational. The government has organised iftars across districts and constituencies during the holy month of

Ramzan. Emphasising the teachings of Prophet Muhammad on charity and compassion, the Chief Minister said the government is committed to supporting the poor and ensuring the socio-economic advancement of Muslims.

Naidu highlighted several welfare measures implemented by the state government. Under NTR Bharosa pensions, about 4.38 lakh Muslims receive financial assistance, with the government spending around Rs 3,511 crore annually. Around 4.5 lakh Muslim students are benefiting from the 'Thaliki Vandanam' scheme, while Rs 264 crore has been released as post-Matric scholarships for 19,215 students. Under the Deepam 2.0 scheme, 6.2 lakh families are receiving LPG support worth Rs 158 crore.

The Chief Minister said Rs 180 crore has already been distributed as honorariums, providing Rs 5,000 for imams and Rs 10,000 for muezzins,

and ordered the immediate release of the remaining Rs 45 crore dues.

Naidu stated that the government respects the sentiments of Muslims and is taking steps to protect Waqf properties. Around 1,500 Waqf properties have been surveyed and the board has been recast, after cancelling earlier orders that created disputes.

The Chief Minister mentioned that Rs 100 crore has been allocated to the Dadekula Muslim Finance Corporation, minority welfare allocations were increased from Rs 5,434 crore to Rs 6,090 crore, and Rs 7 crore was sanctioned to the Urdu Academy.

The event was attended by Minority Welfare Minister NMD Farooq, MP Kesineni Sivanath, MLAs Mohamed Nasseer Ahmed, Bondam Umamaheswara Rao, Gadde Rammohan, and several public representatives and leaders from the Muslim community.

# Trump may send troops to capture 'Crown Jewel of Iran'

WASHINGTON: US President Donald Trump is reportedly weighing the possibility of seizing Kharg Island-- a scrubby stretch of land in the Gulf that handles almost all of Iran's crude exports-- amid a growing energy crisis due to war in the Middle East.

Trump may order the seizure of Iran's critical oil depot on Kharg Island if tankers remain bottled up in the Persian Gulf amid Tehran's blockade, US officials said. If the US goes ahead with the move, it will put US troops on the ground, which risks triggering Ira-

nian retaliatory strikes against oil facilities and pipelines across Gulf countries, particularly Saudi Arabia. But America's main ally in the Middle East, Israel, may not be inclined to put its boot on the ground in Iran just yet, as Israel's ambassador to India, Reu-

ven Azar, has claimed that neither Washington nor Jerusalem intends to invade Iran. He said the focus of US-Israeli actions remains on encouraging change within Iran through pressure from its own people rather than through military occupation.

# True tribute to Amarajeevi lies in all-round growth of state: Naidu

Continued from P1

The monument has been installed by the Amarajeevi Potti Sreeramulu Memorial Trust.

The Chief Minister observed that the "real tribute" to Potti Sreeramulu would be the comprehensive development of the state in all sectors. He urged people to constantly remember Sreeramulu's sacrifice and work collectively for the progress of Andhra Pradesh.

Naidu said the statue is the first major sculpture in Amaravati and stands as a lasting symbol of Sreeramulu's sacrifice. The memorial has been built across 6.80 acres in Shakamuru Park, with the first phase of the project completed in a record six months. In the first phase, the massive structure used 26 tonnes of bronze and 42 tonnes of iron framework. In the next phase, a museum, an auditorium and skill devel-

opment centres will be developed as part of the memorial park.

Describing Sreeramulu as a symbol of inspiration, the Chief Minister said the great freedom-fighter belonged to all communities and not just one section of society. Sreeramulu's sacrifice paved the way for the creation of Andhra State and later encouraged the formation of linguistic states across India. Naidu recalled that Sreeramulu fought also for social causes, including Dalits' entry into temples by undertaking a 29-day fast earlier in his life.

Naidu emphasised that Andhra state was achieved through Sreeramulu's sacrifice, just as the state capital has been made possible by the sacrifices of farmers who contributed land for Amaravati's development. The Chief Minister criticised the previous government for attempting to

divide the capital and said Amaravati is now progressing as a "people's capital".

Naidu also announced that the state government would soon issue a Government Order (GO) to recognise various Vaishya groups under the unified identity of Arya Vaishyas, respecting their sentiments. He assured that the coalition government is committed to creating a business-friendly environment for the community.

Deputy Chief Minister Pawan Kalyan, Union Minister Pemmasani Chandrababu Naidu, Ministers Nara Lokesh, Nandendra Manohar and several public representatives attended the unveiling ceremony. The Chief Minister and the Deputy Chief Minister also released a postal cover issued by India Post in honour of Potti Sreeramulu and felicitated members of his family during the event.

# Global energy crisis deepens as Iran keeps hold on Hormuz

Continued from P1

As morning broke Monday, a drone hit a fuel tank near Dubai International Airport, the world's busiest for international passenger traffic, causing a large fire. Firefighters contained the blaze and there were no injuries reported, but the airport suspended all flights before resuming them a few hours later. Later, a person was killed in the capital of the United Arab Emirates when an Iranian missile hit a vehicle, the Abu Dhabi media office said. Fire also broke out at an oil facility in Fujairah, one of the UAE's seven emirates, following a drone attack.

Saudi Arabia, meanwhile, said it intercepted a wave of 35 Iranian drones sent to its eastern region, home to major oil installations. Iran has fired hundreds of missiles and drones toward countries in the region hosting U.S. military assets since the war began. Emirati authorities say most have been intercepted by air defenses, though debris and some drones have fallen in-

side the country. Israel's military said on Monday that Iran launched missiles toward Israel as well.

The conflict is battering the world economy, driving up energy and fertilizer prices; threatening food shortages in poor countries; destabilizing fragile states; and complicating efforts by central banks to drive down prices for consumers. Much of the difficulty stems from the virtual shutdown of the Strait of Hormuz.

Trump said on Sunday that he wants to police the strait to make it safe for shipping, with his party increasingly concerned that rising prices for American consumers will hurt the Republicans in elections this fall. He did not identify the countries he said he asked to help with those efforts, but he said he won't forget the countries that decline. He has previously appealed to China, France, Japan, South Korea and Britain. "Whether we get support or not, but I can say this, and I said to them: We will remember," Trump said.

# 'Take steps to prevent LPG black marketing'

Naidu suggested holding consultations with hotel associations to encourage measures that could temporarily reduce LPG consumption if necessary. Officials also informed the

Chief Minister that the Centre is expected to allocate additional LPG supplies to Andhra Pradesh, Telangana and Karnataka in the coming days.

He further advised offi-

cials to explore alternative options such as pipeline gas and induction stoves as supplementary solutions to ensure energy security and reduce dependence on LPG in the long term.

# MEA slams US report recommending sanctions on RSS

Continued from P1

This comes after USCIRF designated India as a "country of particular concern" and asked United States to link arms sales and trade policies to religious freedom.

USCIRF said its report, Systematic Religious Persecution in India, provides an overview of India's social, political, and criminal justice systems as they relate to issues regarding freedom of religion or belief (FoRB). "It also examines the relationship between Hindu nationalist groups like the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) and the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), and the implications of this dynamic for FoRB.

Despite offering some constitutional protections for FoRB, India's political system facilitates a climate of discrimination toward religious minority communities," the

report alleged. USCIRF also argued that conditions for religious freedom in India have "continued to deteriorate" and accused the Indian government of "targeting" religious minorities and houses of worship. "Several states undertook efforts to introduce or strengthen anti-conversion laws to include harsher prison sentences. Indian authorities also facilitated widespread detention and illegal expulsion of citizens and religious refugees and tolerated vigilante attacks against religious minority communities," the report said.

Created in 1998 by an act of the United States Congress, the USCIRF "monitors the universal right to freedom of religion or belief (FoRB) abroad" and makes recommendations to the President of the United States, the United States Department of State, and Congress.

# 10 killed in Cuttack ICU fire

Continued from P1

The fire broke out around 2:30 am to 3 am, where critically ill patients were being treated. Multiple fire engines rushed to the spot and are engaged in the rescue operations.

Shortly after the incident, the Odisha Chief Minister, along with Health Minister Mukesh Mahaling, visited the hospital and reviewed the situation. They also visited other patients who are receiving treatment at the facility.

"A total of 23 patients have been shifted to other departments. Seven serious patients died while shifting to other ICUs and wards, while another three patients died later.

I have directed the concerned officers for proper treatment of the injured patients," the Chief Minister told the media. Majhi announced a compensation of Rs 25 lakh for the families of those people who died.

# Iran seeks return of 3 tankers seized by India

IN RETURN FOR HORMUZ SAFE PASSAGE

TEHRAN

IRAN has asked India for the release of three seized tanker ships in return for the safe passage of India-bound tankers through Strait of Hormuz amid the ongoing Gulf crisis, sources said on Monday.

The report said that Iran's ambassador to India met Foreign ministry officials on Monday to discuss the issue. However, neither India, nor Iran has not reacted to the report yet.

Indian coastal authorities in February reportedly seized three oil tankers sanctioned by the United States and allegedly linked to Iran. The vessels were intercepted off the Mumbai coast and taken in for investigation over sus-

pected involvement in illicit oil trade activities.

The 'Shadow Fleet' vessels Stellar Ruby, Asphalt Star, and Al Jafzia, which were carrying sanctioned Iranian oil, were seized on February 6.

Iran, meanwhile, has made it clear that Strait of Hormuz cannot be used to launch strikes on Tehran and set conditions on the passage of vessels through it. It said vessel movement through the strait could occur only under special conditions due to what he described as insecurity created by Israel and the United States, adding that Iran's armed forces oversee the passage and would prevent its use for military action against Tehran.

# PNG and CNG supply uninterrupted: Govt

Continued from P1

During an inter-ministerial briefing, Sujata Sharma, Joint Secretary (Marketing and Oil Refinery) at the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas, said fuel stations supplying CNG and households using PNG continue to receive normal supply. Authorities have also initiated enforcement action against hoarding, with raids conducted across several states to monitor storage and distribution. The government said crude oil availability remains adequate, with refineries operating at full capacity and petrol pumps functioning normally without reported shortages.

City gas distributors are also promoting PNG adoption. Indraprastha Gas Lim-

ited has announced an incentive of free gas worth Rs 500 for consumers registering for PNG connections before March 31.

LPG bookings have declined as concerns over domestic gas availability eased. Meanwhile, 22 states and Union Territories have set up control rooms to monitor supply and curb hoarding or black marketing.

The ministry urged consumers to avoid panic bookings and use digital platforms for LPG orders. The government said it continues to prioritise uninterrupted supply to households and key sectors such as hospitals and educational institutions, while closely monitoring the situation amid prevailing geopolitical developments.

# India rules out talks with US on Hormuz

NEW DELHI: India on Monday said it has not held bilateral talks with the United States on deploying naval vessels to secure merchant shipping in the Strait of Hormuz.

The clarification came after US President Donald Trump urged countries to send warships to keep the strategic waterway open amid tensions with Iran. Speaking to reporters on Sunday, Trump said that his administration has contacted 7 countries for support. India has not held bilateral discussions with the United States on deploying naval vessels to ensure the safe passage of merchant shipping through the Strait of Hormuz, the External Affairs Ministry said on Monday.



# Womenuia

## Awesome debut: Divya Pathak's kathak arangetram mesmerises Hyderabad

Young dancer Divya Pathak marked a graceful milestone with her Kathak Arangetram, delivering a performance that blended tradition, precision and expressive storytelling. Held at Ravindra Bharati under the guidance of award-winning guru Raghava Raj Bhatt and the aegis of Akruti Kathak Kendra, the debut captivated audiences throughout

A graceful celebration of rhythm, devotion, and classical excellence unfolded at Ravindra Bharati as young dancer Divya Pathak marked her Kathak Arangetram with a performance that held the audience spellbound. Organised under the auspices of Akruti Kathak Kendra, the evening showcased the arrival of a promising artiste deeply rooted in tradition and refined training.

The debut was presented under the mentorship of noted Kathak exponent and Sangeet Natak Akademi awardee Raghava Raj Bhatt, whose guidance was evident in every detail of the recital. Divya opened the evening with Guru Stotram, offering a devotional invocation that set a serene tone. She then moved into an elegant presentation of Teen Tal, the popular 16-beat rhythmic cycle of Hindustani classical music, displaying impressive command over footwork, posture, and laya control. Her expressive depth shone in a lyrical interpretation set to a Meera bhajan, where rhythm and emotion blended seamlessly. One of the most captivating segments portrayed the divine love of Radha and Krishna during Holi, performed in the Dhamar style of Dhrupad. The choreography beautifully combined storytelling with technical finesse, evoking festivity and devotion in equal measure.

A semi-classical Thumri followed, rich in abhinaya and delicate rhythmic variations. Drawing from devotional ragas and reflecting the refined aesthetics of the Lucknow tradition, the piece stood out for its emotional nuance and visual grace. Divya further impressed the audience with Dashavataram, effortlessly transitioning through varied mythological themes and moods with striking clarity and energy. The recital concluded on a vibrant note with a traditional Tarana, bringing the performance to an exhilarating close.

The evening was also marked by blessings and tributes. Renowned Bharatanatyam guru Dr. Rajeshwari Sainath conveyed her blessings and fondly remembered the late Dr. Mangalabhat, honor-

ing his invaluable contributions to Kathak. Appreciation was extended to Guru Bhatt for his thoughtful choreography and dedicated mentorship. Among the distinguished guests, Ashar Faran, Trustee of Lamakaan, wished Divya a bright future and encouraged her continued journey in dance. A touching highlight was Divya's Guru Pooja, a heartfelt gesture of reverence reflecting the spiritual essence of the classical arts.

The recital was elevated by an accomplished live orchestra led by Fateh Singh Ganga on pakhawaj. Vocal support came from Madhu Prasad, with instrumental accompaniment by Uday Kumar, Lavanya Ambade,

Puneet Sisodia, Raghav Sai, and Harika. Presentation by Amit Kumar, lighting by Basava Raju, and stage design by Madhav Raj Bhatt added visual richness. The sabha was smoothly coordinated by Parag Pathak.

With poise, devotion, and artistic maturity, Divya Pathak's debut announced the rise of a Kathak dancer to watch.



## Raising emotionally brave kids

Parenting

WHY LETTING CHILDREN FACE SMALL FAILURES BUILDS LIFELONG RESILIENCE

DR DEEPTI T NAIR

The present world which emphasizes achievement brings about protection for children against disappointment and frustration and failure. The protective measures which parents use to protect their children arise from their love for their children yet these measures create an unintended result which weakens the emotional strength of the children. Children develop emotional bravery through real-life experiences which include facing their first small failures. The process of brain development requires failure as an essential factor which also supports emotional development. Children learn to persevere through difficult challenges when their brains adapt to difficult situations which they cannot immediately solve. The process enhances neural connections which are essential for solving problems and managing emotions and maintaining determination.

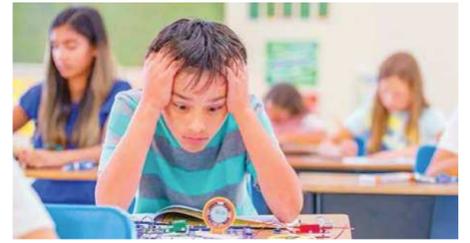
Children learn to recognize discomfort as a temporary condition which they can handle. They develop a mindset which psychologists refer to as growth mindset because they believe that effort leads to skill development. Students who develop this mindset achieve academic success throughout their educational journey which extends into their professional life and mental health. The term emotionally brave describes children who experience fear and embarrassment and disappointment but maintain their courage.

Children develop emotional strength through learning that these feelings represent



standard reactions which people experience. Children experience sadness and frustration and self-doubt when they lose a game or face school challenges or forget performance lines or fail to join a team. The moments which people experience teach them how to manage their emotions. The child recognizes that challenging emotions will emerge reach their highest point and then disappear. Building emotional endurance enables people to face their future life challenges which include academic pressure and workplace stress and relationship difficulties.

The emotional weakness develops through excessive protection from parental care. The presence of adults who solve problems and handle disputes and shield children from failure hinders their development of coping mechanisms. The unknown experience of failure makes them develop intense fear of failure. Children with this condition avoid new experiences and they show quick abandonments of tasks and they need to receive approval from others. The condition develops into anxiety issues and low self-esteem and an inability to handle rejection and criticism in both teenage years and adult life. Minor



In a world that prizes constant achievement, many children are shielded from failure in the name of love—often at the cost of their emotional resilience. Experts say that small setbacks are essential for building confidence, problem-solving ability and lifelong mental strength

ing of failure through their actions. The goal is not to create harsh or stressful situations but to create situations that match the natural development needs of children. The adult response matters more than the actual failure when children experience their first unsuccessful attempts. Children need calm reassurance and empathy together with encouragement to attempt again because these elements help them develop constructive ways to handle their situations. Resilience gets strengthened through statements which recognize persistence and courage because those statements direct focus towards effort instead of final results.

Children need to develop their ability to solve problems through independent thinking because this skill holds equal value with their need to solve problems through independent thinking. The process of solving problems without assistance helps individuals build their confidence when they face challenges with friends or work on tough tasks or ac-

quire new abilities. The ability to handle difficulties enhances emotional security for children because they understand their own capacity to deal with problems.

Children who display emotional courage develop into adults who possess strong mental abilities and adaptable nature and self-assuredness. The methods enable them to take safe risks and try out fresh possibilities while using their previous failures to guide them toward success. The practice of avoiding all failures leads people to develop fear-based behaviors which result in emotional weakness.

People develop resilience through their challenges instead of their comfortable experiences. The process of developing resilience requires people to go through various life situations which include their temporary periods of rest and their self-evaluation time.

(The writer is a Senior Consultant - Pediatrics and Neonatology, Rainbow Children's Hospital, Sarjapur Road)



## Shilpa Shetty reveals her ultimate 'secret to staying calm' before work

amaForTheWin."

In the video, the 'Baazigar' actress can be seen practicing pranayama as she gears up for a professional stint.

Dressed in a shimmering gold halter-neck outfit with delicate embellishments, the actress is seen sitting outdoors and calmly performing the breathing exercise.

Talking about Shilpa Shetty, the actress has long been known as a yoga enthusiast and has constantly advocated the benefits of the generations-old practice of yoga along with healthy and clean eating.

The actress has often been seen em-

phasising the importance of balance in lifestyle and fitness.

In many of her earlier interviews, she has shared that throughout the week she follows a strict and disciplined diet, while Sundays are reserved for sheer indulgence.

Apart from her film work, Shilpa is also popular for her "Sunday binge" posts on social media, where she offers fans a glimpse into her cheat-day rituals.

On the professional front, Shilpa Shetty made her Bollywood debut with the 1993 thriller 'Baazigar' opposite Shah Rukh Khan and Kajol, which

went on to become a major success.

Over the years, she has appeared in several popular films like 'Tu Khiladi Main Anari', 'Dhadkan' and many more.

Shilpa's younger sister, Shamita Shetty, is also an actor who made her debut with 'Mohabbatein'.

Apart from films, Shilpa has also built a strong presence on television as a reality show judge, appearing on popular shows such as 'Super Dancer' and 'India's Got Talent'.

On the personal front, she is married to businessman Raj Kundra and the couple is blessed with two children.

## Soha says her mother's house is the 'only home where she's still someone's baby girl'

Actress Soha Ali Khan, on Sunday, shared a heartwarming glimpse of her beautiful time with her mother, veteran actor Sharmila Tagore.

Sharing a picture alongside her mother, Soha mentioned that it is the only home where she's still somebody's baby girl, highlighting the warmth of her maternal house.

Taking to her social media account, Soha posted a carousel featuring her pictures along with Sharmila Tagore and her daughter Inaaya Naumi Kemmu.

She captioned the post as, "The only home where I'm still someone's baby girl."

In the pictures, Soha can be seen dressed elegantly in a red saree paired with traditional jhumkas and a small bindi.

She is seen standing beside her mother Sharmila Tagore, with both of them smiling warmly at the camera.

Another picture in the carousel shows her daughter Inaaya hugging her grandmother Sharmila Tagore.

Adding a nostalgic touch to the post, Soha used her mother's timeless song 'Taarif Karoon Kya Uski' as the background track, originally sung by legendary playback singer Mohammed Rafi.

The song was a part of Sharmila Tagore's debut movie 'Kashmir Ki Kali', where she starred opposite legendary actor Shammi Kapoor.

For the uninitiated, Soha



Ali Khan comes from the illustrious Pataudi family and is the daughter of Sharmila Tagore and late cricket legend Mansoor Ali Khan Pataudi.

She is also the sister of actor Saif Ali Khan and the sister-in-law of actor Kareena Kapoor Khan.

On the professional front, Soha made her

Bollywood debut with the film 'Dil Maange More' and later appeared in films like 'Rang De Basanti', 'Tum Mile' and many more.

Apart from acting, Soha also turned an author and podcaster host. She is married to actor Kunal Kemmu and the couple are parents to their daughter Inaaya Naumi Kemmu.

### CROSSWORD



- ACROSS**
- Concocted (4-2)
  - Marsh (3)
  - Memory alone (4)
  - Atop or over (4)
  - Wash bowls (6)
  - Absolute freedom from living micro-organisms (9)
  - Greek god of love (4)
  - Lopsided (3)
  - Couches (5)
  - Pertaining to the pope (5)
  - Drowsy state produced by bhang etc. (3)
  - Harry Potter's best friend (2)
  - Length or breadth, should we say? (5)
  - Reel (5)
  - A corded cloth (3)
  - Big Apple law enforcers (4)
  - Puzzled (9)
  - Secured (6)
  - House rodents (4)
  - Elder sister, in India (4)
  - Diddle and Derek (3)
  - Pieces of rocks used as roofing material (6)

### DOWN

- Lynched by a crowd (6)
- \_\_\_ towards : inclined to? (8)
- Vessels for ashes (4)
- After 1945 (4-3)
- Transport across river etc (5)
- Invalid (4)
- Mail carrier (7)
- Conversational stopgaps (3)
- Easily influenced (4)
- Elvis \_\_\_ Presley? (4)
- Multilingual (8)
- Caused by motion (7)
- Adds on (7)
- The divisions, male and female (3)
- Gymwear name (6)
- Rips apart (5)
- Plebeian (4)
- Irish parliament (4)



Solution to March 16

### SUDOKU



Solution to March 16



## 13-year-old Hyderabad student develops multi-system AI architecture

Raja Dharma Tej Maddala develops a unique artificial intelligence framework designed for multi-perspective reasoning and collaborative decision-making



ARTI ADKE

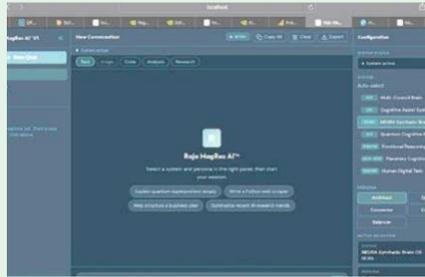
IN an unusual example of young innovation, a 13-year-old student from Hyderabad has designed an artificial intelligence ecosystem that is attracting attention in technology and research circles. Raja Dharma Tej Maddala, a Grade 7 student, has developed an original AI framework called Raja MagRex AI™, which has been recognised as an innovation initiative by the Government of India's Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT). At an age when most students are just beginning to explore coding and basic digital tools, Raja is attempting to rethink how artificial intelligence systems can be structured and coordinated.

Raja, who studies in the IB Middle Years Programme at Oakridge International School,

Gachibowli, describes himself as a technology enthusiast with a deep interest in artificial intelligence, science and complex systems. His curiosity about how mathematics, computing and scientific ideas connect with each other gradually led him to explore artificial intelligence more seriously.

This interest eventually resulted in the creation of Raja MagRex AI™, an AI ecosystem designed around a structured architecture rather than a single model. According to Raja, the system is built on 22 cognitive systems, 87 modules and more than 100 functional features. The aim is to allow the system to examine problems from multiple analytical perspectives before producing a final response.

The project introduces a concept he calls "Artificial Civilisation Intelligence."



The idea is inspired by how human societies solve complex problems. In the real world, experts from different fields such as science, engineering, economics and policy often collaborate to reach better decisions. Raja's framework attempts to replicate this model within an AI environment, where multiple reasoning systems analyse an issue simultaneously and contribute to a unified conclusion.

At the centre of the architecture is a

coordination system called NEURA, which manages how the different cognitive modules interact with each other. When a problem or prompt is introduced, NEURA analyses it and determines which reasoning systems should be activated. These systems may focus on areas such as logical reasoning, contextual understanding, analytical evaluation or creative exploration. Their outputs are then combined through a structured synthesis process to produce a final response.

Unlike many current AI tools that rely on a single large model to generate answers directly from prompts, Raja's framework emphasises structured reasoning and collaborative analysis. The architecture allows different reasoning pathways to examine the same problem before arriving at a conclusion, which he believes could make AI systems more transparent and easier to interpret.

Building the system while continuing regular school responsibilities was one of the biggest challenges, Raja said. Balancing classes, assignments and examinations while working on research and system design required careful time management and discipline.

Much of the work involved not just coding but also conceptual thinking about how

different systems should interact and how reasoning should flow across the architecture.

Despite the challenges, Raja continued refining the concept and developing the structure of the AI ecosystem. He is currently working on Version 1 of Raja MagRex AI™, focusing on integrating the core systems and modules and preparing the framework for real-world testing.

The next stage will involve deploying the system to observe how different cognitive modules collaborate in practical scenarios. This phase will help improve the orchestration logic and refine the coordination between different reasoning systems.

In the long term, Raja hopes to expand the architecture by adding more advanced modules and exploring applications in research,

### Examples of how it helps solve problems

For example, if a city wants to reduce air pollution, the system can study pollution sources, traffic patterns, weather conditions and policy options before suggesting balanced solutions such as improving public transport or regulating emissions.

In education, if a student faces a difficult scientific question, the AI can break the problem into smaller steps, examine different theories and explain possible solutions.

By combining these viewpoints, the system helps users understand the problem better and arrive at more thoughtful and practical solutions.

### Today is National 3D Day



## How 3D helps students develop creativity, problem-solving and design thinking

Three-dimensional (3D) technology is transforming the way students learn, create and explore ideas. From 3D modelling software to 3D printers, these tools allow students to move beyond textbooks and turn their imagination into real, physical objects. By doing so, 3D technology plays an important role in developing creativity, problem-solving skills and design thinking among young learners.

One of the most exciting aspects of 3D technology is that it encourages students to think creatively. Instead of only drawing ideas on paper, students can design objects in a digital environment and then print them as real models. Whether it is building a miniature bridge, designing a science project model, or creating an artistic sculpture, students learn to experiment with shapes, structures and ideas in new ways.

3D technology also strengthens problem-solving abilities. When students design a model, they must think carefully about how the parts fit together, how strong

the structure will be and whether the design will work in real life. If something does not work during printing or assembly, they need to analyse the issue, adjust the design and try again. This process teaches them to learn from mistakes and improve their solutions.

Another important benefit is the development of design thinking. Students learn to approach problems step by step: first identifying a challenge, then creating possible solutions, testing prototypes and refining their designs. This method is widely used in engineering, architecture and product design.

By combining creativity with technology, 3D tools help students become active creators rather than passive learners. As schools introduce more hands-on learning methods, 3D technology is becoming a powerful way to encourage curiosity, innovation and practical learning. Through designing, testing and improving their ideas, students gain skills that are valuable for future careers in science, engineering, art and technology.

## Speaking up to inspire and share ideas

Speech is one of the most powerful tools human beings possess. Through spoken words, people can express thoughts, share knowledge, inspire change and build meaningful connections. The ability to speak confidently and clearly allows individuals to communicate their ideas effectively and influence the world around them. Speaking is not only about delivering information; it is about encouraging dialogue and creating understanding. When people share

their ideas openly, they invite others to think, question and contribute. In classrooms, workplaces and communities, conversations often lead to innovation and collaboration. Many great movements and breakthroughs in history began with someone having the courage to speak up and share a vision. The power of speech also lies in its ability to motivate and uplift others. A few encouraging words can boost confidence, help someone overcome

challenges and inspire them to pursue their goals. Leaders, teachers and mentors often use speech as a way to guide and empower others. By communicating clearly and thoughtfully, they create environments where ideas are valued and voices are heard. Learning to speak effectively is an important life skill. It involves not only choosing the right words but also listening to others with respect and openness. Confidence in speaking develops with practice—through

discussions, presentations, storytelling and everyday conversations. When individuals feel comfortable expressing their thoughts, they become more engaged participants in society.

Speech also strengthens creativity and critical thinking. Sharing ideas allows them to grow, evolve and improve through feedback and collaboration. When people speak and listen with curiosity and respect, they create opportunities for learning and collective progress.

Words have the power to encourage, connect minds, and turn ideas into action



## Tips to crack the class XII Economics board exam

Preparing for the Class XII Economics board examination requires a clear strategy, regular practice and strong conceptual understanding. Many students study hard but still lose marks due to avoidable mistakes, poor time management or lack of structured revision. Analysing mistakes, practising sample papers consistently and following a clear revision plan can help improve both accuracy and confidence. The following practical tips can help students prepare effectively and perform well in the Economics board examination.

### General Tips

1. By now, most students would have attempted two pre-board examinations. Carefully evaluate your mistakes, identify recurring errors and clearly mark the chapters or topics where you are weak. Begin your revision with these weaker areas and practise related questions alongside.
2. While revising the syllabus, do not stop solving sample papers thinking you will attempt them after completing revision. Over the next two months, try to solve one sample paper every two days. For Economics, analyse your mistakes in each paper and maintain a separate

A focused preparation strategy to improve accuracy, manage time effectively and score better in the Economics board exam



notebook to record them. Revisiting these errors regularly will help you avoid repeating them.

3. Practise a wide variety of questions, including objective questions, case-based questions and numericals. Avoid skipping any section during preparation.
4. Go through at least the last five years of official sample papers and previous year questions. Read each question carefully, frame answers mentally and verify them using the marking scheme. Solve all MCQs and numericals thoroughly and keep a

- record of your mistakes.
5. Practise case-study based questions from the official question bank as they are often included in the board examination pattern.
6. Plan your revision by working backwards from the exam dates. Decide how many days you will dedicate to each subject and set a target number of sample papers to practise before the exam.

### Macroeconomics Tips

1. Conceptual clarity is essential in Macroeconomics. First revise each chapter thoroughly and then

- practise all related questions, especially numericals.
2. Maintain a separate list of graphs chapter-wise with proper labelling and practise drawing them. Use graphs wherever applicable, even in short-answer questions.
3. Many students find it difficult to identify items included in national income or domestic income. Maintain a separate list of such questions along with explanations to understand the logic behind inclusion and exclusion.
4. While solving numericals,

clearly write "Given" and "To Find," mention the formula and show all steps. Avoid shortcuts during practice as writing complete steps helps reduce errors in the exam.

### Indian Economy Tips

1. The NCERT textbook is the most important source for Indian Economy. Read it carefully as questions are often directly based on it.
2. Prepare short notes for quick revision before the exam.
3. Follow a structured revision flow: read the chapter carefully, revise the recap section, practise

questions based on the chapter and solve objective questions for reinforcement.

4. Maintain a list of important dates, data points and policy-related developments. Using accurate data in answers can improve the quality of your responses.
5. After completing your first revision, cross-check the official syllabus and ensure that every topic has been covered.

### Answer Writing Tips

1. Manage time carefully. You may spend around one hour on Macroeconomics and about one and a half hours on Indian Economy. Keep at least twenty minutes at the end to revise the entire paper.
2. In Macroeconomics, use tables and graphs wherever required. Write full formulas in numericals and avoid abbreviations.
3. Begin answers with definitions wherever possible and conclude with a short line. Present answers in clear points.
4. You may start with either section depending on your comfort, but complete one section fully before moving to the other.

(The writer is PGT Economics, HOD Social Science, Seth Anandram Jaipuria School)

If your name is Jasprit Bumrah, the pressure comes automatically. He is that kind of bowler. He creates an impact in every game, guarantees you a wicket, and restricts the opposition. That responsibility brings a lot of pressure because his four overs are the most precious thing for MI - Aakash Chopra

## India has depth to field several T20 teams: SKY

'Batting a mix of instinct and reaction and team effort behind 80 per cent win rate'

NEW DELHI

INDIA'S T20 World Cup-winning captain Suryakumar Yadav believes the country's talent pool in the shortest format has grown so vast that it could comfortably field two or even three international-quality teams at the same time, underlining the depth created by a thriving domestic structure and franchise ecosystem.

The flamboyant batter, who has overseen a period of remarkable consistency since taking over the leadership after the ICC Men's T20 World Cup 2024, credited the steady pipeline of players emerging from domestic competitions and the Indian Premier League for strengthening India's dominance in T20 cricket.

Since Suryakumar took over the captaincy in 2024 -- right after Rohit Sharma stepped down following the World Cup victory in Barbados -- the Indian team has won 42 of the 52 matches played, reflecting team's domi-



nance in a fickle format.

In a podcast interview with PTI Videos on Sunday, Suryakumar called the current group "the best T20 team India has produced", adding that India's depth in T20 cricket is now too evident to be downplayed.

"If you talk about talent, I feel you can find talent regularly. There is IPL cricket, franchise cricket, then there is domestic cricket. You can see how many players come every year. So you can make as many teams as you want in T20 when I am talking about T20," Suryakumar said.

"So I feel talent is unlimited. If you can make two-three

playing XIs, our base is so strong, of the Indian team. So this is not a modest and diplomatic reply. But now it is so strong, so there is no shame in telling the truth," he said.

Suryakumar credited the team's success coming into the World Cup to a collective approach in the dressing room, saying a shared vision among players and support staff helped produce an impressive 80 per cent win rate in a notoriously unpredictable format.

Even with that success rate, the World Cup was not going to be a cake-walk because as Suryakumar noted, "we played bilateral matches one way, and in ICC tournament something

else happened."

For this reason, he needed to motivate the team to maintain the winning streak in the Feb 7 to March 8 tournament.

"I don't pay too much attention to statistics but I hate losing any game. If everyone in the dressing room moves in the same direction, only then can you achieve such a percentage," he said.

Known for his 360-degree strokeplay, Suryakumar described batting in T20 cricket as largely a reactive sport, with preparation accounting for only part of the process. "I feel batting is about 70-75 per cent reaction. The remaining 25 per cent is instinct, what you decide to do in the moment. Once you enter the ground, you are almost in autopilot mode. You try to bat with rhythm and according to the situation," he said.

He also traced the origins of his unconventional range of shots to childhood rubber-ball games in Mumbai, where uneven boundary sizes forced him to improvise.

## Indian women's team to feature in FIH Hockey Nation Cup

LAUSANNE (SWITZERLAND): The Indian women's team will feature in the FIH Hockey Nations Cup to be held in Auckland, New Zealand from June 15 to 21.

The Hockey Nations Cup was launched in 2021 to offer a top-level competition to the best-ranked teams not participating in the Hockey Pro League, and give the winning team an option to be promoted in it the following season. The Indian women's hockey team was relegated from the Pro League 2024-25 after finishing at the bottom of the nine-team standings.

Apart from India, hosts New Zealand, USA, Japan, Korea, Chile, Scotland and France, who were promoted via the Hockey Nations Cup 2, will take part in the event.

The men's event will be held in Cape Town and will involve South Africa, New Zealand, France, Korea, Japan, Wales, Malaysia, along with Scotland, who were promoted via the Hockey Nations Cup 2, as well as Ireland, who were relegated from the 2024-25 season of the Hockey Pro League.

## ORLEANS MASTERS SUPER 300

### Ayush, Tanvi to lead Indian challenge; Injured Prannoy pulls out

ORLEANS (FRANCE): Youngsters Ayush Shetty and Tanvi Sharma will lead India's challenge at the USD 250,000 Orleans Masters Super 300 badminton tournament beginning here on Tuesday after senior shuttler HS Prannoy pulled out due to a shoulder injury.

Prannoy, who was originally slated to face top seed Chou Tien Chen of Chinese Taipei in the opening round, was forced to withdraw after experiencing shoulder pain during the Swiss Open in Basel last week. While the cause of his discomfort was unclear initially, the Indian had decided to pull out of his match against Japan's Koki Watanabe to avoid aggravating the injury.

"The shoulder pain developed after travelling to the Swiss Open. We didn't know the reason then, so I decided to withdraw and fly back," Prannoy told PTI. "After a scan it showed a slight tear. It is a minor thing and hopefully I should be okay soon," added the seasoned pro, who is targeting a return at the Asian Championships to be held from April 7 to 12 in Ningbo, China.

All eyes will be on eighth seed world No. 25 Ayush Shetty, who won the US Open Super 300 last year, as he opens his campaign against Lee Chia Hao of Chinese Taipei.

Former world No. 1 and currently ranked 30th, Kidambi Srikanth will face Denmark's Magnus Johannesen.

Tharun Mannepilli, fresh from a quarterfinal finish at last week's Swiss Open, takes on



Chinese Taipei's Wang Tzu Wei in his opening game. World No. 42 Kiran George will face third seed Kenta Nishimoto of Japan.

In women's singles, Tanvi Sharma, the silver medalist at last year's BWF Junior World Championships, will take on Thailand's Supanida Katethong, while Malvika Bansod will continue her quest for glory after returning to action from a major injury when she faces Sung Shuo Yun of Chinese Taipei.

Rakshit Sree Santhosh Ramraj will meet Japan's Manami Suizu, while Anmol Kharb will be up against Turkey's Neslihan Arin.

In women's doubles, Devika Sihag and Isharani Baruah will take on a pair coming through the qualifiers. The men's doubles pair of Hariharan Amsakarunan and M R Arjun will face the Chinese Taipei duo of Lai Po Yu and Tsai Fu Cheng.

In women's doubles, Ashwini Bhat K and Shikha Gautam will be up against the fourth-seeded Japanese pair of Rui Hirokami and Sayaka Hobara.

## Bumrah creates an impact in every game: Aakash Chopra

NEW DELHI

FORMER India opener Aakash Chopra says pace ace Jasprit Bumrah is guaranteed to deliver in every match for the Mumbai Indians (MI) in IPL 2026, but warned that the five-time Indian Premier League (IPL) champions face a complex puzzle to solve to fit their array of overseas talent into their playing eleven.

Bumrah picked 18 wickets in 12 games at an average of 17.56 and an economy rate of 6.68 in IPL 2025. MI will kick-

start their campaign at home against three-time champions Kolkata Knight Riders (KKR) on March 29 at the Wankhede Stadium in Mumbai. The side had reached Qualifier 2 in IPL 2025 before losing to eventual runners-up Punjab Kings.

"If your name is Jasprit Bumrah, the pressure comes automatically. He is that kind of bowler. He creates an impact in every game, guarantees you a wicket, and restricts the opposition. That responsibility brings a lot of pressure because his four overs are the

most precious thing for MI. Bowl one over in the power-play, keep one for the middle phase, and two at the death.

"That is Bumrah -- that pressure is not going anywhere. Whether Boult bowls well or Deepak Chahar is fully fit, Bumrah's pressure stays with him. But if Boult is fit, MI will want to continue with him. Fit, available, in form. They will want the new ball to move around a little with Boult and Deepak Chahar. "Shardul Thakur is a capable replacement for Cha-



har, but it does not necessarily mean that he plays ahead of him. A fit Deepak Chahar, a fit Trent Boult, Bumrah, and Hardik Pandya will be MI's four starting pacers. Corbin Bosch is waiting in the wings. He is a very good all-rounder. But again, you cannot play all overseas players," said Chopra on JioStar.

## NATIONAL TENPIN BOWLING C'SHIPS

### Kishan, Preemal crowned champions

BENGALURU: Former national champion Kishan R of Karnataka clinched his second national title in the men's division at the ARC 34th National Tenpin Bowling Championships, which concluded at Amoeba, Church Street, Bengaluru, on Monday.

In the women's division, Preemal J. of Karnataka captured her maiden national title, ending a 15-year wait for Karnataka in this division.

In the Championship Match played based on cumulative pinfall of two games, top-seeded Kishan produced a composed performance to gain a lead of 17 pins in Game 1 (208-191). He extended his lead in the 2nd game, scoring a high game of 244 to Aakash's 238, seal-



ing the Title with an overall margin of 23 pins (452-429).

In the Championship Match, fourth-seeded Preemal J. took an early lead of 20 pins in the first game with 188 against top-seeded Sabina Athica (Tamil Nadu) (168). Despite a close second game, Preemal maintained her composure

to secure victory, claiming her maiden National Title by a margin of 24 pins (332-308).

Special prizes: Most Promising Player: Anirudhan Sanjeevi (TN) and Suchita S. Kumar (KER)

The largest number of scores above 225 in the Men's division: Kishan R. (KAR) (11)

The largest number of scores above 200 in the Women's division: Sabeena Athica (TN) (4)

Highest block of 6 games in Men's division: Kishan R (KAR) (1369 pins)

Highest block of 6 games in Women's division: Sabeena Athica (TN) (1122 pins).

# BJP MP's remarks on namaz draw flak from Oppn

ALIGARH (UP)

THE remarks of a BJP MP that he does not know what Eid or Ramzan is while opposing namaz in this Uttar Pradesh district have gone viral on social media, drawing criticism from opposition politicians, even as community leaders have

appealed for calm.

When reporters asked BJP MP Satish Gautam on Sunday about a local AIMIM leader's demand for permission to hold Eid prayers at the exhibition grounds here, he said he is not interested in such festivals and does not even know their names. "I do not

know what Eid or Ramzan is. I am least interested in them," Gautam said.

He also accused Muslims of "illegally occupying huge tracts of land during the Samajwadi Party's rule" in Uttar Pradesh and questioned the need for additional space for prayers. "There is no need to give

them the ground. They have the Eidgah for prayers," the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) leader said.

He further said that Muslims are among the major beneficiaries of the present BJP-led government's welfare schemes. "They are getting more than their due share, so what else

do they want from us now?" he asked.

Reacting to the MP's remarks, former Aligarh Muslim University Students' Union president Salman Imtiaz said Gautam is known for frequently making "senseless and provocative statements" and that both Hindus and Muslims

ignore such comments in the interest of peace.

Imtiaz, now associated with the Congress and a former contestant for the Aligarh City Assembly seat, alleged that Gautam's remarks were intended at diverting attention from internal disputes within the city unit of the BJP.



## Man kills 2 in-laws during Panchayat; wife critical

BAREILLY (UP)

A man on Monday allegedly stabbed his mother-in-law and brother-in-law to death and seriously injured his wife during a panchayat in Rahrura Chaudhary village in Bareilly district, police said.

The accused, identified as Afsar Khan, fled after the attack and police teams have been deployed to trace him, Bareilly Additional SP Manush Pareek said.

"Raids are being conducted at several locations and the accused will be arrested soon," he added.

According to the police, the victims have been identified as 19-year-old Adil and his 45-year-old mother Asma, while the accused's wife Saima sustained serious stab injuries and is undergoing treatment in a hospital where her condition is stated to be critical. Family members said Afsar Khan had a violent temperament and frequently quarrelled with his wife over minor issues, forc-



ing her to repeatedly return to her parental home. Saima had reportedly refused to go back with him due to his aggressive behaviour.

They said the accused had earlier been arrested in 2022 for allegedly killing his maternal uncle in the Bithri Chainpur police station area and had recently returned to the village after securing bail from a court.

The police said Saima had submitted a written complaint at Izzatnagar police station on Sunday alleging that her husband was threatening to kill her and her family members. On Monday, villagers convened a panchayat to resolve the dispute when the accused allegedly attacked the family members with a knife before fleeing, the police said.

## 'Embezzlement' of Rs 11.4-cr scholarship funds

# CBI registers FIR against govt officials in 5 states

NEW DELHI

The CBI has registered a case into the alleged siphoning of more than Rs 11.4 crore from scholarship funds intended for students with disabilities by "non-existent" institutes and students, officials said Monday.

The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) has filed an FIR against unidentified public servants and nodal officers in Delhi, Uttar Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, and Jammu and Kashmir for allegedly embezzling funds from the Umbrella Scholarship Scheme, launched in 2018 after six scholarship schemes including the Post-matric Scholarship for Students with



Disabilities were merged, the agency said.

Scholarships under this scheme were available to students of classes 11 and 12, as well as in post-matriculation diploma and certificate courses. Bachelor's degree and diploma and master's degree and diploma from any university recognised by UGC/AICTE were also funded under

these scholarships.

"The objective and allowances of the scheme for the post-metric scholarship, including the details of maintenance allowance, disability allowance, reimbursement of compulsory non-refundable fees and book allowance, are referred to in the scheme book (scholarship scheme for students with disabilities)," the

CBI said.

The central agency had launched a preliminary enquiry last year on a complaint from the secretary of the Union Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities, alleging that Rs 11.41 crore in scholarships had been paid to 926 students related to 28 institutes, which were either fake or showed serious malpractices during an inspection by the ministry.

During the enquiry, it surfaced that many of these institutions were non-existent or were closed while still claiming funds from the National Scholarship Portal, according to the FIR.

## Hoax cyanide gas email threat alarms Bhopal office

BHOPAL

AN email threatening to "blow up" the premises of a Madhya Pradesh government office here using cyanide gas cylinders on Monday prompted precautionary evacuation, officials said.

The threat turned out to be a hoax after police personnel searched the office of the Weights and Measures Department in the MP Nagar area.

"While checking mails, I came across a message at 10:20 AM stating that 16 cylinders filled with cyanide gas had been placed inside the department office and would go off around 1 pm," office superintendent Shyam Solanki told PTI.

He contacted his seniors, and the police were informed. Bomb disposal squad personnel and police teams with sniffer dogs rushed to the spot and searched the premises, he said, adding that the office



was evacuated as a precaution.

Solanki said the police did not find any cylinders or explosives in the office. Officials said similar threatening emails had earlier targeted People's University and AIIMS in Bhopal, but those alerts also proved false.

Bhopal City Zone 2 Deputy Commissioner of Police (DCP) Vivek Singh stated that the investigation is underway to identify the sender of the email. He suspected that a gang was behind such emails nationwide, using fake names. Department officers and workers' leader Umashankar Tiwari said staffers resumed work at 1:10 PM.



## Venugopal urges LS Speaker to revoke 8 MPs' suspension

NEW DELHI: Congress leader K C Venugopal urged Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla on Monday to revoke the suspension of eight opposition members, saying they were suspended "unfairly".

Raising the issue during the Zero Hour, Venugopal said Parliament has seen countless protests but suspending MPs is a "disturbing new trend" that cannot be allowed to continue.

Birla said a decision of the Lok Sabha cannot be discussed on the floor of the House and disallowed Venugopal to speak further. Later, in a post on X, the Congress leader said he had raised concern over the "unfair suspension of 8 Opposition MPs for this Session". "Rose in the Lok Sabha to raise concern over the unfair suspension of 8 Opposition MPs for this

Session. Parliament has seen countless protests but the suspension of MPs is a disturbing new trend, which cannot be allowed to continue. This suspension should be revoked immediately," he said. The eight opposition members were suspended during the first part of the Budget Session for "unruly" behaviour. They were suspended for the entire session.

Workers have been using small gas-enabled burners for cooking. Now, due to LPG cylinder shortage, some factory canteens have shut down, forcing workers to return to their native places. Currently, the situation is not like the COVID pandemic, but it could escalate if the issue is not resolved

-Vinnie Mehta, DG, ACMA

**BIZ BRIEFS**

**Levi's rolls out new campaign**

The Levi Strauss & Co., has unveiled its 2026 global campaign, 'Behind Every Original', to India, starring Global Brand Ambassador Alia Bhatt. Hiren Gor, MD, Levi Strauss & Co, said: "For over 150 years, Levi's has been worn by those who move culture forward, and Behind Every Original reinforces our commitment to staying at the center of that momentum. Alia Bhatt represents a new generation of originals — confident, self-defined and unapologetically authentic."

**Cooling technology event in Mumbai**

Rocky Mountain Institute (RMI) and CEPT University convened industry leaders at a summit in Jio World Convention Centre, Mumbai. The event titled: 'Can Today's Air Conditioners Keep Up with a Hotter, More Humid World? Delivering Affordable, Efficient Comfort for the Global South.' Sanjay Sudhakaran, MD, Bosch Home Comfort India Ltd, said: "As the heat waves intensify and climate patterns shift, India stands on the brink of a cooling revolution."

**Price hike by Tata Motors**

Tata Motors announced a price increase of up to 1.5 per cent across its commercial vehicle range, effective April 1. The price increase is being undertaken to partially offset the impact of rising commodity prices and other input costs. The increase will vary depending on the model and variant. According to the company: "With over eight decades of leadership in commercial mobility, Tata Motors is known for its innovation, reliability, and performance."

**PhysicsWallah's expansion plans**

Education company PhysicsWallah (PW) has expanded its presence in Andhra Pradesh with the inauguration of its first tech-enabled PW Vidyapeeth centre in Vijayawada, located on MG Road. Ankit Gupta, CEO, Vidyapeeth Offline, PW, said: "At PW, we try to find out avenues of making students' learning experience better. We believe that students should not have to travel to other cities to access quality education, as this can be both emotionally and financially stressful."

**Kai India's new product**

KAI India, a name in personal grooming products, offer CAN Face Razor for Women, a product for facial hair removal for Women. Keijiro Takasago, MD, KAI India, said: "We designed the CAN Face Razor to be simple and dependable — something a woman can use quickly, even on busy mornings. It removes the finest hair with care and makes skin feel smooth. Kai products make everyday grooming easier, and that's what we set out to do."

## Markets rebound over 1% on bargain buying after 3-days fall

The equity market staged a late-session rebound, supported by value buying in domestically oriented sectors such as auto, banking, and FMCG

**Domestic Support**

- BSE-Sensex rose 938.93pts or (+1.26%) to 75,502.85
- NSE-Nifty climbed 257.70pts or (+1.11%) to 23,408.80
- FII offloaded Rs10,716.64-cr; DII bought Rs 9,977.42 cr on Fri



UltraTech Cement surged 4.22 per cent. Trent, HDFC Bank, Mahindra & Mahindra, Eternal, Bajaj Finance, ITC, Tata Steel and State Bank of India were among the biggest gainers. Bharat Electronics, Sun Pharma, Power Grid and Bharti Airtel were among the major laggards.

MUMBAI: Stock market benchmark indices Sensex and Nifty rebounded by over 1 per cent on Monday after facing a massive drubbing in the past three trading days, driven by value-buying in blue-chip banking counters.

The 30-share BSE Sensex jumped 938.93 points or 1.26 per cent to settle at 75,502.85. During the day, it hit a high of 75,805.27 and a low of 73,949.76. The 50-share NSE Nifty climbed 257.70 points or 1.11 per cent to end at 23,408.80.

From the 30 Sensex firms,

could provide further support," Vinod Nair, Head of Research, Geojit Investments Limited, said. "The BSE MidCap Select index dipped 0.36 per cent and Smallcap Select index edged lower by 0.25 per cent. Among sectoral indices, BSE Top 10 Banks surged 1.61 per cent, followed by Private Banks index (1.38 per cent), Financial Services (1.32 per cent), Auto (1.23 per cent), Bankex (1.08 per cent) and FMCG (0.94 per cent). BSE oil & gas index dropped 2.29 per cent, hospitals (1.64 per cent), realty (1.51 per cent), energy (1.36 per cent) and healthcare (1.13 per cent).

"Markets started the week on a volatile note and gained

over a per cent, snapping their recent losing streak, supported by bargain buying. The rebound largely reflects participants taking advantage of lower levels to accumulate select large-cap stocks after the sharp decline. "However, the overall mood remained cautious amid persistent geopolitical tensions in the Middle East and elevated crude oil prices, which continue to raise concerns over inflation and India's import bill. In addition, continued foreign institutional investor outflows and currency volatility are keeping risk appetite in check," Ajit Mishra, SVP, Research, Religare Broking Ltd, said.

Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) offloaded equities worth Rs 10,716.64 crore on Friday, according to exchange data. Domestic Institutional Investors (DIIs), however, bought stocks worth Rs 9,977.42 crore. On Friday, the Sensex settled at 74,563.92, down 1,470.50 points or 1.93 per cent. The Nifty tanked 488.05 points or 2.06 per cent to end at 23,151.10.

## Exports dip marginally in Feb

Trade deficit narrows to \$27 bn | Imports surge even as global tensions disrupt trade routes

**Trade Insights**

- Exports (Feb 2026): \$36.61 bn
- Imports (Feb 2026): \$63.71 bn
- Trade Deficit: \$27.1 bn
- Exports (Apr-Feb FY26): \$402.93 bn (+1.84%)

NEW DELHI

INDIA'S merchandise exports dipped marginally in February while the trade deficit narrowed sequentially as imports moderated compared with the previous month, according to data released by the Ministry of Commerce and Industry on Monday. Exports in February

stood at \$36.61 billion, registering a slight 0.81 per cent decline year-on-year. Imports, however, rose sharply by 24.11 per cent to \$63.71 billion, pushing the trade deficit to \$27.1 billion during the month.

On a month-on-month basis, the deficit narrowed from \$34.68 billion in January, as imports fell from \$71.24 billion while exports were almost unchanged.

Commerce Secretary Rajesh Agrawal said exports have remained resilient despite global challenges, though shipments may see a downward trend in March due to logistical disruptions arising from tensions in West Asia.

For the April-February period of FY26, India's merchandise exports grew 1.84 per cent to \$402.93 billion, compared with \$395.66 bil-

lion in the same period last year. Imports during the period increased 8.53 per cent to \$713.53 billion.

The data comes amid escalating tensions in West Asia following military action by the US and Israel against Iran on February 28. The crisis has disrupted key trade routes, particularly the Strait of Hormuz, through which nearly 20 per cent of global oil and gas shipments pass.

Officials said India has strengthened its resilience to global energy shocks through diversification of imports across about 40 supplier countries and by building strategic petroleum reserves. Government officials added that India is also in contact with Iran to ensure safe passage for merchant ships through the region.



### LG HVAC system showcased at ACREX

HANS BUSINESS HYDERABAD

LG Electronics India Limited (LGE India) has participated at ACREX ISHRAE India 2026 - South Asia's largest exhibition for HVAC and Intelligent Business Solutions. The company presented its most comprehensive product portfolio at the exhibition, spanning residential, commercial, and industrial applications, highlighting innovations that deliver intelligent, reliable, and energy-efficient climate solutions for India. LG Electronics showcased its advanced VRF, Chillers & Cassette range ACs best suited for diverse Indian climate & consumers requirements. Commenting on the company's participation in ACREX, Hong Ju Jeon - Managing Director & Chief Sales & Marketing Officer, LG Electronics India Limited said, "LG Electronics has been part of India's journey for nearly three decades, and has during this period built unparalleled expertise in addressing the country's infrastructure requirements, while meeting performance standards that developers, consultants, and facility managers demand."

### HCLTech ties up with Google Cloud for Agentic AI adoption

HANS BUSINESS HYDERABAD

HCLTech, a technology company, has announced the expansion of its strategic collaboration with Google Cloud to help accelerate enterprise adoption of Agentic AI. HCLTech will use Gemini Enterprise and Gemini models to build custom AI agents for global clients, while strengthening collaboration and security through Google Workspace, supporting their scalable, AI-driven transformation. As enterprises scale AI, the company's Gemini-enabled offerings embed AI into systems, workflows and decision-making to unlock new market opportunities, introduce innovative capabilities and boost operational efficiency. Many of the agents the company has developed are already available on the Google Cloud Marketplace. This expanded collaboration formalises a structured program to accelerate clients' GenAI and Agentic AI adoption, cultivate Google Cloud



champions across HCLTech and support over 2,000 GenAI-led customer engagements.

The company's key areas include: Building unique offerings with Data and AI at its core, the AI Force platform integrates with Google's Gemini family of models and Gemini Code Assist to transform software development and IT operations. Additional offerings include Unified Migrations, including Oracle, SAP and VMware transformation to Google Cloud and Security transformation.

The company is growing its Center of Excellence to expand industry-specific agentic solutions. Advancing Agentic AI solutions, building on offerings such as Insight for manufacturing and Netsight for telecommunications.

## Sebi mulls light-touch penalty structure for IAs

The regulator aims to promote compliance while ensuring transparency and fairness

NEW DELHI: With an aim to strengthen the investment advisory ecosystem, markets regulator Sebi is working on a raft of measures, including a standardised light-touch penalty structure, a digital regulatory guidance platform, and a common advertisement code, its chairman Tuhin Kanta Pandey said. Speaking at an event organised by the Association of Registered Investment Advisers (ARIA), Pandey said the investment advisory ecosystem in India is currently at an important stage of transition.

At present, there are around 1,000 registered investment advisers (IAs) in the country-- about 470 individuals and 530 non-individual entities. He said the regulator is working on a standardised light-touch penalty structure aimed at encouraging compliance



while ensuring transparency and fairness. "A standardised light-touch penalty structure for IAs is being worked out. This should promote compliance while ensuring transparency and fairness," he said.

The regulator is also developing a digital platform -- SEBI SETU -- to provide simple, end-to-end regulatory guidance for investment advisers, covering the entire lifecycle from registration to ongoing compliance, he added.

In addition, the regulator is preparing a common advertisement code for all intermediaries to reduce

operational challenges and improve consistency in communication. Among other initiatives, a working group has been constituted to review the existing regulatory framework for Mutual Fund Distributors (MFDs) and examine overlaps, if any, between MFDs and investment advisers.

Pandey said a simplified certification module is also being developed by National Institute of Securities Markets (NISM) for individuals associated with investment advice who are engaged in sales and other non-core functions. However, he expressed concern over the declining number of registered investment advisers despite a rapidly expanding investor base.

"It is a matter of concern that the number of registered investment advisers has declined since 2021.

### Vedanta eyes ₹2,575-cr via NCDs

NEW DELHI: Vedanta Ltd said its committee of directors has approved raising up to Rs 2,575 crore through issuance of debentures. The fundraising is part of Vedanta's efforts to diversify funding sources and strengthen its balance sheet as it continues to refinance debt and reduce borrowing costs. The committee has approved the allotment of 2,57,500 unsecured, redeemable, rated, listed, non-convertible debentures of face value of Rs 1,00,000 each, aggregating to Rs 2,575 crore on a private placement basis, a BSE filing said. Vedanta has seen strong investor interest in recent debt issuances. In October 2025, its \$500 million bond issue was oversubscribed three times, while an NCD offering in June last year saw nearly 60 per cent oversubscription. The company has been gradually deleveraging its balance sheet. Vedanta Resources Ltd, the parent of Vedanta Ltd, has reduced net debt to about \$4.8 billion as of December 2025 from about \$8.9 billion in March 2022.

## Inflation: Rising crude prices push WPI to 11-month high of 2.13% in Feb

It is likely to pick up pace if oil price rise persists, and spills over to other goods

**Global Jitters**

- Inflation in food articles was 2.19%
- Vegetables, inflation eased to 4.73%
- Pulses, potato and egg, meat and fish saw an uptick



NEW DELHI: Wholesale price inflation rose to a 11-month high of 2.13 per cent in February, driven by an uptick in prices of food and non-food articles, even though vegetable prices eased on a month-on-month basis, government data showed on Monday.

This is the fourth straight month of rise in Wholesale Price Index (WPI)-based inflation. It was 1.81 per cent in January and 2.45 per cent in February last year.

Economists said the WPI inflation is likely to pick up pace further if the oil price

rise persists, and spills over to other goods (fertilisers, aluminium) given it tracks international prices more closely relative to the CPI basket.

According to WPI data, inflation in food articles was 2.19 per cent in February, as against 1.55 per cent in the previous month. Although in vegetables, inflation eased to 4.73 per cent in February against 6.78 per cent in Janu-

ary, pulses, potato and egg, meat and fish saw an uptick in inflation in February.

"Positive rate of inflation in February 2026 is primarily due to an increase in prices of other manufacturing, manufacture of basic metals, non-food articles, food articles and textiles, etc.," the industry ministry said in a statement. Negative inflation, or deflation, in the fuel and power basket narrowed

to 3.78 per cent in February, vis-a-vis 4.01 per cent in January. Global oil prices averaged \$68/bbl in February from \$63/bbl in January.

Barclays in a research note said the passthrough of the rise in crude oil prices from the Middle East conflict will reflect more in WPI inflation vs retail CPI inflation, as retail fuel prices are unchanged in the latter.

"With a sharp jump in crude oil prices crossing \$100/bbl as of 16 March, the corresponding WPI will likely reflect this in the March print," Barclays said.

India Ratings and Research the rising crude oil prices since the US-Iran war will have a strong impact on wholesale inflation from March 2026, till the supply side issues are resolved.

The average price of Indian crude basket March 2026 (up to March 12) touched a 44-month high of \$101.25/bbl.

## Nifty likely to reach 35,000 in 3 yrs: Report

In last 4 years Indian markets delivered about 12.7% CAGR; If the index maintains its current valuation multiple of about 20.9x earnings, it could translate into around 12.8-14% CAGR

NEW DELHI: India's benchmark index Nifty 50 is likely to touch 34,000-35,000 levels over the next three years due to earnings growth, stronger consumption and banking credit expansion, a report claimed on Monday.

From these factors and continued investment in infrastructure and manufacturing, Nifty earnings per share may rise to Rs 1,281 in FY27, Rs 1,463 in FY28 and Rs 1,650-1,700 by FY29, the report from investment platform smallcase said. Mid-caps led market returns, outperforming large caps during the past four years when global markets experienced shocks from multiple geopolitical conflicts, the report said.

Indian markets delivered about 12.7 per cent CAGR demonstrated notable resilience, with most geopolitical shocks triggering short-term corrections of



around 2-8 per cent, followed by swift recoveries within weeks, during times of conflict in last 4 years.

This performance has been supported by the strength of the domestic economy, improving corporate earnings, and rising retail participation in the stock market, the firm said. Assuming the index maintains its current valuation multiple of about 20.9x earnings, the trend could translate into approximately 12.8-14 per cent compound annual growth rate (CAGR), the report added.

The firm highlighted mid-caps delivered CAGRs of about 18.4 per cent dur-

ing this period versus 13.4 per cent for small caps and 9.8 per cent for large caps. Defence and aerospace companies have emerged as key beneficiaries of heightened geopolitical tensions, supported by rising global defence spending and stronger domestic procurement initiatives, it said.

Oil and gas producers have also historically performed well during geopolitical crises due to supply disruptions and rising crude oil prices. Commodity-linked sectors such as metals and mining have similarly witnessed phases of outperformance during periods of supply constraints and commodity price rallies, it added. Meanwhile, manufacturing and capital goods companies are gaining prominence as global supply chains undergo structural shifts, the firm suggested.



# Raashii Khanna promises vintage Pawan Kalyan magic

The excitement around 'Ustaad Bhagat Singh' has been steadily building ever since the project brought together Power Star Pawan Kalyan and director Harish Shankar, the blockbuster duo behind 'Gabbar Singh'. Mounted on a grand scale by Mythri Movie Makers, the film promises a festive theatrical experience when it releases on March 19 for Ugadi. With the teaser, trailer, and songs already striking a chord, expectations are soaring — and leading lady Raashii Khanna is feeling the buzz.

Calling this phase of her career "incredibly hectic but exciting," Raashii reveals that joining the film was an instant decision driven purely by admiration. "The moment I heard it was Pawan Kalyan Garu's film, I said yes immediately — even before listening to the story. Since my first film, I've heard so much about his stardom and the phenomenon people call 'Pawanism.' I always wished to work with him at least once. With this film, that dream finally came true."

In the film, Raashii plays Shloka, a contemporary young woman written with depth and presence. She describes the role as both stylish and substantial. "Every character in the story has importance, and Shloka has a strong arc with solid characterization. There's good emotional range in the role." She adds with a smile, "I also have a proper

mass song in the film. I love dancing, so shooting that number was pure fun for me."

Working alongside Pawan Kalyan left a lasting impression on the actress, not just professionally but personally. "He is an incredibly simple person. You'll almost always see him reading books. There's an innocence about him that's very rare and difficult to explain," she says. Their first conversation remains memorable. "On day one, he asked me if I always wanted to become an actress. I told him I had once dreamed of becoming an IAS officer. He speaks very little, but every word carries weight."

What moved her most was his perspective on life beyond cinema. "He encouraged me to think about public service and contributing to society. He genuinely cares about people. I learned a lot about humanity from him." Witnessing his fan following up close was overwhelming. "When I looked at the crowd during the film event, it felt like people were worshipping him like a god."

Raashii is equally appreciative of director Harish Shankar's filmmaking intensity. "He's extremely sharp and understands the pulse of the mass audience perfectly. What amazed me most was his speed — a schedule that usually takes 120 days was completed in just 40. He worked tirelessly, often sacrificing sleep." She recalls how his creativity

flowed even on set. "He would write punch dialogues on the spot. His patience and dedication to cinema taught me so much."

Despite sharing screen space with another leading lady, Raashii says the narrative gives each character room to shine. "We don't have scenes together, so there was never a concern. Each role has its own space, and mine comes with good variations."

Managing schedules around the star's commitments required flexibility and stamina. "I was told in advance that dates could be unpredictable, and I was prepared. There were days we worked 24-hour shifts without knowing whether it was day or night."

She also credits the producers for fostering a creative environment. "They put their heart and soul into films, never compromise on scale, and give directors complete freedom. The working atmosphere is wonderful."

For audiences, Raashii promises a wholesome entertainer. "Like 'Gabbar Singh', this film is packed with entertainment. It's a complete family film everyone can enjoy together in theatres. Releasing during Ugadi makes it even more special. Most importantly, you'll get to see vintage Pawan Kalyan Garu on screen."



## Suriya shines in 'Vishwanath & Sons' emotional teaser

The teaser of 'Vishwanath & Sons', starring Suriya, has been unveiled, offering a glimpse into the world of Sanjay Vishwanath. Directed by Venky Atluri and produced by Suryadevara Naga Vamsi, the film promises an emotional and engaging cinematic experience.

The teaser introduces Sanjay Vishwanath, an international pistol shooter who continues to chase his dreams even in his 40s. Suriya appears in a layered role, portraying both fatherly warmth and emotional depth. His stylish screen presence and the impactful dialogues penned by Venky Atluri bring back shades reminiscent of his iconic performances.

Adding freshness to the narrative is Mamitha Baiju, who brings vibrant and charming energy to the film. The teaser hints at an unconventional love story featuring a noticeable age gap. With Venky Atluri's storytelling sensibilities, the film is expected to handle this aspect with depth and

emotional maturity.

The teaser also highlights the film's strong technical craftsmanship. G. V. Prakash Kumar delivers a classy and powerful background score that elevates the visuals. Cinematographer Nimish Ravi captures the film in rich and visually striking frames, while editing is handled by Navin Nooli. Production design by Banglan further enhances the film's immersive world.

Touted as a large-scale family drama with strong emotional undercurrents, 'Vishwanath & Sons' brings together a compelling ensemble cast and a top-tier technical team. Director Venky Atluri, who is riding high on the success of 'Lucky Baskhar' and 'Vaathi', aims to deliver another memorable entertainer.

Produced under the banners of Sithara Entertainment and Fortune Four Cinemas, and presented by Srikara Studios, the film has successfully wrapped up shooting and is gearing up for a grand worldwide theatrical release this July.

## Kiran Abbavaram unveils Thimmarajupalli TV's 'Ooru Song'

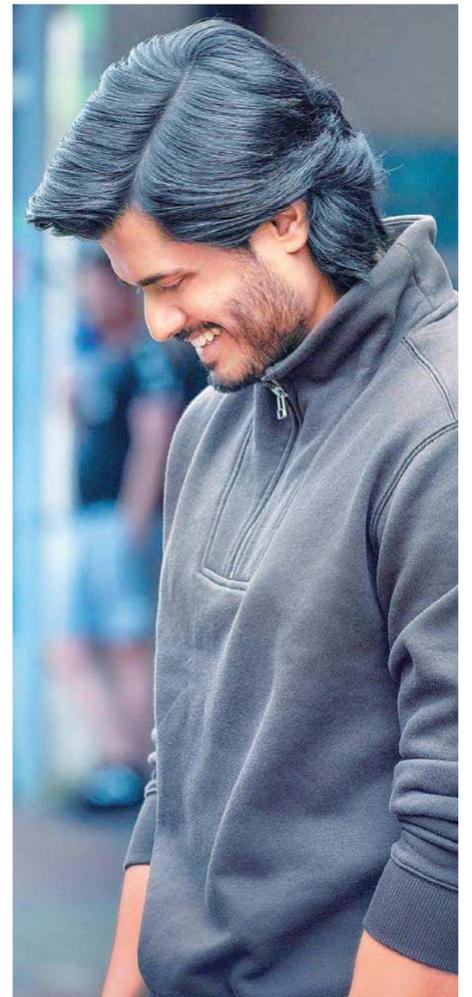
Hero Kiran Abbavaram's KA Productions, in association with Sumaira Studios, is backing the film 'Thimmarajupalli TV', encouraging fresh talent in the industry. Teja Velpucharla is serving as the co-producer. The film introduces Sai Tej and Veda Jalandharr as the lead actors, while V. Murniraju makes his directorial debut with 'Thimmarajupalli TV'.

Set against a rural backdrop, the film is being made as a period drama and is gearing up for a grand theatrical release soon. Today, the makers unveiled



the "Ooru Song" from 'Thimmarajupalli TV'. The track has been beautifully composed by Vamsikanth

Rekhana, with lyrics penned by Sanare and vocals rendered by Mamatha Ramesh. The song vividly captures the festive spirit of a village preparing for the Shivaratri fair. The song portrays the charm of rural life — from the sound of cuckoos perched on tree branches and the lush greenery at dawn to the colourful rangolis adorning homes and the fragrant breeze carrying the scent of flowers. The lyrics also reflect the excitement among people of all ages as the village gears up to celebrate the Shivaratri festival and the vibrant fair that accompanies it.



## Anand Deverakonda's 'Epic' birthday promo impresses fans

An impressive birthday promo from young hero Anand Deverakonda's upcoming film 'Epic' has been drawing significant attention. The film is directed by Aditya Haasan and produced by Suryadevara Naga Vamsi and Sai Soujanya under the banners of Sithara Entertainment and Fortune Four Cinemas. Srikara Studios presents the film, while Venkat Upputuri and VMR are serving as co-producers. On the occasion of Anand Deverakonda's birthday today, the makers released a special promo from 'Epic'.

The promo shows the hero celebrating his birthday in

London with friends, while his parents call from India to wish him. A touching moment highlights the father subtly conveying his heartfelt wishes to his son.

The promo carries a unique emotional tone, enhanced by the use of the iconic Amrutham title song as the background score.

After the cult blockbuster Baby, Anand Deverakonda and Vaishnavi Chaitanya are reuniting for this film. The recently released song "Sancharame.." from 'Epic' has also received a positive response. With this exciting combination, the film is generating strong curiosity among audiences.

## Sudigali Sudheer's 'G.O.A.T' cleared for March 26 release



The upcoming Telugu film 'G.O.A.T' (Greatest Of All Times), starring popular comedian-turned-hero Sudigali Sudheer, has successfully completed its censor formalities and is gearing up for a worldwide theatrical release on March 26.

The film features Divya Bharathi as the female lead and is directed by Vedavyas. It is being produced by Chandrasekhar Reddy Mogulla under the banners of Mahateja Creations and Jaishnav Productions. The film is currently undergoing post-production work.

According to the makers, the content released so far has received a positive response from audiences, and the trailer will be unveiled soon. The film has now completed the censor process and has been awarded a U/A certificate by the censor board.

Speaking about the film, the producer said it is being made on a grand scale without compromising on quality. He added that the film will be technically strong and is expected to become a milestone in Sudigali Sudheer's career. "Every frame of the film has

come out beautifully. Along with being a complete commercial entertainer, the movie also carries a meaningful message that will make today's youth think," he said, expressing confidence that it will entertain audiences across all sections.

Apart from Sudigali Sudheer and Divya Bharathi, the film also features Sarvadaman Banerjee, Nithin Prasanna, Brahmaji, Prithvi Raj, Aadukalam Naren, Rajendran, Anand Ramraj, Chammak Chandra, Pammi Sai, and Naveen Neni in important roles.

The film's music is composed by Leon James, with the background score by Mani Sharma. Cinematography is handled by Rasool Ellore, while editing is done by Vijay Muktavarapu. Rajeev Nair serves as the production designer. Samaira Reddy N is the co-producer, and Prasoon Mandava is the creative producer.

With its blend of commercial elements and a socially relevant message, 'G.O.A.T' is expected to entertain audiences when it hits theatres worldwide on March 26.