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'Can't support Iran war in good conscience'

TOP TRUMP AIDE JOE KENT RESIGNS

WASHINGTON: US President Donald Trump's counterterrorism chief Joe Kent on Tuesday resigned over the ongoing US-Iran conflict, stating that Tehran posed "no imminent threat to our nation." He claimed that the war was initiated due to pressure

from Israel and its lobby in the US. Kent, who served as Director of the National Counterterrorism Center, announced his decision in a post on X, saying, "after much reflection, I have decided to resign from my position effective today."

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CM to launch 'Divyang Shakti' scheme today

► New scheme facilitates free bus travel to people with disabilities

HANS NEWS SERVICE

AMARAVATI: Chief Minister Nara Chandrababu Naidu will launch 'Divyang Shakti' scheme in Amaravati on Wednesday. This will offer free bus travel to people with disabilities across the state. MLAs will simultaneously inaugurate the programme in their respective constituencies. The initiative fulfills a promise the Chief Minister made on December 3 last year, observed as the International Day of Persons with Disabilities. Under the new scheme, people with 40 per cent or more disability can travel free of cost on buses currently covered under the Stree Shakti Scheme. Cont'd on Page 7

LPG SITUATION A MATTER OF CONCERN, SAYS GOVT

HANS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI

THE Centre on Tuesday said that the energy crisis in India still remains a matter of concern amid the ongoing conflict in the Middle East. However, it assured consumers not to panic over LPG supplies.

During an inter-ministerial briefing on recent developments, Sujata Sharma, joint secretary in the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas, advised judicious consumption of LPG and suggested using alternate sources for cooking.

"On the issue of LPG, I would like to reiterate that the situation still remains a matter of concern. However, no LPG

- Centre calls for judicious use amid shortage fears
- Govt suggests using alternate sources for cooking
- Assured consumers not to panic over gas supply



distributor is facing a dry-out situation at present. In addition, LPG supplies and cylinder deliveries for all domestic consumers are continuing as

usual. With regard to online booking, I would like to inform you that there has been significant improvement, and as of today, nearly 94% of cyl-

3 lakh MT LPG stranded at Hormuz P7

inder bookings are being made online. There has also been improvement in the delivery authentication code system, which has now reached 76%. As far as commercial LPG supplies are concerned, these were initially completely halted but were later partially restored," Sharma said. "Cylinders that were placed at the disposal of various state governments and Union Territories are also being distributed.

Several governments, including those of Bihar, Delhi, Gujarat, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Karnataka, Manipur, Rajasthan and Uttarakhand, have already issued allocation orders for non-domestic LPG," she added. Cont'd on Page 7

No need to panic about LPG supply: CM Naidu

State has 15 days of LPG stock

HANS NEWS SERVICE

AMARAVATI: Andhra Pradesh has adequate LPG reserves for the next 15 days, and there is no need for public concern over cooking gas supplies, Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu said on Tuesday. The state currently holds 14,000 metric tonnes of LPG, while another 24,000 metric tonnes of gas is available at Visakhapatnam, providing a comfortable buffer, the Chief Minister said. Cont'd on Page 7

RAMZAN TIMINGS
IFTAR (Wed)
6.32 PM
SEHAR (Thu)
4.59 AM

IRREGULAR by MANJUL

How can we trust them to vote on bills when they cannot even vote properly in Rajya Sabha elections?

PAGE: 7
Iran security chief Larijani killed in Israel strike?
400 killed, 250 injured in Pak strike on Kabul hospital
Mamata locks horns with BJP's Suvendu again
Govt clarifies on eKYC norms for LPG

Parl panel suggests ₹7,500 EPF pension

HANS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI

A Parliamentary panel on Tuesday recommended an urgent, comprehensive review of the Rs 1,000 minimum monthly pension under the Employees' Pension Scheme, 1995, to raise it to a more realistic and dignified level.

This assumes significance in view of pensioners' demand to raise the pension to Rs 7,500 per month, as Rs 1,000 is not sufficient to make both ends meet. Pensioners under the



Employees' Pension Scheme 1995 (EPS-95) run by the retirement fund body EPFO had also staged a three-day protest at Jantar Mantar from March 9, for increasing the minimum monthly pension to Rs 7,500.

The Parliamentary Standing Committee on Labour, Textiles and Skill Development, in its 15th Report on 'Demands for Grants (2026-27)' of the Ministry of Labour and Employment, noted that the minimum

pension of Rs 1,000 per month under the Employees' Pension Scheme, 1995, has remained unchanged for a considerable period of time despite the rising cost of living.

During the course of evidence, the committee observed that numerous representations have been received from pensioners seeking an upward revision of the minimum pension, particularly considering the financial hardships faced by elderly and economically vulnerable beneficiaries.

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6 LPG, crude oil ships to reach Vizag Port soon

RANI DEVALLA
VISAKHAPATNAM

MUCH to the relief of the consumers, two vessels carrying tonnes of commercial LPG are bound to arrive in Visakhapatnam Port from the Strait of Hormuz on March 26, 30.

According to port officials, each ship is likely to contain 25,000 to 30,000 metric tonnes of commercial LPG. And the quantity is expected to provide a huge relief to LPG users who are in dire need of it now. Following

shipping disruptions at the Strait of Hormuz, scores of hotels and restaurants have been reeling under severe supply crunch of commercial LPG cylinders.

With a shipment from Qatar arriving earlier and its unloading exercise coming to a close, the other two vessels would take the total quantity to 60,000 metric tonnes of LPG. "These vessels are arriving by the end of this month," a senior port official told The Hans India on condition of anonymity.

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Divyanga Shakti

Free Bus Travel for Persons with Disabilities

Equal opportunity is the foundation of an inclusive society. **Divyanga Shakti** aims to make travel easier for persons with disabilities and strengthen their independence.

Hon'ble Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh
Sri Nara Chandrababu Naidu
will launch the "Divyanga Shakti" program on March 18, 2026.

Buses eligible for free travel
City Ordinary, Metro Express, Express, Pallevelugu and Ultra Pallevelugu buses.

Eligibility
As per the RPwD Act, 2016, Persons with Disabilities (PwD) with **40% or more disability across 21 recognised categories** are eligible for free bus travel.

Subsidy
₹207 crore per year towards the free travel facility for PwDs.

Beneficiary Expansion
2.06 lakh
Existing Beneficiaries

12.76 lakh
Total Beneficiaries
(including escorts)

The NDA Government is committed to empowerment and equal opportunities for **persons with disabilities**.

Issued by: Director, Information & Public Relations Dept., Andhra Pradesh.