



THE Hans India



Air conditioning: How does it affect the skin?

Air conditioners have seen a significant surge in use in recent years, particularly in hot-climate countries like India. In today's increasingly climate-controlled world, air conditioning has evolved from a luxury into a near necessity.

P8

Hashtags, hate and half-truths: The dark side of India's digital politics

The rise of social media in India was once hailed as a democratic revolution. It promised to dismantle the monopoly of traditional media, amplify unheard voices, deepen citizen participation, and establish a direct connection between political leaders and the public.

P6

India's residential market matures; Hyd joins growth surge in Q1 2026

India's residential real estate market has transitioned into a "structurally mature, demand-anchored growth phase", with Q1 2026 recording 93,065 new unit launches and 95,973 unit sales across the top eight cities, a report said on Saturday.

Why self-discipline and motivation matter more than ever for students

As rightly penned by Jim Rohn, Discipline turns ordinary things into extraordinary accomplishments and motivation is the energizing force behind it. In today's fast-paced world filled with distractions, smartphones, social media, and constant digital stimulation.

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WINDOWS



2 Indian climbers die during Mount Everest descent

KATHMANDU: Two Indian mountaineers who summited Everest have died while descending, an official said on Friday. The climbers, identified as Arun Kumar Tiwari and Sandeep Are, were exhausted while they were coming down from the peak and could not be saved despite the best efforts of their guides, said Rishi Bhandari, secretary general of the Expedition Operators Association of Nepal. It appears that Are summited on Wednesday and Tiwari on Thursday around 5.30 pm, Bhandari said. The guides 'worked really hard' but were not able to save them, he said. Tiwari died near the Hillary Step, just below the summit, after falling ill during his descent on Thursday evening while being assisted by four Sherpa climbers, said Nivesh Karki, Director at Pioneer Adventures, which organised the expedition. Are summited on Wednesday but became unwell during the descent. He was rescued by Sherpa guides from the South Summit and died shortly after arriving at Camp II early Friday, Karki said. Efforts are underway to bring back the bodies of the deceased climbers to Kathmandu, Karki said. With this, the death toll on Everest has reached five in this season. Earlier, three Nepali climbers died on Mt Everest. On Wednesday, three Indians, including Are, were part of 274 climbers who summited the 8,848.86-metre peak. It was a new record for the highest number of ascents ever recorded in a day. The other two were Tulasi Reddi Palpunoori and Ajay Pal Singh Dhaliwal. The following day, on Thursday, India's Lakshmi Kant Mandal also reached the world's highest peak.

India blocks China's request for dispute panel at world body



NEW DELHI: India has blocked China's request to set up a dispute panel at the WTO in a case that Beijing has filed against New Delhi's support measures for the solar cells, modules, and information technology sectors, an official said. Earlier this month, China made this request to the WTO's (World Trade Organization) dispute settlement body. The request follows the failure of bilateral consultations on reaching a mutually-agreed solution on the dispute filed by China in December last year. The Geneva-based official said that India has blocked the first request of China for the establishment of a panel. China has alleged that India's tariff or import duty on certain technology products, and measures like the use of domestic products over imported goods, discriminate against Chinese goods. Beijing, which is a major exporter of goods under these sectors, had claimed that these support measures and incentives infringe rules pertaining to the WTO's General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade 1994.



IRREGULAR by MANJUL

SC questions quota benefits for BC creamy layer

If both parents are IAS officers, why should they have reservations?, asks the top court

NEW DELHI

OBSERVING that with educational and economic empowerment there is social mobility, the Supreme Court on Friday questioned the continued grant of reservation benefits to children of economically and educationally advanced families within backward classes. A bench of Justices B V Nagarathna and Ujjal Bhuyan was hearing a plea challenging a Karnataka High Court judgment which upheld the exclusion of the

The Supreme Court remarked that if the parents of students are in good jobs with handsome incomes, then the children should get out of reservation

petitioner, whose parents are both state government employees, from reservation. "If both parents are IAS officers, why should they have reservations? With educational and economic empower-



ment, there is social mobility. "So then again, to seek reservation for the children, we will never get out of it," the bench observed while

issuing notice in the matter. The top court remarked that if the parents of students are in good jobs with handsome incomes, then the children

should get out of reservation. The apex court said several orders passed by the government already provide for the exclusion of such affluent sections from reservation benefits, but they are being challenged now. "For the Economically Weaker Section and Disadvantaged Group, there is no social backwardness but only economic backwardness. There has to be some balance. Socially and educationally backward, yes, but once the parents have attained a level

because of taking advantage of reservation," the bench said. The petitioner was selected for appointment as an assistant engineer (electrical) in the Karnataka Power Transmission Corporation Limited under the reserved category. The District Caste and Income Verification Committee, however, denied him a caste validity certificate after concluding that he fell within the creamy layer. The authorities noted that both parents were govern-

ment employees and that their combined income exceeded the prescribed creamy layer threshold. The classification of the petitioner as belonging to the creamy layer was based on the income of his parents, who are salaried employees and whose combined income allegedly exceeded Rs 8,00,000. Consequently, the caste certificate issued to the petitioner, certifying him as belonging to the Kuruba community, was revoked.

Continued on Page 5

CHILL PILL AS TEMP SOARS...!

Beer guzzlers add more fizz to booze biz in state

Chilled beer in high demand, sales jumps in April and May

- High summer temperatures driving sales
- 42L cases of beer were sold until May 21
- Youth consuming beer in place of other drinks at watering holes

HANS NEWS SERVICE HYDERABAD



WITH the temperature hovering between 44 degrees centigrade and nearly 47 degrees C in most districts of Telangana, tippers who believe in the concept of "work hard and party harder" would naturally like to wind up their day by quaffing mug after mug of chilled beer. Some may take a break even before calling it a day by downing draught beer to enjoy its authentic flavour and aroma, crisp taste, smooth mouthfeel, and rich foamy

head. Naturally, chilled beer is on high demand during summers. The demand has skyrocketed this time due to scorching heatwaves. Beer sales scaled up in April and May, marking the peak of summer season. In all, 42 lakh cases of beer were sold until May 21, reflecting 18.4 per cent growth as against the sales in the same period last year. In

April this year, nearly 20.99 per cent growth was registered in beer sales, with 56,21 lakh cases being sold against 46.46 lakh cases in the corresponding month last year. Due to the scorching heat, people can't wait until afterhours; so, they tend to gulp chilled beer during evening hours or in the afternoon. It is estimated that nearly 60 lakh cases of beer

will be sold by the end of May, registering the highest ever beer sales in May.

Paradoxically, while extreme heat lifted beer sales, the onset of monsoon could prove to be a party pooper for the state Excise and Prohibition Department.

According to officials of the department, beer sales may go down slightly even before the onset of monsoon, if the temperature plummets over the next week. According to the Indian Meteorological Department's prediction, the South West monsoon will enter the state early this year. The officials said another reason for the increasing beer sales is that breweries have been supplying adequate brewed liquor despite facing many challenges in procuring raw material from different countries amid the West Asia crisis.

Continued on Page 5

Centre will make NEET re-test 100 pc error-free, says Pradhan

NEW DELHI

UNION Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan on Friday said the government had to take "tough decisions" after irregularities were detected in the conduct of the NEET-UG, asserting that authorities did not want even a single deserving student to lose their rightful seat because of the "examination mafia". He also asserted that the government is committed to ensuring that the re-test scheduled to be held on June 21 remains "100



per cent error-free". Addressing the Jagran Bharat Education Conclave 2026, Pradhan said around 22 lakh students have suffered "mental anguish" due to the controversy surrounding the medical entrance exam and the government is committed to fixing the system. Continued on Page 5

NEETGATE: More skeletons tumble out of closet

Pune lecturer arrested in NEET-UG 2026 paper leak episode

PUNE: The CBI has arrested a Pune-based lecturer for allegedly leaking the physics paper of NEET UG 2026 to a select group of aspirants, officials said on Friday. The CBI has arrested Manisha Sanjay Havaldar, presently employed with the Seth Hiralal Saraf Prashala in Pune, terming her another "source" for the paper leak. "The CBI has identified



another key accused who was the source for the leak of NEET-UG 2026 physics questions," a CBI spokesperson said in a statement.

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CJP swings into action, demands Pradhan's scalp



NEW DELHI: Back with the tagline "Cockroaches Never Die" after its original X handle was withheld in India, the "Cockroach Janata Party" (CJP), a satirical social-media account, launched a campaign on Friday demanding the resignation of Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan. The campaign, spearheaded through CJP's new X handle -- "Cockroach Is Back" -- and its Instagram platform, centres on alleged systemic failures in the education sector, particularly concerns surrounding the NEET-UG 2026 "paper-leak" controversy.

Continued on Page 5

EC announces polls for 26 RS seats on June 18

NEW DELHI: The NDA is likely to lose one Rajya Sabha seat in the biennial elections for 26 seats in 12 states across the country, while the Congress-led opposition is set to gain three. The Election Commission on Friday announced elections for 26 Rajya Sabha seats on June 18 following the retirement of incumbents, including former prime minister HD Deve Gowda, Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge and party leader Digvijaya Singh, besides two Union ministers Ravneet Singh

and George Kurian. In a statement, the EC said the elections for the Rajya Sabha seats will be held in 10 states where 24 incumbents are retiring on different dates beginning June 21 to July 19.

Of the total 26 seats where elections are being held, the NDA currently has 18 and the Congress four while one seat is with the JMM and three are with the YSRCP. The NDA is likely to get 17 seats in these elections, while the Congress will get five, the JMM two and the TVK one. Continued on Page 5

India, Cyprus boost ties to a strategic partnership



NEW DELHI: India and Cyprus on Friday elevated their ties to a strategic partnership and set up a joint task force to facilitate deeper cooperation in sectors such as infrastructure and shipping as Prime Minister Narendra Modi hosted Cyprus President Nikos Christodoulides for wide-ranging talks.

Continued on Page 5

KTR SEEKS WHITE PAPER ON GRAIN PROCUREMENT

HANS NEWS SERVICE HYDERABAD

BRS working president KT Rama Rao on Friday dared Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy to dissolve the Assembly and face re-election if he is confident of being in power till 2034.

The BRS leader offered to resign and also dared Revanth Reddy to make the turncoat MLAs resign and face the election again if the Chief Minister was unwilling to dissolve the Assembly. Rama Rao made these comments while addressing a press conference at Tel-



angana Bhavan, where he lashed out at the government stating that the crop procurement crisis in the state was severe. He alleged that Revanth Reddy had become the Chief Minister under management quota.

"If the Chief Minister is

so popular, why did he lose Mahbubnagar Lok Sabha seat? Why could he not win a single urban local body in the Malkajgiri Lok Sabha, which he had represented?" KTR asked. KTR said that while there was an agrarian crisis, yet Chief Minister Revanth Reddy and his Cabinet ministers were ignoring the issue and peddling falsehoods. KTR demanded that the state government release a white paper specifically detailing crop-wise statistics regarding the procurement activities undertaken thus far.

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RBI to pay record dividend of ₹2.87L cr to Centre for FY26

MUMBAI: The Reserve Bank on Friday announced a record Rs 2.87 lakh crore dividend to the government for the 2025-26 financial year, providing financial leeway amid geopolitical challenges. The dividend or surplus transfer for 2024-25 was Rs 2.69 lakh crore, 27.4 per cent more than the payout in 2023-24.

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) had transferred Rs 2.1 lakh crore in dividends to the government for 2023-24 and Rs 87,416 crore for 2022-23. The decision on the dividend payout was taken at the 623rd meeting of the Central Board of Directors of RBI under the Chairmanship of Governor Sanjay Malhotra. "The net income, before risk provision and transfer to statutory funds, aggregated Rs 3,95,972.10 crore in FY 2025-26 as against Rs 3,13,455.77 crore in FY 2024-25," RBI said in a statement. The Balance Sheet of the central bank expanded by 20.61 per cent to Rs 91,97,121.08 crore as on March 31, 2026.

Major schemes likely to be launched on TG Formation Day

Today's Cabinet meet to take call on insurance for every family, enhanced pensions, housing for more sections

HANS NEWS SERVICE HYDERABAD

THE state government is likely to announce the launch of major schemes on June 2, the State Formation Day, for which crucial decisions would be taken at the Cabinet meeting convened by Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy on Saturday. The items topping the agenda of the Cabinet

meeting include two lakh new pensions, Indiramma family insurance scheme for all families in the state, and housing for more sections.

Considering that the Chief Minister has already decided to hand over Indiramma houses in Adilabad district on June 2, officials said the Cabinet would review the implementation of the housing scheme and take some



decisions to expedite the construction of the houses

and the release of funds to the beneficiaries on a fast track.

The applications received for pensions have been scrutinised and their approval is under progress in the districts. The Cabinet will ratify a proposal to sanction two lakh pensions on the State Formation Day. The enhancement of the pension amount would also be discussed.

The Chief Minister will take a call on the specifics of the foregoing key schemes

in view of the financial challenges in the current financial year. The Cabinet sub-committee on Rs 5 lakh family insurance scheme for every Telangana family, headed by Deputy Chief Minister Bhatti Vikramarka, would submit its report, following which the Cabinet will work out the modalities of launching the scheme.

Continued on Page 5

KTR accuses Revanth, Bandi Sanjay of sheltering POCsO accused

BRS Working President demands accountability, alleges conspiracy to intimidate victim's family and suppress media reports

HANS NEWS SERVICE
HYDERABAD

BRS Working President KT Rama Rao on Friday alleged that a young woman in Telangana suffered injustice due to the collusion between Chief Minister Revanth Reddy and Union Minister Bandi Sanjay.

Speaking sharply against the State Government, KTR accused the Chief Minister of intimidating the victim's family, orchestrating a counter-case against them, and shielding the accused for nine days.

Rao condemned the "reckless remarks" made by the CM on the case, asserting that it was the State Government that subjected the minor girl to severe distress, forcing her to wait at the police station until midnight when she went there with her parents to report the injustice. He questioned how the accused was allowed to remain at large for over a week, alleging it was due to the "close ties" between Bandi Sanjay and Revanth

Reddy. "The accused was finally arrested only after the High Court refused to grant bail, and after public outrage across Telangana," KTR said. He criticised the CM, who also holds the Home portfolio, for offering excuses like, "The police were, too, busy due to the Prime Minister's visit." KTR questioned whether the Prime Minister's visit justified allowing associates to roam freely while crimes went unchecked.

KTR said his party had maintained silence out of sensitivity toward the young girl, avoiding politicisation of the matter. However, he was compelled to speak after the CM levelled criticism against BRS.

He demanded clarity on whether there was any other instance in the country where an accused in a POCsO case was shielded for nine days. Reports suggest the accused was allegedly sheltered in a hospital owned by a close associate of the Chief Minister. KTR called for a thorough government inquiry into the matter.

He challenged both Bandi Sanjay and the CM to reveal who orchestrated the conspiracy to file a counter-case alleging a "honey trap" against the victim's family. KTR also alleged that the two leaders personally contacted media offices to suppress the publication of reports exposing the case.

Concluding his statement, KTR asserted that whenever injustice is committed against women in Telangana, it is the BRS that steps forward to fight for justice, and accused the ruling government of failing its duty to protect the vulnerable.

TG govt set to revise land market value from May 28

- Property registrations to follow new rates from month-end

- HILT policy guidelines finalised to boost revenue

- Cabinet panel reviews revised land values

- N Uttam Kumar Reddy orders action against revenue leakages

- Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka pushes departments to mobilise additional revenue

- Officials told to align collections with 2026-27 budget targets.

- Government aims to plug all financial leakages



HANS NEWS SERVICE
HYDERABAD

THE market value of lands in Telangana is set to increase from May 28. The Stamps and Registration Department has made elaborate arrangements to register properties with the revised

market values from the end of this month.

In a bid to generate additional revenue, the government has also finalised guidelines for the HILT policy, and the State Industries Department is expected to issue a notification soon.

The Cabinet Sub-Com-

mittee on Resource Mobilisation held a meeting with officials of the Registration and Industries Departments

to review the revised land market values. Irrigation Minister N Uttam Kumar Reddy instructed officials to take strict action against individuals involved in illegal

activities that cause financial losses to the state exchequer.

Deputy Chief Minister Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka directed officials of all departments to focus on mobilising additional revenue sources to meet the budgetary requirements of the current financial year and accelerate the state's economic growth.

He emphasised that resource mobilisation should be aligned with the budget estimates proposed for the 2026-27 financial year. Officials were instructed to completely plug all leakages and fully utilise every available revenue source to achieve the budget targets.

Bhatti further clarified that officials across departments must work towards enhancing revenue strictly in accordance with the predetermined timeline and implementation calendar.

PUBLIC NOTICE

Public in General are hereby notified that my client **Lingampelli Dinesh S/o Lingampelli Rajaiah**, Occupation : Singareni Employee, R/o H.No. 26-68, Ramakrishnapur, Mandal : Mandamari, Dist : Mancherial is the Owner of House Plot Bearing No. 150 admeasuring Land to an extent of 266.66 Square Yards = 222.95 Square Meters Situated in Survey No. 107P/108P/111P/112P/113P/113P/118/129/131/132/133/134 and 135 of Bheemaram Village, Mandal : Hasanparthi, Dist : Hanamkonda having acquired through Registered Sale Deed Document No. 28125/2023, Dt. 23-12-2023 Registered Before SRO, Warangal (RO) Purchased from Sri Lingampelli Rajeshwar Rao @ Rajaiah, S/o Lingampelli Rajaiah @ Krishna Rao. It is reported that my clients Original of said Link Registered Sale Deed Document No. 1803/2002, Dt. 21-10-2002 Registered Before SRO, Warangal Executed By Thota Chandraiah @ Uppala Chandraiah S/o Veeriah @ 137 Others in favour of Syed Murthuza Hussain is misplaced on 15-04-2026 While travelling from Home to Xerox Center at Ramakrishnapur and the same is not traced out in spite of best efforts. My client is intending to obtain Housing Loan from State Bank of India by offering said subject property as security for the Loan by depositing the said Link Document along with other Original Documents with State Bank of India.

Therefore General Public are hereby informed that if anybody has got any claim or right over the said above link Original Registered Sale Deed Document No. 1803/2002, Dt. 21-10-2002, Registered Before SRO, Warangal Executed By Thota Chandraiah @ Uppala Chandraiah S/o Veeriah @ 137 Others in favour of Syed Murthuza Hussain, the said document may submit their objections within (7) days to the under signed with documentary proof. After (7) days my client will create charge with State Bank of India by mortgaging the above property.

Sd/- P Sanjay Kumar Jain, Advocate
H.No. 4-29/1, "Paras Nivas", 1st Floor,
Opp. Laxmi Talkies, Mancherial, Above
Chola Insurance Express, Mandal:
Mancherial, Dist: Mancherial, Telangana
State. Pin: 504208. Cell: 9849477424

STATE BANK OF INDIA

RASMECCC, 2nd Floor, KNAR Estates, Godown Road, Nizamabad-503003

POSSESSION NOTICE (Symbolic)

(Rule - 8 (1) (For immovable property))

Whereas, the undersigned being the Authorized Officer of the **State Bank of India, RASMECCC, Nizamabad**, under the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest (Second) Ordinance, 2002 (Ord. 3 of 2002) and in exercise of the powers conferred under section 13 (12) read with Rule 9 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 issued a **Demand Notice dated: 25.02.2026** calling upon the Borrowers 1. **Smt Shekapu Radha Bai** W/o Shekapu Manik Rao, 2. **Sri Shekapu Manik Rao** S/o Thippanna Address: H.No. 1-5/2, Khajapur (Village) Salora (Mandal) Nizamabad-503185 A/c No:62502308017 (H/L) & 62502308408 (Suraksha) to repay the amount mentioned in the notice being **Rs.1,87,796/- (Rupees One Lakh Eight Seven Thousand Seven Hundred and Ninety Six Only)** as on 25.02.2026 + interest + other incidental expenses wherever applicable & 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 under in exercise of powers conferred on him/her under section 13(4) of the said Ordinance" read with Rule 9 of the said rules on this **18th Day of May 2026**. The borrower/guarantor 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 the charge of the State Bank of India, RASMECCC, Nizamabad for an amount of **Rs.2,11,398/- (Rupees Two Lakhs Eleven Thousand Three Hundred Ninety Eight Only)** as on 18.05.2026 and further interest, Costs, etc., thereon.

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

DESCRIPTION OF THE IMMOVABLE PROPERTY

All the existing RCC Roofed House constructed on open Plot G.P. Door No.1-10 Admeasuring of Plot Area 21'0" x 45'0" = 945.00 Sq. Feet or 105.00 Sq. Yds in or 89.79 Sq. Meters situated at Khajapur Village, Bodhan Mandal with in the Grampanchayat Limits of Khajapur (Village) Parishad Bodhan, Dist. Nizamabad standing in the name of **Smt Shekapu Radha Bai W/o Shekapu Manik Rao** as per Sale Deed No.4993/2016 Dated 08.08.2016. (Total Area 105.00 Sq. Yards or 89.79 Sq. Mts). **As Bounded by:** North: G.P. Road, South: G.P. Road, East: Open Place of Shekapu Bharath, West: Open Place of Neelapu Bhujanga Rao.

Date: 18.05.2026, Place: Nizamabad Authorized Officer, State Bank of India

UNION BANK OF INDIA

SULTHANABAD BRANCH-12271

H.No.1-10, OPP:BP PETROL PUMP,SULTHANABAD,TELANGANA-508165, Phone: 934812271, Email: ubin0812271@unionbankofindia.bank

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 property mortgaged/charged to the Secured Creditor, the constructive possession of which has been taken by the Authorised Officer of Union Bank Of India, Sulthanabad Branch Secured Creditor, will be sold on "As is where is", "As is what is", and "Whatever there is" on 24.06.2026, for recovery of Rs.60,28,448.37/- as on 29.07.2025 Plus interests & expenses thereon to the Union Bank Of India, Sulthanabad Branch Secured Creditor from borrow Mr.Kallepelli Anil Kumar, S/o Rajaiah H.No.71, Narayanapur Sulthanabad, Peddapalli, Pin-505185 and Guarantor & Mortgagor :1.Mrs.Thota Kavitha, W/o Thota Thirupathi, H.No.23-225/1-103,Nagadevalah Colony,Pochamma Cheruvu Katta, Mancherial,Mancherial Mndi & Dist, Pin:504208, Guarantor & Mortgagor 2.Mrs.Nugoori Anupama W/o Kama Srinam, H.No.6-187, Thagur nagar, Theegalpahad, Mancherial,Telangana-504303, Guarantor 3.Mr.Thota Thirupathi, S/o Mallaiiah, H.No.23-225/1-103,Nagadevalah Colony,Pochamma Cheruvu Katta,Mancherial,Mancherial Mndi & Dist, Pin:504208

Particulars of Immovable property 1:

All the piece and parcel of immovable property bearing Plot No.177 an extent of 266.66 Sq.Yds. and Plot No.178 an extent of 105.66 Sq.Yds., Total Plot extent 373.33 Sq. Yds. in Sy.No.366 situated at Carmila Shivar, Mancherial Mandal and Municipality, Mancherial District belonging to Mrs. Thota Kavitha. Bounded by: East : Land of Chikaita Sarojana, West: H.No.23-225/1-14 of Mateti Bakkaiah, North: House of Sirpuram Lachaiah, South : 30 Feet Wide Road

Reserve Price: **Rs.46,00,000/-** EMD: **Rs.4,60,000/-** Bid Increment Amount: **Rs.20000/-**

Particulars of Immovable property2:

All the piece and parcel of immovable property House situated at Sy. No. 5 of Teegalpahad Village, Plot measuring 211.75 Sq.Yds., bearing House No.6-187 out of Block No.6, having A.C. sheets house plinth area 750 Sq.Ft., within the limits of Naspur Municipality and Naspur Mandal, Mancherial Dist., Telangana belonging to Mrs. Nugoori Anupama.

Bounded by: East: H.No.6-186 of Dasari Ashalu, West: H.No.6-187/1 of Pancherpu Amruthamma, North: H.No.6-188 of Dasari Ashalu, South: PWD Road

Reserve Price: **Rs.41,50,000/-** EMD: **Rs.4,15,000/-** Bid Increment Amount: **Rs.20000/-**

For detailed terms and conditions of the sale, please refer to the link provided in Secured Creditor's website i.e. <https://www.unionbankofindia.co.in/auction-property/view-auction-property.aspx> and on-line E-Auction Portal <https://baanknet.com>.

Place:Sulthanabad Sd/- Authorized Officer

Date: 21.05.2026 for UNION BANK OF INDIA

UNION BANK OF INDIA

07361 BUS STATION COMPLEX BRANCH, KARIMNAGAR REGION,

Ph No:9177286141, Mail ID: ubin0807362@unionbankofindia.bank;

SALE NOTICE FOR SALE OF IMMOVABLE PROPERTY

[Under Rule8(6)/(9)(1) of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002]

Auction Sale Notice for Sale of Immovable Assets under the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement Interest Act, 2002 read with provision 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 property mortgaged/charged to the Secured Creditor, the Symbolic possession of which has been taken by the Authorized Officer of Union Bank of India Bus Station Complex-07361 Branch, Secured Creditor, will be sold on "As where is", "As is what is" and "Whatever there is" on 12.06.2026 for recovery of Rs. 14,19,124.38 (as on 15.10.2025) plus interest and charges thereon due to the Union Bank of India, Bus Station Complex-07361 Branch secured Creditor from Deceased Legal Heirs of Mr Egaal Deepak Kumar 1. Mrs.Egala Lalitha, 2. Mrs.Egala Ravi Kumar. Guarantors 1. Jarpula Rathnakar

Reserve Price: 65,60,000/- EMD Rs.6,56,000/- Bid Increments Rs. 20,000/- Date and Time E-Auction:12.06.2026 12pm to 5pm (with 10 min un-

limited auto extension) E-Auction website www.baanknet.com and <https://www.unionbankofindia.bank.in/auction-property/viewauction-property.aspx> Last date for submission of EMD on or before the commencement.

Particulars of Immovable property:

All that part and parcel of the property consisting of Municipal Door No. 7-4-345/1 to an extent of 175.23 Sq. Yards in Sy.No.1086 situated at Kashmeeragadda locality of Karimnagar city within the limits of Karimnagar Municipal Corporation, Karimnagar and under jurisdiction of Sub-District and Registration District Karimnagar belongs to Mrs.Egala Lalitha.

Property registered under CERSAI vide Asset Id: 200018538937 Bounded; East: 30'-0" wide Road, West: House of Billa Yellaiah, North: Plot of Chigiri Narsaiah (As per Sale deed Doc.No.1439/2004 dated 13-02-2004)

South: House of Reddymalla Vimala

For Detailed terms and conditions of the sale please refer the link provided in secured creditor's website: andhttps://www.unionbankofindia.bank.in/auction-property/viewauction-property.aspx

Place: Karimnagar Sd/- Asst General Manager & Authorized Officer

Date: 22.05.2026 UNION BANK OF INDIA

FORM NO.14 [See Regulation 33(2)]

OFFICE OF THE RECOVERY OFFICER - I/II

DEBTS RECOVERY TRIBUNAL HYDERABAD (DRT 1)

3rd Floor, Triveni Complex, Abids, Hyderabad-500 001.

DEMAND NOTICE

NOTICE UNDER SECTIONS 25 TO 28 OF THE RECOVERY OF DEBTS & BANKRUPTCY ACT, 1993 AND RULE 2 OF SECOND SCHEDULE TO THE INCOME TAX ACT, 1961.

RC/23/4/2025 STATE BANK OF INDIA 20-05-2026

Versus

To M/s. MEGA MINERALS AND MINES ENTERPRISES

(CD-1) M/s. Mega Minerals and Mines Enterprises, Smt.Lyagala Bhagya Laxmi, K.Rajesh Chandra Prasad, 54/E2, 54/E2, 55/AA, Jakora Village, Narmi Mandal, Nizamabad-503 201, Telangana.

(CD-2) Smt. Lyagala Bhagya Laxmi, H.No.3-10-281, Kurnampally, Near Budda Bhavan, Hanmakonda-506 001.

This is to notify that as per the Recovery Certificate issued in pursuance of orders passed by the Presiding Officer, **Debts Recovery Tribunal, Hyderabad (DRT 1)** in **OA No.: 48/2025** an amount of **Rs. 21,76,41,110/- (Rupees Two Crores Seventeen Lakhs Sixty Four Thousands One Hundred Ten Only)** along with pendente lite and future interest @ 13.40 % Simple Interest Yearly w.e.f.29-01-2025 till realization and costs of **Rs. 2,10,670/- (Rupees Two Lakh Ten Thousands Six Hundred Seventy Only)** has become due against you (Jointly and Severally/ Fully/ Limited).

2. You are hereby directed to pay the above sum within 15 days of the receipts of the notice, failing which the recovery shall be made in accordance with the Recovery of Debts Due to Banks and Financial Institutions Act, 1993 and Rules there under.

3. You are hereby ordered to declare on an affidavit the particulars of yours assets on or before the next date of hearing.

4. You are hereby ordered to appear before the undersigned on **15-07-2026 at 10.30 a.m.** for further proceedings.

5. In addition to the sum aforesaid, you will also be liable to pay:

(a) Such interests as is payable for the period commencing immediately after this notice of the certificate/execution proceedings

(b) All costs, charges and expenses incurred in respect of the service of this notice and warrants and other processes and all other proceedings taken for recovering the amount due.

Given under my hand and the seal of the Tribunal, on this date: **20-05-2026**

Sd/- Recovery Officer,

Debts Recovery Tribunal, Hyderabad (DRT 1)

HANS NEWS SERVICE
HYDERABAD

TRS leader Kalvakuntla Kavitha was arrested by police on Friday after she led a protest in which party leaders dumped farmers' harvested paddy near the Secretariat.

Kavitha slammed the Congress government as incompetent, stating that farmers are left stranded at procurement centres in scorching 48-degree heat without even basic amenities.

Alleging procurement fraud, she said authorities are deliberately registering Grade-A paddy as Grade-B to avoid paying the promised bonus on fine-variety paddy (sanna vadlu).

She further alleged that district collectors are worsening the situation of farmers, while unfair weight deductions are

being used to exploit them.

She demanded immediate action from the government to ensure farmers are not cheated by middlemen.

As part of the protest, she staged a sit-in and poured paddy on the road, highlighting the government's failure. Protesters raised slogans against the administration before police intervened and arrested them.

Kavitha, along with several women and farmers, was taken to Falaknuma Police Station and later released.

Lashing out at the administration, Kavitha said the Chief Minister has not conducted a single review meeting on the Agriculture Department in the last two and a half years.

NIMS sets national record with 2,000 kidney transplants

Chief Minister Revanth Reddy hails medical team for exceptional service

HANS NEWS SERVICE
HYDERABAD

CHIEF Minister A Revanth Reddy congratulated the doctors at Nizam's Institute of Medical Sciences (NIMS) for achieving a landmark milestone in kidney transplant operations. The institute has now completed 2,000 kidney transplants, setting a national record. The Department of Urology successfully carried out these transplants, making NIMS the number one institution in South India for kidney transplant surgeries. Nationally, the Institute of Kidney Diseases and Research Centre (IKDRC) in

Gujarat holds the top rank, followed by Christian Medical College, Ludhiana, with NIMS at third place.

Revanth Reddy praised the NIMS medical team for their dedication and exceptional service to patients suffering from kidney ailments.

Out of the 2,000 patients, 1,900 individuals (95%) underwent kidney transplants free of cost under the Rajiv Aarogyasri scheme and the Chief Minister's Relief Fund. Remarkably, the institute performed 500 kidney transplants in just three years and four months, starting from January 2023, setting a record in efficiency and patient care.

Court sentences man to 60 days for ill-treatment elderly parents

HANS NEWS SERVICE
HYDERABAD

THE Court has sentenced a 44-year-old man to two months of imprisonment for harassing and ill-treating his elderly parents in their house in Narayanguda.

According to the police, the respondent, identified as G Srinivas, had been constantly harassing his aged parents. Based on a formal complaint received from the aggrieved parents, Narayan-guda Police registered a case against him under Section 70B of the Criminal (CP) Act, and Section 115(2) of

the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS). The Investigation Officer, Srikanth Reddy, Sub-Inspector of Police conducted a thorough probe, collected strong evidence, and produced the respondent before the Hon'ble V Special Judicial Magistrate Court at Nampally, Hyderabad.

Upon perusing the case facts and evidence under STC No. 1780/2026, the Judge, M Bhasker, found the respondent guilty of the offence and sentenced him to undergo 2 months (60 days) of jail terms along with a fine of Rs 50.

ACB raids Medchal deputy collector in DA case

HANS NEWS SERVICE
HYDERABAD

THE sleuths of Telangana Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB) on Friday carried out raids at the house of Medchal-Malkajigiri Deputy Collector Vamsi Mohan in connection with a disproportionate assets (DA) case booked against him.

The Rangareddy district ACB special teams carried out searches at eight places linked to him across Medchal and Ranga Reddy districts to collect more details about the DA assets beyond his known sources of income. Mohan earlier worked as Serilingampally RDO. Following allegations that Mohan amassed disproportionate assets, the ACB booked a case against him. The investigation has also brought attention to allegations linked to government land transactions during Vamsi Mohan's period as Shamirpet and later Serilingampally revenue officer.

During the investigation, officials reportedly identified nearly eight acres of land in Abdullapurmet and Piglipuram that were allegedly registered in the name

of the deputy collector's father-in-law and later handed over to a realtor for development.

ACB officials also found that the realtor allegedly transferred 10 plots to the deputy collector through gift deeds. The agency is now examining property documents, financial transactions and linked assets as part of the investigation.

ACB teams are also verifying ownership records and other investments connected to the deputy collector and his family members. The assets recovered from his residence are believed to be valued at several hundred crores of rupees, including documents, immovable properties, and movable assets.

Officials said further investigation is underway to determine the total value of the assets and whether they are disproportionate to the officer's declared income. Senior ACB officials announced that a case of disproportionate assets has been filed against Vamsi Mohan, and investigations are ongoing to uncover other individuals involved in the corruption network.

Dasari's arrest reveals large scale tax evasion in granite business

• As the transactions aren't disclosed in the GST returns, the firm consistently filing nil returns

• This resulted in an estimated tax evasion of Rs 16.96 crore

HANS NEWS SERVICE
KARIMNAGAR

IRREGULARITIES in the granite trade across the integrated Karimnagar district are increasingly coming under scrutiny, with multiple enforcement agencies exposing what appears to be a well-organised tax evasion network.

After earlier findings by Vigilance and Enforcement officials, the entry of the Directorate General of GST Intelligence (DGGI) into the probe has revealed the extent to which government revenue was allegedly being siphoned off.

Acting under Sections 132(1)(a) and 69 of the CGST Act, DGGI officials arrested Srikanth Dasari, a resident of Asifnagar in Karimnagar, for his alleged role in orchestrating large-scale GST evasion. He was produced before the Economic Offences Court in Nampally, Hyderabad.

The arrest followed exten-



sive searches conducted over two days at premises linked to granite traders and transporters in and around Karimnagar.

According to investigators, Dasari was operating a firm named M/s Manoj Enterprises, which was allegedly used as a front to facilitate illegal transport of granite blocks and slabs without payment of GST. Officials found that e-way bills worth nearly Rs 80-100 crore were generated under the firm's name.

As the transactions aren't disclosed in the GST returns, the firm consistently filing nil returns. This resulted in an estimated tax evasion of Rs 16.96 crore.

Recently, the probe re-

vealed that Dasari coordinated operations involving several granite factories and transporters in the region. Fake invoices and e-way bills were allegedly created using a mobile number registered in his wife's name. Investigators also discovered that the firm's GST registration was linked to a bank account held in the name of one of his friends, suggesting that others were being used as fronts to carry out the operations.

In a significant finding, the individual listed as proprietor of M/s Manoj Enterprises, Manoj Thara, was reportedly unaware of the firm's existence.

Authorities said his Aadhaar, PAN, and other docu-



ments had been misused by members of the granite syndicate to register the entity.

DGGI officials stated that the firm was primarily created to enable the illegal movement of granite from Karimnagar to Hyderabad without valid invoices or e-way bills. During interrogation, Dasari is said to have admitted to playing an active role in managing the covert supply network. Officials also indicated the involvement of individuals from Rajasthan in the operation.

As part of the crackdown, DGGI teams seized illegally transported granite from locations including Serilingampally and Ghatkesar, and intercepted trucks near

Pragnapur.

Officials also found that much of the money involved in these operations was being handled in cash, often routed through drivers instead of formal banking channel — a method that made the transactions harder to trace.

What has emerged from the probe is not an isolated violation but a closely coordinated network, where brokers, transporters and factory operators appeared to be working in tandem.

DGGI Hyderabad officials said the investigation is still ongoing, and efforts are being made to identify everyone connected to the operation and understand how far the network extends.

Allegations against Naini will not be tolerated: DCC chief

HANS NEWS SERVICE
HANUMAKONDA

HANUMAKONDA DCC president and Kakatiya Urban Development Authority (KUDA) chairman Inagala Venkata Rao Reddy on Friday strongly criticised the baseless allegations being intentionally made against MLA Naini Rajender Reddy, who, he said, has been tirelessly working for development after winning with blessings of people. He warned that the party would not tolerate the false propaganda being spread against the MLA for political purposes under any circumstances.

Speaking as the chief guest at a media conference at the party office, Reddy stated that the MLA has been working with dedication towards solving public issues and implementing development programmes. He alleged that there is a clear political conspiracy behind the false accusations being made against such a leader.

He accused the BRS and BJP leaders of deliberately dragging the MLA into controversies related to temple matters as part of their political drama. He questioned why, if ancient idols had truly been discovered, the Endowments and Archaeology officials were not informed. He criticised certain individuals for bringing ready-made idols and creating political



drama while the government and the local MLA are working to protect government lands. He further alleged that BRS and BJP are jointly attempting to mislead the public and said that the dramas are being created because of their declining popularity in surveys. Some people are trying to gain political mileage in the name of idols to encroach vacant lands in the city.

Reddy recalled that the MLA had contributed personal funds for the development of the Shayampet Hanuman Temple. He said the

public is fully aware of the MLA's devotion and commitment. There is only one true devotee of Hanuman; the rest is merely political showmanship.

He claimed they have evidence that idols were manufactured in Rajasthan and that payments related to them were made through leaders of the opposing party itself. He advised against spreading misleading political messages among youth. Attempts to damage the party and MLA through false propaganda would never succeed.

Animal birth control centre opens

HANS NEWS SERVICE
KARIMNAGAR

CITY Mayor Kolagani Srinivas on Friday inaugurated a newly set-up Animal Birth Control Centre at Bommakal in the 6th Division, in a move aimed at tackling the growing stray dog issue while ensuring their welfare.

Speaking on this occasion, the Mayor said the Municipal Corporation is focusing on both public safety and humane treatment of animals through planned population control measures. Built at a cost of Rs 43 lakh, the centre is expected to help bring down dog bite incidents in the city.

Municipal Commissioner Praful Desai, Deputy Mayor Yadagiri Sunil Rao, and other public representatives were present on the occasion.

The centre currently has 20 pre-operative kennels and 18 post-operative kennels, with a total capacity of 38. It also includes an operation theatre equipped with modern surgical tools such as a shadowless lamp, electrocautery machine, surgical cables, and a vaccine refrigerator. Basic facilities like a kitchen have also been arranged to

Built at a cost of Rs 43 lakh, the centre is expected to help bring down dog bite incidents



ensure smooth day-to-day functioning.

The Mayor asked officials to take up further expansion by adding 62 more kennels and building a compound wall around the premises. He underlined the need to step up sterilisation drives, especially in light of recent dog bite cases reported from the 41st and 43rd divisions.

He assured that all surgeries would be conducted strictly as per AWBI norms, without causing harm or distress to the animals. After the procedures, the dogs will be kept under observation for five days under the supervision of veterinary experts. Trained doctors, dog catchers, and staff have been engaged for the work.

5.45 quintal counterfeit cotton seeds seized, two arrested



HANS NEWS SERVICE
ASIFABAD

POLICE seized a large quantity of counterfeit cotton seeds during vehicle inspections conducted within the limits of the Sirpur (U) police station limits on Friday.

While SI Vikram and his team were conducting routine vehicle inspections, they detained and interrogated two individuals who were moving about suspiciously. Approximately 68 kilograms of cotton seeds, packed in 152 packets, were recovered from their possession.

A total of 5.45 quintals of counterfeit seeds were seized, and two accused were taken into custody.

The police grew suspicious as these seed packets lacked details regarding government

authorization, a QR code, a hologram, or a batch number. Upon verification by officials from the Agriculture Department, the seeds were confirmed to be counterfeit.

As part of the ongoing investigation, the police seized an additional 4.90 quintals of counterfeit seeds—packed in another 1,100 packets—from the residence of one of the accused, Naitham Jangu. In connection with this case, Mangunath and Naitham Jangu were arrested and remanded to judicial custody. Speaking on the occasion, SP Nitika Pant, issued a stern warning that strict action would be taken against anyone found selling counterfeit seeds. She also urged farmers to report the details of any individuals who come into their villages to sell seeds.

Centre's massive boost for Orugallu with huge funding

HANS NEWS SERVICE
HANUMAKONDA

BJP State leader Rao Padma Reddy stated on Friday that the Modi government is giving top priority to the comprehensive development of the historic Orugallu metropolitan city (Warangal). Under the Central prestigious "Urban Challenge Fund" (UCF), Telangana has been sanctioned Rs 5,681 crore, of which a massive Rs 4,740-crore package has been approved exclusively for Warangal city, calling it a positive development for people of Orugallu.

In a statement Reddy said that the Centre is committed to transforming Warangal into a future-ready city with world-class infrastructure. She expressed confidence that the funds would provide a permanent solution to the drainage problems that have troubled city residents for decades.

She stated that Rs 4,674 crore has been allocated for the complete modernisation of Warangal's under-



ground sewerage system.

The implementation of the project would significantly improve sanitation conditions. She noted sanctioning of Rs 166 crore for development of the Khammam-Warangal-Karimnagar corridor would open new avenues for city connectivity and industrial growth.

She added the corridor project would boost the trade and transport sectors while

also creating employment opportunities.

The Centre's allocation of an additional Rs 840 crore for development of Karimnagar-model roads reflects its strong commitment to infrastructure development in the State.

On behalf of people of Warangal, she expressed gratitude to PM Modi, Union Ministers Manohar Lal Khattar, G Kishan Reddy and Bandi Sanjay Kumar for announcing such a massive package for Orugallu.

Reddy expressed confidence that the implementation of the mega projects would completely transform Orugallu metropolitan city and significantly improve the people's standards.

Governor couple visits Sri Kaleshwar Mukteshwar Swami temple

HANS NEWS SERVICE
BHUBALAPALLY

GOVERNOR Shiv Pratap Shukla and his wife performed special prayers at Sri Kaleshwar Mukteshwar Swami temple here on Friday.

The couple had taken part in the Pushkar baths at the Triveni Sangam and watched the Saraswati Navaratri Mala aarti and the cultural programmes held on Thursday night.

When they arrived at the Mukteshwar Swami temple, the Endowments Department Commissioner Hanumantharao, temple priests and others gave them a grand welcome with parivattam, poornakumbham, and auspicious musical instruments.

The Governor and his wife performed special pujas to the Swami. Afterwards the temple priests offered blessings and presented white garments, laddu prasadam,



sakkara pongali, and a memento of the goddess.

The Governor then toured the exhibition stalls displaying Mahadevapoor dasali silk garments with keen interest. IT and Industries Minister explained the tassari silk weaving process to the Governor during the event.

District Collector Rahul Sharma, District SP Sirishetti Sankirth, and other district officials attended the programme.

Governor Shiv Pratap Shukla said the Saraswati

Antya Pushkaras are being held with great splendour.

He noted that the Navaratri Mala aarti by the Kashi pandits at the Saraswati ghat and the cultural programs reflect India's spiritual traditions. He expressed satisfaction with the state government's comprehensive arrangements to ensure devotees face no inconvenience.

He hoped that devotees who performed the sacred Pushkar baths at the Triveni Sangam would receive the goddess's blessings.

Govt aims to ensure holistic growth of every family: MLA

HANS NEWS SERVICE
WARANGAL

PARAKALA MLA Revuri Prakash Reddy on Thursday asserted that the State government, under the leadership of Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy, is moving forward with public welfare as its primary objective, rather than focusing solely on economic growth. He emphasised that strengthening the financial and social stability of present-day families would lay a robust foundation for future generations.

Addressing the district-level 'Prajapalana Pragati Pranalika' programme here on Friday, the MLA outlined the government's welfare-driven agenda.

He stated that the government aims to ensure



holistic growth for every family across all sectors.

"The core idea behind these schemes is to reduce the financial burden on people and enhance their savings, thereby strengthening household economies," he said. He highlighted that initiatives such as free bus travel for women, establishment of solar plants, low-interest loans, and interest-free credit facilities are significantly contributing to women's empowerment and economic upliftment.

He announced that, in addition to the mid-day meal scheme, breakfast facilities would soon be extended to students from primary to high school levels. The government has also increased diet and cosmetic charges to ensure better nutrition and overall well-being of students, he noted. Urging parents to enrol their children in government schools, he said experienced and well-trained teachers are available in these institutions.

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KALESHWARAM, A SANCTUARY OF FAITH FOR CENTURIES

Kaleshwara Mukteswara Swamy Temple stands as a symbol of spiritual grandeur and historical significance as the shrine sits at the confluence of the Godavari, Pranahita, and the subterranean Saraswati rivers

- According to the Puranas, Lord Rama visited this region during his exile in the Dandaka forest in the Treta Yuga
- Devotees believe this is the only temple in the Telugu States where Yama Dharma Raja is worshiped alongside Lord Shiva in linga form

SAMPATH GURRAM
BHUBALAPALLY

THE Kaleshwaram Trilinga Kshetram, popularly known as the Sri Kaleshwara Mukteswara Swamy Temple, is a major pilgrimage site in Jayashankar Bhupapalli district. Also known as “South Kashi”, it represents Triveni Sangamam of the south. It stands as a symbol of spiritual grandeur and historical significance as the shrine sits at the confluence of the Godavari, Pranahita, and the subterranean Saraswati rivers. This centuries-old holy temple is situated amid densely forested terrain. Believed to be the confluence of the Godavari, Pranahita, and the subterranean Sarasvati rivers, this holy site is honored by devotees as Dakshina Kashi. The temple’s glory is described in the Skanda Purana under the section called “Kaleshwara Khanda.” According to the Puranas, Lord Rama visited this region during his exile in the Dandaka forest in the Treta Yuga. Ancient Rama temples in the



surrounding area reinforce this belief. The principal shrine is the Sri Kaleshwara Mukteswara Swami Temple, located on the left bank of the Godavari. Puranic accounts say that Yama Dharma Raja performed severe penance here worshipping Lord Shiva. Pleased by Yama’s devotion, Lord Shiva blessed him and granted boons to those who dwell here. Consequently, the temple uniquely houses two Shiva lingas on the same pedestal — Kaleshwara and Mukteshwara. Devotees believe this is the only temple in the Telugu States where Yama Dharma Raja is worshiped alongside Lord Shiva in linga form. Two small holes visible on one of the lingas are regarded as the deity’s nasal apertures by devotees. Local belief holds that water or milk poured into these holes flows into the Godavari. Kaleshwaram is also famous for its sacred bath-

ing ghats on the Godavari’s southern bank, known collectively as the Ashta Tirthas (eight sacred baths). These include Brahma Tirtha, Picchuka Tirtha, Jnana Tirtha, Vayasa Tirtha, Sangama Tirtha, Narasimha Tirtha, Hanumat Tirtha, and Vyasa Tirtha. On major festival days, thousands of pilgrims gather here to perform holy baths. The temple’s history records significant patronage from the Kakatiyas, Rashtrakutas, Vemulavada Chalukyas, Kalyani Chalukyas, and Vijayanagara rulers. Inscriptions of the Vijayanagara empire’s Devaraya kings mention victory celebrations held at Kaleshwaram. The Andhra Pradesh government carried out extensive restoration of the temple in 1976, and in 1982 the Kanchi Kamakoti Peethadhipati Jagadguru Shankaracharya performed the re-consecration. Kaleshwaram is renowned for its distinctive sculptural heritage: sculp-



tures of Vishnu’s Dashavatara, Matsya-Kurma avatars, Annapurna Devi, Shaiva door-guardians, a four-faced linga, and carvings depicting Arjuna’s fish-machine attract devotees and tourists alike. These stone works, carved from red sandstone, granite, and basalt, are displayed in a museum near the temple. Several historic and spiritual sites along the Godavari’s southern bank are also close to Kaleshwaram. Blending spirituality, history, mythological importance, sculptural art, and natural beauty, Kaleshwaram has remained a sanctuary of faith for centuries as Dakshina Kashi.

Uttam hits back at KTR, warns procurement politics will ‘backfire’

HYDERABAD: In response to BRS working president KT Rama Rao’s criticism of the current Rabi paddy procurement efforts, Irrigation and Civil Supplies Minister N. Uttam Kumar Reddy launched a pointed counterattack on Friday, accusing the BRS leader of deceiving farmers with false information to conceal the party’s own procurement shortcomings.

The Minister alleged that BRS working president KT Rama Rao’s sole agenda is to create a politically manufactured chaos among the farmers. But it will “backfire,” he asserted.

Uttam Kumar Reddy, in a statement issued here, said the Congress government was executing the largest paddy procurement operation in Telangana’s history despite severe manpower shortages, massive logistical challenges and an unprecedented scale of arrivals. While the BRS is busy spreading confusion, the Congress government is ensuring that every grain brought by farmers is procured and every rupee reaches farmers’ accounts,” he said.

Uttam Kumar Reddy completely rejected KTR’s allegations and said official figures had exposed the hollowness of the BRS campaign. He said that by May 21, Telangana had already recorded 54.29 lakh metric tonnes (LMT) of paddy arrivals, out of which 46.21 LMT had been procured, accounting for nearly 85 per cent procurement completion.

He said procurement transactions of more than 6.32 lakh farmers had already been completed and payments worth Rs 7,841 crore had been directly credited into farmers’ bank accounts.

“This is a record-breaking Rabi procurement operation

Minister launches a pointed counterattack, accusing the BRS leader of deceiving farmers with false information to conceal the party’s own procurement shortcomings



happening on a war footing across Telangana,” he declared. Taking dig at the BRS regime, Uttam Kumar Reddy said the Congress government had already outperformed multiple Rabi procurement seasons handled by the previous government.

He pointed out that during the BRS regime, procurement stood at only 26.78 LMT in Rabi 2021-22 and 36.63 LMT in Rabi 2022-23, whereas the Congress government had already crossed 48.21 LMT procurement this season with procurement operations still continuing.

He also highlighted the “historic benchmark” achieved during the previous Rabi season under Congress rule in 2024-25. (As on May 22, 2025) when Telangana recorded an all-time high procurement of 60.44 LMT, with MSP payments touching Rs 10,882 crore.

“Those who failed farmers for years are now unable to digest the scale and transparency of the Congress government’s farmer-first procurement model,” the Minister said.

Responding strongly to allegations of gunny bag shortages, Uttam Kumar Reddy termed the accusations “completely fabricated and irresponsible.”

He said the government had already positioned nearly 20 crore gunny bags across procurement centres and adequate stocks were available to handle the entire procurement process smoothly.

He said the government was conducting daily reviews, deploying more than 13,000 trucks and lorries every day, and continuously monitoring logistics, lifting and transportation. More than 43 LMT of paddy had already been shifted to rice mills, while additional stocks were being transported to storage facilities without interruption.

Uttam Kumar Reddy also slammed attempts by the opposition to politically exploit farmer deaths by linking them to procurement delays.

“Using farmers’ for political drama is shameful and insensitive. The BRS leadership is resorting to desperation politics because it has lost public trust,” he said. The Minister said the Congress government had ensured “a fair deal, better support and faster payments” for farmers while the BRS leadership was only interested in “manufacturing headlines through false propaganda.”

“We believed in and built a farmer-first ecosystem. Facts tell the real story. The Congress government is way ahead in MSP operations, procurement efficiency and farmer payments,” Uttam Kumar Reddy asserted.

Summer safeguards

Zoo rolls out heat protection for wildlife

SAIVIVEK ALLAKONDA
HYDERABAD

NEHRU Zoological Park has implemented various temperature-control measures to protect animals from dehydration and heat stress during the ongoing summer season. The facilities are benefiting around 2,100 animals belonging to 196 species. To shield animals from extreme heat, zoo authorities have installed sprinklers, foggers and small rain guns in key enclosures, particularly in herbivore zones, the Reptile House, macaw enclosures, pheasantry and aviaries. Temporary shaded shelters, thunga roofing and kashkash thattis have also been arranged to reduce direct exposure to sunlight.

Coolers have been installed in monkey and carnivore sections, while the Nocturnal Animal House has been equipped with air-conditioners and exhaust fans. To help animals stay hy-

Sprinklers, foggers, coolers and hydration supplements help 2,100 animals beat soaring temperatures



drated, keepers are serving seasonal fruits such as watermelon, musk melon and citrus fruits. Continuous supply of cold drinking water with electrolyte and vitamin supplements, including Glucon-D, Electral, vitamin C, B-complex, Stresswell and Thermo Care liquids, is being provided to reduce summer stress, said J Vasantha, Curator of Nehru Zoological Park. Park supervisors said teams are regularly wetting the thattis and thunga coverings three to four times a day and closely moni-



toring the animals’ condition throughout the heatwave. With a large number of people visiting the zoo during the summer holidays, staff have also arranged additional

drinking water points, shaded resting areas and misting facilities at selected locations across the park to help visitors cope with the heat while exploring the zoo.

Four TG students set off for Japan for SAKURA Science prog

HANS NEWS SERVICE
HYDERABAD

FOUR bright students from Telangana have been selected to participate in the prestigious SAKURA Science Programme, also known as the Japan Science High School Programme, organised by the Japan Science and Technology Agency (JST).

The programme, scheduled from May 24 to 30 in Japan aims to promote scientific learning, innovation, and cultural exchange among talented school students from across the world.

The initiative, conducted under the guidance of the Ministry of Education, Government of India, provides selected students with the opportunity to visit advanced scientific and technological institutions in Japan. They will interact with eminent scientists and researchers, gaining valuable exposure to Japan’s innovative educational and scientific ecosystem.

Students from Telangana were selected through a rigorous process that included



Four students from Telangana G Shivanjali, Ch Akshaya, B Parusha and B Venu depart for Japan to participate in the prestigious SAKURA Science Programme, organised by the Japan Science and Technology Agency

district-level nominations and a state-level screening test held in January 2026. The four selected students are G Shivanjali from Telangana Model School & Junior College, Elgandal, Karimnagar; Ch Akshaya from Telangana Residential Junior College, Hasanparthy, Hanamakonda; B Parusha from IIIT Mahbubnagar; and B Venu from Telangana Model School, Irkoda, Siddipet.

The students left for Japan on Friday to represent Telangana at the international

level. Their participation is expected to highlight the state’s commitment to nurturing young talent and fostering global educational collaborations.

Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy, along with Dr Yogita Rana, Secretary, State Education Department, and A Sri Devasena, Commissioner and Director of School Education (FAC), congratulated the students and extended best wishes for their journey. They expressed confidence that the students would bring

laurels to the state through their participation and learning experiences.

G Ramesh, Director of SCERT Telangana, emphasised that the programme would inspire students to pursue innovation and research, while also strengthening cultural ties between India and Japan.

He noted that such opportunities not only enhance scientific knowledge but also broaden perspectives by exposing students to international practices.

Students receive sports uniforms

HANS NEWS SERVICE
NAGARKURNOOL

DISTRICT Additional SP Venkateshwarlu stated that physical fitness is highly essential for every student from a young age and urged youth to work for the future of the nation. He attended a programme at the ZP Grounds in Nagarkurnool on Friday, where sports uniforms were distributed to students receiving regular training under the Laksha Athletics Coaching Academy led by coach Malleth. The uniforms were sponsored by renowned neurologist Dr. Hemanth Neuro. Speaking on the occasion, the Additional SP said



that along with value-based education in classrooms, regular physical exercise on playgrounds is equally important for building strong health and discipline among students. He appreciated

coach Malleth for providing continuous training to the students and praised Dr. Hemanth Neuro for his generosity in supporting young athletes by providing sports uniforms.

Coconuts & canes: The summer lifeline on city streets

LIPIKA GUNTI
HYDERABAD

ON a hot summer afternoon, it feels like the only thing that can cool the body is a glass of coconut water or fresh sugarcane juice. These drinks are the ultimate sources of hydration, rich in minerals, and easy on the stomach. A coconut water-cum-sugarcane juice vendor said they are in this business as they have no other source of livelihood.

Vendors typically sell around 100 coconuts per day during peak summers and 25-50 per day in other seasons. The business usually starts with dealers buying coconuts from bulk wholesalers or farms at approximately Rs 15 to Rs 25 per coco-

nut. The retail price ranges from Rs 40 to Rs 60, depending on the size of the coconut and the stall’s location. On average, vendors earn a profit of about Rs 15,000 to Rs 60,000 per month, depending on the season and daily sales.

Sugarcane juice is sourced from 10-15 canes, costing around Rs 200 to Rs 300, yielding about 100 glasses. There is generally a shortage of canes in summer, and profits may vary slightly. A single glass of juice sells between Rs 20 and Rs 40. In busy traffic areas, vendors sell 150 to 250 glasses daily, generating Rs 3,000 to Rs 6,000 in revenue. Profit margins are slightly higher, netting operators Rs 1,500 to Rs 4,000 on peak summer days.

HYDERABAD'S SUMMER LIFELINE ON WHEELS!

Coconut Water & Sugarcane Juice - Nature's Cool, Street's Pride.

COCONUT WATER

Sales: 100 coconuts/day in peak season (25-50 coconuts/day in other season)

Purchase Price: ₹15 - ₹25 per coconut

Selling Price: ₹40 - ₹60 per coconut

Monthly Profit: ₹15,000 - ₹60,000 (depends on season & daily sales)

SUGARCANE JUICE

Raw Material: 10-15 canes Cost: ₹200 - ₹300 Yield: 100 glasses

Selling Price: ₹20 - ₹40 per glass

Daily Sales (busy areas): 100 - 250 glasses

Daily Revenue: ₹2,000 - ₹10,000

Daily Profit (peak summer): ₹1,500 - ₹4,000

NATURE'S HYDRATION. STREET'S SURVIVAL.

Rich in minerals | Instantly refreshing | Easy on the stomach

KEY CHALLENGES

- SPILLAGE & STORAGE: Water-soaked streets & waste in lining bins
- FRESHNESS MATTERS: Sugarcane must not be left in air; coconut water spoils quickly

INITIAL INVESTMENT

Heavy-duty electric or battery-operated sugarcane juice machine & cart

₹20,000 - ₹50,000

PRIME LOCATIONS - HIGHER MARGINS

- Metro stations (Overhead, Ameerpet)
- IT Parks (Hi-Tech City)
- Busy parks & main roads
- High footfall areas drive higher sales

UNORGANISED TODAY. ESSENTIAL ALWAYS. These street vendors don't just sell drinks, they deliver relief, hydration & hope every summer.

Key challenges include spoilage and storage. Tender coconuts require heavy ice blocks during scorching temperatures, while sugarcane must remain fresh to avoid souring, as waste accumulates quickly.

The initial investment for a heavy-duty electric or battery-operated sugarcane juice machine and cart typically runs between Rs 20,000 and Rs 50,000. Prime spots for these stalls—near metro stations like Khairatabad, Ameerpet, IT parks (Hi-Tech City), busy parks, and main roads—largely dictate margins. Though these businesses fall under the unorganised sector, they play a crucial role in survival and hydration during scorching summers.

24-hour police surveillance at rly stations to nab interstate thieves

Special police teams are deployed at Warangal and Kazipet railway stations

HANUMAKONDA: In view of the recent increase in house burglaries and chain-snatching incidents in the Warangal Police Commissionerate limits, the police have intensified surveillance to curb interstate criminal activities.

Investigations revealed that criminals, particularly from North Indian states, were reaching Warangal and Kazipet through railway routes, committing thefts, and later escaping back to their native places using the same transport network.

Taking serious note of these crimes, Warangal Police Commissioner Sunpreet Singh has implemented a special action plan to crack down on interstate thieves. As part of this initiative, four special police teams have been



formed under the supervision of Crimes Additional DCP Balaswamy and CCS ACP Sadayya.

Two teams each have been deployed at Warangal and Kazipet railway stations in co-ordination with the Government Railway Police (GRP)

and Railway Protection Force (RPF). The teams are closely monitoring passengers arriving through various railway routes, especially from North Indian states, and identifying suspicious individuals.

Police personnel are thoroughly checking the luggage

and belongings of suspected passengers and collecting their personal details. Their fingerprints and facial images are then verified using face recognition technology and integrated with criminal databases available with the police department.

If any individual is found to have a previous criminal background, the technical devices used by the police instantly generate the suspect's details, enabling officers to immediately detain and shift them to the concerned police station for further inquiry.

At the same time, records of all suspicious individuals being checked are being systematically documented for future reference. Each special team consists of four members working in shifts round the clock at the railway stations.

By using advanced technology and continuous surveillance, Warangal Commissionerate Police are making strong efforts to prevent interstate thieves from operating in the region.

MLA Gandra inspects crops gutted in fire accidents

Urges govt to provide immediate assistance to the affected farmers



HANS NEWS SERVICE
BHUBALAPALY

MLA Gandra Satyanarayana Rao inspected crop fields that were recently burnt in fire accidents in several villages of the Bhupalpalli constituency.

He met the affected farmers and asked for details about the losses. In Chitlyl mandal, Ramachandrapuram village resident Siripura Kumaraswamy's banana plantation

was burnt due to an electrical short circuit. In Challagarig village, Chada Sammireddy's palm oil grove was damaged, and in Chitlyl village Balaveni Venu's chilli crop was lost in a fire. In Tekumatla mandal, Ankushapuram village resident Chittireddy Ramanareddy's palm oil grove was also gutted in the fire.

The MLA said that, regarding crops burnt by electrical short circuits, electricity

department officials should conduct a full assessment of the damage and ensure that farmers receive appropriate compensation.

He also urged the government to provide immediate assistance to the farmers affected by the fires. Noting the severe losses suffered by the farmers, he asked officials to respond quickly and stand by the affected families.



HANS NEWS SERVICE
HANUMAKONDA

Public participation must for welfare progs' success: Gutha

HANS NEWS SERVICE
NALGONDA

LEGISLATIVE Council chairman Gutha Sukender Reddy emphasised the importance of public participation in the implementation of government welfare programmes.

Addressing a district-level meeting near Nalgonda on Friday, he said that the government is implementing several welfare schemes, including Rythu Bharaosa, and the Six Guarantees, for the benefit of all sections of society. He stressed the need to solve issues in agriculture, education, irrigation, and healthcare sectors. Farmers were advised to adopt crop diversification based on climate and seasonal conditions and focus on increasing livestock resources.

Highlighting educational reforms, he said the government has established Young India Integrated Residential Schools and Model Schools while providing uniforms and mid-day meals to students. Breakfast facilities will also be introduced from the next academic year.

He stated that sanitation measures, including wet and dry waste management, are being implemented in villages. He directed officials to complete paddy procurement in the district by June 2.

Earlier, District Collector B Chandrasekhar explained the activities conducted and achievements made under the

Praja Palana-Pragati Pranalika programme, which began on March 6, through a presentation. District SP Sharath Chandra Power explained the measures taken under the Alive, Arrive, and road safety programmes.

District officials from various departments also gave Power-Point presentations regarding their departmental activities.

Meanwhile, in Suryapet, District Collector Tejas Nandalal Pawar called upon field-level officials to work with coordinated planning to ensure the district's overall development and effective implementation of welfare schemes.

The Collector instructed officials to ensure welfare schemes reach every eligible beneficiary and assured that mandal and district officials would support people until their problems are resolved. He stressed the importance of constructing buildings for women's self-help groups and said proposals submitted through MPDOs would receive immediate funding. He revealed that proposals for over 370 buildings were received, with groundwork completed for 200. He also announced the distribution of 342 special assistive devices for 50 children with special needs through ALIMCO. The SP urged strict action against drug abuse, cybercrime, and road accidents while strengthening women and child safety measures through Bharosa Centres and She Teams.

MLA inspects Devadula phase-1 works



gar, and Velair mandals. He stated that during his tenure as MLC, he had succeeded in securing funds for the project

with the support of then Chief Minister KCR.

The MLA said that three mini lift irrigation schemes

On Friday, the MLA inspected the ongoing Devadula Lift Irrigation Phase-1 works at the Gandhiramaram pump house in Tarigoppula mandal. Later, he held a review meeting with engineers and officials to assess the progress of the works and directed them to speed up the project to ensure early supply of irrigation water to farmers.

Speaking on the occasion, Palla Rajeshwar Reddy said that the then BRS government had sanctioned three lift irrigation schemes worth Rs 110 crore to permanently address irrigation problems in Tarigoppula, Chilpur, Dharmasa-

SC questions quota benefits for BC creamy layer

Continued from P1

Earlier in January 2025, the top court in a separate case had refused to entertain a plea seeking the exclusion of children of Indian Administrative Service (IAS) and Indian Police Service (IPS) officers from Scheduled Castes (SC) and Scheduled Tribes (ST) reservation

benefits in Madhya Pradesh.

It said the reference to the exclusion of the creamy layer from SC and ST quotas in a seven-judge Constitution bench's August 2024 ruling in the State of Punjab versus the Davinder Singh case was only a view and the legislature has to decide in this regard.

Major schemes likely to be launched on TG Formation Day

Continued from P1

The state government is keen on launching the scheme on June 2. In the wake of the opposition Bharat Rashtra Samithi party's strong criticism on the slow pace of paddy procurement, the Chief Minister and Ministers will review the status of the procurement and take some corrective measures. The situation with regard to maize procurement would also be reviewed at the Cabinet meeting. The construction of irrigation projects, integrated residential educational institutions as well as road development projects would also be reviewed.

Beer guzzlers add more fizz to booze biz in state

Continued from P1

More importantly, the breweries have been assured that their long-pending bills would be cleared in view of increasing revenue from beer sales in the summer. "A win-win situation has emerged between the government and the breweries with focus on meeting the consumer demand in the peak summer," an official said. Taking into consideration the challenges faced in 2024 and 2025, the excise department has made fool-proof arrangements for regular supply of beer to the licensed liquor shops across the state.

In a rare instance, shortage of some popular brands of beer witnessed in

some areas in the evening hours has been attributed to "sudden increase in beer demand". The officials said that whisky and brandy sales dipped a little bit due to the shift made by tipplers to beer in the hot season.

Youth are also consuming beer in place of other drinks while hanging out with their friends in the city's watering holes.

Noticeably, sales of draught beer in the microbreweries and pubs have also increased significantly, particularly during weekends.

All told, officials want to make the most on the revenue front, as only two weeks are left for beer demand to remain high.

Centre will make NEET re-test 100 pc error-free, says Pradhan

Continued from P1

"Twenty-two lakh children have gone through immense mental anguish. Understanding that anguish and taking responsibility, I am saying this today, we had to take some tough decisions," he said.

The National Eligibility-cum-Entrance Test (Undergraduate) for admissions in medical courses held on May 3 was cancelled by the National Testing Agency (NTA) recently amid allegations of paper leak. The matter is being probed by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) and a re-test is scheduled to be held on June 21. Pradhan said the government decided to cancel the examination after finding that "some assessments had been compromised". "We did not want even a single student to be deprived of

their rightful seat because of the conspiracy of those involved in irregularities in the education system and the examination mafia," he said. The minister acknowledged the criticism over the handling of the issue but said the government is prepared to face the challenge. "We are facing criticism and challenges, and I accept that. But it is our responsibility to set the system right. It is not our duty to shut our eyes and turn away from the problem," he said.

The education minister further said the government is committed to ensuring a smoother conduct of the re-examination scheduled on June 21. "For the examination scheduled on June 21, it is our responsibility to ensure that it is 100 per cent error-free," he said.

EC announces polls for 26 RS seats on June 18

Continued from P1

The NDA currently has 149 MPs in the upper house while the opposition has 78 and non-aligned regional parties have 17 MPs in the 244-member house.

The Rajya Sabha elections will be held in four seats each in Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat and Karnataka, three seats each in Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan, two seats in Jharkhand and one seat each in Manipur, Meghalaya, Arunachal Pradesh and Mizoram. Besides, one seat each in Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu will also go to the polls on June 18.

The last date for filing of nominations is June 8, according to the EC. In a separate notification, the EC also announced by-elections to fill the vacancies created by the NCP's Sunetra Pawar in Maharashtra and the AIADMK's C Ve Shanmugam in Tamil Nadu following their resignations after they were elected to the state assemblies. While

the NDA is set to bag Pawar's seat, going by its strength in the state assembly, the TVK is likely to get the lone Rajya Sabha seat from Tamil Nadu going for a bypoll.

The tenure of Pawar's seat will be till July 4, 2028 while that for the Tamil Nadu seat will be till June 29, 2028. In Andhra Pradesh, the TDP will win all the four states for the Council of States and the BJP will bag all four seats in Gujarat. In Jharkhand, the JMM-Congress alliance is likely to win both the seats, but the BJP which has 21 seats of its own may try to bag one seat with the help of cross-voting by four opposition members.

In Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan, the Congress will get one seat each while the BJP will win two seats in each of the states, going by their current numbers.

In Karnataka, the Congress will win three seats and the BJP will get only one seat. Among those who

are retiring from the Rajya Sabha are Gowda, Congress president Kharage (both from Karnataka), Union ministers Ravneet Singh (Rajasthan) and George Kurian (Madhya Pradesh), former chief minister Digvijay Singh, and Congress leader Shaktisinh Gohil. Besides Ravneet Singh, the members whose tenure is ending in Rajasthan are Neeraj Dangi of the Congress and Rajendra Gehlot of the BJP. Rajasthan has a total of 10 Rajya Sabha seats.

The BJP and the Congress currently have five members each. Given the present strength of parties in the 200-member Rajasthan Assembly, the BJP is expected to win two of the three seats, while the Congress is likely to secure one.

The BJP has 118 MLAs in the Assembly, while the Congress has 67 members. The BSP has two MLAs, the Bharat Adivasi Party four, the Rashtriya Lok Dal one, and Independents eight.

CJP swings into action, demands Pradhan's scalp

Continued from P1

CJP founder Abhijeet Dipke urged followers to support an online petition demanding Pradhan's resignation.

"How are you cockroaches? Everyone is saying you are doing great on the internet, but I think now it is time to do some real work. Today, we are starting a petition demanding the resignation of the education minister," Dipke said in a video message.

India, Cyprus boost ties to a strategic partnership

Continued from P1

The two leaders also deliberated on the West Asia crisis as well as the Ukraine conflict, with PM Modi saying New Delhi supports all efforts for an early end to the hostilities. "Over the past decade, investment from Cyprus to India has nearly doubled. Trust between the two countries has increased, and with the India-European Union Free Trade Agreement, numerous new possibilities have emerged," Modi said in his media statement. Taking advantage of this, we are targeting to double this investment again in the next five years, he said. "And to realise this resolve,

today we are elevating our trusted relationship to a strategic partnership," he added.

The prime minister also noted that the friendship between India and Cyprus is both "strong and futuristic" as he elaborated on various aspects of his talks with Christodoulides. "We also discussed global issues. Whether it is Ukraine or West Asia, we will continue to support efforts for the early end of the conflict and for peace," Modi said. "We are also unanimous on the view that reform of global institutions is urgent and important for resolving the growing global challenges," he said.

NEETGATE: More skeletons tumble out of closet

Continued from P1

The agency alleged that Havaladar was involved in the NEET UG process after being appointed an expert by the National Testing Agency (NTA). "She had complete

access to the physics question paper. In April, she shared some of the questions with co-accused Manisha Mandhare," the statement said.

The CBI arrested Mandhare, a botany teacher from

Pune, in connection with the NEET paper leak on May 16.

The agency found that the questions Havaladar shared with the aspirants tallied with the physics paper of NEET UG 2026.

KTR seeks white paper on grain procurement

Continued from P1

"We personally toured several districts and witnessed the dire plight of farmers at procurement centres. I have written an open letter to the government.

The Chief Minister and his ministers are merely resorted to telling lies and engaging in diversionary tactics to shift attention away from the real issues and when issue of suicides is raised they say 'no one has died'," said KTR, advising the government to discuss the procurement in Saturday's Cabinet.

KTR pointed out that even after toiling for an entire sea-

son to cultivate and transport their produce to procurement centres, the authorities were not even bothering to weigh farmers' crops.

He alleged that the government had displayed negligence in every single aspect of the process including the supply of gunny bags. He drew attention to recent attacks and acts of lawlessness in the state, wryly observing that while gunny bags remain unavailable, guns seem to be available in abundance.

He urged the government to acknowledge the crisis in crop procurement and to wake up from its deep slum-

ber by heeding the information and suggestions provided by the opposition parties.

He asserted that the government's policy was clearly evident- by delaying crop procurement, they intend to force farmers to sell their produce to brokers at whatever arbitrary price is offered. KTR stated that if the state government does not respond to the issue of crop procurement even at this stage and take appropriate measures, or if it continues to disregard the concerns of the farmers, the party will exert pressure on the government at the grassroots level.

Cockroach Janta Party: When satire becomes a threat

IT began as a joke but got taken seriously—so seriously that the government acted against it. That is the story of the Cockroach Janta Party (CJP), which is merely a week old. On May 16, an activist, who reportedly was earlier associated with the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP), Abhijeet Dipke, launched CJP, a satirical take on Chief Justice of India (CJI) Surya Kant's comment on the unemployable youth with fake degrees who eventually become “parasites” and “cockroaches,” attacking the system. The CJI's remarks were not very elegant; these were especially hurtful as the young have been the victims rather than tormentors of the system. Among other things, they suffer because of a dearth of quality jobs and

a conducive environment in which they can become wealth creators. And now, they are also hit by the incompetence and corruption in the bodies that carry out exams for coveted seats in higher education and jobs. The remarks were deeply resented by not just youth but also others. This was the reason that the CJI later issued a clarification, stating he was misquoted and his remarks were directed specifically at individuals entering the legal profession through “fake and bogus degrees.” This, however, didn't stop the usage of the term ‘cockroaches’ online and the party espousing their cause; in fact, the party received wide support from various politicians, activists, artists, and millions of other users across

social media platforms. It is said that the CJP was able to get more followers than the ruling BJP and Congress, though the figures have not been verified. The government overreacted by reportedly directing X to withhold the account following inputs from the Intelligence Bureau (IB), which flagged “national security concerns.” Apparently, the Ministry of Electronics & Information Technology (MeitY) invoked Section 69A of the Information Technology Act, 2000, to demand action against the CJP account. Senior Congress leader Shashi Tharoor pointed out that the episode “confirms to us the extent to which there is frustration and dissatisfaction that the public can express through being able to tap into

an initiative like this.” In the meanwhile, Trinamool Congress MP Mahua Moitra accused the government of stifling dissent. The government should have avoided action against the CJP, because it was quite clearly a joke. Which serious political party would claim to be the “voice of the lazy”? Or claim that the “eligibility criteria” to join the CJP was to be “unemployed, lazy, and chronically online” with the “ability to rant professionally”? More than anyone else, the government took the joke seriously. By moving to block the account, the government ended up validating the very criticism the satire sought to make. A parody page that may otherwise have remained a passing internet joke suddenly acquired

political significance because of official intervention. In trying to suppress ridicule, the authorities amplified it. The episode also raises troubling questions about the increasing tendency to invoke sweeping powers such as Section 69A against online expression that is inconvenient or embarrassing rather than genuinely dangerous. Democracies are expected to tolerate mockery, even harsh mockery, because satire is often a barometer of public sentiment. What makes the CJP episode particularly revealing is that the government appeared more offended by the language of protest than by the underlying anger that produced it. A confident government would have laughed away the joke.

Prajesh Paramasivan, Neelambur-641048

Students must focus on GCC space

With reference to the article “Bright story of growth in GCC space awaits us beyond layoffs” (THI May 22), the increasing wave of layoffs in global technology companies has become a major concern for employees, students and parents across the country. In recent months, leading multinational firms have laid off thousands of workers worldwide. However, the changing situation should not alarm our IT professionals given that India is the preferred destination for GCCs because of its skilled workforce and growing digital ecosystem. More global firms are setting up technology centres in the country, which is expected to open fresh employment opportunities. Employees must adapt themselves to this transformation. Those who fail to keep pace with emerging technologies may find it difficult to survive in the changing market. Workers should also branch out into communication skills, teamwork and problem-solving abilities. Educational institutions should step in and update their syllabus according to industry requirements. Youngsters must understand that the IT industry now opens opportunities not only in coding but also in analytics, robotics, AI systems and digital transformation. Companies should invest in reskilling and upskilling programmes rather than simply laying off workers. Internal training sessions and mentorship initiatives can help employees move into new domains. Governments and industry bodies can bolster employees through skill development schemes. Skilled professionals who adapt themselves to the changing demands are likely to secure rewarding careers in the future. India's GCC ecosystem is expected to create large-scale employment opportunities in the long run. Employees, students and educational institutions must work together to prepare for the changing technological landscape instead of getting discouraged by temporary setbacks.

Raju Kolluru, Kakinada

Engineers should eye GCC positions.

THIS refers to “Bright story of growth in GCC Space awaits us beyond layoffs”. Rather than worry over layoffs, professionals must take comfort from the fact India's growing GCC ecosystem offers real hope. Many mid-level professionals are still anxious about job security and the rapid shift towards AI-driven roles. Rather than relying solely on market forces, we need practical steps: targeted government-industry partnerships for short-term AI and data science certification programmes, easier credit for tech startups, and clearer pathways for experienced engineers to move into GCC positions. Companies too must invest more in internal reskilling instead of sudden headcount cuts.

M Barathi, Bengaluru - 560076

Reskilling is the need of the hour

As propos “Bright story of growth in GCC space awaits us beyond layoffs”, (THI, May 22). The anxiety around layoffs is understandable, but the bigger concern is whether India's IT workforce is preparing itself for what comes next. GCCs are expanding, and that is genuinely good news. But expansion does not automatically translate into opportunity if skills remain static. Many mid-level professionals are still anchored to roles that AI is steadily absorbing. Reskilling cannot remain a talking point in corporate presentations. Universities, employers, and industry bodies must together create credible, accessible pathways for professionals to transition into AI-adjacent roles. India has the scale and the talent base to lead this shift. The question is whether we move with enough urgency before the window narrows.

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BENGALURU ONLINE

Flight services from Bengaluru to Bidar and Kalaburagi to resume: MB Patil

BENGALURU: Infrastructure Development Minister M B Patil on Friday announced that flight services from Bengaluru to Bidar and Kalaburagi, the district headquarters of the Kalyana Karnataka region, will resume from June 1 and June 10 respectively.

Speaking on the occasion, he said that Star Air (Ghodawat Enterprises Limited) will operate flights on the Bengaluru–Bidar–Bengaluru and Bengaluru–Kalaburagi–Bengaluru sectors. The Government is extending viability gap funding of ₹28.47 crore to support the operations. Advance booking for flights on both routes has already commenced, he added.

Patil said the flight service to Kalaburagi had earlier been suspended due to financial losses. In the case of Bidar, services were being operated with special support from the Kalyana Karnataka Regional Development Board. Taking into account the growth of industries, education, tourism, agriculture and commercial activities in the Kalyana Karnataka region, the Government has decided to revive the services under the regional air connectivity initiative, he said.

The Minister said the Government is committed to enhancing air connectivity to Tier-2 and Tier-3 cities across the State. Such initiatives will not only accelerate regional economic growth but also contribute to infrastructure development, he noted.

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

Hashtags, hate and half-truths: The dark side of India's digital politics



THE rise of social media in India was once hailed as a democratic revolution. It promised to dismantle the monopoly of traditional media, amplify unheard voices, deepen citizen participation, and establish a direct connection between political leaders and the public. In many ways, it succeeded. Political communication became immediate, interactive, and accessible on an unprecedented scale.

But now the same platforms have steadily polluted the country's political ecosystem. What began as an instrument of participation has, in many instances, degenerated into an unregulated arena of misinformation, abuse, manufactured outrage, and character assassination. The consequences extend far beyond politics; they strike at the very culture of democracy.

Indian politics has always been intensely competitive and emotionally charged. But social media transformed both the speed and scale of political confrontation. Earlier, allegations against political rivals passed through editorial scrutiny, legal checks, and institutional filters before reaching the public domain. Newspapers and television channels, despite their flaws and biases, still functioned within identifiable structures of accountability. Social media erased those barriers overnight.

Today, anonymous handles with no credibility or accountability can circulate fabricated claims, morphed videos, edited speeches, fake documents, and defamatory accusations to millions within minutes. Once amplified through coordinated digital networks, repetition itself

When outrage becomes currency and truth becomes irrelevant, democracy pays the price

creates the illusion of truth.

The political ecosystem has consequently shifted from ideological contestation to perpetual digital warfare. Truth is no longer merely the first casualty of political conflict; it is increasingly treated as irrelevant.

Perhaps the gravest danger posed by social media is the near-total absence of accountability.

Traditional journalism, at least in principle, carried institutional responsibility. Publications could face defamation suits, public scrutiny, legal consequences, and professional censure for unethical reporting. Editors and publishers were answerable for what they printed. Of course, it is a different matter that these days even journalists seem to be getting increasingly influenced by social media and are vying to belittle the views expressed by fellow journalists acting more like activists.

Political operatives, ideological influencers, troll networks, and anonymous accounts routinely spread allegations without evidence. Many posts are cleverly framed as “questions,” “sources suggest,” or “reports indicate,” enabling users to evade direct liability while successfully planting suspicion in the public mind. The damage, however, is immediate and often irreversible.

A false allegation may trend nationally for a day, dominate television debates, influence public perception, and quietly disappear later without apology, correction, or consequence. By the time fact-checkers intervene, the political narrative has already hardened.

This has created a dangerous incentive structure where outrage is rewarded, restraint ignored, and sensationalism travels faster than truth.

In a healthy democracy, political rivalry should revolve around governance, policy, ide-



The digital public square has become a theatre of political hostility, where anonymous allegations, viral half-truths and manufactured narratives often overpower evidence. This article examines how social media polluted India's political ecosystem and asks whether democratic discourse can still recover civility, accountability and respect for truth

ology, and public performance. Increasingly, however, Indian political discourse online revolves around the destruction of individuals rather than debate over ideas.

Political opponents are routinely portrayed not merely as rivals but as enemies, traitors, criminals, dictators, communal agents, or anti-national conspirators — often without substantiated evidence.

Families are dragged into political battles. Private lives are scrutinized. Old videos are selectively edited. Rumours are packaged as “exposés.” The objective is not persuasion but delegitimation.

Almost every major political formation now possesses an aggressive digital ecosystem dedicated less to defending its own ideas and more to attacking opponents relentlessly. The tragedy is that civil disagreement — the cornerstone of parliamentary democracy — is steadily disappearing.

Social media algorithms are designed not to promote truth or balance, but engagement.

Anger, outrage, fear, and polarization generate more clicks than reasoned analysis. Consequently, users increasingly inhabit ideological echo chambers where they consume only information that reinforces pre-existing beliefs.

Supporters of one political camp accept every allegation against rivals unquestioningly while dismissing all criticism of their preferred leaders as propaganda. Facts themselves become partisan.

A democracy cannot function effectively when citizens no longer agree even on basic facts. Nuance disappears. Complexity is reduced to hashtags. Serious policy discussions are drowned out by viral abuse and performative outrage.

Another disturbing feature of India's social media is that political messaging today is systematically engineered through coordinated hashtag campaigns, bot amplification, influencer networks, edited clips, selective leaks, meme factories, and targeted disinformation operations. Public percep-

tion itself can now be artificially manufactured. Visibility is mistaken for legitimacy.

The loudest voices online are often not the most credible — merely the most aggressively amplified.

The pollution generated by social media extends beyond political parties and leaders. Institutions themselves have become targets of sustained digital delegitimation.

The judiciary, Election Commission, investigative agencies, armed forces, universities, journalists, economists, and even constitutional authorities are routinely attacked whenever their actions conflict with partisan expectations.

Social media toxicity is not accidental; it is deeply tied to the economics of digital platforms which interests most of those who own these digital channels. These platforms profit from engagement, not civility. Outrage sustains attention. Polarisation increases interaction. Conflict keeps users online longer. As a result, inflammatory political content is often algorithmically rewarded.

Political actors exploit this structure ruthlessly because digital aggression delivers immediate visibility. Falsehood spreads not only because it is politically useful, but because it is commercially incentivised. The ultimate casualty is informed citizenship.

The answer, however, cannot lie in censorship alone. Excessive state control over digital speech carries dangers of its own and can easily become an instrument of political suppression. What India urgently needs is a culture of balanced accountability.

Political parties must discourage anonymous abuse and misinformation instead of covertly benefiting from it. Social media platforms must evolve

transparent and politically neutral mechanisms to identify coordinated disinformation campaigns. Fact-checking institutions must remain independent and credible. Most importantly, citizens themselves must cultivate digital literacy and scepticism. But no such signs are visible, at least not now. Democracy depends not merely on the freedom to speak, but also on the responsibility to verify. Political disagreement is healthy. Deliberate misinformation designed to destroy reputations and poison public discourse is not.

Social media, if responsibly used, can still strengthen those democratic instincts by enabling wider engagement between governments and citizens.

But the present trajectory is deeply troubling. When abuse replaces debate, rumours overpower evidence, anonymous propaganda shapes perception, and political victory becomes more important than truth itself, democracy suffers lasting damage.

The pollution of India's political ecosystem is not caused by technology alone. Technology merely amplifies human impulses — ambition, anger, tribalism, prejudice, and the relentless pursuit of power.

The real challenge before India is therefore moral, political, and institutional: whether democratic culture can rediscover restraint, credibility, civility, and accountability in the digital age.

If that correction does not happen, India risks drifting toward a political culture where propaganda triumphs over truth, noise overwhelms reason, and permanent outrage replaces constructive governance.

(The author is former Chief Editor of The Hans India)

Therefore, any caste enumeration exercise must be conducted with transparency, scientific rigor, and strong legal safeguards. Data protection mechanisms should ensure that information is used exclusively for policy and welfare purposes, not for partisan political gains.

The debate now demands clarity and political maturity from the Union government. Caste enumeration should not be viewed merely through an electoral lens, but as an administrative and constitutional necessity. A credible framework must emerge through consultations with states, sociologists, statisticians, and policy experts. Public expectations today are increasingly shaped by a demand for evidence-based governance rather than broad political assurances.

Dr B R Ambedkar envisioned an India where equality would not remain a constitutional promise alone but become a lived social reality. Achieving that vision requires more than slogans or symbolic commitments. It requires institutions willing to confront uncomfortable truths with honesty and policy courage.

A comprehensive caste census is not merely a bureaucratic exercise. Properly designed and responsibly implemented, it can become a transformative democratic reform, one that strengthens representation, improves welfare delivery, and deepens the Republic's commitment to social justice. For a nation still grappling with entrenched inequalities, understanding the true contours of deprivation may well be the first step toward correcting them.

A historic step towards social justice

AMARAVAJI NAGARAJU

THE national debate on caste enumeration has once again moved to the centre of India's political and social discourse. Recent observations by the Supreme Court emphasizing the importance of caste data in the Census have added renewed urgency to a long-pending issue. For communities that have consistently demanded equitable representation, welfare, and social justice, the development carries both symbolic and policy significance.

Our Constitution guarantees equality to every citizen. Yet, the realities of social and economic inequality continue to shape access to education, employment, political representation, and public resources. Despite decades of affirmative action and welfare policies, the absence of comprehensive and updated caste-based data has remained a major policy gap. Governments continue to frame reservation policies and welfare interventions largely on estimates and outdated assumptions rather than contemporary evidence.

The last comprehensive caste census in India was conducted in 1931. After Independence, official Census exercises have largely restricted caste enumeration to Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. Consequently, there is no reliable nationwide data on the population, educational status, economic conditions, or



representation of Other Backward Classes and several marginalized communities. These paradoxical policies meant to advance social justice are being implemented without a precise understanding of the social realities they seek to address.

Caste enumeration:

In this context, the Supreme Court's observations assume considerable importance. The underlying principle is simple, yet profound: meaningful equality cannot be achieved without understanding the actual structure of inequality. In a democracy committed to inclusive governance, representation and opportunity must be informed by evidence, not speculation. Policymakers across the world increasingly recognise that data-driven governance is indispensable for effective welfare planning and equitable distribution of resources.

The demand for caste enu-

mation has been consistently raised by several political and social movements over the years. Their argument is rooted in a fundamental democratic question: who has access to the nation's wealth, institutions, education, and decision-making structures, and in what proportion? Without credible data, these debates remain confined to rhetoric. The Court's intervention has now provided institutional legitimacy to a conversation that many believe was delayed for far too long.

The Telangana caste survey:

Telangana's recent caste survey has emerged as an important example in this regard. Conducted with administrative coordination and public participation, the exercise attempted to systematically gather socio-economic and educational data across communities. While debates on methodology and implementation may continue, the broader sig-

nificance of the initiative lies in its attempt to shift governance toward evidence-based policymaking. In an era where governments worldwide rely on data to frame targeted welfare measures, India too must strengthen its statistical foundations.

Globally, countries routinely collect demographic and social indicators to address disparities in healthcare, education, employment, and income distribution. In diverse societies, such exercises are not viewed as instruments of division but as tools for inclusion. India, with its layered social realities, arguably has an even greater need for accurate and transparent data systems.

Critics of caste enumeration, however, raise concerns that such exercises could deepen social divisions or intensify caste-based politics. These concerns cannot be dismissed lightly. Yet, acknowledging inequality is not the same as perpetuating it. Democracies cannot correct structural disadvantages without first identifying them. Just as a physician cannot prescribe treatment without diagnosis, governments cannot meaningfully address social inequities without reliable evidence.

Data privacy and public trust:

Another critical dimension is data privacy and public trust. In the digital age, the collection of personal information naturally raises concerns about misuse and surveillance.



Why self-discipline and motivation matter more than ever for students



sistent effort, it boosts their confidence. They begin to trust their abilities and become more independent.

5. Most importantly Stay focussed and motivated

One needs to encourage Healthy Habits

Self-discipline is not limited to academics; it also impacts physical and mental well-being.

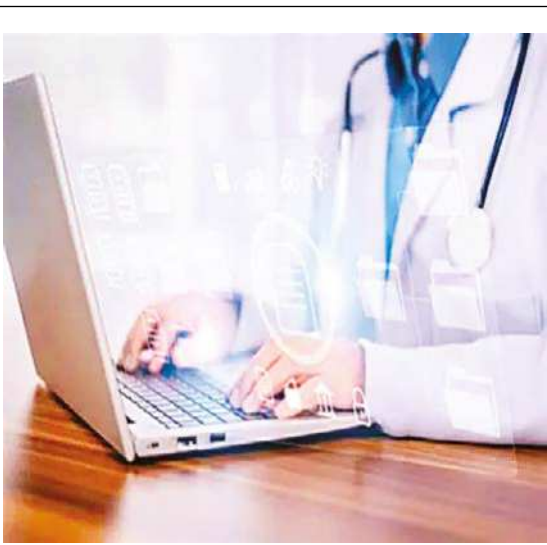
Disciplined students are more likely to:

- Maintain a proper sleep schedule (7–8 hours daily)
 - Eat balanced meals
 - Participate in physical activities
- According to health experts, students who follow a routine are 30% more likely to maintain better concentration and energy levels throughout the day.

Role of Schools in Building Self-Discipline

Schools are critical to the development of disciplined individuals. Structured routines, clear rules, and consistent expectations help students understand the importance of responsibility. It also provides in creating a Supportive environment. We as mentors need to appreciate consistent efforts and encourage positive habit.

Self-discipline is one of the influential tools a student can develop during his/her school life. It shapes not just academic graph but also hones their character, confidence, and future readiness. In a world full of distractions, the ability to stay focused and consistent sets students apart. Self-discipline and motivation help students to make better choices every day. These small, consistent choices taken every day will lead to big achievements over time. The author is educationist at the Sanskriti Group of Schools.



Today is Medical Coder Day

The importance of medical coding

Medical coders play a crucial role in modern healthcare systems by converting complex medical information into standardised codes used across hospitals, clinics, insurance systems, and research organisations. These professionals analyse patient records, diagnoses, treatments, laboratory reports, and procedures to ensure healthcare data is accurately documented and universally understood.

The work of medical coders supports several important functions within the healthcare sector.

Accurate coding helps hospitals maintain organised patient records, process insurance claims efficiently, and reduce documentation errors. It also assists healthcare providers in tracking treatments, monitoring disease trends, and improving overall healthcare management.

Medical coding has become increasingly important with the rapid

digitisation of healthcare services and electronic medical records. Standardised coding systems help ensure consistency in healthcare documentation across different institutions and regions.

The data generated through coding is also widely used in public health studies, medical research, and policy planning.

Professionals in this field require strong attention to detail, knowledge of medical terminology, anatomy, and healthcare procedures, along with familiarity with international coding systems. As healthcare systems continue to expand and rely more heavily on digital records, the demand for trained medical coders is steadily increasing.

Experts believe medical coding is emerging as an important career option for students interested in healthcare administration, medical documentation, and health information management.

Educators believe that beyond intelligence and talent, qualities such as consistency, time management, focus, resilience, and healthy routines help students stay confident and goal-oriented. Experts also emphasise that motivation and discipline work together to encourage curiosity, improve decision-making, reduce stress, and build independence. Schools and mentors, they say, play a key role in helping students develop positive habits, emotional balance, and the ability to remain focused in an increasingly distracted world

PRANEET MUNGALI

As rightly penned by Jim Rohn, Discipline turns ordinary things into extraordinary accomplishments and motivation is the energizing force behind it. In today's fast-paced world filled with distractions, smartphones, social media, and constant digital stimulation, self-discipline has become one of the most valuable life skills a student can develop. While intelligence and talent matter, discipline often determines long-term success. For students, especially during school years, learning self-discipline lays the foundation for academic achievement, personal growth, and future career success.

It is all about getting invested in the process of learning and mo-

tivation provides both direction and persistence. Students who are self-motivated invest more time and effort in activities that align with their values and interests, which in turn leads to stronger academic results whereas there is always a set of students who to be motivated. For students, discipline includes punctuality, focus during study time, respect for authority, and consistency in work habits. It goes beyond mere obedience to rules — it represents self-control, organization, and value-based behaviour. It is the act of going forward in life without losing hope. One needs to put in a lot of effort to develop a positive outlook on life, and adopt never-say-no attitude in order to acquire and accomplish goals faster, be it in academics, self-health or any other path of

life. Motivation does not just fuel effort – it directs it. A motivated student makes promising choices that will also yield positive results. They choose to attempt challenging tasks, ask questions rather than staying quiet, and come back to try again after a setback.

One of the most powerful things a motivated student has is Curiosity. Both self-discipline and motivation go hand in hand and nourish this curiosity and to encourage this there needs to be certain life style approaches that will create a sea amount of difference. It builds feeling of being in control of one's decision-making capabilities, helps accomplish goals and most importantly builds a Never to Give up Attitude.

Milestones towards creating a perfect balance between self-discipline and remaining motivated-

1. Know your strength and weaknesses

Time management is one of the biggest challenges students face. Between school, homework, extracurricular activities, and social life, it's easy to feel overwhelmed. A wisely planned schedule is the key to success and works wonders.

It will help students to limit procrastination and stress and be optimistic towards achieving desired goals. Time management also is required to limit screen time and be in control of that.

2. Tap and identify motivation Factor

Motivation plays an important role and one should always believe in the mantra "I am working on it, I can do it and I have done it".

3. Recognize and work on the downfalls

Accepting short comings as well as challenges and chalking out a doable plan with gradual accomplishments. Last-minute studying and unfinished assignments often lead to stress. Self-discipline helps students stay ahead of their tasks, reducing unnecessary pressure.

4. Self- Appreciation

Students feel motivated to do better when they are being encouraged and appreciated for all the small achievements and accomplishments that they achieve. As mentors and teachers, we should encourage them. When students achieve their goals through con-

SURVEY

School study highlights growth in student self-management and collaboration skills

Experiment conducted among students from Grades 1 to 9 reveals increasing focus on behavioural learning beyond academics

- 84% of students demonstrated independent self-management skills
- 80% showed initiative and proactive behaviour
- 80% prioritised collaboration and teamwork
- 79% managed tasks without reminders
- 65% demonstrated empathetic listening abilities



A recent school-based social experiment has highlighted the growing importance of behavioural and life skills among students, suggesting that qualities such as self-management, collaboration, initiative, and emotional awareness are becoming increasingly visible within school environments.

The study, conducted among students from Grades 1 to 9 at Glendale International School, examined how students perceive their own learning experiences beyond textbooks, examinations, and academic scores. According

to observations and behavioural assessments carried out as part of the initiative, 84% of students demonstrated independent self-management skills, indicating an ability to organise and regulate their work without constant supervision.

The findings further showed that 80% of students displayed proactive behaviour and initiative in classroom and school-related activities. Another 80% prioritised teamwork and collaborative thinking over individual participation, while

79% were able to manage and complete tasks without repeated reminders from teachers or parents.

In addition, 65% of students demonstrated empathetic listening skills during classroom interactions and group activities. The study also found that 52% of students showed the ability to independently plan tasks and schedules ahead of time, reflecting the development of organisational and leadership habits at an early stage.

As part of the experiment, both parents and students

were independently asked the same question: "What is your child learning well in school?" While most parents focused primarily on academic performance and subject knowledge, students highlighted behavioural and personal development areas such as responsibility, listening, collaboration, initiative, and self-management.

Education experts say the findings reflect a broader shift in school education, where behavioural learning and social-emotional development are increasingly

being viewed as important alongside academic achievement.

The assessments were conducted using structured behavioural rubrics integrated into the school's learning framework. The initiative aimed to better understand how habits related to accountability, communication, teamwork, and leadership are developing among students in day-to-day school environments.

School officials noted that behavioural competencies are gradually becoming part of classroom learning and student engagement processes rather than being treated separately as extracurricular skills. Educators also believe that qualities such as adaptability, emotional intelligence, collaboration, and self-discipline are becoming increasingly important for long-term academic and professional success.

The findings contribute to a wider conversation in education about measuring student growth beyond marks and examinations, particularly as schools explore more holistic approaches to learning and development.

UoH & IIIT-H sign MoU, focuses on advanced technology and research innovation



Two leading Hyderabad-based academic institutions — University of Hyderabad and International Institute of Information Technology Hyderabad — have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) aimed at strengthening collaboration in higher education, advanced research, and deep-tech innovation.

The agreement was formally signed in the presence of senior academic and administrative officials from both institutions, including Prof. J. Anuradha, Vice-Chancellor In-Charge of UoH, and Prof. Sandeep K. Shukla, Director of IIIT-H.

According to officials, the partnership is expected to encourage greater cooperation between the academic departments and specialised research groups of the two institutions. The collaboration will allow reciprocal access to laboratories, high-performance computing (HPC) facilities, and library

resources, enabling students and researchers to work across institutional boundaries. The MoU focuses on promoting interdisciplinary research, joint academic activities, and collaborative innovation in emerging technology sectors. Experts believe such partnerships are becoming increasingly important as universities attempt to strengthen research ecosystems and build industry-relevant skills among students.

Under the agreement, faculty members from both institutions will be able to participate in co-teaching, collaborative research projects, and joint supervision of postgraduate and PhD scholars within the framework of AICTE and UGC regulations.

The collaboration is also expected to support joint publications, intellectual property development, research events, and competitive extramural funding proposals in advanced tech-

nology areas. One of the major focus areas of the partnership will be semiconductor science and technology, including research in VLSI and embedded systems. Officials stated that the MoU also envisions the possibility of future collaborative or joint degree programmes in specialised technology domains.

Academic representatives from both institutions noted that the initiative aims to create stronger institutional synergy while supporting the development of highly trained and industry-ready professionals in areas of national importance.

To coordinate the implementation of the partnership, faculty members from the Centre for Advanced Studies in Electronics Science and Technology (CASEST) at UoH and the Centre for VLSI and Embedded Systems Technology (CVEST) at IIIT-H have been designated as official coordinators for the programme.

Air conditioning: How does it affect the skin?



SHAHNAZ HUSAIN

Air conditioners have seen a significant surge in use in recent years, particularly in hot-climate countries like India. In today's increasingly climate-controlled world, air conditioning has evolved from a luxury into a near necessity. During scorching summers and relentless heatwaves that can break even the strongest admirers of the season, air conditioning feels like a blessing. When temperatures become unbearable, often exceeding 40°C, the easiest solution is to switch on the AC and relax in cool air. High temperatures combined with humidity can be dangerous, leading to dehydration, heat exhaustion, and even heatstroke. As a re-

sult, people now spend much of their lives indoors under controlled cooling, moving from air-conditioned homes to cars, offices, malls, shopping centres, and gyms. Across cities, from Delhi to Dubai, air conditioners have become less of a luxury and more of a survival tool. While AC systems provide comfort and safety, constant exposure to artificial cooling can also lead to dry skin, fine lines, dull complexion, brittle hair, and fatigue. The very machines protecting us from the heat may quietly be reshaping our wellness in ways we rarely question. Prolonged reliance on artificial cooling can cause fatigue, lethargy, and chronic headaches, often linked to poor air circulation and low indoor humidity. Unlike sunburn or direct heat exposure, AC-related dehy-

dration develops gradually. Many people spend extended hours in offices, cars, shopping malls, and air-conditioned bedrooms without noticing the slow loss of moisture. Symptoms usually become noticeable only after persistent dryness, itching, or changes in skin and hair texture begin to appear over time.

1. Immunity Reduction Due to Artificial Cooling

Constant dependence on air conditioning can weaken the body's natural ability to adapt to temperature changes. Drastic shifts between cold indoor environments and hot outdoor temperatures may cause "summer chills," muscle stiffness, and reduced immunity.

AC systems reduce humidity and create cold environments that draw moisture from the body, resulting in significant dryness, irritation, and brittleness. This damages the skin barrier, leading to flaking, itching, and cracked skin, while also causing dull hair and brittle nails.

Air conditioners do not simply cool the air — they strip it of moisture, and this

has biological consequences. When the skin loses water, it becomes rough, tight, and flaky. Constant exposure to dry indoor air accelerates trans-epidermal water loss, a process in which moisture escapes directly from the skin and hair. This leaves the skin looking dull, tired, and dehydrated, especially after cleansing.

Dry air also causes the skin to contract, making fine lines and wrinkles appear more prominent.

2. AC Acne

Air conditioning can contribute to acne by dehydrating the skin and triggering sebaceous glands to produce excess oil. This overproduction of sebum can clog pores, leading to inflammation, breakouts, blackheads, and whiteheads, particularly in people with combination skin.

This imbalance often creates a frustrating cycle in which the skin feels dry and oily at the same time, making skincare difficult to manage. Dermatologists commonly refer to this condition as "AC acne."

3. Accelerated Ageing

Spending nearly 10 to 12 hours daily in air-conditioned environments can accelerate premature skin ageing. Cold, dry air reduces skin elasticity and may cause the skin to shrink, sag, and develop fine lines. Over time, continuous moisture loss reduces the skin's natural plumpness and

elasticity, making wrinkles and signs of ageing more noticeable. Premature sagging and dullness often become visible much earlier in people who spend most of their day in heavily air-conditioned spaces.

4. Chapped Lips

Air conditioners are a major cause of dry and chapped lips because they lower indoor humidity and strip moisture from the air. The skin on the lips is thinner and more delicate than facial skin and lacks oil glands, making it especially vulnerable to dryness. Unlike the rest of the skin, lips cannot produce natural oils to lock in moisture. As a result, prolonged exposure to dry AC environments often leads to cracking, peeling, and irritation. Moisture escapes from the lips much faster than from other areas of the face in climate-controlled spaces.

How to Protect Your Skin in Air-Conditioned Environments By understanding how AC affects the skin, hair, and body, and by making small but consistent lifestyle changes, it is possible to maintain healthy, glowing skin despite extreme summer conditions. One of the most important steps is staying hydrated. Drink plenty of water, soups, fresh juices, and other fluids throughout the day. Adding a pinch of salt to a litre of water may help improve cellular absorption, while occasional electrolyte supplements can



support hydration further.

A diet rich in water-based foods such as cucumber, lettuce, celery, watermelon, strawberries, and oranges also helps maintain moisture levels in the body. Foods high in antioxidants — including berries, green tea, dark chocolate, and leafy greens — can protect the skin from environmental stress caused by prolonged AC exposure.

Maintaining indoor temperatures between 23°C and 25°C is considered ideal for balancing comfort and skin health. This range supports the body's natural thermoregulation while reducing excessive dryness. Using a humidifier is another effective solution. Humidifiers release moisture back into the air-conditioned

room, helping maintain healthy humidity levels and counteracting the drying effects of AC. Using a humidifier at night can significantly improve skin texture over time. Regular application of moisturiser, lip balm, and hand cream is equally important. Reapplying these products every few hours helps restore the skin barrier and prevent moisture loss.

Keeping AC systems clean also plays a vital role in maintaining indoor air quality. Clean air filters trap dust, pollen, and other pollutants more effectively. Filters should ideally be cleaned every three months. Older air-conditioning units may also release chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs), refriger-

erants that are harmful to the ozone layer and contribute to environmental warming.

In addition, taking regular breaks from air-conditioned environments allows the body to adjust naturally to outdoor temperatures. This helps improve thermoregulation and reduces dependence on artificial cooling.

The key lies in maintaining hydration, protecting the skin barrier, balancing indoor humidity, and practising mindful indoor living. When these factors are addressed, comfort and healthy, youthful skin can coexist — even in a world dominated by air conditioning.

(The author is international fame beauty expert and is called the herbal queen of India.)



In today's heat-driven lifestyle, air conditioners have become an essential part of daily living, offering comfort and protection from extreme temperatures. However, while ACs help us escape the harsh summer heat, prolonged exposure to artificial cooling can silently affect skin health, leading to dryness, premature ageing, acne, and dehydration

Asha Attaluri's purposeful pageant journey

Representing the Telugu states of Telangana and Andhra Pradesh, Asha Deepika Attaluri is all set to compete at the prestigious Cosmos Queen India 2026 grand finale in Bengaluru on May 26, 2026. If crowned, she will earn the coveted Mrs India title under the Cosmos platform and go on to represent the country at the internationally acclaimed Mrs Unity World.

An entrepreneur, technologist, philanthropist, and visionary leader, Asha's journey into pageantry is deeply rooted in purpose and service. For her, the platform extends far beyond glamour and recognition — it is an opportunity to create meaningful social impact and inspire positive transformation.

Through initiatives such as Mission Shantivan, undertaken in collaboration with the Government of Himachal Pradesh, Asha is committed to showcasing India's hidden destinations, local talent, rich culture, and heritage on the global stage. Her vision also focuses on creating sustainable opportunities in employment, healthcare, and education for underserved communities.

Having spent years working quietly behind the scenes to support social causes, Asha believes that a crown carries the responsibility to uplift lives and strengthen communities. She hopes to inspire individuals and families to embrace compassion, service, and purposeful living while proving that true beauty lies in the ability to create lasting change.



Neena Gupta says 'buddhi ho toh kya' as she enjoys vacation in hot pants

Veteran actress Neena Gupta has questioned her choices of living with her free will and what her age has to do with it.

The actress in a video on her social media account, was seen unapologetically asking 'buddhi hoon toh kya' (so what if I am old)

The actress shared a fun-filled video from her vacation where she was seen jumping around with childlike excitement on an empty road.

In the clip, Neena Gupta looked stylish in a casual white shirt paired with hot shorts and sneakers and sunglasses.

She used Dia Mirza's iconic track "Zara Zara" from the cult romantic film 'Rehnaa Hai Terre Dil Mein' as the background score for the video.

Sharing the video on social media, Neena took a jibe at the trolls and haters always trolling her for being free spirited despite senior age. She captioned it as, "Bol do Bol do Sharmao Mat... buddhi ho toh kya?" (Say it, say it Don't be shy. I am old so what!?)

Actress Sunita Rajwar commented, "Dil toh baccha hai ji" (The heart is still childlike) while many other fans flooded the comments section with love and admiration.

For the uninitiated, Neena Gupta has often spoken openly about embracing life on her own terms.

From discussing her single motherhood, relationships or openly asking filmmakers for work on social media,



Neena Gupta has never shied away.

A few years ago, the 'Badhaai Ho' actress had made headlines when she openly asked for work on social media, stating that she was out of work and shared her work profile too. In her widely discussed

post on her social media account, she had written, "I live in Mumbai and am working. I am a good actor looking for good parts to play." The post had struck a chord across the industry and among audiences, who lauded her honesty and fearlessness.

CROSSWORD

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ACROSS

1 Car protector (6)

7 Enlarged (8)

8 Qatar's capital (4)

10 Set in layers (6)

11 Prolonged shrill sound or cry (6)

14 160 in Roman numerals (3)

16 Common (5)

17 Small and cramped (4)

19 Corsican mob group (5)

21 King with the touch

of gold ? (5)

22 Three ____ (or 36 months) ? (5)

23 Drunkards (4)

26 Mature (5)

28 Large Australian bird (3)

29 Experts (6)

30 Provision merchant (6)

31 Egyptian symbol of life (4)

32 Mortification (8)

33 Barely (6)

Solution to May 22

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Solution to May 22

India’s residential market matures; Hyd joins growth surge in Q1 2026

ALONG WITH BENGALURU AND DELHI-NCR, HYDERABAD POSTED ROBUST DOUBLE-DIGIT SALES GROWTH IN Q1 2026 AMID RISING PREMIUM HOUSING DEMAND AND STEADY PRICE APPRECIATION

NEW DELHI

INDIA'S residential real estate market has transitioned into a "structurally mature, demand-anchored growth phase", with Q1 2026 recording 93,065 new unit launches and 95,973 unit sales across the top eight cities, a report said on Saturday. The report from PropTiger said the supply rose 1.1 per cent sequentially and sales improved 1 per cent quarter-on-quarter. The weighted average price reached a record high of Rs 10,050 per sq ft -- crossing the five-digit benchmark for the first time -- "signalling that value creation now drives market health rather than transaction volume."

"The Indian residential market has transitioned into a structurally more disciplined phase. Growth today is increasingly being driven by demand quality, inventory discipline, and



- India’s housing market entered a more mature, demand-driven growth phase in Q1 2026
- New launches stood at 93,065 units while sales reached 95,973 units across top eight cities
- Average housing prices crossed `10,000 per sq ft for the first time
- Bengaluru led growth with 33% YoY rise in sales
- Hyderabad posted strong double-digit sales growth alongside Delhi-NCR and Chennai
- Premium and upper mid-income housing drove most new launches
- Q2 outlook remains positive with steady sales and price growth expected.

buyer confidence rather than speculative expansion," said Prakash Tejwani, CEO, PropTiger.

The supply remained flat at -0.1 per cent on a YoY basis, while sales moderated to -2.2 per cent, reflecting healthy normalisation rather than structural weakness, the report noted.

Bengaluru emerged as the standout performer, recording sales of 15,603 units, up 33 per cent year-on-year and 12 per cent sequentially. The city also maintained near-parity between new supply and sales absorption, indicating a well-balanced market. The GCC and startup employment engine continues to prove more durable than conventional IT hiring cycles, providing Bengaluru with a structurally differentiated demand base.

Mumbai Metropolitan Region remained the largest market by volume and value with 26,116 sales units in Q1

2026. Though the performance moderated on YoY basis, it reflected base-effect normalisation against an exceptional 2025, rather than a loss of demand momentum, the report noted.

Chennai, Hyderabad and Delhi-NCR also posted robust gains in sales from 11 per cent to 43 per cent, while Pune, Kolkata and Ahmedabad showed mixed trends.

A disproportionate share of new launches in Q1 2026 -- particularly in Mumbai MMR, Bengaluru, and Delhi NCR -- remained concentrated in the premium and upper mid-income segments, driving the average property prices higher. The outlook for Q2 2026 is constructive, the firm said, predicting a steady sequential growth of 2-4 per cent and sustained year-on-year price appreciation of 4-8 per cent across major metros driven by limited mid-segment supply.

India emerges as Asia Pacific’s top real estate yield market

Office, logistics, retail and student housing assets in India outperformed regional peers on returns, while Q1 investment inflows crossed \$2.29 billion

NEW DELHI

INDIA offers the highest real estate yields across every major asset class in the Asia Pacific region and recorded an 189 per cent year-on-year jump in investment volumes in the Q1 CY 2026, a report said on Thursday.

The report from CBRE said that cap rates in India consistently outpace every other market in the region across office, retail, logistics, hotels, and student housing sectors, in some cases by as much as 320 basis points. India's Q1 2026 investment volume rose to \$2,295.19 million from \$839.85 million a year earlier, second to only Singapore that led the region in investment volumes with a 364 per cent year-on-year increase. "We are seeing genuine, broad-based demand across sectors driven by India's economic fundamentals, its growing corporate base, and a young, consumption-led population," said Anshuman Magazine, Chairman & CEO, India, South-East Asia, Middle East & Africa, CBRE.



"Global investors who have been cautious till now are actively looking to deploy capital here, and we expect this momentum to strengthen further as more institutional-grade products come to market," he added. The report highlighted sustained interest from domestic institutions, family offices, and global capital markets players as they increasingly allocate to Indian real estate through direct acquisitions, REITs, and structured debt instruments. India is one of the top markets for real estate debt interest in Asia Pacific, signalling maturing capital markets, the report noted.

The report noted India's Grade A office cap rates range from 7.50 per cent to

8.40 per cent in core central business district locations, compared to 3.25 per cent to 3.80 per cent in Singapore and 2 per cent to 3 per cent in Tokyo.

India is named among the top three preferred markets for Grade A office investment enquiries in Asia Pacific, alongside Singapore and Japan. Student housing yields in India stood at 8.50 per cent-9 per cent, around 320 basis points higher than the next-highest market, Australia. The institutional-grade logistics cap rates in India stand at 7.15 per cent-7.75 per cent, around 115 basis points more than the second-ranked market, Vietnam with the rates of 6 per cent-7 per cent.

UPRERA bars builders from using homebuyers’ money for assured return schemes

LUCKNOW: Uttar Pradesh Real Estate Regulatory Authority has barred builders from using homebuyers' money for "assured return" schemes and made it mandatory for all registered projects to operate through three separate bank accounts, officials said on Thursday. The new framework, aimed at tightening financial discipline



and preventing diversion of project funds, was discussed at a meeting convened by

UP RERA with bankers and financial institutions. Uttar Pradesh Real Estate Regulatory Authority (UP RERA) Chairman Sanjay Bhoosredy chaired the meeting, which was attended by senior officials of nationalised banks, financial institutions and the State Level Bankers' Committee.

Experts bullish on long-term real estate prospects in South India

HANS BUSINESS HYDERABAD



INDUSTRY experts believe that South India's long-term real estate growth trajectory continues to remain fundamentally strong.

The three large states of Karnataka, Tamil Nadu and Telangana contribute almost 25 per cent of India's GDP. Tamil Nadu is the second largest

contributor to India's GDP with share of 9 per cent while Karnataka is close behind with share of 8 per cent. Karnataka is largely driven by IT/ITES, Tamil Nadu has diversified economic base including

real estate, IT/ITES, automobiles and manufacturing clusters. Industry participants also point out that professionally managed real estate investment platforms, AIFs and REITs continue to witness growing investor interest as the sector becomes increasingly organized and transparent. Investors today are evaluating opportunities through a long-term lens, focusing more

on structural demand drivers. Sharad Mittal, Founder & CEO, Arnay Real Estate Fund Advisors, said: "Real estate investments are fundamentally linked to long-term economic indicators such as urbanization, infrastructure growth, employment generation, and end-user demand. Markets backed by strong industrial ecosystems and economic activity continue to remain

attractive for long-term real estate capital." Sharad, further added: "South India has consistently demonstrated resilience across market cycles. The region continues to benefit from manufacturing-led growth, infrastructure development, and sustained residential demand, which continue to support long-term investor confidence."

BIZ BRIEFS

Amazon expands beauty store

Amazon.in, an e-commerce platform, announced the expansion of its premium beauty selection, with over 100 new brands set to go live. Amazon will include renowned international brands such as, Dolce & Gabbana, Laura Mercier, Elemis, Urban Decay and more. Siddharth Bhagat, Director, Amazon India, said: "India's beauty industry is seeing a clear shift from availability-led shopping to more intentional, discovery-led consumption, driven by growing awareness of global beauty trends."

Paisabazaar's new campaign

Paisabazaar, a financial marketplace, announced the launch of a new integrated brand campaign for the Credit Premier League (CPL) featuring former Indian cricketer and commentator Irfan Pathan. CPL is Paisabazaar's initiative aimed at recognising and rewarding consumers with strong credit health.

FRAI organises seminar in Hyd

The Federation of Retailers Association of India Telangana chapter held a seminar in Hyderabad on tackling illicit trade and unfair market practices. Retailers, traders and policymakers raised concerns over counterfeit goods, illegal distribution, predatory pricing and deep discounting by quick commerce and e-commerce players. Participants said these practices harm genuine businesses, consumer trust, government revenues and livelihoods of small traders.

Domestic demand cushions India against global uncertainty: RBI

Financial conditions, crude oil prices challenges for external sector outlook

NEW DELHI

INDIA'S economic activity exhibited resilience in April, with industrial and services sectors maintaining strength across several segments even as the global economy continued to be shadowed by uncertainties in West Asia, according to the RBI's monthly bulletin released on Friday. Industrial and services activity stayed strong in many segments. Early results of listed private non-financial companies for Q4:2025-26 also showed an improvement in business performance over the previous quarter, with aggregate sales and operating profit recording a double-digit growth, the bulletin stated.

It highlighted that in the agriculture sector, rapid progress of summer sowing was



supported by above normal pre-monsoon rainfall and sufficient reservoir storage levels. However, a higher probability of above-normal minimum temperatures and unseasonal rains in some parts of the country could pose risks to the harvesting of remaining rabi crops. The current public foodgrain

stocks remain well above the buffer norms ensuring domestic food security.

The financial conditions, crude oil prices and capital flows continue to pose challenges to the external sector outlook. Nevertheless, robust services exports, positive net FDI flows, foreign exchange reserve buffers and a number

of proactive policy measures undertaken by the Government and the Reserve Bank are likely to cushion the Indian economy against external headwinds.

In March, net foreign direct investment remained positive for the second consecutive month. Foreign portfolio investors continued to remain net sellers in April and May, though the pace of outflows moderated, the bulletin observed.

CPI inflation rose to 3.5 per cent in April, driven mainly by food inflation, while core inflation remained steady indicating limited pass-through of higher input cost conditions. Although headline inflation remains firmly within the tolerance band, the pass through to domestic prices needs to be monitored, it pointed out.

Institutional buyers bid ₹2,380 crore in Central Bank of India OFS

MUMBAI

INSTITUTIONAL investors on Friday put in over Rs 2,380 crore worth bids in the Offer For Sale (OFS) of Central Bank of India shares, which got over-subscribed more than two times.

The government is selling up to 8 per cent stake in the Central Bank of India at a floor price of Rs 31 per share. If fully subscribed, the stake sale would fetch Rs 2,456 crore to the government.

Till the close of trading hours on Friday, institutional investors put in bids for over 76.86 crore shares, which is about 2.36 times of the 32.58 crore shares on offer.



At the indicated price of Rs 31.01 a share, non-retail investors put in over Rs 2,380 crore worth bids for Central Bank OFS. The OFS offer includes a 4 per cent greenshoe option, taking the total stake that the government intends to offload to 8 per cent. This is the first OFS by the government in the current fiscal. Retail investors will be able to bid in the share sale offer on Monday. The floor price

of Rs 31 a share is 8.58 per cent lower than the stock's Thursday's closing price of Rs 33.91 on the BSE. Shares of Central Bank of India slipped 7.90 per cent to close at Rs 31.23 on BSE on Friday. The OFS will help the government inch towards meeting the Securities and Exchange Board of India's minimum public shareholding norm. According to SEBI, all listed companies must maintain public shareholding of 25 per cent. The government currently holds 89.27 per cent stake. If the government exercises the greenshoe option, its total stake in the state-owned bank will come down to 81.27 per cent.

FLIPKART PARTNERS WITH INDIA POST TO BOOST LAST MILE PARCEL DELIVERY

NEW DELHI: E-commerce major Flipkart has signed an agreement with the Department of Posts for efficient last mile parcel delivery, an official statement said on Friday. The partnership aims to leverage the delivery network of the Department of Posts along with Flipkart's strong presence in India's e-commerce sector to provide efficient, reliable and customer-centric parcel delivery solutions across the country, the statement said. "The Department of Posts (DoP), Ministry of Communications, and Flipkart India Private Limited have signed an agreement for last mile parcel delivery services.

Oben Electric bets big on Telangana after strong Rorr Evo response

HANS BUSINESS HYDERABAD

OBEN Electric, an electric motorcycle manufacturer, showcased Oben Rorr Evo, its newly launched electric motorcycle in Hyderabad. The company said it is witnessing strong demand for the new model, with Hyderabad emerging as highest booking market nationwide since its launch on April 30.

The vehicle is equipped with a 3.4 kWh LFP battery offering an IDC range of 180 km, acceleration from 0-40 km/h in 3 seconds and a top speed of 110 km/h. The motorcycle also supports fast charging from 0-80 per cent in 90 minutes and comes with an 8-year battery warranty.



The bike features a 5-inch colour TFT display, OTA updates, turn-by-turn navigation, geo-fencing, remote immobilisation and fall detection with emergency SOS through Oben Electric's proprietary ARXUS connected technology platform. It has 10 litres storage and integrates SmartIQOben Electric's AI-powered

ride optimisation technology, which enhances range by up to 15 per cent. Madhumita Agrawal, CEO, Oben Electric, said: "Hyderabad emerging as our highest booking market nationwide for the Rorr Evo reflects the city's strong shift towards electric motorcycles that deliver both performance and practicality."

Higher gold import duty could cut demand by 50-60 tonnes this year, says WGC

MUMBAI

INDIA'S gold demand is expected to contract by 50-60 tonnes this calendar year, around 10 per cent lower than the previous year, following the import duty hike, according to the World Gold Council (WGC). "Looking at 2026 as a whole, we estimate that combined jewellery and bar and coin demand could decline by around 50-60 tonnes, around 10 per cent lower than the previous year, due to the impact of the import duty hike," WGC said in its India gold market update. The gold import duty was raised sharply from 6 per cent to 15 per cent, making it the single-largest increase on record and fully reversing the duty cut of July 2024. The Prime Minister has also appealed to consumers to avoid



buying gold for a year.

Other factors, such as the gold price, changes to income levels, inflation, or effects from the monsoon, would further influence annual demand, it added. "Our econometric models suggest that changes in import duties tend to impact gold demand in both the short and long term, although the impact differs across jewellery and investment products such as bars and coins. Investment demand appears more sensitive to duty changes, while jewellery demand has shown greater resilience," said WGC.

Dalmia Bharat to acquire JAL Cement assets in ₹2,850 cr deal

NEW DELHI: Dalmia Bharat on Friday said it will acquire the cement assets of debt-ridden Jaiprakash Associates, which has been acquired by billionaire Gautam Adani-led Adani Enterprises through insolvency proceedings. Dalmia Cement (Bharat) Ltd (DCBL), a wholly-owned subsidiary of Dalmia Bharat, has already executed a Business Transfer Agreement (BTA) with Jaiprakash Associates Ltd for the transaction, which is expected to complete within two weeks, a statement said.

Following the takeover, Dalmia Bharat's cement capacity will increase to 54.7 million tonnes per annum (MTPA). The BTA has been signed for acquisition of cement plants at Rewa (Madhya Pradesh), Churk, Chunar and Sadwa (Uttar Pradesh), with 5.2 MTPA cement capacity and 3.3 MTPA clinker capacity, at an enterprise value of Rs 2,850 crore, Dalmia Bharat said.

HC pulls up WFI over decision to declare Vinesh Phogat ineligible

NEW DELHI

THE Delhi High Court on Friday pulled up the Wrestling Federation of India (WFI) for its decision to declare celebrated grappler Vinesh Phogat "ineligible" from participation in domestic events and asked the Centre to constitute an expert panel to evaluate her.

A bench of Chief Justice D K Upadhyaya and Justice Tejas Karia observed that the WFI's departure from the earlier practice of permitting the participation of reputed athletes "speaks volumes," and asked the Centre to ensure that Phogat, who is seeking her return from a maternity break, is allowed to participate in the upcoming Asian Games selection trials.

The bench emphasised that motherhood is celebrated in the country, and the federation should not act with "vengeance." It asked the Centre to constitute an expert panel to evaluate Phogat after the government counsel submitted that the framework provided by the Sports Authority of India permits relaxation of eligibility criteria in certain cases. "Ask the experts to evaluate her chances. Ensure that she participates," the court orally said, as it clarified it would take up the matter at 2:30 pm again to enable the government counsel to come back with further details with respect to the constitution of the team of expert. The court was hearing Phogat's appeal against a single-judge's order of May 18 refusing her immediate relief on the issue of her participation in the selection trials on May 30-31 for this year's Asian Games despite being declared "ineligible" by the WFI. Phogat's senior counsel urged the bench to grant her the opportunity to participate in the trials, contending that the show-cause notice issued to her on May 9, a day before her participation in a domestic event in Gonda, showed that "somebody is clutching at straws" to oust her.



J&K's Aaquib Nabi ignored Scrap Ranji if it doesn't matter: Vengsarkar blasts selectors

Nabi was the primary catalyst in Jammu and Kashmir's Ranji Trophy triumph in the 2025-2026 season with 60 wickets to his name

MUMBAI

CRICKET legend Dilip Vengsarkar has slammed the Ajit Agarkar-led selection committee for ignoring the Ranji Trophy star Aaquib Nabi for the Afghanistan Test, calling the decision 'absurd' and questioning the value of domestic cricket performances.

The Board of Control for Cricket in India selection committee, led by Ajit Agarkar, has come under scathing attack for the shocking selection calls for the one-off Test against Afghanistan.

Gurnoor Brar, who has done well for India A and in the Vijay Hazare Trophy, was picked ahead of the Ranji Trophy's top wicket-taker, Aaquib Nabi, in the Test squad. Nabi was the primary catalyst in Jammu and Kashmir's Ranji Trophy triumph in the 2025-2026 season with 60 wickets to his name. A consistent performer in red-ball cricket, he also took 44 wickets at an average of 13.27 in the 2024-2025 Ranji season. Cricket legend Dilip Vengsarkar has slammed Agarkar for ignoring a proven performer, asking the BCCI to do away with the Ranji Trophy



PBKS seek dramatic turnaround to keep playoff hopes alive

LUCKNOW: Punjab Kings will need something spectacular to arrest a disastrous slide and keep their fading playoff hopes alive when they take on already-eliminated Lucknow Super Giants, in their IPL clash, here on Saturday. Punjab's campaign has unravelled dramatically since their record 265-run chase against Delhi Capitals on April 25. From remaining unbeaten till the midway stage and looking like genuine title contenders with six wins in seven matches, the last season's runners-up have crashed to six successive defeats, leaving their playoff hopes hanging by a thread. Now placed fifth, Punjab not only need to beat LSG in their final league game here on Saturday but also depend on Sunday's double headers (MI vs RR and KKR vs DC) to earn a place in the playoff. The Shreyas Iyer-led side would hope both Mumbai Indians and Kolkata Knight Riders lose their respective matches. A Rajasthan Royals win over Mumbai would officially end Punjab's hopes, while a KKR victory over Delhi Capitals could bring net run rate into play. At present, PBKS hold a slight edge in NRR over KKR. But before permutations come into the picture, Punjab first need to rediscover their form after a prolonged slump that has exposed flaws across departments. Their aggressive top order of Priyansh Arya, Prabhsimran Singh and Cooper Connolly has failed to provide the explosive starts that defined the first half of their season. Priyansh has managed just one fifty in his last seven innings and was dismissed for a duck in the previous game, while Prabhsimran too has struggled for consistency with only one fifty in his last five innings. Connolly has shown glimpses but has not converted starts into substantial scores.



Chaliha's impressive run ends in quarters

KUALA LUMPUR: India's Ashmita Chaliha produced a spirited performance before going down narrowly to world No. 23 Line Hojmark Kjaersfeldt of Denmark in the women's singles quarterfinals of the Malaysia Masters Super 500 badminton tournament here on Friday.

Returning after an eight-month rehabilitation following a medial meniscus tear in her right knee, the 71st-ranked Indian squandered a hard-fought opening game advantage to lose 23-21 18-21 11-21 to the eighth seed in a contest lasting a little over an hour at the Axiata Arena.

Chaliha started brightly, opening up an 11-6 lead at the interval in the opening game. Line clawed her way back after the break to narrow the gap to 13-12 and later moved ahead 19-18, but the Indian held her nerve in a gruelling battle to pocket the game. The second game followed a similar pattern as Chaliha again surged ahead 10-5 before the Dane restored parity at 13-13. Line then broke away from 15-15 to force the match into a decider.

The final game, however, was largely one-way traffic as Line stamped her authority early with an 8-4 lead and never allowed Chaliha a route back, comfortably sealing the contest to enter the semifinals.

Pak hockey players complain about pending dues, daily allowance

KARACHI: Pakistani hockey players' financial woes continued as they are yet to receive pending dues from the national federation (PHF) and their daily training camp allowance has also been reduced ahead of the FIH World Cup to be held in the Netherlands and Belgium in August this year. The Pakistan Hockey Federation's (PHF) interim set-up announced that players and officials of the national team will now receive a daily allowance of USD 110 on foreign tours. But the players have complained that their training camp allowance has been reduced from USD 11 (3000 rupees) to USD 3.5 (1000 rupees).

According to a reliable source close to the PHF, the senior players had asked the PHF to confirm about how much allowance they would get for the training camp duration. Pakistan on Thursday named their 20-member squad for next month's FIH Pro League matches in Belgium and England but didn't name the captain, a move that didn't go down well with the players.

Shakeel Ammad Butt has been leading Pakistan since early last year. "They have announced we will get USD 110 daily allowance for foreign tours, including the World Cup qualifying event we had played in Egypt but we will only believe it unless we are paid that amount," one player said on condition of anonymity. He said in the past also the PHF officials had made similar promises but never fulfilled that. "Right now we just want to know whether it is true they will pay us just 1000 rupees daily for the camp duration."



Maaya to mix Junior, Pro events for smooth transition

NEW DELHI: India's bright teenage tennis prospect Maaya Rajeshwaran Revathy is carefully balancing junior and professional tournaments this season as she prepares for a gradual transition to the senior circuit.

The 16-year-old, who will soon compete at the junior French Open, has largely featured on the junior circuit this year, a move her coaching team says is aimed at building confidence, gaining match exposure and securing a strong junior ranking before taking a bigger leap into professional events. Maaya, who trains full-time in Spain at Rafa Nadal Academy, said the exposure to a more competitive environment in Europe has accelerated her development. "At a certain level, it's more about how you compete. In Europe, you are competing every day with equal players and that gives you a lot of experience," Maaya said during a virtual media interaction facilitated by SAI. She won a J3000 event in France on clay in April apart from finishing semifinalist at a couple of events in Spain and Egypt. "For us every week is an opportunity for improvement. That's been the objective since the start of the year, to just keep getting better, get more matches and feel more comfortable on the tour." Maaya is supported through Target Asian Games Group (TAGG) scheme of the government and has received a sum of Rs 51 lakh

Ebola surveillance stepped up at Kochi airport after emergency meet

Thermal screening, 21-day travel history verification, and self-declaration forms have been made mandatory for international passengers

KOCHI

AUTHORITIES stepped up Ebola surveillance and precautionary measures at Cochin International Airport Limited (CIAL) on Friday following an emergency preparedness meeting between management and the Airport Health Organisation.

A CIAL spokesperson said a 24-hour monitoring system has now been activated at the airport as part of efforts to detect possible symptoms early and strengthen coordinated public health response measures.

"Thermal screening, 21-day travel history verification, and self-declaration forms have been made mandatory for international passengers," he said in a statement after the meeting.

Passengers arriving from countries including the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Uganda, and South Sudan will be placed under special health surveillance in view of global alerts over Ebola outbreaks, authorities said. The meeting was attended by Airport Director Manu G, Airport Health Officer Dr Raphael Teddy, Senior Medical Officer Dr Aysha Manika K A, and representatives from CISE, Immigration, airlines, the Airports Authority, and CIAL.

APHO Public Health Specialist Dr Anna presented the preparedness and response plan covering Ebola prevention, case identification, and infection control measures.

Officials noted that there is currently no widely approved vaccine or specific treatment for the Bundibugyo Ebola virus (BDBV), one of the five known Ebola virus species.

"The disease can spread from animals to humans and also through direct contact with bodily fluids of infected persons," officials said.

Authorities said the incubation period ranges from 2 to 21 days, while fever, sore throat, headache, and flu-like symptoms are among the early signs of infection.

"Mortality rates can range between 30 and 50 per cent," officials added.

Isolation wards have been arranged at Ernakulam General Hospital, Government Hospital Kalamassery, and District Hospital Aluva as part of the preparedness plan.



Doctor rapes patient after sedation; hospital 'sealed'

The doctor allegedly called the patient alone into the operation theatre during treatment and asked the female staff and the victim's father to step outside; victim alleges that the doctor administered an intoxicating injection and sexually assaulted her

LUCKNOW

A doctor at a private hospital here was accused of raping a female student after administering her a sedative injection during treatment, police said on Friday. In the wake of the allegation, the state health minister directed that the hospital be sealed and the doctor's degree be confiscated. The student had been admitted to Tejas Hospital on May 18 after suffering a health episode, officials said.

"According to the complaint, the doctor allegedly called the patient alone into the operation theatre during



Bengal govt notifies free bus travel for women from June 1

KOLKATA: The West Bengal government has notified free bus travel for women in all state government-run buses from June 1 as part of a scheme aimed at enhancing women's empowerment and improving access to public transport.

According to a notification issued by the state Transport Department on May 21, women commuters will be eligible for free travel in both short-route and long-route state-run buses operating in West Bengal.

The Transport department notification said a smart card with QR code, photograph and beneficiary details will be issued to all eligible women upon application through the BDO or SDO offices concerned.

It said that the smart card shall be issued to women of the state on the basis of supporting documents like Aadhaar card, elector's photo identity card (EPIC), VB-G RAMG job card, Ayushman Bharat health card, driving license, Pan card, passport, pension document with photograph, identity card of central/state government/psus, identity cards issues by schools/colleges/universities.

Till issuance of the smart cards, women passengers will be allowed to avail the facility on production of valid photo identity documents such as Aadhaar card, voter identity card, driving licence, PAN card, passport and government-issued service identity cards, among others, the notification said.

Conductors will issue 'zero value tickets' to women passengers after verification of identity documents, it said.

The scheme will come into effect from June 1, 2026, the notification added. -- PTI



Lecturer held for leaking NEET UG physics paper

NEW DELHI: The CBI has arrested a Pune-based lecturer for allegedly leaking the physics paper of NEET UG 2026 to a select group of aspirants, officials said on Friday. The CBI has arrested Manisha Sanjay Havaladar, presently employed with the Seth Hiralal Saraf Prashala in Pune, terming her another "source" for the paper leak. "The CBI has identified another key accused who was the source for the leak of NEET-UG 2026 physics questions," a CBI spokesperson said in a statement.

The agency alleged that Havaladar was involved in the NEET UG process after being appointed an expert by the National Testing Agency (NTA). "She had complete access to the physics question paper. In April, she shared some of the questions with co-accused Manisha Mandhare," the statement said. The CBI arrested Mandhare, a botany teacher from Pune, in connection with the NEET paper leak on May 16. The agency found that the questions Havaladar shared with the aspirants tallied with the physics paper of NEET UG 2026. "The CBI conducted searches at various locations across the country and seized several incriminating documents, laptops, bank statements and mobile phones. A detailed analysis of the seized items is underway," the agency said.

On May 12, the NTA cancelled the National Eligibility cum Entrance Test (Undergraduate), or NEET, held on May 3 for medical admissions amid allegations of paper leak. A re-examination has been scheduled for June 21.



DMK's 'bent coconut tree' jibe draws retort from VCK

CHENNAI: The DMK on Friday made a sarcastic "coconut tree bending towards a neighbour" remark targeting the VCK and IUML after they joined the TVK government, prompting the VCK to retort that it "did not grow at the mercy of other parties". Aiming to assuage the feelings, DMK chief M K Stalin appealed to party members not to use harsh words as to hurt anyone.

Both Viduthalai Chiruthaigal Katchi and IUML, allies of the DMK till the 2026 Assembly election, announced support to the TVK government which fell short of a simple majority of 118 in the Assembly. VCK leader Vanni Arasu, who emerged victorious from Tindivanam Assembly constituency and A M Shahjahan who was elected from Papanasam were sworn in as ministers by Governor Rajendra Viswanath

Arlekar at the Lok Bhavan here today in the presence of Chief Minister C Joseph Vijay. Shahjahan was made Minister for Minorities Welfare while Vanni Arasu was made Minister for Social Justice. DMK deputy general secretary A Raja, with a penchant for making controversial remarks, alluded the two parties joining the TVK Cabinet as a "coconut tree bending towards a neighbour".

Expand PNG infra fast, Nadendla to companies

- Civil supplies minister directs PNG firms to speed up infrastructure expansion and public outreach to shift households from LPG to Piped Natural Gas across the state
- Announces large-scale skill training for youth through ITIs and polytechnics, with free accommodation, food and stipends, to meet manpower needs in the growing PNG sector and boost employment
- PNG connections will be mandatory for major temples conducting Annadanam

HANS NEWS SERVICE
VIJAYAWADA

FOOD and civil supplies minister Nadendla Manohar directed officials and PNG companies to accelerate efforts to shift people from LPG usage to Piped Natural Gas (PNG) across the state.

He assured that the government machinery would fully support PNG companies in expanding infrastructure and creating public awareness about the benefits of PNG usage.

The minister conducted a special review meeting at the Secretariat here on Friday with representatives of PNG companies and senior officials from various departments. Transport minister B C Janardhan Reddy participated in the meeting through video conference.

Speaking on the occasion, Manohar said the coalition

government is committed to providing alternative gas solutions to the public quickly and efficiently. He stated that the government aims to ensure uninterrupted cooking gas supply to households and urged the five PNG companies operating in the state to be fully prepared for rapid expansion. He noted that people are increasingly turning towards PNG gas in line with changing times and asked companies to strengthen infrastructure and intensify promotional campaigns.

The minister assured that the government is granting approvals for gas expansion works in cities and towns at a faster pace and promised immediate resolution of any issues faced by companies. He also said the government would facilitate land allotment on lease basis for setting up PNG filling stations. Highlighting the need



Civil supplies minister Nadendla Manohar holds a review with officials and representatives PNG companies at the Secretariat in Amaravati on Friday

for skilled manpower, the Minister said youth should be trained in PNG technical skills through ITIs, polytechnic colleges and other skill institutions.

Under the supervision of AP Skill Development and district collectors, batches of 100 youth from each district would be trained every 15 days with free accommodation, food and stipend support. He said linking trained youth with PNG companies would create employment opportunities while addressing manpower shortages in the sector.

Manohar also stressed the need for extensive awareness campaigns through women self-help groups, SERP and MEPMA net-

works to educate people about the convenience, cost savings and safety benefits of PNG usage. He instructed gas companies to coordinate with women's groups and offer incentives for their participation in expansion activities.

The minister announced that PNG connections would be made mandatory for major temples where Annadanam is conducted. He said the government would resolve pending issues in temples like Kanaka Durga temple and Sri Kalahasteeswara temple to speed up PNG implementation, following directions from Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu. He also stated that simplified guidelines

would soon be introduced for tenants using PNG connections and availing LPG subsidy benefits.

He said the government is preparing regulations to ensure PNG users also receive the Rs 2,400 Deepam-2 scheme subsidy annually, as directed by the Chief Minister.

Special focus would be given to expanding PNG connections in apartments, group housing complexes and villas in urban areas.

He warned that another review on the performance of PNG companies would be conducted within 15 days and made it clear that visible progress in expansion activities must be achieved by then.

AP plans gold mining expansion to boost jobs, economy

- Mines minister Ravindra reviews operations at the Jonnagiri gold mine in Kurnool district, where nearly one kilogram of gold is being produced daily using advanced underground mining technology
- Says AP is focusing on expanding mining activity, identifying new gold zones in Ramagiri and speeding up mineral block tenders near Visakhapatnam to drive industrial growth
- Pattikonda MLA Shyam Babu states that the Jonnagiri project has generated jobs for 300-400 local youth, reduced migration from drought-prone villages and strengthened economic activity in the region

HANS NEWS SERVICE
KURNOOL

MINISTER for mines and geology and excise Kollu Ravindra on Friday said the state government is focusing on expanding the mining sector to generate employment, increase industrial growth and strengthen the economy.

The minister, accompanied by Pattikonda MLA K E Shyam Babu visited the Jonnagiri gold mine operated by Geo Mysore Services India Private Limited near Jonnagiri village in Tuggali mandal and reviewed mining and mineral processing operations.

During the inspection, the minister examined underground mining activities, ore extraction systems, and gold refining processes being carried out with advanced technology.

He said mining operations are currently being conducted at a depth of nearly 300 metres and may be expanded further in the coming years. According to officials, the mine is producing around one kilogram of gold every



Mines and geology minister Kollu Ravindra visits Jonnagiri gold mine in Kurnool district on Friday

day, while the monthly production has reached nearly 30 kilograms.

Ravindra said geological assessments indicate the presence of nearly 13,000 tonnes of mineral reserves in and around the Jonnagiri belt, making it one of the most significant private gold mining projects in the country.

Highlighting the state government's mining policy, the minister said Andhra Pradesh possesses vast mineral resources with strong industrial potential. He noted that efforts are underway to identify and develop additional gold mining zones in the Ramagiri region of Anantapur district.

He also pointed out that rare earth minerals available along the state's coastline

have immense international demand and said the government is accelerating the tendering process for mineral blocks near Visakhapatnam.

The minister added that value-added industries based on quartz and granite resources are also being promoted to encourage manufacturing activity and create large-scale employment opportunities.

Speaking on the occasion, MLA Shyam Babu said the Jonnagiri gold mine has brought fresh economic activity to the region by providing direct and indirect employment to local youth. He said nearly 300 to 400 people from nearby villages have already secured jobs through the project, reducing seasonal migration in drought-prone areas.

State welcomes ECLGS 5.0 for MSME relief

HANS NEWS SERVICE
VIJAYAWADA

MINISTER for micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) Kondapalli Srinivas welcomed the Centre's launch of the Emergency Credit Line Guarantee Scheme (ECLGS) 5.0, describing it as a crucial relief measure for industries affected by the ongoing political and economic instability in West Asia.

The minister said the scheme would help businesses secure additional working capital through government-backed credit guarantees at a time of rising global uncertainty and supply-chain disruptions. He stated that the Central government would provide guarantee coverage on additional loans extended by scheduled banks and financial institutions under the scheme.

Explaining the framework of ECLGS 5.0, the minister said MSMEs would receive 100 per cent credit guarantee coverage in the event of loan default, while non-MSME sectors would be eligible for guarantee protection of up to



Picture for representational purpose only

90 per cent.

Eligible businesses can avail additional credit of up to 20 per cent of the highest outstanding working capital utilised during the fourth quarter of the 2025-26 financial year, he said. The scheme allows each eligible borrower to access additional credit support of up to Rs 100 crore.

According to the minister, the facility will apply only to loans sanctioned before March 31, 2027, and disbursed by June 30, 2027. He clarified that only borrowers maintaining regular repayment records with banks and financial institutions would qualify for the scheme. The scheme will be adminis-

tered and monitored by the National Credit Guarantee Trustee Company Limited (NCGTC).

Highlighting Andhra Pradesh's MSME ecosystem, Srinivas said the state currently has nearly 20.77 lakh MSME units, including 4.98 lakh manufacturing enterprises, around 10 lakh service-sector units and 5.74 lakh trading establishments.

The minister urged MSMEs impacted by the West Asia crisis to utilise the scheme to strengthen liquidity and sustain operations. He also thanked the Central Government for introducing ECLGS 5.0 at a critical time for domestic industries.

Atchanna hits back at Jagan's charges on deaths

VIJAYAWADA

AGRICULTURE minister K Atchannaidu on Friday strongly criticised YSRCP chief Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy for linking family deaths to the TDP and Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu.

Speaking in Amaravati, Atchannaidu said people were well aware of the circumstances surrounding the murder of Jagan's grandfather, Y S Raja Reddy. He alleged that victims of that era had spoken of a "reign of oppression and anarchy" under the Y S family. While most accused in the Raja Reddy case had since died, he claimed one accused remained in the YSRCP, exposing the party's "double standards." Rejecting Jagan's claims about former CM Y S Rajasekhara Reddy's helicopter crash, Atchannaidu said Chandrababu's Assembly remarks only referred to faith in Lord Venkateswara and had no link to YSR's death. He accused Jagan of twisting the statement for political gain.

On the murder of Y S Vivekananda Reddy, Atchannaidu alleged the YSRCP initially portrayed it as a heart attack before evidence proved otherwise.

Smart drug tracking soon in state hosps

- AP plans major reforms to the e-Aushadhi platform with QR code access, real-time stock monitoring and automated alerts to improve transparency and efficiency in medicine supply.
- Patients will soon be able to check medicine availability in state hospitals directly, while officials will receive advance alerts on medicines nearing expiry to reduce wastage
- The state is developing a live dashboard covering medicine stocks from Ayushman Arogya Mandirs to teaching hospitals

HANS NEWS SERVICE
MANGALAGIRI

THE state government is set to introduce sweeping reforms in the medicine supply and utilisation system in government hospitals by strengthening the existing 'e-Aushadhi' software platform with advanced technology-driven features aimed at ensuring transparency, efficiency and public accessibility.

As part of the proposed reforms, people will soon be able to directly check the availability of medicines in government hospitals through QR code-based access. The government is also planning to introduce an automated alert system to monitor medicine utilisation, expiry timelines and

supply chain management in real time.

A high-level review meeting on the proposed reforms was held on Friday at the headquarters of the Andhra Pradesh State Medical Infrastructure Development Corporation (APSMIDC) in Mangalagiri.

Senior officials from the Centre for Development of Advanced Computing (C-DAC), who arrived from Delhi at the request of Health Minister Satya Kumar Yadav, participated in the discussions.

At present, medicine procurement and supply to government hospitals in Andhra Pradesh are being managed through the e-Aushadhi application. The government spends nearly Rs 800 crore annually on medicines and



C-DAC officials from New Delhi participate in the high-level review meeting at APSMIDC headquarters in Mangalagiri Friday.

surgical supplies, of which around Rs.600 crore worth of medicines are supplied free of cost to poor patients through primary health centres, community health centres, district hospitals, teaching hospitals and specialty institutions.

Based on indents raised by pharmacists, medical officers and hospital superintendents, proposals are generated through the e-Aushadhi system and medicines are procured through tenders before being distributed to Central Drug Stores and subsequently to hospitals across districts.

However, officials observed several operational challenges in areas such as stock monitoring, expiry tracking and supply management.

To address these issues,

the Health Department has proposed several key changes. A public-facing QR code system will allow citizens to directly verify medicine availability at hospitals. A special alert mechanism will notify officials in advance about medicines nearing expiry, especially within six months of the expiry date to minimise wastage.

The government also plans to introduce a state-wide dashboard displaying real-time medicine stock positions from Ayushman Arogya Mandirs to teaching hospitals.

Officials are considering bringing AYUSH medicine supply systems under the e-Aushadhi network as well. In addition, the "Mana Mitra" app will soon provide information on medicine stocks to the public.

AP powers through record summer demand

- State recorded its highest-ever power consumption at 288.9 MU on May 21, with peak demand touching 15,016 MW amid intense heatwave conditions
- APTransco, APGenco and discoms ensure uninterrupted electricity supply through advance planning, continuous grid monitoring and effective load management

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AMID severe summer conditions and intense heatwave temperatures across the state, the Andhra Pradesh State power utilities successfully ensured uninterrupted and quality power supply while handling the highest-ever electricity demand in the State's history.

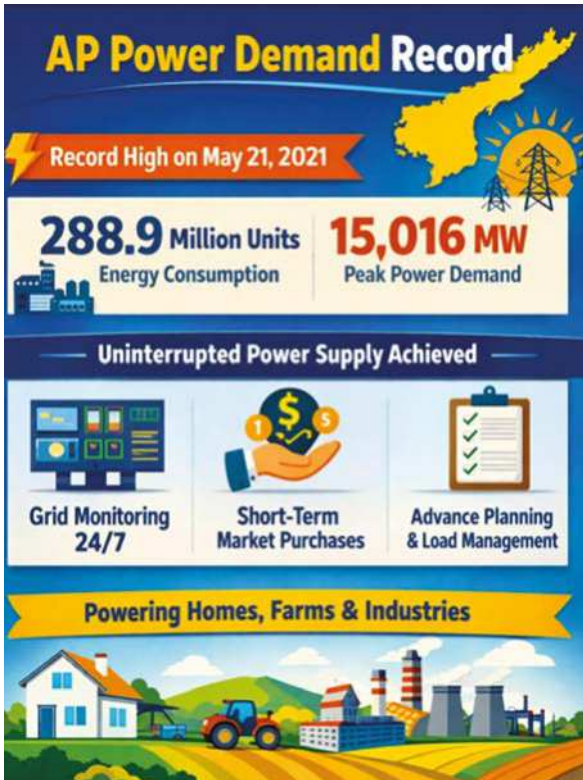
The Andhra Pradesh State Grid recorded an all-time high energy consumption of 288.9 million units (MU) on May 21, along with a record day peak demand of 15,016 MW and an evening peak demand of 12,474 mw.

According to officials,

the unprecedented surge in electricity demand was mainly due to soaring temperatures, high humidity levels and increased usage of air-conditioners, cooling appliances, drinking water systems and agricultural pump sets across the State. Temperatures in several districts reportedly touched nearly 46 degrees Celsius.

Despite the extraordinary demand, APTransco, in coordination with APGenco and the discoms, maintained continuous and stable power supply without any disruption.

Officials attributed the achievement to advance planning, round-the-clock grid monitoring, effective load management and opti-



mum utilisation of available power resources.

Special chief secretary

to the Chief Minister K Vijayanand said that the milestone was achieved in

line with the vision of Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu and energy minister Gottipati Ravi Kumar to provide reliable and uninterrupted power supply to consumers across the State.

He said additional power was procured through short-term market purchases whenever necessary to maintain grid stability and ensure uninterrupted supply to domestic consumers, farmers, industries, commercial establishments and essential services during peak demand periods.

Vijayanand appreciated the dedicated services of APTransco, APGenco and discom personnel, including engineers, field staff, system operators and maintenance teams, for successfully managing the historic demand. He reiterated that the State government remains committed to strengthening power infrastructure and ensuring quality electricity services to all consumers.

TTD records highest Thursday darshan figures

- More than 79,000 devotees had darshan on May 21
- TTD ensured darshan to 5,850 pilgrims under Sarva Darshan during Abhisheka Seva on Friday

HANS NEWS SERVICE
TIRUMALA

TTD managed to provide darshan to over 79,000 devotees on May 21, Thursday, and also allowed over 5,850 common devotees during Abhisheka Seva on Friday, according to TTD additional executive officer Ch Venkaiah Chowdary.

Speaking to media outside the Srivari temple on Friday morning, the additional EO said through the Integrated AI Command Control Centre, with a proper time, queue and darshan management schedule besides collective efforts of various departments, the sharp rise in pilgrim traffic during the summer holidays is being handled in



TTD additional EO Ch Venkaiah Chowdary speaking to the media at Tirumala on Friday

a smooth manner ensuring comfortable darshan for common devotees. Through this effective pilgrim influx forecasting and continuous monitoring, there is a substantial increase in daily darshans, facilitating darshan for over 15,000 additional devotees every day, he said.

Despite Thursdays traditionally having reduced darshan hours due to weekly rituals, TTD facilitated darshan to a record number of 79, 603 devotees for the first time, demonstrating the institution's operational efficiency, he said. Senior officials are reviewing queue-line conditions hourly and implementing necessary measures

immediately to expedite the darshan process. The coordinated efforts among TTD departments, vigilance and police wings helped manage the summer rush and all departments are working round-the-clock to ensure uninterrupted supply of drinking water, Annaprasadam, medical services and amenities in queue lines for devotees, he maintained.

Reiterating that providing comfortable and speedy darshan to common devotees is the primary objective of TTD, the additional EO said that the entire administrative machinery is committed to working with dedication to this end.



Indian OTT platforms ignoring NRIs

Becomes a serious problem for Telugu cinema



SUHAS SISTU

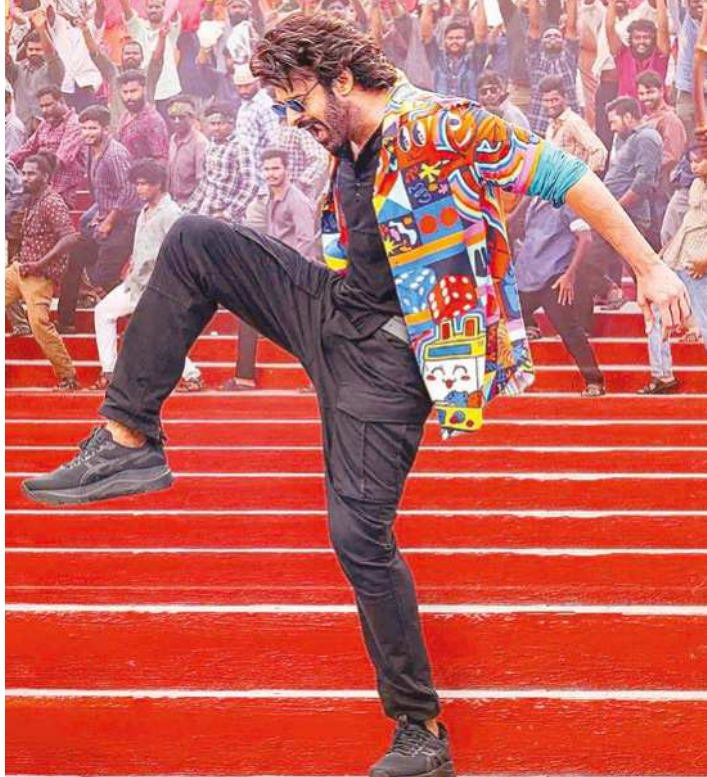
The growing frustration among overseas Telugu audiences is exposing a major flaw in the Indian OTT streaming ecosystem. While Indian viewers are enjoying instant digital premieres of new Telugu films, Non-Resident Indians (NRIs), especially in the United States, are increasingly being left without legal access to the same content. This repeated issue is now turning into a serious concern for the future of Indian OTT platforms and their global credibility.

Recent Telugu OTT releases like *Bad Boy Karthik*, *Sathi Leelavathi*, and *The Raja Saab* have highlighted the problem once again. Though these films premiered on major streaming giants like

Amazon Prime Video and JioHotstar in India, many subscribers in the United States discovered that the movies were either unavailable or significantly delayed on the same platforms overseas.

For Telugu cinema, the overseas market — particularly the U.S. — has played a crucial role in building global recognition. From theatrical collections to social media promotions, NRIs have consistently supported Telugu films and helped expand their international reach. Yet, despite paying premium subscription charges across multiple OTT services, many overseas audiences are unable to legally stream newly released Indian films on release day.

The larger issue lies in how Indian OTT platforms continue marketing films with aggressive "streaming now



worldwide" campaigns while quietly restricting access in international territories. This lack of transparency is slowly damaging audience trust. Many viewers abroad now feel sidelined, even though they represent one of the most loyal and financially strong consumer bases for Indian entertainment.

Industry experts believe poor international OTT planning can have long-term consequences. When legal viewing options disappear, piracy naturally becomes the easiest alterna-

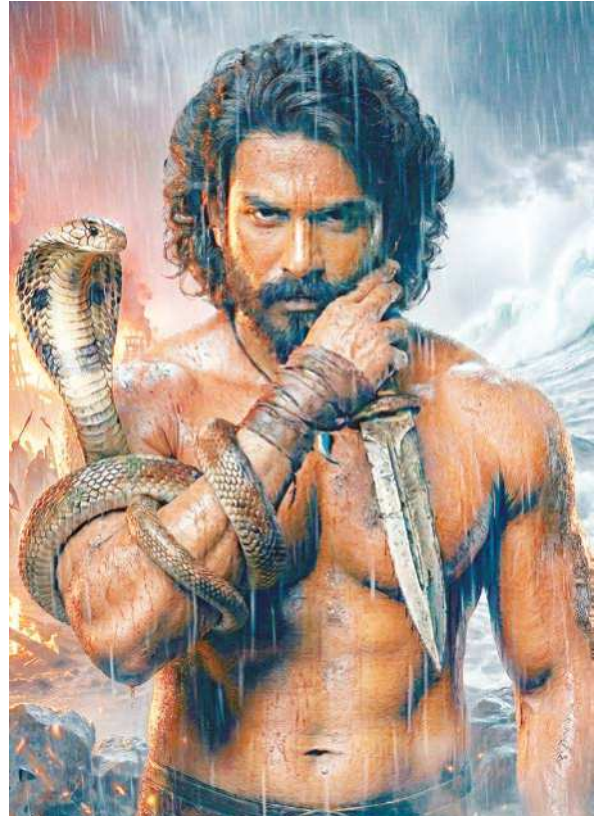
tive for frustrated audiences. This not only affects the streaming platforms but also impacts producers, distributors, and actors who depend heavily on overseas popularity and engagement. If Indian OTT services continue ignoring the overseas audience, they risk weakening one of the strongest global markets that has supported Telugu cinema for years. The demand clearly exists — what is missing is proper global streaming planning and equal access for audiences everywhere.

‘Nagabandham’ poster raises expectations; slated for July 3 release

The makers of *Nagabandham* have unveiled a powerful new poster featuring young actor Virat Karina, further increasing anticipation for the film's grand theatrical release on July 3. Directed by Abhishek Nama, the ambitious project has already created strong buzz through its promotional campaign, including striking posters, an intriguing glimpse, and chartbuster singles.

The latest poster presents Virat Karina in an intense avatar, standing fearlessly in heavy rain with a giant cobra wrapped around his arm. Holding a massive blade and surrounded by fiery battle visuals and stormy seas, the actor's rugged transformation and fierce expression have become major talking points on social media.

According to the production team, post-production work is progressing rapidly as the film approaches release. The makers revealed that some of India's leading VFX studios are handling the CGI work to ensure a visually rich cinematic experience. The quality showcased in the promotional material has already impressed audiences and raised expectations among movie lovers.



Produced under the NIK Studios banner, "*Nagabandham*" is being mounted on a large scale by blending mythology with historical fiction elements. The film aims to offer audiences a visually grand theatrical spectacle.

For the Hindi market, Zee Studios is presenting

the movie and planning a wide release across North India and Hindi-speaking territories.

With aggressive promotions, high-end visuals, and a unique mythological backdrop, "*Nagabandham*" is steadily emerging as one of the most awaited Telugu releases of the season.



Satyadev's 'Samavarthi' FL promises an ecological action thriller

Satyadev Kancharana is gearing up to impress audiences once again with a powerful new avatar in *Samavarthi*. The makers recently unveiled the film's title and first-look poster, which has already created strong curiosity among cinema lovers and fans of intense action dramas.

Directed by Ajay Nag V, the film is being produced under the Rudra Pictures and Panchabhuta Productions banners. Touted as an ecological action thriller, "*Samavarthi*" is expected to combine action, survival elements, and emotional storytelling against a unique backdrop.

The newly released

first-look poster showcases Satyadev in a calm yet deadly avatar. Wearing headphones and maintaining a composed expression, the actor appears completely fearless even as multiple attackers armed with knives and axes surround him. His stylish appearance and intense body language have become the major highlights of the poster.

Interestingly, the title "*Samavarthi*" is associated with Yama Dharma Raja and symbolizes equal treatment toward everyone. The makers hint that Satyadev's character will be portrayed as a ruthless force who eliminates enemies without

fear or discrimination, adding a mythological depth to the action-driven narrative.

The film also features a strong supporting cast including Dileesh Pothan, Rajeev Kanakala, Ganavi Laxman, Ravindra Vijay, and Mohan Bhagath in important roles.

Known for choosing unconventional scripts and performance-oriented characters, Satyadev appears to be continuing the same trend with "*Samavarthi*." With its intriguing concept, powerful visuals, and intense character design, the film is already emerging as one of the most anticipated projects in the actor's upcoming lineup.

‘Memu Coplam’ creates buzz with grand preview event

The upcoming Telugu web series *Memu Coplam* is gearing up for its digital premiere on May 22, and the makers recently hosted a grand preview event in Hyderabad that turned into a star-studded celebration. Streaming on ZEE5, the rural comedy-drama has already generated strong curiosity among OTT audiences with its unique blend of village humor, satire, mystery, and Telugu nativity.

The event witnessed the presence of several notable personalities from the Telugu film industry including Ajay Bhupathi, Kona Venkat, S. Thaman, and Bandla Ganesh. Many speak-



ers praised the series for bringing back rooted Telugu entertainment at a time when OTT platforms are largely dominated by crime thrillers and dark dramas.

Produced by B. V. S. Ravi under the RAW Entertainment banner and directed by Pradeep Maddali, *Memu Coplam* stars Getup Srinu, Raviteja Nannimalla, Nagababu, and Reethu

Chowdary in pivotal roles.

One of the biggest talking points at the event was the revelation that the entire series was completed in just 17 days. Despite the tight schedule, several guests appreciated the impressive production quality and technical standards. Music director Thaman praised composer Saket Komanduri for delivering energetic mu-

sic and emotionally engaging background scores.

Director Ajay Bhupathi highlighted the show's entertaining rural backdrop and comedy-driven storytelling, while Kona Venkat appreciated the cultural authenticity embedded in the narrative. Emotional moments also unfolded during the event when actor Raviteja Nannimalla became overwhelmed while speaking about his journey in the industry.

Blending cockfight culture, village chaos, humor, and emotional storytelling, *Memu Coplam* promises to be a refreshing family entertainer for Telugu OTT viewers this summer.



‘Ramayana’ deal leaves Bollywood buyers stunned!

The buzz around *Ramayana* is getting louder by the day, but now the film is making headlines for a completely different reason. While the recently released glimpse left audiences spellbound and raised expectations sky-high, the real drama seems to be unfolding behind the scenes in Bollywood's distribution circles.

Producer Namit Malhotra is reportedly demanding a massive ₹450 crores for the Hindi theatrical rights of the epic saga, and the figure has apparently sent top distributors into panic mode. Industry biggies like Anil Thadani, Jayantilal Gada, and Karan Johar are said to be keen on grabbing the rights, but insiders reveal that the jaw-dropping price has made them take a step back.

Trade circles are already comparing the deal with Shah Rukh Khan's upcoming film *King*, whose theatrical rights were reportedly acquired by Pen Marudhar for ₹250 crores. Against that backdrop, *Ramayana*'s quote is being called "too risky" even for Bollywood's biggest players.

Sources say distributors are now urging Namit Malhotra to reconsider the price and bring it down to a more realistic number. However, no deal has been finalized yet.

Directed by Nitesh Tiwari, *Ramayana* stars Ranbir Kapoor, Sai Pallavi, Yash, and Sunny Deol in key roles.



Raja Ravinder's first look from 'CASTE' is intense

The makers of *CASTE* have unveiled the powerful first look of Raja Ravindra from the movie, where he appears in the role of Minister Narayana. The intense poster has quickly grabbed attention among movie lovers and raised curiosity about the political backdrop of the film.

Directed and written by A. K. Jampanna, the film is being produced by Thota Lakshmi Koteswara Rao under the Golden Productions banner. Earlier, the film's first look and glimpse received a positive response from audiences, creating decent buzz around the project.

In the newly released poster, Raja Ravindra is seen dressed in white attire with a political party scarf draped over his shoulder. His serious expression and commanding screen presence have made the character look intense and powerful. The makers introduced him as "Minister Narayana," hinting at a strong and impactful role in the narrative.



The film stars Varun Sandesh, Gagan, Satyam Rajesh, and Ravi in lead roles, while actresses Kashika Kapoor and Divi Vadthya play the female leads. The supporting cast also includes Nagababu and Prithvi Raj in important roles. Music for the film is being composed by Anup Rubens.

The makers are expected to announce the official release date of the movie soon. With a strong cast, political drama elements, and intriguing character reveals, "*CASTE*" is steadily building anticipation among Telugu cinema audiences.

Preethi Pagadala's elegant look speaks beyond fashion

Preethi Pagadala once again proves that simplicity and confidence can create the most striking visual impact. In this stunning photograph, the young actress appears effortlessly graceful as she poses in a flowing white outfit against a warm natural backdrop. The image has quickly caught the attention of social media users and fashion enthusiasts for its

classy and serene appeal. Dressed in an elegant layered white dress, Preethi carries a look that perfectly balances glamour with sophistication. The soft sunlight enhances the earthy tones surrounding her, while also highlighting her expressive features and natural charm. Her flowing hair and relaxed pose add a cinematic feel to the frame, making

the photograph look straight out of a fashion editorial. What makes the image particularly appealing is its minimalist beauty. Instead of relying on extravagant styling or dramatic settings, the photograph focuses on raw elegance and emotion. Preethi's confident expression and calm presence give the frame a powerful identity. The simplicity of the styling allows her

personality to shine through naturally. Over the years, Preethi Pagadala has been gaining attention for her fashionable appearances and graceful screen presence. This latest picture further showcases her ability to carry modern fashion with effortless poise. Fans have especially appreciated the earthy aesthetic and the refreshing natural vibe of the shoot.

