



THE Hans India



WOMENIA
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**

EDIT
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**

BUSINESS
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. **P9**

YOUNG HANS
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. **P7**

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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.

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

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, tipplers 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**



CJP swings into action, demands Pradhan's scalp
COCKROACH JANTA PARTY
 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**

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. **Continued on Page 5**



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.

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 turnout 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 Telangana 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 Mahabubnagar 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. **Continued on Page 5**



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**

IRREGULAR by MANJUL

 We are working on the heat-wave problem. Just wait a little, there will be a cold-wave