

Eatala pushes for defence, and rail upgrades in state

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MALKAJGIRI MP Eatala Rajender held crucial meetings in New Delhi with Union Defence Minister Rajnath Singh and Union Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw on July 30, advocating for a series of development initiatives and infrastructure renovations across Telangana. During his meeting with Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, Eatala Rajender emphasised the urgent need for additional funding towards the development of the Secunderabad Cantonment area. He requested permission for construction and road widening on defence lands, notably highlighting the road stretch from Kowkur Dargah to BITS Pilani alongside other key roadways within defence jurisdictions. Eatala Rajender also urged for increased public access to these defence routes to significantly ease civilian movement. Furthermore, he discussed the current political scenario in Telangana, referencing Rajnath Singh's recent visit to the state. He pointed out growing political opportunities for the BJP to deepen its presence in Telangana, assuring the Defence Minister that with central support and local coordination, the party would achieve a major breakthrough in the region.

Later, Eatala Rajender, accompanied by a delegation of BJP MPs, met Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw to address urgent rail infrastructure requirements in his constituency.

He called for the quick completion of sanctioned railway over-bridges and under-bridges, approval of pending proposals, and the construction of small underpasses to ensure commuter safety.

Centre defends ethanol blends

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Gadkari, however, said studies by government agencies and automobile manufacturers indicate that the reduction in fuel efficiency in certain E10-designed vehicles is limited to about 2-6%. "However, the same is influenced by several factors, including driving conditions, driving habits and vehicle maintenance," he said, stating that E20 petrol can reduce fuel economy by 2 to 6% depending on the vehicle category and vintage.

The clarification comes amid growing debate about the government's Ethanol Blending Programme. The Delhi Taxi and Tourist Transporters and Tour Operators Association has announced a protest march to Parliament on August 4. Amid concerns over possible vehicle damage and reduced mileage from ethanol-blended fuel, reports suggest sales of 100-octane premium petrol—the only grade exempt from ethanol blending—have more than doubled in recent months amid concerns over possible vehicle damage and reduced mileage from ethanol-blended fuel.

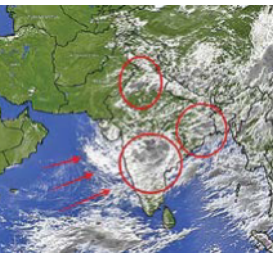
Critics also argue that consumers will have to bear recurring annual costs due to lower fuel efficiency, a burden that could rise if the ethanol content in petrol is increased further.

The minister said the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas introduced the Ethanol Blended Petrol (EBP) Programme through a phased, scientifically validated and consultative process involving NITI Aayog, automobile manufacturers, Oil Marketing Companies, the Automotive Research Association of India (ARAI), the Society of Indian Automobile Manufacturers (SIAM), the Indian Institute of Petroleum (IIP) and other technical institutions.

"E20 offers a higher-octane rating, superior anti-knock characteristics, cleaner combustion and smoother engine performance.

E20 improves acceleration and ride quality while reducing carbon emissions. These studies also established that legacy vehicles do not exhibit variation in performance or abnormal wear and tear due to E20," he said

Officials ruled out any immediate move to increase ethanol blending in petrol beyond the current 20%, saying any decision on higher blends would be taken only after detailed scientific and technical studies and consultations with all relevant stakeholders.



Monsoon in no mood to stop in August

Country's rain deficit shrinks to 14%

NEW DELHI: India's south-west monsoon is showing no signs of weakening and is instead expected to gain further momentum during the first half of August, raising hopes of a strong recovery after weeks of uneven rainfall across the country. The India Meteorological Department's latest rainfall data shows the all-India monsoon rainfall deficit has narrowed to 14%, a significant improvement from much steeper shortfalls recorded earlier this season. Meteorologists say the revival is being driven by the strongest weather system of the monsoon so far, a deep depression moving across Maharashtra. Embedded within the monsoon trough, the deep depression has drawn enormous amounts of moisture from the Arabian Sea and the Bay of Bengal. Its impact has been further amplified by the Somali Jet, the powerful low-level wind stream that transports moisture across the Arabian Sea into the Indian subcontinent.

US launches 'heavy' strikes on Iran

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Iran and the US have engaged in escalating strikes and counter-strikes since a ceasefire in April, aimed at pausing the months-long war, fell apart in June.

The US has blockaded Iranian ports and bombed Iranian sites, while Iran has fired missiles and drones at US assets in countries across the Middle East and targeted shipping in the economically important Strait of Hormuz, connecting the Gulf and Arabian Sea. On Wednesday, news outlet Axios cited an unnamed US official as saying that Trump had met Saudi defence minister Prince Khalid bin Salman, who had conveyed that Saudi Arabia wants to de-escalate tensions. The BBC has contacted the White House for comment.

Meanwhile, the Egyptian government said a fire at a port on Wednesday had been caused by a drone attack. Egypt, a US ally, has not previously been directly attacked during the war.

Heavy rains lash several places in Telangana

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Meanwhile, continuous rainfall over the past 48 hours has caused streams and rivulets to overflow, leading to the submergence of low-lying areas. Normal life has come to a complete standstill as several villages have been cut off from the outside world. The Jampanna Vagu at Medaram in Mulugu District surged dangerously. A devotee from Ghatkesar, who had stepped into the water for a holy dip, was swept away by the strong current and has gone missing. Upon receiving the information, rescue teams launched a search operation. Officials have advised people living near river basins and streams to remain alert. Revenue Minister Ponguleti Srinivasa Reddy directed the officials concerned to work in coordination with officials of the Municipal, Panchayat Raj, Irrigation, Energy departments. The Minister directed the officials to monitor the situation and if needed shift the people from the low-lying areas to safe areas.

Rs 76.46-cr development push unveiled for Uppal constituency

Duddilla Sridhar Babu lays foundation stone for comprehensive infrastructure works focusing on storm water drainage, roads, and sports facilities

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IT, Industries and Commerce Minister Duddilla Sridhar Babu laid the foundation stone on Thursday for development works worth Rs 76.46 crore in Uppal Assembly constituency, focusing on storm water drainage, roads, footpaths, sports infrastructure, and civic amenities.

Executed by the Malkajgiri Municipal Corporation, the projects were launched alongside Municipal Commissioner T Vinay Krishna Reddy, Medchal-Malkajgiri District Collector Milkilineni Manu Chowdhury, Uppal Zonal Commissioner Radhika Gupta, and other public representatives.

The development package includes Rs 90 lakh for expanding the Bajrang Gymnasium at Ramanthapur with modern equipment and a borewell. The largest allocation, worth Rs 56.35 crore, covers major storm water drains, footpaths, a multi-sports arena, CC roads across colonies, improvement of the VT Kaman



bus stop, and other civic infrastructure in the Ramanthapur Bhagayat-Uppal area.

Works worth Rs 3.23 crore were sanctioned for Bodrai, Chilakanagar, and Beerapagadda, including CC road repairs, storm water drain reconstruction, a retaining wall, a steel girder bridge, and crematorium development. Another Rs 15.97 crore will be spent across Cherlapalli, Vampuguda,

and Capra to strengthen culverts, reconstruct tertiary storm water drains, lay RCC pipelines, construct CC roads, and improve rainwater drainage networks.

Speaking at the event, Duddilla Sridhar Babu affirmed that the state government remains committed to delivering modern urban infrastructure, quality civic services, and efficient storm water drainage systems.

He stated that these works will substantially upgrade roads, drainage, sports facilities, and public amenities to enhance the overall quality of life for Uppal constituency residents. He instructed officials to ensure all projects are completed with high quality standards, complete transparency, and within stipulated timeframes so that public benefits are realized at the earliest.

Oppn protests in Parl over police action on students

Continued from P1

The MPs carried large banners and placards demanding accountability for the police action and sought an official apology from union Home Minister Amit Shah.

In the Rajya Sabha, Congress president and Leader of the Opposition Mallikarjun Kharge demanded the resignation of Amit Shah over the alleged police crackdown. He launched a sharp attack on the Centre during the debate on the Public Examinations (Prevention of Unfair Means) Amendment Bill, 2026, calling the proposed amendments "hogwash" for failing to address systemic issues behind examination malpractices. Holding Amit Shah directly responsible for the police

action at Delhi's Jantar Mantar, Kharge condemned the use of tear gas, lathi-charge, and other coercive measures against students demanding justice.

He called for Shah to either resign or appear before Parliament to explain the conduct of law enforcement and demanded a Supreme Court-monitored inquiry into the alleged police excesses.

Kharge expressed solidarity with the protesting students, accusing the government of attempting to silence youth voices instead of addressing their concerns. "The youth are asking for justice for their future. Instead of listening, they are being beaten and suppressed. Is this how a democratic government treats students?" he questioned.

He called for comprehensive reforms and urged the government to implement recommendations of the K Radhakrishnan Committee and overhaul agencies like the National Testing Agency (NTA) to restore trust in the examination system. He also questioned Prime Minister Narendra Modi on the government's delayed response, asking why action was taken only after nationwide protests and public outrage.

The protest comes amid sustained Opposition attacks over the Centre's handling of the examination controversy and follows repeated allegations that students protesting the NEET paper leak were subjected to excessive force by the Delhi Police during demonstrations at Jantar Mantar.

Foreign study tours for govt teachers

Continued from P1

Reiterating that the people's government will remain in power until 2034, the Chief Minister stressed that teachers should create awareness among students on the importance of education and sought suggestions. He assured that all the issues of teachers would be addressed soon. Revanth Reddy lambasted PM Modi for the mounting debt burden on the country. The total debt incurred by Prime Ministers from the time of Independence until 2014 was Rs 50 lakh crore. The debt incurred by Modi between 2014 and 2026 was Rs 151 lakh crore. The country's total outstanding debt currently stands at Rs 201 lakh crore, he pointed out.

PM DISCUSSES WEST ASIA CRISIS IN KEY CABINET MEET

Continued from P1

The Prime Minister directed that all necessary measures be taken to ensure uninterrupted fertiliser supplies. Officials indicated that sufficient stocks are available for the upcoming Rabi sowing season as well as for next year's Kharif crop.

The safety of Indian seafarers serving on domestic and foreign-flagged vessels in conflict zones was also discussed. Prime Minister Modi asked officials to establish a mechanism for providing timely information, emergency assistance and counselling to seafarers and their families. He also stressed that all efforts must be made to protect Indian citizens and the Indian community from the impact of the ongoing conflict.

The meeting took place against the backdrop of heightened tensions in West Asia following the recent US-Israel conflict involving Iran. Attacks on oil and cargo vessels in the Strait of Hormuz and threats issued by Yemen's Houthi militia against shipping near the Bab al-Mandab

have raised concerns over energy and trade flows. Ship traffic through the Bab al-Mandab has reportedly declined in recent days, while shipping activity in the Black Sea has also faced disruptions due to the intensifying Russia-Ukraine conflict.

India remains heavily dependent on imports for its energy needs, with a significant share of supplies traditionally passing through these sensitive maritime corridors. The disruptions have therefore prompted a whole-of-government response

aimed at reducing vulnerabilities.

PM Modi also emphasised the need to accelerate the use of renewable energy sources, including solar power and other non-fossil-fuel options, to strengthen India's long-term energy independence. He called for a unified and coordinated mechanism for regular monitoring of developments so that appropriate measures can be implemented quickly to protect citizens and national economic interests as the global situation evolves.

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CM plans social media blitz to counter Oppn

Continued from P1

Top officials said that special teams have been formed to also create digital content on government schemes and create a positive perception among people about the government's developmental programmes and the implementation of the welfare schemes. "Some special digital media groups are also being created in all departments which come under the purview of important ministers to spread the message of the government initiatives fast soon," an official source told The Hans India.

It is said that the Chief Minister is unhappy with ministers who are not utilising the digital media extensively to put across important schemes.

Only a few ministers have been proactive in adopting the technology to use the digital media. Lack of good PR staff in many ministers' offices is now considered a serious issue. Some PR personnel in the minister's staff are oblivious of the importance of social media. As a result, good things done by many departments are not publicised at the expected level in the state. The PR staff

also have no skills on how to counter the Opposition criticism instantly unless there is support from the officials. "So, PR staff is being given training by organising regular camps with experts in media management and digital media," officials said.

It is learnt that the Chief Minister has asked the ministers to hire only skilled PR professionals to ensure a positive campaign on every government programme and scheme in the next two and half years – i.e. until the 2028 Assembly elections.

Puri holds talks with Team Bharat

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On Wednesday, Union Petroleum Minister Harddeep Singh Puri reportedly met representatives of Team Bharat, the group led by activist Tehseen Poonawalla protesting the hurried E20 rollout, ahead of its planned protest on Friday. However, the protesting team's joy was short-lived as Poonawalla was detained by Delhi Police personnel the very next day (Thursday) and his Instagram account got suspended. The activist, who appreciated the minister earlier, was furious with the action and said he was not scared of any minister and would continue to expose the "ethanol scam".

