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## PARL NOD FOR ANTI-PAPER LEAK BILL

NEW DELHI: The Public Examination (Prevention of Unfair Means) Amendment Bill, 2026, which proposes stricter punishment for exam-related malpractices, has been passed by both Houses of Parliament. The Bill, which provides for a maximum punishment of up to 10 years in jail and a fine of Rs 50 lakh for those involved in unfair means during public examinations, was passed by the Lok Sabha earlier and later cleared by the Rajya Sabha. Leader of the Opposition in the Rajya Sabha Mallikarjun Kharge accused the government of bringing the amendment to the anti-paper-leak law only to pacify the agitating youth, not to address the issue. Speaking on the anti-paper leak bill, Kharge said the government has not explained how it would conduct examinations that could prevent paper leaks.

## VANDE MATARAM BILL CLEARED

NEW DELHI: PARLIAMENT on Wednesday cleared a bill to make insult to the national song Vande Mataram a criminal offence, with the Lok Sabha passing the legislation amid din following a brief debate. The bill — The Prevention of Insults to National Honour (Amendment) Bill, 2026 — had already been passed by the Rajya Sabha a day earlier. With its passage in the Lower House, the proposed amendment now moves closer to becoming law. In the Lok Sabha, the bill was taken up and passed through a voice vote.

## MOCKERY NO SUBSTITUTE

## Academicians slam Priyanka over Kamakoti remarks



NEW DELHI: Academicians, in an open letter, have criticised Priyanka Gandhi Vadra's reported remark about IIT Madras director V Kamakoti in the Lok Sabha. They said the comment undermined academic discourse and could deter scholars from participating in public debate. More than 215 vice chancellors, former vice chancellors and academicians have come out in support of IIT Madras Director Prof V Kamakoti after Congress MP Priyanka Gandhi Vadra allegedly referred to him as a "cow urine expert" during a Lok Sabha debate, saying the remark undermines academic discourse and the dignity of India's scientific institutions.



## PM discusses West Asia crisis in key Cabinet meet

CCS discusses global security situation, supply chain constraints

NEW DELHI

PRIME Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday chaired a meeting of the Cabinet Committee on Security (CCS) and held detailed discussions with senior ministers on the prevailing global security situation, with a focus on maintaining uninterrupted supply chains amid ongoing conflicts affecting key maritime routes such as the Strait of Hormuz, the Black Sea, the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden.

The meeting reviewed measures taken by various ministries and departments to safeguard India's energy security, fertiliser supplies, shipping operations and the interests of Indian citizens and the Indian community living abroad.

The two-hour meeting at the Parliament House complex was attended by Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, Home



Minister Amit Shah, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar and Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, along with ministers handling petroleum, commerce, shipping and fertilisers.

Officials said this was the fourth special CCS meeting convened on the West Asia situation. The Cabinet Secretary briefed the CCS on the current geopolitical developments and steps taken to ensure adequate availability of petroleum products, including LNG and LPG. He informed the committee

that LPG procurement sources have been diversified and that overall stocks of major petroleum products remain adequate. Adequate crude oil availability has enabled public sector refineries to operate at utilisation levels above 100 per cent, ensuring continued production of petrol, diesel and other fuels.

The government also reviewed efforts to expand Piped Natural Gas (PNG) connections and strengthen gas infrastructure through the National Gas Grid, LNG import and regasification facilities, city gas distribution networks and time-bound pipeline connectivity approvals. A major focus of the meeting was fertiliser availability for the forthcoming Rabi season. The CCS assessed domestic requirements and discussed alternative import sources.

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## Centre defends ethanol blends

- ▶▶ Says no verified engine failures in over 20 cr vehicles
- ▶▶ Claims E20 petrol can reduce fuel economy by 2-6%



NEW DELHI: Amid the debate over ethanol-blended fuel, the government on Thursday said E20 offers a "higher-octane rating, superior anti-knock characteristics, cleaner combustion and smoother engine performance." More than 20 crore two-wheelers and over 3 crore petrol cars have been operating on ethanol-blended fuel without any verified evidence of widespread engine failure or vehicle breakdown attributable to ethanol blending, Minister of Road Transport and Highways Nitin Gadkari told the Lok Sabha in a written reply. Gadkari said E20 improves acceleration and ride quality while reducing carbon emissions. "Laboratory studies, field validation and real-world operating experience have not established any adverse impact on vehicle performance due to E20 fuel. This is evident from the fact that E15 blended petrol has been in widespread use for over three-and-a-half years and E19-E20 fuel for over two-and-a-half years," he said.

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## Puri holds talks with Team Bharat Group activist Tehseen Poonawalla arrested



Union Petroleum Minister Hardeep Singh Puri with Team Bharat activist Tehseen Poonawalla

NEW DELHI: Post the Jantar Mantar protests and clashes, the Narendra Modi government appears determined not to repeat the missteps that turned the recent student protests into a movement powerful enough to force Dharmendra Pradhan to step down as the Union education minister. With the Ethanol-Blended Petrol programme now drawing similar backlash, New Delhi is moving early.

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## US launches 'heavy' strikes on Iran

DUBAI: The US military says it has completed a "heavy wave" of strikes against Iran in retaliation for Tuesday's attempted ballistic missile attacks on American forces.

Centcom said it hit "dozens" of Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) targets in response to Iran's firing on US bases in Jordan and at ships in the Strait of Hormuz.

Iranian state media said the latest strikes had killed three people, including a two-year-old child, on Qeshm island, while other locations were also hit in the south and west of the country.

The latest hostilities come on a week that has seen the conflict expand, with the first publicly announced joint US-Saudi strikes targeting Iranian proxies in Iraq.

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## FOREIGN STUDY TOURS FOR GOVT TEACHERS

- CM urges teachers to build world-class education system
- Blasts BRS' demand that he must relinquish education portfolio

HANS NEWS SERVICE HYDERABAD

CHIEF Minister A Revanth Reddy has blasted the Bharat Rashtra Samithi for its demand that he must relinquish education portfolio. The Chief Minister also castigated Prime Minister Narendra Modi for India's mounting debt burden.

Claiming that one lakh additional enrollments in government schools is testimony of the successful implementation of breakfast and mid-day meal schemes, the Chief Minister announced foreign study tours henceforth for government teachers every year.

Interacting with the delegates of Finland and Germany Exposure Programme



on Thursday, he questioned the BRS whether the party is aware of the initiatives of breakfast and mid-day meal schemes introduced in all schools and junior colleges. The enrollment of one lakh additional students this year is a great achievement in school education, Revanth

Reddy said and added that the government is spending Rs 1.08 lakh on each student whereas the parents spend only Rs 50,000 on children attending private schools.

The Chief Minister instructed the authorities to prepare a report by December outlining an action plan

for the upcoming academic year. The plans should be formulated by taking every mandal into a cluster. Further, he said that the state government would provide teachers with opportunities to go abroad for further studies. He asserted that the government has launched a slew of initiatives not for politics or votes but to provide quality education to the poor. "Let us transform our government educational institutions into world-class destinations", the Chief Minister observed and added: "We all should dedicate five years to society and to transform the future for generations to come and work with the goal of making Telangana a role model for the nation."

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## Oppn protests in Parl over police action on students

RS erupts as Kharge demands Shah's resignation

NEW DELHI

THE Opposition on Thursday intensified its attack on the Centre over the alleged police action against students protesting the NEET paper leak issue, staging a noisy demonstration inside the Parliament House complex and disrupting proceedings in the Lok Sabha, which was adjourned till 2 pm amid persistent sloganeering.

Leaders of the Congress and several opposition parties gathered at the steps of the Makar Dwar in the Parliament complex, raising slogans of "Who gave the orders?" as they accused the government of unleashing "police brutality" on students who had assembled at Jantar Mantar to demand account-



TMC MP Kalyan Banerjee stages a protest as Congress MP Priyanka Gandhi Vadra, MP Pappu Yadav and others look on during the monsoon session of Parliament in New Delhi on Thursday

ability over alleged irregularities in the NEET examination.

The demonstration was led by Congress general secretary and MP Priyanka Gandhi Vadra, who was joined by

several MPs, including Congress Rajya Sabha MP Imran Pratapgarhi and Congress Lok Sabha MP Sanjana Jatav, along with lawmakers from other Opposition parties.

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## CM Revanth plans social media blitz to counter Oppn

- ▶▶ Revanth unhappy with ministers' unskilled PR staff
- ▶▶ Spl teams to create digital content

HANS NEWS SERVICE

HYDERABAD: With opposition parties aggressively going against the state government, and with all ministers failing to effectively put across the state government's developmental and welfare measures to create a positive impact among people, Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy has devised his own "Digital Campaign Strategy" to counter the Opposition's anti-government rhetoric and corner it on social media platforms. The Chief Minister is said to be critical of the public relations (PR) staff of all ministers for lacking a strategy on the use of digital media.

Experienced political consultants, analysts and certain reputed organisations involved in PR have been hired to utilise their expertise in the campaign on government schemes and digital media campaigns.

Officials of the Chief Minister's Office (CMO), ministers' PR staff and the officials of the Information & Public Relations Department are already being provided regular training on the propagation of the government schemes through digital platforms aggressively.

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## Heavy rains lash several places in Telangana



Photo: Ch Prabhud Das

in various reservoirs. Hopes of agriculture picking up in several villages also rose because of the torrential downpours. Very heavy rainfall occurred at many

places over Komaram Bheem Asifabad, at a few places over Mancherial, Jayashankar Bhupalpally and at isolated places over Adilabad, Jagtial, Mulugu

and Peddapalli districts of Telangana. Heavy rainfall occurred at many places over Jagtial, Mulugu, Mancherial and at a few places across Karimnagar,

Komaram Bheem Asifabad, Peddapalli and at isolated places in Adilabad, Jayashankar Bhupalpally and Warangal districts of Telangana. The weather offi-

cials said that the Southwest Monsoon has been vigorous over Telangana. The IMD had earlier issued a red alert (indicates extremely heavy rainfall with over 200 mm rainfall) for the districts of Adilabad, Komaram Bheem Asifabad, Mancherial, Nirmal, Jagtial; orange alert with heavy to very heavy rainfall in Nizamabad, Rajanna Sircilla, Karimnagar, Peddapalli, Jayashankar Bhupalpally, Mulugu and Kamareddy districts; yellow alert for heavy rainfall very likely to occur at isolated

places in Medak, Sangareddy, Jangaon, Hanumakonda, Mahabubabad, Warangal, Vikarabad, Rangareddy, Hyderabad, Medchal-Malkajgiri, Siddipet and Bhadradi Kotagudem districts of Telangana. Strong surface winds up to (30-40 kmph) are very likely to prevail at isolated pockets in remaining districts of Telangana. The IMD has also issued forecast for heavy rainfall or thunderstorms at isolated places in various parts of the state till August 3.

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