

AP journalists call on Rajasthan CM, Assembly Speaker

NARESH NANDAM
JAIPUR

A delegation of journalists from Andhra Pradesh called on Rajasthan Chief Minister Bhajan Lal Sharma and Rajasthan Legislative Assembly Speaker Vasudev Devnani in Jaipur on Thursday. The visit was part of the final leg of a media tour in Rajasthan, organised by Press Information Bureau, Vijayawada.

The meeting with Chief Minister Bhajan Lal Sharma took place on the first day of the Rajasthan Assembly sessions. The Chief Minister enquired about the journalists' experience of the tour so far in the State. He also recalled his association with leaders from Andhra Pradesh. Speaking at the meeting, Assembly Speaker Vasudev Devnani

urged the visiting AP journalists to experience the culture, heritage, and hospitality of Rajasthan.

PIB Jaipur Director Anubhav Bairwa and PIB Vijayawada Assistant Director R Ramesh Chandra explained the aim of the press tour to the hosts.

The visiting journalists also called on the Regional Office of PIB Jaipur. The journalists shared their experience and understanding of various issues gathered during their three-day tour in Jodhpur, which included visits to several National Institutes.

PIB Jaipur Deputy Director Dharmesh Bharti, Assistant Director Amit Kanaujiya, PIB Jodhpur Media and Communication Officer Ashish Verma, PIB Vijayawada officer Y Upender and other officers were also present at the meeting.



Delegation of journalists from Andhra Pradesh and PIB Vijayawada officials presenting a Kondapalli handicraft memento to Rajasthan Chief Minister Bhajan Lal Sharma at Assembly in Jaipur on Thursday

J'khand HC stays Soren govt order to cancel JPSC exams

RANCHI: The Jharkhand High Court on Thursday stayed Soren government's order to cancel 11th and 13th JPSC exams and appointments following student protests.

This comes days after the government cancelled the JSSC-CGL examination and all recruitment exams conducted by TSR Data Processing Pvt Ltd (TDPL).

Chief minister Hemant Soren had announced the cancellation of the JSSC-CGL examination and all



recruitment tests conducted by TDPL since 2014.

The government also decided to cancel the 14th JPSC and backlog examinations and announced measures to reform the recruitment system.

An exam reforms committee headed by senior IAS

officer Amitabh Kaushal has also been constituted to recommend measures to strengthen and streamline the recruitment process.

While the cancellations addressed a major demand of the protesting students, the demand for a CBI probe has remained a point of contention. Meanwhile, the government's decision triggered a separate protest by candidates who had cleared the JSSC-CGL examination and were appointed to government posts.

Govt limits SIM cards to 9 per person

NEW DELHI: The Department of Telecommunications (DoT) has directed telecom operators to decline new connections to subscribers who already have nine mobile SIMs in their name.

According to a circular, telecom operators have been asked to put in place appropriate technical and organisational measures from August 24 onwards to identify each subscriber seeking to obtain a connection beyond the prescribed limit and deny them a new SIM card.

"From August 24, 2026, onward, TSPs (telecom service providers) shall take appropriate technical and organisational measures to identify each subscriber who seeks



to obtain mobile connections beyond the prescribed limit and communicate to him that he already has a maximum number of mobile connections permitted to an individual and accordingly, a new mobile connection cannot be provided to him," the circular said.

The DoT has also put in place a mechanism to help telecom operators identify such subscribers. From August 23, a representative image of the photo of each subscriber who has already reached the prescribed limit for mobile connections in their name will be made available on the DIP.

The DIP uses subscriber information submitted by telecom operators. The latest directive requires operators to use the platform to help identify people who have already reached the permitted limit.

the prescribed limit and the details of such subscribers are available on the DIP," the circular said.

The DoT has also put in place a mechanism to help telecom operators identify such subscribers. From August 23, a representative image of the photo of each subscriber who has already reached the prescribed limit for mobile connections in their name will be made available on the DIP.

The DIP uses subscriber information submitted by telecom operators. The latest directive requires operators to use the platform to help identify people who have already reached the permitted limit.



US debt tops \$40 trn, raises eco concerns

WASHINGTON: The national debt surpassed a record \$40 trillion on Wednesday, a staggering milestone as defense costs, social programs like Social Security and Medicare and interest on the burgeoning deficit to make up an enormous share of federal spending.

The milestone figure was recorded just five months after the US hit a record \$39 trillion debt in March.

MODI'S DEGREE ROW

Delhi HC sets Sept 29 for hearing appeals

NEW DELHI: The Delhi High Court has scheduled September 29 to hear appeals requesting the disclosure of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's bachelor's degree details. The date was set after Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, representing Delhi University, requested an expedited hearing. A Division Bench of Chief Justice Devendra Kumar Upadhyaya and Justice Tejas Karia was hearing the appeals, which challenged a single-judge ruling that overturned a Central Information Commission (CIC) directive to release the degree records.

6-yr-old-boy dies as teacher hits him for not doing homework

HANS NEWS SERVICE
VISAKHAPATNAM: In a tragic incident at a private school in Visakhapatnam, a six-year-old child died after a teacher hit him for not completing his homework.

The child, Tammanna Pranay Tej, looked visibly scared while the teacher reprimanded and slapped him. Footage from a CCTV recording of the incident drew public ire and sparked a serious debate about the prevalence of corporal punishment despite its ban, apparently due to laxity in enforcement.



Soon after the teacher hit the LKG student, the boy collapsed in the classroom. When the child was rushed to the King George Hospital, doctors there declared him brought dead. Parents of Pranay Tej reached the hospital and demanded justice for their child. They expressed concern over

the death of the boy who was quite healthy before leaving for the school. They blamed the teacher for the boy's death. "The boy was very healthy. As we went on a pilgrimage, Pranay Tej could not complete his homework," Pranay Tej's father informed. The body of the boy has been sent for a post-mortem. Responding to the tragic incident, HRD and IT Minister Nara Lokesh assured the government's support to Pranay Tej's family. He mentioned that strict action will be taken against the teacher and the school

management.

For context, Section 17 of the Right to Education (RTE) Act, 2009 bans physical punishment and mental harassment of children in schools, making it a punishable offense for teachers.

The Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) and the National Commission for Protection of Child Rights strictly prohibit physical punishment in affiliated schools. The Juvenile Justice Act, 2015 outlaws cruelty to children in institutional care and alternative care settings.

Cops can't probe offences under PCPNDT Act: SC

NEW DELHI: Police cannot commence an independent investigation of the offences under the Pre-Conception and Pre-Natal Diagnostic Techniques (PCPNDT) Act, the Supreme Court said on Thursday. A bench of Justices Sanjay Karol and N Kotiswar Singh held that authorities designated under the law must take action in such cases. The PCPNDT Act was enacted with the intent to prohibit the use of prenatal diagnostic techniques for determination of the sex of the foetus.

Trump announces 'Economic D-day' Warns Iran and allies

WASHINGTON: US President Donald Trump announced what he called the "most crushing economic operation" against Iran, stating that any country that does business with Tehran will face "TREMENDOUS economic consequences." In a statement on Wednesday, Trump asserted that he provided Iran with an opportunity for a deal, but the Islamic Republic squandered it. "No one has given the Islamic Republic of Iran a greater opportunity to make a Deal than me. TRAGICALLY, for them, they have failed to take it. Therefore, today, I am announcing the MOST CRUSHING ECONOMIC OPERATION EVER TAKEN AGAINST ANY COUNTRY," Trump said in a post on his Truth Social account. Comparing the "operation" to an "Economic D-Day,"

I CAN SEE PAPA SMILING: RAHUL

Pays emotional tribute to father Rajiv

NEW DELHI: Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on Thursday marked the 82nd birth anniversary of his father and former prime minister Rajiv Gandhi with a deeply personal tribute, recalling the pain his mother Sonia Gandhi endured after his assassination and expressing pride in her decision to publicly share her life story. In an emotional social media post addressed to his mother as "Mama", Rahul Gandhi looked back on the last time he saw his parents together more than 35 years ago and spoke of the resilience with which Sonia Gandhi faced life after Rajiv Gandhi's death.

"Mama, I last saw you and Papa together more than 35 years ago. Since the day Papa left, I have watched you face everything life threw at you with never-ending courage and dignity," Rahul Gandhi wrote.

The Congress leader said that he and his sister Priyanka Gandhi Vadra were perhaps the only ones who could truly understand the difficulties their mother faced in the years following Rajiv Gandhi's assassination. "Only Priyanka and I



Congress leader Rahul Gandhi pays a moving tribute to his mother Sonia Gandhi on his father Rajiv Gandhi's 82nd birth anniversary on Thursday

PM'S TRIBUTE TO RAJIV GANDHI

NEW DELHI: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday paid tribute to former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi on his birth anniversary, remembering the Congress leader who served as India's prime minister from 1984 to 1989. In a post on social media platform X, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said, "On his birth anniversary, my tributes to former Prime Minister Shri Rajiv Gandhi Ji." The tribute comes as Rajiv Gandhi's political legacy remains closely associated with the Nehru-Gandhi family and the Congress.

really know what you have been through, and how difficult your life after Papa truly was," he said.

NEET PROTESTS SC sets up 5-member panel to probe police 'excesses' at CJP stir

NEW DELHI: A day after the Supreme Court announced it will be setting up a committee to examine allegations of excessive use of force by security personnel against students during the July 20 student march over the NEET paper leak, the top court on Thursday said that a five-member panel will be headed by former SC judge Justice R Subhash Reddy. Other members of the committee include former Punjab and Haryana High Court Chief Justice Ravi Shankar Jha, former Delhi High Court judge Justice Shalinder Kaur, former CBI Director Rishi Kumar Shukla and retired Meghalaya Director General of Police Dr LR Bishnoi.

The committee will examine allegations of excessive use of pellet guns, electric batons, lathi charges and tear gas, along with alleged violence against women protesters. It will also look into police surveillance, the proportionality of crowd-control measures, and the provision of medical assistance and compensation to victims. The committee will also consider allegations by authorities of violence against police personnel and damage to public property.

This comes as the apex



court is hearing a batch of petitions alleging excessive police action against students who participated in protests at Jantar Mantar and other locations across the country over alleged NEET examination paper leaks and broader concerns relating to the examination system.

The proceedings come against the backdrop of weeks of student demonstrations led by the Cockerroach Janata Party (CJP) at Jantar Mantar, including a hunger strike and a subsequent march towards Parliament.

On July 20, thousands of students participated in a Parliament march organised by the CJP, demanding, among other things, the resignation of Union education minister Dharmendra Pradhan over alleged examination paper leaks and seeking wider reforms in the examination system. As demonstrators attempted to move towards Parliament and breach police barricades in central Delhi, security personnel used tear gas and lathi-charge to disperse the protesters.

12 bills cleared in monsoon session

- ▶ BC reservations in local bodies get approval
- ▶ Assembly records 25 hours of debate as YCP stays away



HANS NEWS SERVICE
AMARAVATI

THE monsoon session of the Andhra Pradesh Legislature ended on Thursday with a sharp contrast between the Assembly and Legislative Council. While the Assembly completed substantive business and debated key political and administrative issues, the Council was virtually paralysed for four days by YSRCP protests demanding a discussion on alleged irregularities in the Mega DSC recruitment.

The Assembly recorded about 25 hours and 15 minutes of debate, with 103 members participating in the proceedings. Ministers answered 45 questions, including 25 starred and one unstarred question. Three short-duration discussions and a special discussion under Rule 344 were held, while the government secured passage of 12 Bills. The House also witnessed major announcements on BC reservations in local bodies, with Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu announcing 33.33 per cent reservation for BCs

in urban local bodies and 34 per cent in rural local bodies. The Legislative Council, however, remained caught in a confrontation over the Mega DSC recruitment issue. YSRCP members repeatedly rushed to the Chairman's podium, raised slogans and demanded an immediate debate on alleged irregularities. The protests continued throughout the four-day session, preventing substantive discussions on other legislative businesses. Apart from Question Hour and the election of the Deputy Chairman, proceedings were repeatedly adjourned. The Assembly's agenda included detailed discussions on the implementation of the government's Super Six promises, the Mega DSC controversy, law and order and alleged irregularities in the APPSC Group-1 examination. On the opening day, HRD Minister Nara Lokesh gave a detailed statement on the Mega DSC allegations. Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu also initiated a discussion on rainfall deficit, outlining the government's response and contingency measures.

Shah favours early resolution of water-related issues thru talks

Continued from P1

The southern states agreed with the Home Minister's suggestion to resolve these pending water disputes expeditiously through mutual dialogue and constructive solutions. Shah said that since 2014, efforts have been made to transform the Zonal Council into a meaningful platform.

Regarding the issues concerning the division of assets and liabilities between Andhra Pradesh and Telangana, both states agreed to resolve these matters in consultation with the Ministry of Home Affairs. Shah said in his address at the meeting.

Tamil Nadu Chief Minister C Joseph Vijay, who serves as the council's

vice-chairman, personally welcomed Shah upon his arrival. The two leaders also held a brief interaction before the meeting began. During the proceedings, Vijay was seated alongside Karnataka Chief Minister DK Shivakumar. Representatives from Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala and Telangana took part in the meeting.

Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu, Kerala Chief Minister VD Satheesan and Telangana Deputy Chief Minister Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka were among those who attended. Puducherry Chief Minister N Rangasamy was absent from the meeting, with Lieutenant Governor K Kailashnathan representing the Union Territory.

SOUTH CMs RAISE DELIMITATION, WATER DISPUTES AT SZC MEET

Continued from P1

Delimitation, an issue on which most southern states are on the same page, prominently figured in the meeting, with Karnataka and Tamil Nadu stressing that status quo of 543 Lok Sabha seats be maintained for another 25 years.

With his state locked in a dispute with Tamil Nadu over the Mekedatu dam proposal, Karnataka Chief Minister DK Shivakumar told TN that its interests would be protected if the reservoir is constructed. Shivakumar also urged the Southern Zonal Council to adopt a resolution asking the Union government to honour the 1971 census for delimitation, retain 543 Lok Sabha seats for 25 years and fit women's reservation within the existing seats.

Tamil Nadu CM Vijay conveyed to the Union Home Minister that the existing freeze capping Lok Sabha seats at 543 nationally and 39 in the state should continue, state minister R Nirmal Kumar said.

Both Andhra Pradesh and Telangana agreed to resolve matters related to the division of assets and liabilities in consultation with the Union Ministry of Home Affairs.

Keralam CM Satheesan raised the Mullaperiyar dam issue at the meeting and stressed the need for cooperative federalism in healthcare, infrastructure, environmental protection and regional security. The Mullaperiyar dam issue was among the key state concerns raised by the CM at the meeting, according

to a post on 'X'.

Satheesan said Keralam was willing to provide Tamil Nadu with its full share of water from a new Mullaperiyar dam. Tamil Nadu would manage the design, location and construction of the new dam, while Keralam would bear the entire cost.

Telangana Deputy CM Vikramarka sought protection of the state's rights in Krishna river waters and Central support for major irrigation projects. Puducherry was represented by Lt Governor K Kailashnathan. The LG sought the Centre and neighbouring states' support, particularly Tamil Nadu, to develop an integrated surface water system for a reliable year-round water supply.

Settle lingering bifurcation issues, Naidu urges Centre

Continued from P1

Naidu proposed that the Centre pursue Godavari-Kaveri river interlinking as a long-term solution to water security. He said Andhra Pradesh's rivers, including the Godavari, Krishna, Vamsadhara, Nagavali and Penna, support irrigation across 28 districts. He proposed diverting more than 500 TMC of surplus floodwater to the Kaveri basin through the Polavaram, Krishna and Penna systems. He said such a project could benefit Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Karnataka and Tamil Nadu.

Naidu also suggested that Ganga-Kaveri interlinking be taken up as a national project and called for a dedicated coordination mechanism for south-

ern river basins. He urged the Centre to fix timelines for DPRs and statutory clearances.

Naidu proposed a bullet train corridor linking Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu and Karnataka through Kuppam, connecting Amaravati, Bengaluru, and Chennai. He also called for a shared logistics network and dry ports, integration of the southern power grid with the national grid, and a common skill-development system involving universities and skilling institutions. A dedicated southern disaster-management task force was proposed to enable states to support one another during natural calamities.

Naidu said south India could become a USD

10-trillion economy by 2047 and play a decisive role in India's ambition to become a USD 30-35 trillion economy.

Naidu proposed a national heritage and pilgrimage circuit linking Tirupati, Srishailam, Kancheepuram, Madurai, Rameswaram, and Mysuru with Varanasi, Ayodhya, and the Char Dham. He urged the Southern Zonal Council to work on mutual trust, Centre-State cooperation, and faster implementation of decisions.

Tamil Nadu Chief Minister C Joseph Vijay, Karnataka Chief Minister D K Shivakumar, Deputy Chief Ministers of Kerala and Karnataka, Lieutenant Governor of Puducherry and Andaman and Nicobar attended the meeting.

