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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. It reached \$38 trillion five months before that, in October. The unprecedented \$40 trillion figure highlights competing administration priorities, from boosting the defense spending that the US relies on to carry out President Donald Trump's almost-6-month-old Iran war to lowering the cost of gas and groceries.

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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.

IRREGULAR by MANJUL

Oh, he really cares. He hardly spends any of it



SOUTH ZONAL COUNCIL MEET

Settle lingering bifurcation issues, Naidu urges Centre

Calls for solution to issues under Sections 56 & 66

- ▶ Pushes Amaravati, Polavaram, Metro, rail, port, industrial projects
- ▶ Proposes Godavari-Kaveri link as long-term solution to benefit 4 states
- ▶ Moots national heritage and pilgrimage circuit

HANS NEWS SERVICE
AMARAVATI

CHIEF Minister Nara Chandrababu Naidu on Thursday used the 31st Southern Zonal Council meeting in Mahabalipuram to press the Centre for closure of lingering bifurcation issues concerning Andhra Pradesh and Telangana, while putting forward an ambitious blueprint for south India's economic and infrastructure integration. Addressing the meeting chaired by Union Home Minister Amit Shah, Naidu pointed out that 12 years after bifurcation, the division of certain institutions and assets between Andhra Pradesh



Union Home Minister Amit Shah with Telangana Dy CM Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka, Karnataka CM DK Shivkumar, TN CM Joseph Vijay and AP CM Chandrababu Naidu during the Southern Zonal Council meeting in Mahabalipuram on Thursday

SHAH FAVOURS EARLY RESOLUTION OF WATER-RELATED ISSUES THRU TALKS

Hails development of South at CMs' meet

CHENNAI: UNION Home Minister Amit Shah on Thursday hailed the development journey of the southern states, saying "high literacy rate, trained manpower and technical expertise in the utilisation of deep seas" have been the three pillars behind the progress of these states. Chairing the 31st meeting of the Southern

Zonal Council at Mahabalipuram, Shah stressed the need for early resolution of pending water-related issues concerning southern states through mutual dialogues and joint meetings involving the Union Ministries of Jal Shakti, Home Affairs, the Inter-State Council, and the respective states.

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SOUTH CMs RAISE DELIMITATION, WATER DISPUTES AT SZC MEET

CHENNAI: Delimitation issue was raised by the participating state governments at the 31st meeting of the South Zonal Council, chaired by Union Home Minister Amit Shah at Mahabalipuram on Thursday.

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and Telangana remains incomplete. He said Andhra Pradesh had been waiting for

nine years for a decision on issues under Section 66 of the Andhra Pradesh Reorganisa-

tion Act. He sought action also on matters under Section 56, the resource gap and the

12 bills cleared in monsoon session

- ▶ BC reservations in local bodies get approval
- ▶ Assembly records 25 hours of debate as YCP stays away
- ▶ Council paralysed for 4 days over Mega DSC
- ▶ Group-1 irregularities, Super Six dominate proceedings

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.

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I CAN SEE PAPA SMILING: RAHUL

Pays emotional tribute to father Rajiv



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

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.

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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.

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.

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VIT
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41st Annual Convocation

8
Inauguration of
**Centre for Advanced Research
in
Bacteriophage and Infectious Diseases (CARBID)**
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22nd AUGUST 2026 - SATURDAY | Time : 9.30 A.M.

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Smt. Rekha Gupta
Hon'ble Chief Minister, Delhi

GUEST OF HONOUR
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Vice President & CTO - BFSI,
Tata Consultancy Services

PRESIDED BY
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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, Tammana 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.

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