

HYDERABAD HEADLINES

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Bears in Control: Nifty Ends at 23,151

MONEY MATTERS 09

Malaika & Harsh Mehta: New Sighting Spark Dating Rumors



BOX-OFFICE 12



U.S. AND ISRAEL INTENSIFY

AIR CAMPAIGNS AGAINST TEHRAN

The Middle East is at a critical flashpoint as the U.S.-Israel-Iran conflict enters its 14th day. Following the death of Ali Khamenei, new Supreme Leader Mojtaba Khamenei has vowed continued strikes. Today, fresh Iranian missiles targeted Israel, while a U.S. KC-135 crash in Iraq claimed six lives. With "Operation Roaring Lion" and "Operation Epic Fury" striking thousands of targets, regional stability has collapsed. As the Strait of Hormuz closure pushes Brent crude past \$100, mounting casualties and global economic pressure are intensifying urgent calls for de-escalation.

BEYOND BORDERS 08

SHORT TAKES



Net-Zero Buildings... India's Sustainable Future

Amid rising global warming and climate change, the IGBC released a report stressing that adopting green & net-zero buildings is essential for transforming the construction sector and reducing environmental impact

FOCUS POINT 10



Early Classrooms Build the Nation's Foundation

Early childhood, between three and six years, is a crucial stage that shapes a child's intellectual, emotional, social, and physical development, strongly influencing lifelong learning abilities, personality, values, and overall growth.

TELANGANA 04

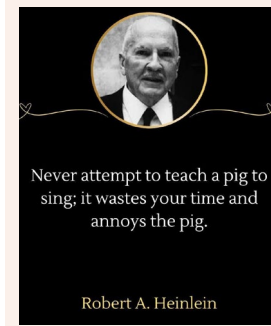


Kanshi Ram and the Bahujan Movement

Born on 15 March 1934, Kanshi Ram dedicated his life to organizing Dalits and marginalized communities for political power. Through movements and the formation of BSP, he reshaped Indian politics and advanced the idea of Bahujan empowerment.

OPINION 06

THE DAILY MANTRA PRIORITY



Never attempt to teach a pig to sing; it wastes your time and annoys the pig.

Robert A. Heinlein

Heinlein humorously warns against wasted effort on the impossible. >Some people or situations resist change, no matter the effort. Wisdom lies in recognizing when to disengage, conserving energy for progress where it matters most. Instead of forcing impossible change, it is better to focus on situations where effort can produce results.

Collected by

Venna Srinivasa Reddy



PAST



PRESENT



FUTURE

Musi Reborn

CM Envisions Hyderabad's Historic Revival

- CM Revanth Reddy defends Musi rejuvenation project amid opposition.
- Accuses critics of spreading half-truths, obstructing development for political gain.
- Highlights historic 1908 Floods, Nizam's reservoirs; vows no harm to poor.
- Challenges opponents: Live in river basin for 3 months if you oppose.
- Promises compensation, houses, jobs for displaced; rejects "lootification" rumors.



HYDERABAD, MARCH 13

Telangana Chief Minister Revanth Reddy today addressed the public on the ongoing Musi River rejuvenation project, accusing critics of spreading half-truths and incomplete information to create unnecessary concern. Speaking on a special program, he emphasized that government power is a responsibility to protect people, not dominate them.

Reddy highlighted Hyderabad's historical development around rivers, noting that human civilization has always thrived near them. "While countries

worldwide advance on the path of development, if we lag behind, future generations will not forgive us," he said. He revealed that his government has consulted intellectuals from all sections of society for suggestions on balanced development. Recalling the devastating 1908 Musi floods that submerged the city, Reddy credited the Nizam's consultation with engineer Mokshagundam Visvesvaraya for building Himayat Sagar and Osman Sagar reservoirs. These century-old structures have protected Hyderabad from floods and supplied drinking water to its residents. **CONTINUED ON PAGE 2 >**

No Shortage of LPG Supplies

despite concerns triggered by geopolitical tensions in the Middle East: Uttam



HYDERABAD, MARCH 13

❖ Daily supply meets 2.5 lakh cylinders with 86% for household use.

❖ Supplies streamlined with regular arrivals addressing disruptions.

❖ Urban booking interval fixed at 25 days to match genuine needs.

Minister for Irrigation and Civil Supplies, N. Uttam Kumar Reddy today assured LPG consumers all over the state of uninterrupted supplies and distribution for domestic consumers amid rising concerns triggered by geopolitical tensions in the Middle East.

He chaired a high-level video conference, held from **CONTINUED ON PAGE 2 >**

Farmer Welfare is the Core Objective: Dy. CM. Bhatti



HYDERABAD, MARCH 13

Deputy Chief Minister Bhatti Vikramarka Mallu stated that the welfare of farmers is the primary objective of the people's government. On Friday morning, at the Dr. B.R. Ambedkar Secretariat, he held a pre-budget meeting with Agriculture Minister Tummala Nageswara Rao and Irrigation Minister Uttam Kumar Reddy to review the proposals of the Agriculture Department.

Speaking on the occasion, the Deputy Chief Minister advised agriculture officials to involve Self-Help Groups as partners in organic and **CONTINUED ON PAGE 2 >**

KTR writes to Amit Shah over benami dealings of CM Revanth

HYDERABAD, MARCH 13

Bharat Rashtra Samithi (BRS) Working President K.T. Rama Rao has written a letter to Union Home Minister Amit Shah raising serious concerns over the deteriorating law and order situation in Telangana and the alleged irregular allocation of government contracts to KLSR Infratech Private Limited, a company linked to Chief Minister Revanth Reddy as a benami entity.

In his letter on Friday, KTR alleged that during the investigation of cases related to KLSR Infratech, the state government tampered **CONTINUED ON PAGE 2 >**

BJP Opposes Musi Demolitions

HYDERABAD, MARCH 13

Telangana BJP president N. Ramchander Rao on Friday said the BJP supports the rejuvenation of the Musi River but will strongly oppose the demolition of houses belonging to poor and middle-class families in the name of development. Speaking to the media, the BJP leader clarified that the party has no objection to the Musi project or presentations on river beautification. However, he said development should not come at the cost of displacing residents of areas such as Madhuban Park and Vighneshwar Colony. He alleged that Congress leaders, including Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy and Minister Ponnam Prabhakar, were **CONTINUED ON PAGE 2 >**

Assam Gets Rs. 24,250 Cr Projects

Modi Targets Congress During Assam Visit



GUWAHATI, MAR 13

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Friday accused the Indian National Congress of endangering national security by handing over indigenous people's land to infiltrators, while launching development projects worth over ₹24,250 crore in Assam during the first leg of his two-day visit ahead of the assembly elections.

Addressing public programmes in Kokrajhar and Guwahati, Modi said Assam was entering a new phase of peace and development un-

der the "double-engine" government. He also announced the beginning of a process to grant land rights to tea garden workers, calling it an effort to end a "historic injustice".

The prime minister alleged that the Congress had neglected tea garden workers for decades and never granted them legal rights to land. Recalling his own days as a tea seller, he said he was "repaying a debt" to the community by ensuring land patts for their homes.

Modi virtually addressed a rally in Kokrajhar after **CONTINUED ON PAGE 2 >**

VICAT
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TAMPER PROOF PACKING



Tarnaka RTC Hospital gets ₹20 lakh portable X-ray machine

HYDERABAD : Under the leadership of Y. Nagireddy, VC & MD of Telangana RTC, the medical services offered at the RTC Hospital in Tarnaka have seen a significant enhancement. This advancement was made possible by a generous donation from 'Can Fin Homes', a subsidiary of Canara Bank, as part of their corporate social responsibility efforts. The bank provided a sophisticated 'Mobile Digital Portable X-ray' machine, valued at ₹20 lakhs, to the hospital.

The inauguration ceremony, held on Friday, was led by Guda Lakshman, Canara Bank's Telangana Zonal Head, and N. Sailaja Murthy, the Hospital Superintendent & CMO. They officially launched the new equipment by cutting a ribbon. During the event, Hospital Superintendent and CMO Sailaja Murthy expressed her appreciation for banking institutions that actively contribute to social welfare through their support.

She highlighted that the new mobile digital portable X-ray machine will significantly improve patient care by allowing X-rays to be performed directly at the patient's bedside within the hospital wards, leading to quicker diagnoses and treatment.

Guda Lakshman, Zonal Head of Canara Bank (Telangana), commended the dedication of the Superintendent and staff at Tarnaka Hospital, under Nagireddy's guidance, in their pursuit of delivering high-quality medical services to RTC employees.

He reiterated Canara Bank's consistent commitment to social service initiatives. The programme was attended by P. Srinivas, Hospital Medical Administrator, Canara Bank Managers T.T. Achyutanandam and Ashok Gautam, along with numerous doctors and bank employees.

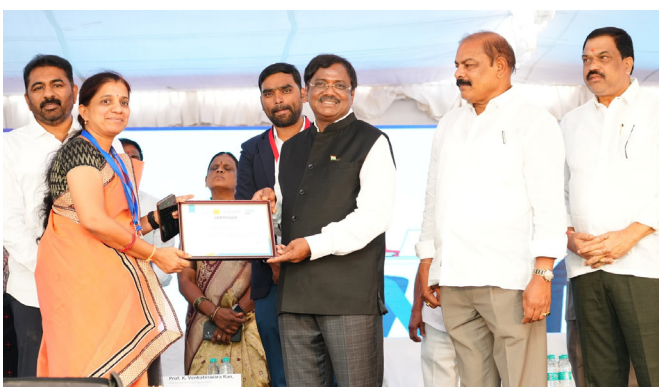
Acquire modern skills for a bright future: Vivek tells students

GHATKESAR

Labour Minister Dr. G. Vivek Venkatswamy emphasised the critical need for students to acquire new skills and modern technological knowledge to secure a prosperous future.

He made these remarks during the inauguration of the SAP Code Innovation 2025-26 programme at Kommuri Pratap Reddy Engineering College in Ghatkesar, Medchal district, on Friday.

During the event, the Minister also officially opened the SAP Code Innovation Room established at the college. He commended the leadership of Kommuri Pratap Reddy Engineering College for their commitment to providing high-quality facilities and for their forward-thinking



approach to institutional development. Dr. Venkatswamy further advised students that success in life is contingent upon cultivating discipline, attentive engagement with their studies, and unwavering dedication. Drawing from his own expe-

riences as a student, he underscored the importance of approaching any task with sincerity and commitment. He noted the rapid evolution of technology globally and encouraged students to embrace these advancements rather than fear them, highlight-

ing their potential to broaden career opportunities.

Kommuri Pratap Reddy expressed gratitude to the Minister for his presence at the SAP Code Innovation program, acknowledging its role in enhancing students' future prospects. He also reminisced about Dr. Vivek Venkatswamy's contributions to public service.

Subsequently, the Minister presented certificates of recognition to students from various institutions who participated in the SAP Code Innovation initiative. The event was attended by notable figures including former Municipal Chairperson Pavani Jangaiah, District Congress leader Mahesh Goud, college management, faculty, students, and local dignitaries.

Youth must enter politics with values: Venkaiah Naidu

NEW DELHI

Former Vice President M. Venkaiah Naidu on Friday called upon the youth to enter politics with a strong foundation of values, integrity and public service rather than the pursuit of power. Interacting with students pursuing M.A. in Political Leadership from the MIT School of Government at his residence in New Delhi, Naidu stressed that intolerance has no place in politics and urged the leaders to respect the opinions of their opponents instead of treating them as enemies.

He said democracy thrives on dignified conduct and constructive dialogue, warning

that leaders who resort to abusive language would ultimately be rejected by the electorate. "Respectful disagreement is the hallmark of democracy. What the country needs is development-oriented politics, not obstructionism", he noted.

Highlighting the importance of discipline and punctuality in public life, Naidu cited the examples of former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee and veteran leader Lal Krishna Advani. The former Vice President reiterated his opposition to dynastic politics and advised aspiring leaders to rise through grassroots work rather than "descending like parachutes." He also noted that the digital revolution is helping

curb corruption but cautioned youth against becoming overly dependent on gadgets at the cost of creativity. Naidu urged the young people to study the lives of national icons such as Swami Vivekananda, Subhas Chandra Bose, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel and Vajpayee before entering public life. Stressing the importance of language and culture, he said leaders must speak in their mother tongue to connect effectively with people. Calling upon youth to contribute to India's emergence as a global mentor, Naidu said the country's rise should be guided by peace and cooperation, adding that expansionism and wars have no place in modern civilization.

CONTINUATION FROM PAGE 1

KTR writes to Amit Shah over benami dealings of CM Revanth

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with evidence under the directions of the Chief Minister. He termed it extremely unfortunate that government officials informed the High Court that crucial evidence collected in the case had gone missing.

The BRS working president stated that this incident reflects the alarming decline of law and order in the state and the pressure being exerted on investigative agencies. He alleged that the Chief Minister misused his authority and pressured officials to destroy evidence in order to protect his benami company.

He further said that the law and order situation in the state has deteriorated to such an extent that public confidence in the police and investigative agencies has been severely eroded. Despite the com-

pany undergoing insolvency proceedings, Chief Minister Revanth Reddy has awarded massive government contracts to KLSR Infratech, KTR said.

According to reports, contracts worth more than ₹2,500 crore have been allotted to the company even while it is undergoing insolvency proceedings. These include irrigation works, drinking water supply projects, Young India Integrated School projects, and major road construction works. Such decisions raise serious questions about compliance with government procurement norms, financial eligibility, and transparency in the tendering process, KT Rama Rao said.

The BRS leader also stated that the association between Chief Minister Revanth Reddy and KLSR Infratech is widely known. He recalled that during an earlier Income Tax investigation it was

revealed that a Toyota Land Cruiser (TS 07 FF 0009), which had been used by the Chief Minister for a long time, was registered in the name of KLSR Infratech.

The insolvency proceedings of the company are currently under consideration before the National Company Law Appellate Tribunal (NCLAT). KTR noted that on August 13, 2025, tribunal member Justice Sharad Kumar reportedly refused himself from hearing the case citing attempts to influence the proceedings.

He also referred to reports stating that AS Met Corp, the company that initiated insolvency proceedings against KLSR in 2022, faced enforcement actions from state authorities soon after the new government assumed office in Telangana in December 2023. As part of these actions, the arrest of a 75-year-old cancer patient reportedly raised serious humanitarian

and legal concerns. KTR further pointed out that during the hearing of Writ Petition No. 18267/2025 in the Telangana High Court, it was revealed that several key documents seized as evidence had gone missing from official custody. The Chief Justice reportedly expressed serious concern over the disappearance of these documents. Additionally, a recent fire incident at the Telangana State Forensic Science Laboratory has raised further concerns about the safety of crucial forensic evidence.

Considering these developments, KTR urged the Union government to ensure a thorough and impartial investigation into the financial irregularities, allocation of contracts, and possible money laundering linked to KLSR Infratech. He requested that central investigative agencies such as the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI), Enforcement Directorate (ED), and Serious Fraud Investigation Office (SFIO) conduct a comprehensive probe into the matter. KTR stated that a transparent and independent investigation is essential to safeguard public funds, ensure accountability in governance, and restore public confidence in the rule of law.(NSS)

No Shortage of LPG Supplies

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The Dr. B.R. Ambedkar Telangana Secretariat on the state's Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) supply situation. Addressing key stakeholders including the Chief Secretary, district Collectors senior officials from the Civil Supplies Department, Superintendents of Police, Police Commissioners, and representatives from Oil Companies (OMCs). He emphasised thorough coordination among all the agencies concerned to ensure adequate stock levels and effective mechanisms for timely delivery while initiating stringent measures for curbing hoarding activity and strategies to counter misinformation fueling public anxiety.

The Minister firmly assured the participants and the public that there is no shortage of domestic LPG in Telangana. He urged citizens to avoid panic booking based on unverified social media rumors, stressing that the supply chain remains stable and fresh consignments arrive regularly. Officials reported that the state maintains about 10,611 metric tonnes of LPG in stock—equivalent to roughly 6.97 lakh cylinders.

Telangana boasts a robust LPG network, with around 12.9 million active domestic connections served by 810 distributors. The daily requirement stands at approximately 2.5 lakh cylinders, of which domestic users account for nearly 86%, leaving commercial demand at about 14%. No bottling plant in the state has faced disruptions, and over 90% of domestic demand has been consistently met in recent periods.

LPG Booking intervals

A key measure discussed was the enforcement of revised booking intervals to prevent diversion of subsidized domestic cylinders to commercial or hoarding purposes. The government has aligned with national guidelines to set the minimum booking gap at 25 days for urban consumers and 45 days for rural consumers.

This adjustment, from previous shorter intervals, aims to match realistic household consumption patterns—one cylinder typically lasts 25-45 days depending on family size and usage—while curbing surplus cylinders that could be misused in hotels, restaurants, or black markets. Dedicated coordination committees have been estab-

lished today at both state and district levels. The State-Level LPG Supply Coordination Committee, headed by the Chief Secretary, will monitor real-time stock, distribution, and compliance across the state. At the district level, committees led by District Collectors will conduct daily reviews, enforce booking rules, and address local grievances promptly. These bodies include representatives from Civil Supplies, police, and OMCs to ensure seamless collaboration.

The government has mandated zero shortages for essential services such as hospitals, schools, orphanages, old age homes, and other critical institutions. Minor adjustments may apply to commercial sectors only if needed to safeguard domestic priorities, but officials clarified that overall supply stability allows balanced distribution. The administration highlighted the OTP-based delivery verification system, where suppliers generate an OTP sent to the booked customer's registered mobile number. The delivery personnel confirm handover only after the customer provides the OTP, reducing chances of cylinders reaching unauthorized recipients.

The Minister wanted steps from the civil supplies department to address concerns about post-delivery transfers and called for stricter field-level monitoring and awareness drives among distributors. Enforcement against misuse has intensified.

Authorities have registered numerous cases under the Essential Commodities Act for hoarding, diversion, and black marketing. District Collectors and police were directed to maintain vigilant patrolling, conduct surprise inspections at dealerships, and take swift legal action against violators, including potential license cancellations.

The Minister appealed for public cooperation, advising reliance on official channels for updates. He reiterated the government's commitment to ensure deliveries meeting genuine requirement of households and ensuring equitable access during this period of global uncertainty.

Chief Secretary, Ramakrishna Rao, Principal secretary (Civil supplies), Stephen Ravindra, Secretary Irrigation, E Sridhar, Commissioner GHMC, R. V. Karnan and the representatives of the oil companies were among those who took part.

Musi Reborn

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"Should we leave such a city with its great heritage unchanged?" he asked.

Without criticizing past rulers directly, Reddy questioned why those who governed the state for a decade now oppose Musi rejuvenation. "Obstructing development isn't a solution. If you oppose, explain why and offer suggestions if there are mistakes," he urged.

He pointed out that despite government changes since 1994, policy paralysis has never halted city development. Only visionary Chief Ministers who implemented bold plans are remembered in history, he added, citing the Nizam's transformation of Hyderabad into an economic zone. Protecting such a legacy is our duty, Reddy asserted. Reddy invoked the historic immersion of Mahatma Gandhi's ashes at Bapu Ghat, the confluence of the Musa and Isa rivers, lamenting low tourist footfall today due to the river's toxic pollution from human errors. Residents of Nalgonda district continue to suffer the consequences. Originating in Rangareddy district, the Musi picks up heavy pollution by Hyderabad, he noted. "Both the river and city share a rich history—should we bury it for political interests, or revive Hyderabad alongside the Musi?"

Dismissing claims of malice, Reddy clarified that the project harms no one. He refuted rumors of bulldozers entering the Musi basin or obstructing central laws, framing it as an effort to preserve culture and history. Already, lakes like Nalla Cheruvu, Bathukamma Kunta, and Bamrooq Ud Daula have been restored. Challenging opponents, Reddy asked: "Can those opposing Musi rejuvenation live in the river basin? If yes, I'll provide a fully equipped container house for three months." He questioned

their motives amid needs for poor people's infrastructure, blue-collar jobs, tourism, and a night economy. "Should we obstruct development and regress to the stone age? If we achieve even 10% of the Nizam's feats, will history forgive us otherwise?" Reddy debunked misinformation labeling the project "beautification" or "lootification," including false claims of ₹5,000 crore for a Gandhi statue. Praising Gandhi's philosophy of winning wars through peace, he asked if Telangana should carry forward such ideals and rewrite its history.

Drawing a mythological parallel, he compared detractors to demons Subah and Maricha who tried disrupting sacred yagnas. "Even if you don't cooperate with society's welfare works, don't obstruct them," he said. The project targets no one and won't seize property—it's for future generations, balancing nature and environment.

With Musi rejuvenation, Telangana will become a growth engine, Reddy predicted, recalling land losses during the Outer Ring Road construction. He invited input on compensation for Musi-affected families, assuring detailed records of displaced people. In consultation with Jana Andolan Sangh, the government plans houses, schools, facilities, and nearby jobs. "Our government serves the poor," he reiterated, rejecting accusations of "real estate business." Developing state-benefiting real estate and tourism is fine, he said, as the world eyes safe Hyderabad.

"We won't make the poor homeless. Those creating hostility with them can't return to power." Reddy alleged some oppose the project out of jealousy, fearing credit to Congress and himself. "With poison in words and hatred in eyes," he said. "I am one of you. We're open to suggestions—let's complete this with everyone's cooperation."

Farmer Welfare is the Core Objective: Dy. CM Bhatti

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natural farming. He suggested that vegetables and flowers should be cultivated through Self-Help Groups and that proper marketing facilities should be provided for these products. He also recommended installing solar rooftops on Rythu Vedikas, agricultural market godowns, and warehousing facilities to generate electricity. He explained that this system would reduce electricity expenses for the Agriculture Department and also create an opportunity to sell surplus power, thereby strengthening the department financially. The Deputy Chief Minister instructed officials to consult the Renewable Energy Development Corporation (REDCO) and take necessary steps for installing solar rooftop systems on Agriculture Department institutions. He further noted that the state government is implementing several welfare schemes for farmers that were not undertaken during the previous government's tenure. Agriculture Minis-

ter Tummla Nageswara Rao stated that the people's government, with farmer welfare as its goal, is distributing agricultural machinery in large numbers at subsidized rates. He added that seeds are also being supplied to farmers on subsidy. The ministers emphasized that significant funds are being spent on farmer welfare and officials should clearly communicate these benefits to farmers.

During the meeting, Ministers Uttam Kumar Reddy and Tummla Nageswara Rao also discussed issues such as cropping patterns under various lift irrigation schemes in the state, water supply, the extent of paddy cultivation during the Yasangi season, the expected arrival of paddy in markets, and procurement arrangements. Finance Department Principal Secretary Sandeep Kumar Sul-tania, Agriculture Commissioner Gopi, Agriculture University Vice-Chancellor Aldas Janaiah, and other officials attended the meeting.

Assam Gets Rs. 24,250 Cr Projects

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rain disrupted his travel schedule. He claimed that insurgency-related violence that once troubled the region had largely ended under the BJP-led government and accused the Congress of signing peace accords only for "selfish political interests."

"The Congress endangered national security by handing over the land of indigenous people to infiltrators," he said, adding that districts such as Dhubri and Goalpara had witnessed demographic changes due to such policies. The prime minister praised Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma for carrying out a drive to clear land encroachments and provide legal land rights to indigenous communities.

Taking a swipe at Congress leader Rahul Gandhi and his "Mohabbat ki Dukaan" slogan, Modi described the Congress as a "shop of false promises" and urged people to reject the party in the upcoming elections.

During the visit, Modi launched projects worth over ₹4,570 crore in Kokrajhar, including road infrastructure works in the Bodoland region. He also flagged off three new trains — Kamakhya—Charlapalli Amrit Bharat Express, Guwahati—New Jalpaiguri Express and Narangi—Agartala Express — aimed at improving connectivity and boosting trade and tourism.

Later in Guwahati, the prime minister inaugurated and laid the foundation for infrastructure and energy projects worth about ₹19,680 crore. He also released the 22nd instalment of the PM-KISAN scheme ben-

efiting more than 9.3 crore farmers across the country. As part of the tea garden rights initiative, 28,241 families will receive land pattas in the first phase, with the prime minister ceremonially handing over documents to three families at the event.

Modi said Assam's development over the past decade had made it a model for the northeastern region and claimed that the state's progress was influencing neighbouring West Bengal, where assembly elections are also expected in April.

He added that his government had significantly increased the minimum support price payouts to farmers, stating that while the Congress provided ₹6.5 lakh crore as MSP in the decade before 2014, the NDA government had given ₹20 lakh crore over the last ten years.

BJP Opposes Musi Demolitions

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making misleading statements about the BJP's stand. Citing the Sabarmati River rejuvenation during the tenure of Narendra Modi as Gujarat Chief Minister, Rao said the project succeeded because families were first rehabilitated and given alternative housing before development work began. BJP has no objection even if the government constructs a massive statue of Mahatma Gandhi or develops a "Gandhi Sarovar", but insists that no family should be rendered homeless, he noted. Rao also dismissed fears about fuel shortages due to global tensions, stating that India imports crude oil from multiple countries and the Centre has ensured uninterrupted supplies through the Strait of Hormuz.

AI to Create More Jobs Despite Displacement

Say Industry Experts at GITAM Conclave

HYDERABAD

Industry experts observed that while Artificial Intelligence (AI) may displace nearly 85 million jobs globally by 2030, it is also expected to create around 97 million new roles across sectors.

These views were expressed during Industry Conclave 3.0, organized by the Career Guidance Centre (CGC) at GITAM Deemed to be University, Hyderabad, on the theme "Engineering the Future: Innovation in Core Sectors" on March 13, 2026. The conclave brought together industry leaders from diverse domains and featured three panel discussions focusing on emerging trends in core engineering sectors. Experts noted that the job market would continue to expand, but emphasized that students must acquire relevant skills suited for the AI-driven era. They advised budding engineers to gain practical exposure through internships, industry visits, and hands-on learning while continuously upgrading their knowledge.

Highlighting the importance of adaptability, the speakers encouraged students to embrace emerging technologies, particularly AI, which has become an integral part of everyday life. They also stressed the significance of collaboration with industry, proactive learning, and a positive attitude.



According to the experts, attitude accounts for nearly 75 percent of success in recruitment, beyond technical skills and knowledge.

Preet Yadav, Head – India Innovation Ecosystem at NXP Semiconductors, and Suman Gorla, Delivery Lead at Stellantis, attended the inaugural session as chief guests and delivered keynote addresses. They underscored the growing importance of innovation and strong industry-academia collaboration in shaping the future of core engineering sectors.

The first panel discussion, "Driving the Industrial Future: Energy, Mobility, Manufacturing," featured Veena Putrevu, Head-HR and Administration, Axis Energy; Yogesh Khatale, DGM, Praj Industries; K.C. Mohan, DGM, AVNL ODF; and N. Srinivas Rao, Head – Operations & Sales, Ul-

tratech. The session was moderated by Dr. Jay Prakash Srivastava, Assistant Professor, Mechanical Engineering at GITAM. The second panel, "The Strategic Shift: From Horsepower to Compute Power," included Dr. Saurabh Srivastava, CEO, Dronevision Industrial AI Drone; Dr. A. Krishna Kanth, CTO, MOSarts; Y. Shameer, Director – Analog Engineering, Analog Port; Vamsi Magapu, Functional Excellence Lead, Bosch; and Priyanka Mathuria, SMTS Design Engineer, GlobalFoundries. The discussion was moderated by Parnika Suresh Surisetty, a third-year B.Tech (ECEE) student.

The third panel discussion, "Building Competencies Beyond Technical Skills: Opportunities in Core Engineering," featured Praneeth Naran, University Relations, Bosch, and Nishita Roy, Talent Acquisition Lead,

Stellantis. The session was moderated by L. Vamsi Krishna, representative from CGC.

During their visit, the panelists toured the state-of-the-art laboratories and infrastructure at the GITAM School of Core Engineering and appreciated the university's efforts in establishing world-class facilities to support advanced learning and research.

Earlier, Prof. D. S. Rao, Pro Vice-Chancellor, delivered the welcome address, while Prof. Ramesh Vaddi, Director, School of Core Engineering, expressed confidence in the success of the event. K. Vasudev, Assistant Manager, CGC, proposed the vote of thanks. Dr. K. Mamata Reddy, Director, CGC also attend. The conclave witnessed enthusiastic participation from faculty members and students of the School of Core Engineering.

Heavy penalty of Rs.4,74,17,729 imposed on Bharathi Builders Pvt Ltd

- **Illegal collection of funds under the name of pre-launch scheme**
- **Declared as a "Defaulter Promoter" for multiple violations of regulations**
- **Directions issued to refund amounts to the buyers within 60 days**
- **Orders issued by the Telangana RERA Authority**

HYDERABAD

The Telangana Real Estate Regulatory Authority (TG RERA) has taken strict action against Bharathi Builders Private Limited in connection with the "Bharathi Lake View Apartments" project located at Kompally in Medchal-Malkajgiri district. After examining the complaints filed by several aggrieved homebuyers, the Authority strongly condemned the conduct of the builder. The promoter had collected substantial amounts from purchasers through pre-launch offers in the year 2021, promising to complete the project

within 24 months. However, the promoter failed to fulfil the commitment. The Authority expressed serious concern that funds were collected without obtaining registration under the Real Estate (Regulation and Development) Act, and without undertaking any construction activity.

In view of the absence of any indication that the project would be completed, the Authority clarified that the buyers cannot be compelled to continue in the project. Accordingly, the Authority directed the promoter to refund the entire amounts paid by the complainants along with interest as prescribed under Rule 15 of the Telangana Real Estate Rules, 2017, within a period of 60 days. The Authority also held that other one more entity named Sree Bharathi Builders involved in the development of the project fall within the definition of "Promoter", and therefore all such entities shall be jointly and severally liable to refund the amounts to the buyers.

Further, for violating the statutory provisions of the Act, the Authority declared Bharathi Builders Private Limited as a "Defaulter Promoter" and imposed a penalty

of ₹3,55,63,297. It was also noted that this penalty is in addition to an earlier penalty of ₹1,18,54,432 imposed in previous proceedings for similar violations.

TG RERA cautioned homebuyers that "pre-launch" offers or schemes in projects that are not registered under RERA are strictly prohibited under the law, and advised buyers not to participate in such schemes. Purchasers investing in such projects may lose several important protections provided under the RERA framework. In particular, projects without RERA registration do not come under the regulatory oversight of the Authority. Buyers may also lose the financial safeguards available in registered projects, including legal safeguard arising from mortgage of 10% project area with the planning authority and the mandatory escrow bank account mechanism applicable to RERA-registered projects.

The Authority therefore advised prospective buyers to verify the registration status of any real estate project on the official TG RERA portal (<https://rera.telangana.gov.in>) before entering into any transaction.

SCR Women's Welfare Organization



Felicitates Women Employees for Meritorious Service

HYDERABAD

South Central Railway Women's Welfare Organization (SCRWVO) felicitated 66 women Railway employees of the Zone with certificate of merit and gifts in recognition of their meritorious and dedicated services today i.e., 13th March, 2026 at Rail Nilayam Auditorium, Secunderabad. Smt. Vandana Srivastava, President, SCRWVO; Smt. Amitha Prakash, Vice-president; Smt. Aparna Murali, Secretary; Smt. Vaishali Khade, Treasurer; Smt. D Malathi, Deputy Chief Personnel Officer/Welfare, SCR, executive committee members of SCRWVO and staff participated in the program.

Addressing the gathering, Smt. Vandana Srivastava appreciated the employees for their hard work and commitment towards Indian Railways. She stated that International Women's Day gives us an opportunity to reflect on the struggles



and sacrifices of women in the past who have fought for our rights. It reminds us of the progress that has been made so far in terms of providing education, jobs for our women while also giving us an opportunity to continue working towards a better future. She emphasized that women should be given equal opportunities, respect and safety so that they can thrive in all spheres of life.

Speaking on the occasion, Ms. D. Mal-

athi, Dy. CPO, SCR elaborated on the theme for this year's women's day which is 'Give to Gain'. She stated that the theme reminds us that the progress women have made today is a result of the efforts and sacrifices of the previous generations. She also cited examples of several prominent women from history and contemporary times whose achievements have brought pride to the nation and paved the way for future generations.

CSIR - IICT, Laghu Udyog Bharati hold industry meet to boost msme tech adoption

HYDERABAD

The Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) - Indian Institute of Chemical Technology (CSIR-IICT), Hyderabad, organized an industry interaction meet with Laghu Udyog Bharati on Friday to strengthen collaboration between scientific research institutions and the MSME sector. The programme, held at the Swami Vivekananda Auditorium of the institute, brought together around 75 entrepreneurs from various sectors, including chemicals, APIs, polymers, food processing, energy and environmental technologies. The meeting was organized by the Business Development & Research Management (BDRM) division of the institute. Addressing the gathering, CSIR-IICT Director D. Srinivasa Reddy said the institute is committed to translating scientific research into technologies that benefit industry and society. He highlighted indigenous technologies developed by the institute, including Hydrazine Hydrate process technology, API manufacturing processes, catalytic technologies for specialty chemicals and biomethanation solutions for waste-to-energy. He said partnerships between research institutions and MSMEs are crucial to accelerate innovation, strengthen domestic manufacturing and support the vision of an Atmanirbhar Bharat.

Telangana targets Global Agri Markets as FTCCI hosts seminar on export opportunities

HYDERABAD

The Federation of Telangana Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FTCCI), in association with the Directorate General of Foreign Trade (DGFT) and the Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APE-DA), organized a seminar on "Emerging Export Opportunities in Food & Agri Products from Telangana – Impact of FTAs" here on Friday.

Telangana Agriculture Minister Tummalala Nageswara Rao, who inaugurated the seminar, said the state has emerged as the largest producer of paddy in the country and must now focus on exports, value addition and food processing to ensure better returns for farmers.

He stressed the need for strengthening grading, processing, packaging, branding and adherence to international quality standards so that Telangana's agricultural products can compete in global markets. The minister said the state government, under Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy, is focusing on expanding food processing infrastructure, including the Mega Food Park coming up at Buggapadu in Khammam district.

FTCCI President R. Ravi Kumar said Telangana produces nearly 168 lakh metric tonnes of rice annually and has strong export potential in rice, spices, fruits, vegetables and processed food products. He called for strengthening export infrastructure such as pack houses, cold chain networks, food testing labs and refrigerated logistics to support exporters. Officials from DGFT and APE-DA briefed the participants on export procedures, global market access, Free Trade Agreements (FTAs), export finance and quality compliance.

DGFT Joint Director General Akshay SC explained that Free Trade Agreements help reduce tariffs and trade barriers between countries, making exports easier and more competitive.

APEDA Regional Head R.P. Naidu said the authority promotes exports of over 700 agricultural and processed food products, with exports reaching about Rs.2.45 lakh crore last year. He noted that Nizamabad has emerged as an important rice processing hub, with several mills exporting non-basmati rice to the United States. The seminar featured technical sessions and panel discussions on "export finance, credit insurance, documentation, and product-specific export opportunities from Telangana", with participation from exporters, food processors, agri-entrepreneurs and Farmer Producer Organizations. K.K. Maheshwari, senior vice president of FTCCI, proposed the vote of thanks.

Panchayat secretary caught in ACB trap

HYDERABAD/GADWAL,

Officials of the Telangana Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB) on Friday caught a Panchayat Secretary red-handed while allegedly accepting a bribe of Rs.15,000 in Jogulamba Gadwal district. The accused officer, Boya Ranganna, Panchayat Secretary of Eklaspur village in Leeja mandal, was trapped at the office of the Mandal Parishad Development Officer (MPDO) after he allegedly demanded money from a complainant to process housing scheme payments. According to ACB officials, Ranganna initially demanded Rs.20,000 – Rs.5,000 for each of

the four instalments of "Indiramma Housing Scheme" house construction assistance. Following the complainant's request, he reportedly agreed to accept Rs.15,000. ACB officials said the accused was caught while accepting the bribe at the MPDO office premises in Leeja mandal. The tainted amount was recovered from his possession during the operation. Officials stated that the Panchayat Secretary allegedly misused his official position and acted dishonestly to obtain undue advantage for releasing the first instalment of the housing construction bill in the name of the complainant's wife and for facilitating the remaining instalments without interruption.

PROVISION OF REDUNDANCY
E-Tender Notice No. N-2025-26-TSK-NIT-38; Dated: 06-03-2026. E-tenders are invited by the undersigned for the following works: SN. 1; E-Tender No.: N-2025-26-TSK-T-38. Brief Description of Work: Provision of redundancy in power supply and media redundancy for BPAC in Tinsukia Division. Tender Value: ₹1,73,24,675.84; Earnest Money: ₹2,36,600.00; E-tender will be closed at 15:00 hrs. on 30-03-2026 and Opened after 15:00 hrs. on 30-03-2026. The complete information with the tender document of above e-tender will be available in website www.ireps.gov.in.
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SHORT TAKES

Harish Rao writes to Rahul Gandhi over 'Defection Double Standards'



HYDERABAD: March 13 (NS-S): Senior BRS leader and MLA T Harish Rao has written an open letter to Rahul Gandhi, Leader of Opposition in Lok Sabha, questioning the Congress party's commitment to constitutional values over the alleged defection of Danam Nagender in Telangana. In the letter, the BRS legislator claimed that Nagender, who was elected to the Telangana Legislative Assembly on a BRS ticket, contested the Lok Sabha election using an official Congress B-Form issued by the Indian National Congress. Calling it a matter of public record, the BRS leader questioned why the Speaker of the Telangana Legislative Assembly had reportedly stated that there was "no evidence of defection". He asked what constitutes evidence under the anti-defection provisions of the Constitution's Tenth Schedule if contesting elections on another party's ticket while continuing as MLA does not qualify. The BRS leader said he had already written to the Speaker seeking action under the anti-defection law but alleged that the Congress government in Telangana appeared unwilling to act.

DGP B. Shivadhar Reddy Condolences the Demise of Former DGP H. J. Dora



HYDERABAD Telangana State Director General of Police B. Shivadhar Reddy expressed deep condolences over the demise of H. J. Dora, a distinguished IPS officer who rendered remarkable services as the Director General of Police of the united Andhra Pradesh. H. J. Dora, who was born in 1943 in Srikakulam district, belonged to the 1965 batch of the Indian Police Service and earned a unique reputation in the police department for his exemplary service. Shivadhar Reddy expressed grief that with his passing, the police force has lost a dedicated mentor and guide. He recalled that during his tenure as DGP, H. J. Dora introduced an innovative program called "Retreat", aimed at reviewing reforms needed in the police department. Inspired by that initiative, after nearly two and a half decades, the Telangana Police Department revived the

"Retreat" program on March 8 and 9, with Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy attending as the chief guest, Shivadhar Reddy said. Dora himself participated in the inaugural event on March 8, offering guidance and sharing his message with police officers. Shivadhar Reddy said it was extremely saddening to hear the news of his death so soon after that event. The DGP praised Dora for initiating several innovative measures in the united Andhra Pradesh Police, including the establishment of a public relations system within the police department. Recalling his personal association, Shivadhar Reddy said that when he was serving as SP of Nalgonda district, Dora described him as a mature IPS officer — a compliment he still cherishes. He remembered Dora as someone who had great affection for him personally and who always encouraged him in

the discharge of his duties. Because of this encouragement, Dora also posted him as SP of Srikakulam, his own native district. The DGP highlighted that the revolutionary reforms and welfare schemes introduced by H. J. Dora in the police department would remain memorable. Dora launched innovative welfare programs focusing on security and health protection for police personnel. He also played a key role in promoting cultural awareness within the police force by establishing police cultural troupes, which served as a counter to the cultural wing Jana Natya Mandali associated with CPI (ML) People's War Naxalites. Shivadhar Reddy explained that during a crucial phase in the fight against Naxalism, Dora focused on strengthening the capabilities of the police forces. He prepared the Andhra Pradesh Police for a decisive battle

against Naxalites, which eventually resulted in heavy losses for them and forced them to leave the state around 2009–2010, taking refuge in Dandakaranya. He also recalled Dora's major contributions in strengthening the police training system by establishing District Training Centres (DTCs), Commissionerate Training Centres (CTCs), and Battalion Training Centres (BTCs). Dora was deeply concerned about the welfare of lower-level personnel and constantly encouraged young officers, acting as a guiding mentor to them. Shivadhar Reddy said Dora left an indelible mark on the police department and will always be remembered as a visionary leader. Expressing profound condolences to Dora's family members, DGP B. Shivadhar Reddy said that with the passing of a leader who served for a long time as the DGP of the united Andhra Pradesh, the police force has lost a great guide.

Condolence message from Union Minister Kishan Reddy on the demise of former DGP H. J. Dora

HYDERABAD

I express my deep sorrow on learning about the demise of former DGP Shri H. J. Dora. The services he rendered as the DGP of the erstwhile united state, and his integrity, honesty, dedication, and administrative ability in maintaining law and order will always be remembered. He also served at the national level as the Director of CISF at the Centre. In particular, the services rendered by Shri Dora

to the Sri Sathya Sai Baba Ashram in Puttaparthi are memorable. Even after retirement, he continued to contribute towards reforms in the policing system. The demise of H. J. Dora is an irreparable loss to the police fraternity. I convey my heartfelt condolences to his family members and pray to God for the eternal peace of his soul. If you want, I can also make a short media/press release version in English (3–4 lines) which is commonly used for news circulation.

KCR expressed his condolences demise of H.J Dora



GAJWEL

BRS chief and the first Chief Minister of Telangana, KCR, expressed his condolences over the demise of former senior police officer H. J. Dora, who served as the DGP of the erstwhile united state. KCR recalled that H. J. Dora served in

several positions in the police department and introduced innovative reforms while working for the protection of law and order. He conveyed his deep sympathies to the bereaved family members. If you want, I can also make it more formal for a press release or news report.

Sharing Light this Ugadi: Radhika Reddy's Earnest Support for Leprosy Patients

MEDCHAL-MALKAJIGIRI

In a moving gesture of compassion and service, Radhika Reddy Tanguturu, founder of Radhika Charitable Trust (RCT), visited the Shivananda Rehabilitation Centre to spend time with its residents and staff. The visit, just ahead of Ugadi, carried a message of dignity, hope, and shared humanity for those living with leprosy.

Radhika Reddy's day at the centre was centered on connection and understanding. She engaged with the residents, listening to their daily challenges and acknowledging the resilience that defines the community at the rehabilitation facility. The conversations underscored the nuanced realities of life for leprosy patients—stigma, accessibility to basic needs, and the importance of fostering a supportive environment where everyone can thrive.

In a heartfelt message she shared during the visit, Radhika Reddy said: "Every person deserves to be seen, heard, and valued. Ugadi is a reminder that new beginnings come with responsibility—to care for one another, especially those who carry society's silent burdens. Today, I stand with these families, not just with supplies, but with a promise to walk beside them toward dignity and brighter days." Her words reflected a deep conviction



that compassion must be a sustained, everyday practice, not a one-time gesture. In the spirit of Ugadi, Radhika Reddy extended her support beyond words by distributing essential items and basic necessities to the patients. The act was designed to bring festive cheer and ensure that residents could observe Ugadi with dignity and comfort. The items included everyday essentials that can ease daily living and contribute to a sense of well-being during a time of celebration.

"Compassion is a collective responsibility," Radhika Reddy reiterated during the visit. "As we celebrate Ugadi, we must remember the marginalized and extend a hand of solidarity. Radhika Charitable Trust is committed to supporting vulnerable communities and advancing their rehabilitation and welfare." Her remarks highlighted a broader ethic of service that the Trust seeks to embody in its ongoing work.

Staff at the Shivananda Rehabilitation Centre expressed gratitude for the thoughtful outreach. They appreciated Radhika Reddy's sustained concern and the tangible help that the Trust's involvement brings to the lives of residents. The collaboration between the centre's team and RCT reflects a shared vision of empathy, dignity, and practical support for those navigating health and social challenges. The visit served as a poignant reminder of the enduring power of empathy and the joy of giving, especially during festive seasons. It showcased how small acts—paired with sustained commitment—can illuminate the path toward greater inclusion and community resilience. As Ugadi approaches, the story of Radhika Reddy Tanguturu's outreach stands as a testament to the healing power of humanity in action—where care, respect, and generosity illuminate the path toward a more inclusive future.

Early Classrooms Build the Nation's Foundation

By Dr. Lion Komati Reddy Gopal Reddy

Eminent Educationist, Environmentalist & TRSMA National Advisor

HYDERABAD

Early childhood is the most sensitive and decisive stage in a child's life. The period between three and six years forms the intellectual, emotional, social, and physical foundation of a human being. What children experience during these years influences their learning ability, personality, and values for the rest of their lives. Therefore, preschool education should never be viewed merely as a preparatory stage for primary school; it is the stage where the true foundations of life and learning are built.

Preschool classrooms provide children with their first meaningful exposure to the world outside their homes. In this environment, children gradually learn how to interact with others, follow routines, and participate in collective activities. These experiences help them develop discipline, cooperation, patience, and respect for others. At this age, learning must happen through joy, curiosity, and exploration rather than pressure and rigid academic instruction.

Scientific research in education and child psychology clearly shows that play-based learning is the most effective ap-



proach for young children. Activities such as storytelling, drawing, singing, building blocks, puzzles, and role-playing stimulate imagination and creativity.

They also strengthen fine motor skills, language development, and problem-solving abilities. Through such playful engagement, children begin to understand basic concepts like numbers, letters, shapes, colours, and patterns in a natural and enjoyable manner.

Another critical benefit of preschool education is social development. When children interact with peers in a classroom environment, they learn the values of sharing, empathy, communication, and teamwork. These early social experi-

ences shape their emotional intelligence and build the confidence required to face future academic and social challenges.

Preschools also help children develop independence and self-confidence. Simple routines such as organizing their belongings, participating in group activities, or expressing their thoughts help them build a sense of responsibility and self-identity.

Teachers in early classrooms therefore play a vital role not only as educators but also as mentors who guide children toward curiosity, creativity, and character building.

In today's rapidly changing world, education systems must recognize that strong foundations lead to strong futures. Investing in quality preschool education means investing in the intellectual and moral strength of the nation. Schools must ensure safe, stimulating, and child-friendly environments where learning happens through exploration and discovery.

On the occasion of National Preschooler's Day, it is important for parents, educators, and policymakers to understand that the future of our society begins in these early classrooms. If we nurture curiosity, creativity, and compassion in children during their earliest years, we will build not only better students but also responsible citizens and thoughtful human beings. Early classrooms do not simply prepare children for school; they prepare them for life.

Grand Celebrations of Kalvakuntla Kavitha's Birthday

Large turnout of Jagruthi leaders and supporters

HYDERABAD

The birthday celebrations of Telangana Jagruthi President Kalvakuntla Kavitha were held in a grand manner on Friday. After midnight on Thursday, Jagruthi leaders cut a cake and began the celebrations.

On Friday morning, Vedic scholars blessed her, and Banjara priests also offered their blessings. A large number of Jagruthi leaders, party workers, supporters, and well-wishers gathered to wish her a happy birthday.

Kavitha cut a cake along with supporters at the Telangana Jagruthi office. On this occasion, Jagruthi leaders and workers expressed their admiration by honoring her with large garlands. Several leaders, well-wishers, workers, and prominent personalities met her personally and conveyed their birthday wishes.

Across the state as well, Jagruthi leaders and supporters



celebrated Kavitha's birthday in a grand manner. Earlier, at her residence, Banjara spiritual leaders and Vedic scholars offered Vedic blessings to her.

Huge Portrait Made with Wheat In Uttar Pradesh, a large portrait of Kalvakuntla Kavitha made using wheat grains was displayed. In Moradabad, an artist named Javed Malik created a massive portrait of Kavitha holding a Bathukamma on a building terrace using wheat grains.

This artwork was arranged by Telangana Jagruthi youth leaders Maillaram Arun Reddy and Krishna Reddy, who belong to Nizamabad district, to convey birthday wishes to Kavitha.

Documentary Released

On the occasion of Telangana Jagruthi President Kalvakuntla Kavitha's birthday, Jagruthi leader Chinnu Goud produced a documentary. The documentary was released at Prasad Labs by Aditya, Kavitha's son.

Hyd Emerging as a Global Hub for Innovation and Investments

Minister Sridhar Babu

HYDERABAD

Hyderabad has been transformed into a centre of innovation supported by world-class infrastructure, said D. Sridhar Babu, Minister for IT, Industries and Commerce. He noted that the city has become a key hub not only for IT and electronics but also for the pharmaceutical, defense, and aviation industries. Hyderabad is steadily evolving into a global hub for innovation and investments, he added.

A German delegation visiting India to study industrial development across BRICS countries, investment-friendly ecosystems, and the impact of advanced technologies met Minister Sridhar Babu at the Secretariat. Members of the delegation included representatives from Global Bridges, an international non-profit organisation. During the meeting, the Minister discussed Telangana's industrial opportunities and the incentives the state government offers to international investors.

Sridhar Babu emphasised that the Telangana government is at the forefront in the country in im-



plementing innovative policies to effectively address the challenges posed by a rapidly changing global landscape. He highlighted that the state ensures uninterrupted power supply and reliable water availability for industries. Regardless of changes in governments, progressive industrial policies have been continued to provide stability and confidence to investors, he said.

The Minister also noted that Hyderabad's geographical location at the heart of India, its pleasant climate throughout the year, and its vibrant cosmopolitan culture create a welcoming environment that makes people from across the world feel at home. He further stated that the ambitious Future City project is rapidly taking shape in the southern part of

Hyderabad. As part of this initiative, projects such as the AI City, Net Zero City, and the Young India Skills University are being developed, which will lay a strong foundation for the state's future. With abundant human resources and a deep talent pool, Telangana ensures that industries never face a shortage of skilled professionals, he said.

The government is also equipping both working professionals and newly graduated engineers with advanced technological skills through large-scale skilling and re-skilling initiatives, preparing them for global challenges. The semiconductor sector is gaining momentum in Telangana, with companies from Taiwan and Korea already initiating activities in chip design

and manufacturing. Several global players are also coming forward to establish data centres in the state. With Germany's technological expertise, Telangana can advance even further in the engineering sector, the Minister said.

He reiterated that the government is committed to steering Telangana towards becoming a \$3 trillion economy by 2047, marking 100 years of India's independence. Members of the German delegation present at the meeting included Dr. Stefan Traeger, Dr. Christian Altenhofen, Frank Bierhorst, Alexander von Kramm, Malte Hohlfeld, Philipp Meyerhofer, and Max Millan von Leyer. Director of Industries Nikhil Chakravarthy also attended the meeting.

PNG connections for hotels, hostels in Gujarat

AHMEDABAD: (MAR 13)

The Gujarat government has decided to provide new PNG (piped natural gas) connections to restaurants, hotels, educational institutes and socio-religious institutions located in areas where city pipeline distribution network is available, if they apply for the facility. The decision was taken on Friday at a high-level meeting chaired by Chief Minister Bhupendra Patel. The meeting reviewed the status of PNG and petroleum products in the state in the backdrop of the ongoing conflict in West Asia which has severely disrupted global energy supplies. "The CM took an important decision -- that in the areas of the state where pipeline network for city gas distribution is available, restaurants, hotels, educational institutions and socio-religious institutions demanding new PNG connections will be given the same with immediate effect as per their needs," stated an official release.

Rahul doesn't know history: UP minister

LUCKNOW: (MAR 13)

UP minister Asim Arun on Friday said Rahul Gandhi's attempt to lay claim to Kanshi Ram's legacy was "artificial", claiming that the Congress leader had "no knowledge of history or geography". Arun was reacting to Gandhi's remarks at an event here in Lucknow that if Jawaharlar Nehru had been alive, then Kanshi Ram would have been made a chief minister from the Congress. In a statement issued here, Asim Arun said Kanshi Ram founded the Bahujan Samaj Party specifically to oppose the Congress.

J-K court clears 3 in terror harbouring case

SRINAGAR: (MAR 13)

A court in Jammu and Kashmir's Bandipora district has acquitted three persons accused of harbouring terrorists who killed a BJP leader and his two family members five years ago. District and sessions judge Mir Wajah, who is also the special judge designated under the National Investigation Agency (NIA), acquitted the three accused after holding that the prosecution failed to prove its case. "The accused, Abrar Gulzar Khan, Muneer Ahmad Sheikh and Mohammad Waqar Lone, all from Bandipora, are hereby acquitted of the charge under Section 39 of the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act by benefit of doubt. They are ordered to be set at liberty forthwith if not required to be detained in connection with any other case, subject to verification by the jail authorities," the judge said in the 89-page order passed on Wednesday.

Over 25 Congress MLAs meet in Bengaluru amid Karnataka CM change buzz

Over 25 Congress MLAs met in Bengaluru to discuss political instability amid CM change speculation, as DK Shivakumar's leadership signals and recent meetings fuel talk of a possible transition in Karnataka.

More than 25 senior legislators of the Congress party gathered for a dinner meeting at a private hotel in Bengaluru on Thursday evening, discussing political instability within the party and growing speculation about a possible change in Karnataka's chief minister.

The meeting took place even as Chief Minister Siddaramaiah was chairing a cabinet meeting at Vidhana Soudha, adding to the political buzz surrounding the gathering.

Sources said the legislators spoke at length about concerns that the party's image has taken a dent in recent



months and warned that internal issues could affect the government's prospects over the next two years and the 2028 Karnataka Assembly elections. Several leaders reportedly expressed unease over the party's current political direction and called for corrective steps. More than 50 legislators had skipped the Congress Legislature Party (CLP) meeting a day earlier, raising eyebrows within the party. Adding to the concern,

only about 20 lawmakers later turned up for the Chief Minister's dinner following the meeting. The internal discussions have unfolded at a time when speculation over a possible leadership transition in the Karnataka Congress has intensified. Political observers say recent meetings and public appearances by senior leaders have added to the buzz around the party's future leadership in the state.

SHIVAKUMAR COM-

PLETES SIX YEARS AS KPCC CHIEF

A dinner hosted by Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar on Tuesday to mark six years as Karnataka Pradesh Congress Committee (KPCC) president has triggered fresh political speculation within the ruling Congress, even as the much-discussed leadership transition in the state remains unresolved. Chief Minister Siddaramaiah attended the dinner, which many in political circles viewed as part of the ongoing political signalling within the party over future leadership. The event followed another gathering last week when several legislators believed to be aligned with Shivakumar met at a Bengaluru hotel to celebrate the birthday of Magadi MLA HC Balakrishna. The gathering was widely interpreted in political circles as a show of strength by the deputy chief minister's camp. Speaking

about his political future, Shivakumar struck a measured tone. "I have confidence in myself whatever is destined will come at the right time," he said. Over the past several months, Shivakumar has made multiple visits to New Delhi and met Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge amid speculation about his possible elevation to the chief minister's post. Siddaramaiah, who attended Shivakumar's dinner, praised his organisational skills and commitment to the party in a post on X. "Though younger than me, he has a bright political future ahead. The Congress should return to power in 2028. I too will stand with him in the party's organisational efforts and struggles towards that goal," Siddaramaiah wrote. The developments come amid continued speculation within political circles about leadership dynamics in the Karnataka Congress government.

Kerala HC defers plea on Sabarimala gold theft

KOCHI, MARCH 13

The Kerala High Court on Friday made it clear that it will not interfere in the ongoing investigation into the alleged gold theft linked to Sabarimala Temple, observing that a competent officer is handling the investigation under judicial supervision. Social news platform The Bench underlined that the observation came when the court considered a petition seeking a probe by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) into the incident, popularly referred to as the Sabarimala gold theft case.

A Devaswom Bench of the High Court said the investigation is being carried out by "one of the best investigating officers in the state," and therefore, there is no reason to present for the court to intervene or order a Central agency probe.

The Bench also clarified that certain observations made by the trial court while granting bail to the accused cannot be the sole basis for transferring the investigation to another agency.

Such remarks, the court indicated, do not automatically warrant judicial interference in an ongoing probe.

The High Court further noted that the investigation is already proceeding under its oversight, adding that



the judiciary would step in only if compelling circumstances arise. Importantly, the Bench underlined that courts cannot be guided by general public perception or speculation surrounding a case. The judiciary, it said, must rely strictly on the materials placed on record and the progress of the investigation rather than the narrative evolving in the public domain. The petition seeking a CBI investigation has been posted for further consideration after one week, giving the court time to review the progress of the ongoing probe. The alleged gold theft connected to Sabarimala has drawn considerable public attention in recent weeks, with demands emerging from certain quarters for a Central agency probe. However, with the High Court indicating its reluctance to intervene at this stage, the investigation will continue under the present arrangement. Of the 13 accused in the two SIT charge sheets, nine of them have so far managed to get bail.

₹2,670 cr credited to farmers under Annadata Sukheebhava

AMARAVATI:

Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu stated that the NDA coalition government is focusing more on farmers welfare and committed to modernise agricultural sector using technology.

The Chief Minister participating in the "PM-Kisan - Annadata Sukheebhava" third installment fund release program held at Surampalli in Gannavaram constituency of Krishna district along with farmers, virtually watched Prime Minister Narendra Modi's address from Guwahati. From Assam, the Prime Minister and the Chief Minister together credited Rs 2,670 crore directly into the bank accounts of 46.85 lakh farmers in the state. The Chief Minister stated



that due to the impact of the ongoing global conflicts, agricultural and poultry products such as bananas and eggs are facing market challenges and the government is exploring alternative markets. Stating that he is son of a farmer and have complete understanding of agriculture, the Chief Minister said through the Pattiseema project ensured irrigation water for the Krishna delta and stabilized agriculture.



Now we are committed to completing Polavaram, the lifeline of the state. He said the government's goal is to bring modernization into agriculture. Technologies such as seed sowing through drones and drip irrigation are being promoted. The state also plans to establish an Indian School of Agriculture, on the lines of the Indian School of Business, to provide farmers with advanced guidance in modern

farming methods. Additionally, a Cocoa City over 500 acres will be established in Eluru district. The Chief Minister said that apart from financial assistance, the government has procured 4.7 million metric tonnes of paddy and ensured payments within 24 hours. Aqua farmers are being supplied electricity at Rs 1.50 per unit. Local public representatives and farmers participated.

2 IPS officers oppose central deputation in HC

NAINITAL: (MAR 13)

Two senior IPS officers of the Uttarakhand cadre filed a petition in the high court challenging their deputation to posts allegedly lower than their current rank in central forces.

A division bench of Chief Justice Manoj Kumar Gupta and Justice Subhash Upadhyay, hearing the petition, sought a response from the government on the matter.

According to the petition, through an order by the Union Home Ministry, Garg, a 2005-batch IPS officer, was posted as deputy inspector general (DIG) in the Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP), while Joshi, a 2006-batch IPS officer, was appointed as DIG in the Border Security Force (BSF).

DRI busts Alprazolam factory in Andhra

AMARAVATI, MARCH 13

In a significant crackdown on the illicit manufacture of synthetic drugs, the Directorate of Revenue Intelligence (DRI) has busted a clandestine facility engaged in the production of Alprazolam, a psychotropic substance under the NDPS Act, 1985, in Andhra Pradesh.

The DRI raided the factory at Kondapalli Industrial Development Area of NTR district and seized 237 kg of drugs worth R.47 crore. It also seized 3.5 tonnes of chemicals and arrested two persons.

An intelligence-driven and well-coordinated operation codenamed "Operation White



Hammer", carried out on March 11-12, revealed a full-fledged industrial setup for the production of Alprazolam, operating under the guise of a chemical manufacturing unit. Searches at the premises resulted in the seizure of 237 kg of Alprazolam having an

estimated market value of Rs 47 crore, along with over 800 kg of key raw materials, 2860 litres of various chemicals, and industrial-scale equipment such as reactors, driers and a centrifuge, demonstrating an organised, large-scale clandestine manufacturing

facility, the DRI said in a release. Preliminary investigation revealed the operation was orchestrated by a chemist with over 20 years' experience in the chemical and pharmaceutical sector, in collusion with his associate, who arranged raw materials and distribution in Hyderabad. The accused had rented the factory premises for clandestinely manufacturing Alprazolam. Both masterminds have been arrested. During the current financial year, DRI has dismantled eight clandestine drug manufacturing units through intelligence-based operations, reaffirming its firm commitment to the government's Nasha Mukta Bharat

Abhiyaan and to safeguarding society and people from the menace of narcotic and psychotropic substances.

Meanwhile, in Hyderabad, the city police arrested four drug peddlers and seized 3.2 kg of Ganja.

On a tip of information, in different operations, the sleuths of Commissioner's Task Force, Charminar Zone team, Hyderabad, in coordination with the staff of Attapur, Chandrayangutta and Mailardevpally Police Stations, apprehended two interstate ganja transporters and two local peddlers who were transporting and selling dry ganja and seized 3.2 kgs of dry Ganja.

78 surrendered Maoists from Sukma witness Chhattisgarh Assembly proceedings

RAIPUR, MARCH 13

In a symbolic step towards rehabilitation and mainstream integration, 78 surrendered Maoists from Sukma district visited the Chhattisgarh Legislative Assembly in Raipur on Friday. The group, comprising former cadres who once operated in the dense jungles of Bastar, observed live proceedings of the House — the very "Temple of Democracy" they had long rejected under Maoist ideology.

Organised under the state's "surrender and rehabilitation policy", the educational tour aimed to expose these individuals to the democratic process, demonstrating how elected



representatives debate and enact laws for public welfare. The visit marked a profound shift; feet that once traversed guerrilla paths with weapons now climbed the Assembly steps as citizens seeking reintegration. Upon arrival, the former Maoists watched the session from the visitors' gallery, gaining insights into

legislative functioning, constituency representation and governance. They also interacted with senior officials, including Forest and Climate Change Minister Kedar Kashyap, who engaged with the group. Sukma MLA Kawasaki Lakshma, a former minister hailing from the district, personally welcomed them, praising

their courage in abandoning violence and wishing them success in rebuilding their lives. The surrendered individuals described the experience as "eye-opening". Many expressed astonishment at the contrast between the democratic realities they witnessed and the distorted narratives of state oppression propagated during their time in the forests. They now aspire to lead normal lives as law-abiding citizens, benefiting from government schemes providing food, shelter, skill training, employment opportunities and financial assistance. Chhattisgarhi's rehabilitation approach extends beyond weapon surrender.

It emphasises holistic reintegration through exposure programmes like this tour, intended to foster trust in constitutional institutions and promote dialogue over armed conflict. Official figures indicate a significant surge in surrenders: over 2,500 Maoists have laid down arms in the past year and a half, with thousands more surrendering in recent years amid intensified security operations and development initiatives in Bastar. The government has reiterated its commitment to eradicating Left Wing Extremism by March 31, 2026, combining firm counter-insurgency measures with rehabilitation initiatives.

CPI-M's Govindan confident of LDF retaining power in Kerala

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, MARCH 13

Even as recent electoral trends in Kerala have favoured the opposition, the Communist Party of India-Marxist (CPI-M) on Friday reiterated its confidence that the ruling Left Democratic Front (LDF) will retain power with a massive majority in the upcoming Assembly elections. The assertion was made by CPI-M State Secretary M.V. Govindan while speaking to the media here.

He said the process of finalising LDF candidates is nearing completion and that the names would be announced immediately after the election schedule is declared. However, the claim comes at a time when the Left

Front, ahead of every election held after the 2021 Assembly polls, and the CPI-M in particular, has made tall claims of sweeping the polls. But the political momentum appeared to shift in favour of the Congress-led opposition each time. In the 2024 Lok Sabha elections, when votes were counted in Kerala, the LDF managed to secure just one of the 20 seats in the state. This was followed by a series of by-elections in which, barring one constituency, the rest were won convincingly by the United Democratic Front (UDF). More recently, in the local body elections held in December, the Left had expressed confidence of repeating its dominance. The results, however, saw the Congress-led UDF register what party lead-

ers described as one of its best performances in the history of local body polls in Kerala. Despite these setbacks, Govindan on Friday maintained that the LDF would secure a decisive mandate in the next Assembly election.

He also criticised the foreign policy of the Central government, alleging that India's growing alignment with the US is undermining the country's sovereignty and self-reliance.

According to him, this policy shift began during Congress-led governments and is now being aggressively pursued by the government led by the Bharatiya Janata Party.

Govindan said India's traditional foreign policy had been to oppose what he termed American imperialism.

EDITORIAL

ARBITRARY AND OPAQUE:
THE TROUBLING
ROLLOUT OF EPS 2026

The manner in which the Employees' Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO)'s Central Board of Trustees (CBT) approved the Employees' Pension Scheme (EPS) 2026, on March 2, replacing the EPS 1995 scheme, has raised serious transparency concerns. This affects approximately 5.4 crore contributing members and 82 lakh pensioners. Although the EPS and the Employees' Provident Fund and Employees' Deposit-Linked Insurance Schemes were designed as a corollary to the Code on Social Security, 2020 — which was abruptly notified in November 2025 along with three other Codes — neither the government nor the Labour Ministry had, until now, given any hint of the new schemes. The stakeholders were not consulted by the authorities. More than any other scheme, the EPS 1995, has over the past decade, dominated headlines due to litigation in various courts, including the Supreme Court of India. Over the past 12 years, certain features of the scheme were altered, to the detriment of employees. For instance, coverage of the Pension Scheme was limited to those earning up to ₹15,000 a month, instead of offering universal coverage as originally intended. The pensionable salary calculation changed from the average pay in the last 12 months to 60 months, substantially reducing the amount of eligible pension. The unrestricted option for pension on a higher pension was limited to those who had exercised the option within a year of the modified scheme that came into force on September 1, 2014. With the Supreme Court's intervention in 2022, the higher pension option was extended to post-2014 retirees as a special case. Unfortunately, pre-2014 retirees were left in the lurch as the unrealistic conditions set by the PF body made most of them ineligible for higher pension.

In the new Pension Scheme approved by the CBT, the option provision has been removed as it is considered 'obsolete' for reflecting a narrow legal interpretation. Moreover, those hoping for an upward revision of the ₹15,000 PF contribution ceiling are disappointed, as no such indication has been given so far. Both the wage ceiling and the minimum pension of ₹1,000 were fixed over 11 years ago. The EPFO's overall approach seems to be aimed at reducing what authorities describe as the burden of pension commitment. With greater government funding and higher contributions from employers and willing employees, the EPFO can well meet pension challenges. A positive mindset along with empathy for pensioners and contributors is what is needed from the Union government and EPFO. A mere change of laws, regulations and procedures will not deliver the results desired by crores of members and lakhs of pensioners.



NO NEED



Crushed by life, yet standing tall,
A warrior who fights for all.
With hands that toil, with hearts sotruer,
They shape the world in colors new.

Men of honor, hands of clay,
Molding wonders every day.
The wise must see, the great must cheer,
For such bright souls deserve to steer.

A mirror now, a guiding light,
A beacon shining through the night.
For those to come, for days ahead,
A legacy in gold is spread.

No more requests, no desperate plea,
Let talent shine, let merit be!
Like gems that gleam in hidden stone,
Their worth is clear, their light well known.

Yet whispers crawl, the virus spreads,
Of favors won by bows and heads.
A table, a bed, a wedding, a feast,
A bribe to the highest, a gift to the least.

Shame! Oh shame! In every place,
A plague that stains, a deep disgrace.
This old disease still lingers on,
Yet hope must rise with every dawn.

If tomorrow changes, what a sight!
Like shadows fleeing from the light.
No more chains of greed and gain,
Let honor rise and truth remain.



...: Dr. Pureka Raju ...
7810032847

Kanshi Ram Bahujan
and the Movement



Kanshi Ram was born on 15 March 1934 in Khwaspur village of Ropar district into a simple Dalit family. His father's name was Hari Singh and his mother's name was Bishan Kaur. He belonged to a Dalit Ramdasia Sikh family. After completing his early education in the village, he graduated with a degree in science and later joined the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) as a scientific assistant. At that time, Kanshi Ram was working in a DRDO laboratory in Pune.

One day at the office, the holiday for Ambedkar Jayanti was removed from the official holiday list and replaced with the holiday of another religious festival. When a Dalit employee, Dina Bhana, protested and said that Dr. B. R. Ambedkar was an icon for Dalits and the architect of the Indian Constitution, so his birth anniversary should remain a holiday, the management did not listen to him. Instead, he was punished on charges of indiscipline. This incident deeply shook Kanshi Ram. He realized that even the followers and community of the person who drafted India's Constitution were still facing discrimination. During his job, he had the opportunity to closely observe caste discrimination and social inequality in society. These experiences eventually changed the direction of his life.

In the 1960s, he decided to dedicate his entire life to the upliftment of the marginalized sections of society. He resigned from his job and began a social movement. He believed that unless Dalits and backward classes were politically organized, they would not gain rights and respect. Kanshi Ram first tried to organize government employees. In 1978, he established BAMCEF (Backward and Minority Communities Employees Federation). The aim of this organization was

to prepare employees from Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, Other Backward Classes, and minority communities for social awareness.

Later, in 1981, he founded the Dalit Shoshit Samaj Sangharsh Samiti (DS-4). Its slogan was:

"Brahmin, Thakur, Bania chhod, baaki sab hain DS-4." (Leave aside Brahmins, Thakurs and Banias—everyone else belongs to DS-4.)

The objective of this organization was to prepare Dalits and backward classes to struggle for their social and political rights. Kanshi Ram's most significant contribution was the establishment of the Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) in 1984. The main aim of the party was to provide political power to Dalits, backward classes, tribals, and minority communities. Kanshi Ram's famous slogan was:

"Jiski jitni sankhya bhaari, uski utni hissedari."

(The greater the population, the greater the share in power.)

To increase the political participation of the Bahujan community, he traveled across the country and organized people.

As a result of his efforts, the BSP gradually emerged as a strong political force. He encouraged Mayawati to enter politics and entrusted her with leadership responsibilities. Later, Mayawati became the Chief Minister of Uttar

Pradesh four times.

Kanshi Ram believed that political power is the most effective means of social change. He often said that unless the Bahujan community participates in power, real change in their lives will not occur. He held thousands of meetings across the country, organized marches, and mobilized people. His efforts created political awareness among millions. His movement established a new social equation in Indian politics, known as "Bahujan politics."

In 1998, a World Dalit Conference was held in Kuala Lumpur, the capital of Malaysia. Kanshi Ram, Ram Vilas Paswan, Phoolan Devi, and others from India were invited, and I also attended. A significant number of Dalits from South India had migrated and settled there in earlier times. The conference was organized under the leadership of Panjamoorthy, who was a Member of Parliament there. In his speech, Kanshi Ram said that they would build such a strong organization of Bahujan castes in India that the upper castes would start protesting loudly.

I was surprised because he was speaking about organizing castes, whereas Dr. Ambedkar had envisioned a casteless society. In 2001, when the All India Confederation of SC/ST Organizations announced that one million Dalits would

convert to Buddhism, a major debate emerged among Dalits. When some people asked Kanshi Ram about it in Bhopal, he said that he would take Buddhist initiation along with millions of people. The impact of this statement was that some people did not participate in the movement due to the scale of the announcement.

In 1996, I was very close to him for a few months, though I do not know how it happened. At that time, Mayawati was the Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh, and Kanshi Ram lived at his residence on Humayun Road in Delhi. I used to visit him frequently, and if I could not go, he would call me. One day, his secretary Gautam told me that "Behenji (Mayawati) has come to know that you have become very close to Saheb." He said that Mayawati regularly kept track of who was visiting Kanshi Ram. Her sister Munni also used to keep an eye on such matters. Gautam warned me that my visits had come to Mayawati's notice, so I should be careful. After that, I suddenly stopped visiting. Later, when we met occasionally, he asked why I had stopped coming, but there was no answer I could give. By then it had become clear to everyone that no matter how close someone was to Kanshi Ram, if they came under Mayawati's suspicion, no one could protect them.

There is no doubt that Kanshi Ram contributed greatly to the political awakening of the community, but some questions remain unanswered. Due to free education and reservation in jobs, a Dalit middle class emerged, and it was this class that first stood firmly with Kanshi Ram with full dedication. However, some questions remain—for example, his aggression was mainly directed against the Congress, but he never spoke much against the RSS.

In his book "Chamcha Yug," he criticized Jagjivan Ram, one of the biggest Dalit leaders of the Congress, so strongly that many people began to dislike him. Interestingly, the Congress largely ignored this, but it eventually had to face the consequences. Due to the Congress vs. Ambedkar narrative, Dalits gradually moved away from the Congress, while the party remained silent. As a result, the Congress lost much of its support base in North India.

Undoubtedly, Kanshi Ram's life was full of struggles. Due to constant work and perhaps other reasons, he did not pay enough attention to his declining health, which led to his early demise. Wealth and family held little importance for him; the upliftment of society was always the purpose of his life.



DR. UDIT RAJ
(EX. IRS)

Member of Parliament
(2014-2019)
National Chairman-
Unorganised Workers and
Employees Congress (KKC)
National Spokesperson of
Congress

Rivers in Distress:

POLLUTION,
MINING &
DISAPPEARING
STREAMS
THREATEN
THEIR
EXISTENCE

India marks the 29th International Day of Action for Rivers on March 14 with the theme "Protect Rivers, Protect People," spotlighting urgent action against pollution, climate threats, and degradation facing sacred lifelines like the Ganga. Revered as mothers in Indian culture, these rivers have sustained civilizations, agriculture, and spirituality for millennia, yet face crises from industrial waste, plastics, and illegal mining. Initiatives like Namami Gange and community efforts are vital to restore their health and secure livelihoods.

When Rivers Suffer,
Civilizations Tremble

The importance of rivers in India is extremely deep and far-reaching. Rivers here are not merely flowing water bodies; they are the foundation of civilization, culture and spirituality. Since ancient times, rivers have been revered in Indian society. Rivers such as the Ganga, Yamuna and Saraswati are not just geographical entities but are regarded as "mother" in Indian culture. This reverence is not limited to religious belief alone; practically too, rivers have always been a vital source of life. If the Earth is considered our mother, then rivers are like her veins, carrying water across the land and giving it life. Life without water is unimaginable, which is why river conservation has become an important issue not only in India but across the world.

Keeping in view the deteriorating condition of rivers, the International Day of Action for Rivers is observed every year on March 14. The main aim of this day is to raise awareness about river conservation and strengthen policy efforts to protect them. This year marks the 29th International Day of Action for Rivers, being observed under the theme "Protect Rivers, Protect People". The theme highlights the urgent need to safeguard global river systems from climate impacts and, in turn, protect the communities and biodiversity that depend on them. Rivers are not just water sources; they are an integral part of our culture, livelihoods and future. If rivers remain healthy, only then can our future be secure.

For thousands of years, civilizations have developed along riverbanks in India. Whether it

was the Indus Valley Civilization or the Ganga-Yamuna Doab region, these areas played a central role in shaping economic, social and cultural life in ancient and medieval India. Even today, more than 4,000 small and large rivers flow across the country. Some originate in the Himalayas and are nourished by glaciers, while peninsular rivers mainly depend on rainfall. Major Himalayan rivers such as the Ganga, Yamuna, Brahmaputra, Sutlej, Jhelum, Chenab, Ravi and Beas play a crucial role in agriculture and water supply across northern India. Similarly, rivers flowing in southern India — including the Narmada, Godavari, Krishna, Kaveri, Tapi, Sabarmati, Mahi, Subarnarekha and Luni — fulfill the water needs of various states. Rivers are not just sources of water; they also help conserve rainwater and maintain soil moisture. This makes them extremely important for agriculture, livestock and other livelihoods.

In modern times, however, rivers are facing a serious crisis. Climate change, pollution, illegal mining and industrial waste are disturbing the ecological balance of rivers. In recent years, abnormal declines in river water levels have been observed. According to a report published in 2023, more than 50 percent of the world's river basins had below-normal water levels, deepening the global water crisis. It was also the third consecutive year when river levels showed abnormal decline, clearly reflecting the combined impact of climate change and human activities. India's most sacred and significant river, the Ganga, is also facing severe pollution threats. This river, approximate-

ly 2,510 kilometres long, receives waste from numerous cities and industries along its course, affecting the quality of its water. The Brahmaputra River, about 2,900 kilometres long and considered the lifeline of Assam, is also being affected by pollution sources. Sewage waste, oil and other contaminants entering the river are adversely affecting its ecosystem. This not only harms aquatic life but also impacts the livelihoods of local communities.

There are several major causes of river pollution, including industrial waste, plastic waste and illegal mining. Chemical and toxic substances released from industries enter rivers and pollute them. Although strict laws exist for the disposal of such waste, the lack of effective implementation continues to aggravate the problem. Plastic pollution has also emerged as a serious threat to rivers. According to a study, 20 of the world's most polluted rivers carry the majority of plastic waste into the oceans. China's Yangtze River alone transports around 333,000 tonnes of plastic into the oceans every year, while India's Ganga River contributes nearly 115,000 tonnes annually. Illegal mining further disrupts the natural structure and flow of rivers, negatively impacting biodiversity. Sand mining and other illegal activities damage river ecosystems and disturb their natural balance.

At present, several initiatives are being undertaken at both global and national levels to conserve rivers. The River Basin Atlas published by the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) provides detailed information about river catchment areas, which helps in better river

management and conservation. Apart from this, community participation, strict enforcement of laws and the implementation of sustainable development policies are essential for protecting rivers. Governments and non-governmental organizations are also running various river-cleaning campaigns. For instance, the Namami Gange Mission is a major government initiative aimed at restoring the cleanliness and ecological health of the Ganga.

Ultimately, the importance of rivers is not only environmental but also social and economic. They form the backbone of agriculture, industry, transportation and water supply. If rivers are not protected, the risks of water scarcity, food crisis and ecological imbalance will increase significantly. Therefore, conserving rivers is essential for securing our future. We must take concrete measures to keep rivers free from pollution and raise public awareness so that we can ensure a healthy and prosperous environment for future generations. Protecting rivers is not only the responsibility of governments; it is also the duty of every citizen. If collective efforts are made, our rivers can once again become clean, vibrant and life-giving.



YOGESH KUMAR
GOVAL

₹2,000 crore for drinking water in Himachal: Sukhu
UNA (HP): (MAR 13)

The Himachal Pradesh government is committed to providing clean drinking water to the people of the state and Rs 2,000 crore will be spent during the next financial year on modern water purification technology, Chief Minister Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu said on Friday. This will ensure better health and well-being of residents and protect them from diseases, he said in a statement issued here. Sukhu laid the foundation stone of Turak Panga drinking water scheme in Kullehar assembly constituency of Una district, to be constructed at a cost of Rs. 14.92 crore. This project will benefit over 10,000 residents of Budhan, Chamryari, Dhungle, Lathiani and Tanoh gram panchayats in the area, the statement added.

PRIME MINISTER SH NARENDRA MODI RELEASES 22ND INSTALLMENT OF PM-KISAN SAMMAN NIDHI YOJANA

CHANDIGARH, MARCH 13:

During an event held in Guwahati, Assam, today, Prime Minister Sh Narendra Modi directly transferred Rs 18,640 crore into the bank accounts of over 9.32 crore farmers across the country under the 22nd installment of the Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi Yojana. Out of this amount, Rs 328 crore was credited to the accounts of 15.86 lakh farmers in Haryana.

Haryana Chief Minister Sh Nayab Singh Saini attended the state-level 'PM Kisan Utsav Diwas' organized at the PWD Rest House in Panchkula as the Chief Guest. He also watched the live broadcast of Prime Minister Sh Narendra Modi's program online. Haryana Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare Minister Sh Shyam Singh Rana is also present on the occasion.

Rs 328 crore deposited into the Accounts of 15.86 lakh farmers in Haryana
Chief Minister Sh Nayab Singh Saini attends State-Level 'PM Kisan Utsav Diwas' in Panchkula as chief guest
Chief Minister expresses Gratitude to the Prime Minister for the 22nd installment



Haryana Chief Minister, Sh. Nayab Singh Saini watching the programme for the release of the 22nd installment of the Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi by Prime Minister, Sh. Narendra Modi in Guwahati, Assam, via an online medium, during the State-level Kisan Utsav in Panchkula on March 13, 2026. Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare Minister, Sh. Shyam Singh Rana is also seen in the picture.

Singh Rana, was also present on the occasion.

Interacting with the media persons after the event, Chief Minister Sh Nayab Singh Saini expressed his gratitude to Prime Minister Sh Narendra Modi for releasing the 22nd installment under the Pradhan Mantri Kisan

Samman Nidhi Yojana. He stated that this financial assistance serves as a testament to the assurance given to the country's farmers. It is a reaffirmation of the pledge that Prime Minister Sh Narendra Modi has taken for the welfare of our 'Annadatas' (food providers). The Chief

Minister emphasized that farmers are at the center of Prime Minister Sh Narendra Modi's schemes. Over the past decade, the Prime Minister has worked continuously for the welfare and empowerment of farmers. Sh Nayab Singh Saini expressed his happiness that, under the 22nd installment of the PM-Kisan scheme, Prime Minister Sh Narendra Modi has facilitated the transfer of Rs 328 crore into the bank accounts of 15.86 lakh farmers in Haryana today. With this installment, a total of Rs 7,562 crore will be released to farmers in the state through 22 installments. He said that, in addition to providing the Samman Nidhi to farmers, the Prime Minister

is also ensuring the availability of fertilizers at subsidized rates. He further remarked that whether it is the Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana, the Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchai Yojana, or the initiative to connect farmers with solar energy under the PM-KUSUM Scheme, Prime Minister Sh Narendra Modi is continuously working towards the empowerment of farmers. Present on the occasion were Additional Principal Secretary to the Chief Minister and Commissioner and Secretary, Development and Panchayats Department Dr. Saket Kumar, Director General, Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare Department Sh Raj Narayan Kaushik, Media Secretary to the Chief Minister Sh Parveen Atrey along with other senior officials and a large number of farmers.



SC rejects plea for mandatory menstrual leave

The Supreme Court of India on Friday rejected a petition seeking mandatory paid menstrual leave for women in all workplaces, observing that making such leave compulsory by law could unintentionally harm women's career prospects. The court said that although menstrual health concerns are significant, a legally enforced monthly leave policy might discourage employers from hiring women.

no woman had personally approached the court seeking such a policy. According to the bench, the petition appeared to be a "designed" public interest litigation that might unintentionally create the impression that women are unable to work on par with men during certain periods. Justice Bagchi also highlighted the possible impact of mandatory menstrual leave on employment opportunities. While acknowledging that affirmative action for women is constitutionally recognised, he said that employers might begin to view women as less attractive candidates if additional leave becomes a legal obligation. Senior Advocate M R Shamsad, representing the petitioner, argued that several governments and institutions have already introduced measures related to menstrual leave or support. He pointed out that Odisha has had a menstrual leave policy since 1992. He also noted that Karnataka recently introduced a similar policy, while some schools and colleges in Kerala provide relaxations for students during menstruation. In addition, several private companies have voluntarily implemented menstrual leave policies. Responding to this argument, the Chief Justice said voluntary initiatives by governments or companies are welcome and reflect a progressive approach. However, he cautioned that making such leave mandatory through legislation could have unintended consequences in the job market.

A bench led by Chief Justice Surya Kant and Justice Joymalya Bagchi was hearing a plea filed by petitioner Shailendra Mani Tripathi. The petitioner had requested the court to direct the Union and state governments to frame policies or laws recognising the health challenges faced by many women during menstruation and to provide paid leave or other forms of support. During the hearing, the judges emphasised that while the issue of menstrual health deserves attention, the court must also consider the practical consequences of introducing such a policy through legislation. Chief Justice Kant said that if employers are legally required to grant menstrual leave every month, it could create a perception in workplaces that women may be absent regularly, potentially affecting hiring decisions and career growth. The Chief Justice also questioned the intent and maintainability of the petition. He pointed out that

193 MPs move to remove CEC Gyanesh Kumar

More than 190 Opposition MPs have submitted notices in both Houses of Parliament seeking a motion for the removal of Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar.



block parties. The Aam Aadmi Party has also backed the move despite no longer being formally part of the opposition alliance. Some independent MPs have also signed the notice, while several others have expressed interest in joining the initiative.

This is the first time that a notice has been moved seeking the removal of a Chief Election Commissioner.

OPPOSITION LISTS SEVEN CHARGES

The notice lists seven charges against Kumar. These

include allegations of "partial and discriminatory conduct in office", "proven misbehaviour", "deliberate obstruction of investigation of electoral fraud", and "mass disenfranchisement". Among the key issues cited by the Opposition is the manner in which the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls was handled in Bihar. The Opposition has alleged that the process led to the disenfranchisement of voters. The notice also claims that the CEC acted in a partisan manner favouring certain political parties. Several Supreme Court judgments have also been cited in support of the allegations, sources said.

Opposition parties have accused Kumar of aiding the ruling BJP on several occasions, particularly in connection with the ongoing SIR exercise, which they allege is intended to benefit the party at the Centre.

18 arrested in raid at IAS officer's farmhouse

During the raid, police recovered 30 mobile phones, playing cards and Rs 13.68 lakh in cash from the accused.



Police in Indore district of Madhya Pradesh detained 18 people for alleged gambling after raiding a farmhouse allegedly belonging to IAS officer Vandana Vaidya and her family. She currently serves as Managing Director of the state government's Finance Development Corporation. Acting on a tip-off, police conducted the raid at a farmhouse in Awalipura village, about 50 km from the district headquarters, on the intervening night of Tuesday and Wednesday. Officials said 18 people were detained for alleged gambling while six others managed to flee the spot. During the raid, police recovered 30 mobile phones, playing cards and Rs 13.68 lakh in cash from the accused, who belong to different parts of the

state. The main gate of the farmhouse was locked while some people were allegedly gambling inside. A case has been registered against the accused under relevant provisions of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita and the Gambling Act. The main accused, Jagdish Rathod alias Kubda, who allegedly organised the gambling at the farmhouse, along with caretaker Ranjeet Chaudhary and others, fled the scene. Police recovered 30 mobile phones, playing cards and Rs 13.68 lakh in cash from the accused. Following the raid, Vaidya wrote to the police stating that unknown individuals

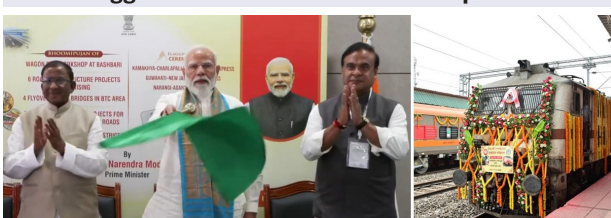
had illegally entered the family's farmhouse and that she suspected theft had also taken place. She requested the police to register a separate criminal case against those involved, according to P.T.I. Superintendent of Police (Rural) Yangchen Dolkar Bhutia said an investigation will be carried out into the IAS officer's complaint to determine how the individuals entered the property. He added that the station house officer of Manpur police station, the sub-inspector in charge of the beat and an assistant sub-inspector have been suspended in connection with the incident.

Modi Dedicated and Laid Foundation Stone for Various Rail Projects

MALIGAON, 13 MARCH, 2026:

The Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi today dedicated and laid foundation stone for various railway infrastructure development projects in Kokrajhar, Assam via Video Conferencing from Guwahati. The Prime Minister flagged off the Kamakhya-Charlapalli-Amrit Bharat Express, the Guwahati-New Jalpaiguri Express and the Naraing-Agartala Express further boosting the railway connectivity in the Northeast. Modi said that these new trains and projects will be stimulating trade & tourism and beneficial for students & patients. He also stated that improved communication & logistics will provide easier access to larger markets benefiting regional economy. The Prime Minister also congratulated the people of Assam on the launch of various other transformative, developmental works.

worth Rs 6,146 Crore in Assam
Also Flagged of One Amrit Bharat & Two Express Trains



worth Rs256 Cr., which will strengthen railway rolling stock maintenance infrastructure, improve operational efficiency and generate employment opportunities in the region. The Prime Minister also stated that significant strides are being taken to bolster overall development of railways and local economy. He also stated that the upcoming rail link to Bhutan and the on-going modernization of the station will turn the area into a logistics hub. He mentioned that the stopovers of Vande Bharat and Rajdhani Express trains in Kokrajhar, symbolizes the region's rising status. Kokrajhar is set to become a major centre of trade through these new initiatives.

Later on at Guwahati, Modi dedicated to the nation three major railway electrification projects. These include electrification of railway lines between Rangiyani-Mukongselek (558km), Chapar-mukh-Dibrugarh (571 km) and Badarpur-Silchar & Badarpur-Churaibari (315 km). Foundation stone of Furkating-Tinsukia double line (194 km) was also laid by the Prime Minister. The total cost of these projects is Rs 5,890 Cr. These initiatives will significantly enhance railway infrastructure in Northeast including Assam while promoting economic growth, tourism and regional integration across the region, contributing to the vision of Viksit Bharat through stronger connectivity.

Vivek Kumar Gupta inspection of the Gorakhpur Junction

GORAKHPUR, MARCH 13, 2026:

Vivek Kumar Gupta, Member (Infrastructure) of the Railway Board and ex-officio Secretary to the Government of India, visited the headquarters of the North Eastern Railway in Gorakhpur on March 13, 2026. During his one-day visit, he conducted a detailed inspection of Gorakhpur Junction railway station and reviewed the ongoing redevelopment works at the station. Gupta closely examined the construction work underway towards Platform No. 9 and directed officials to ensure that the project is completed within the stipulated time while maintaining high quality standards. The inspection was attended by Chief Administrative Officer (Construction) Abhay Kumar Gupta, Divisional Railway Manager of Lucknow Division Gaurav Agarwal, along with other senior officials from the headquarters and divisional offices. Following the inspection, Gupta chaired a review meeting at the



General Manager's conference hall with senior officers from the Engineering, Construction and Signal departments of North Eastern Railway and North Central Railway. The meeting focused on assessing the progress of ongoing infrastructure and development projects. Emphasizing that safety remains a top priority for Indian Railways, Gupta instructed officials to ensure strict adherence to safety rules at level crossings. He also called for strengthening CCTV surveillance at crossing gates and directed the installation of AI-enabled cameras at important locations. He further asked officials to

complete infrastructure projects on time while maintaining high standards of work and services. Gupta also stressed the importance of training and awareness for employees, especially regarding safety precautions during the upcoming summer season, and directed internal audits for fire preparedness. Highlighting the need for operational improvements, Gupta instructed officials to take steps to increase train speeds on loop lines from 30 km/h to 40 km/h. He also emphasized comprehensive planning for doubling and third-line projects to ensure more efficient execution.

Nellai and Pothigai Superfast Express trains to Originate/Terminate at Tambaram

Temporary revision in departure timings of Cholan Superfast Express from Chennai Egmore

CHENNAI, MARCH 13

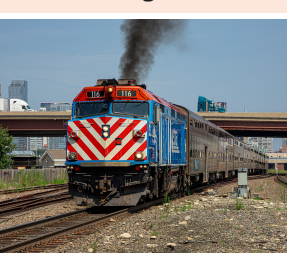
In view of line block on Road No.10 & 11 at Chennai Egmore and to facilitate hassle free train operations during the peak hours, the following are the changes in the pattern of train services:

Change in Origination of Train Service:-

Train No. 12661 Chennai Egmore - Sengottai Podhigai Superfast Express will originate from Tambaram with effect from 17th, March to 06th April, 2026. The departure time from Tambaram is 20.02hrs.

Short Termination of Train Service:-

Train No. 12632 Tirunelveli - Chennai Egmore Nellai Superfast Express will short terminate at



Tambaram with effect from 16th, March to 05th April, 2026. The arrival time at Tambaram is 05.43 hrs

Rescheduling of Train Service:-

Train No. 22675 Chennai Egmore - Tiruchchirappalli Cholan Superfast Express scheduled to leave Chennai Egmore at 08.00 hrs on and from 16th, March to 05th April, 2026 will be rescheduled to leave Chennai Egmore at 10.15 hrs (Late by 2 hours 15 mins).

India a friend, says Iran envoy on Hormuz passage

Iran's Ambassador to India Mohammad Fathali signalled that Indian vessels could receive safe passage through the Strait of Hormuz, describing India as a friend and pointing to shared interests between the two countries amid tensions in the Persian Gulf.

Amid rising tensions in the Persian Gulf and concerns over maritime security,

Iran's Ambassador to India Mohammad Fathali signalled that India could receive safe passage through the Strait of Hormuz, a critical global shipping route.

Speaking to reporters, the envoy suggested that developments ensuring India's access through the strategic waterway could emerge soon.

"Yes, because India is our friend. You will see it within two or three hours," Fathali said when asked whether India would receive safe

passage through the Strait of Hormuz.

The remarks come at a time when shipping movements through the narrow corridor linking the Persian Gulf to global markets are being closely watched due to the ongoing conflict in the region.

'INDIA AND IRAN SHARE COMMON INTERESTS'

When asked directly whether India would be able to transit safely through the



Strait of Hormuz, the ambassador indicated that positive developments were expected.

"Yes, yes, you can see that

Iran and pointed to shared interests between the two countries in the region.

"We believe that Iran and India share common interests in the region," he said.

ENVOY REFERS TO LONGSTANDING TIES

The ambassador also spoke about the broader relationship between New Delhi and Tehran, describing it as one built on friendship and cooperation. "We believe that Iran and India are friends. We have common interests,

we have common faith," he said. Fathali also referred to India's role in supporting Iran during difficult periods.

"As ambassador of India, I say that the government of India in this situation, after the war, helped us in different fields," he said.

STRAIT OF HORMUZ REMAINS A KEY GLOBAL ENERGY CORRIDOR

The Strait of Hormuz is one of the world's most important maritime routes, through which a significant

portion of global oil and gas shipments pass.

Disruption in the passage is already having implications for energy markets and international trade, including for India, which imports a large share of its crude oil through the region.

Fathali's remarks suggesting safe passage for India come as governments and shipping companies closely monitor developments around the Strait amid the ongoing conflict in West Asia.

Sri Lanka weighs buying fuel from Russia

COLOMBO: (MAR 13)

Sri Lanka's Foreign Minister Vijitha Herath on Friday met Russia's Ambassador Levan S Dzhagaryan and discussed the possibility of purchasing Russian fuel. The development comes a day after the Trump administration announced a temporary authorisation to many countries to purchase Russian oil currently stranded at sea, as there were no immediate signs of an early end to the US war on Iran. The US had granted a similar waiver from sanctions to India to buy Russian oil as part of efforts to cool down oil prices that have been on the rise since the outbreak of war on February 28.

Dubai Financial Centre building hit by debris as city thwarts Iran drones

Local authorities said air defence systems were activated after alerts were sent to mobile phones in Dubai warning residents of incoming threats.



A building at the Dubai International Financial Centre sustained visible damage on Friday morning after authorities reported a "successful interception," following missile alerts across the city amid escalating tensions linked to the ongoing conflict involving Iran, Israel and the US, the Associated Press reported. Local authorities said air defence systems were activated after alerts were sent to mobile phones in Dubai warning residents of incoming threats. Soon after the

interception, videos circulated widely on social media showing thick plumes of black smoke rising from a building within the financial district. The structure affected was identified as the DIFC Innovation Hub, where parts of the exterior facade appeared damaged and signs of fire were visible on Friday morning. Pieces of the outer cladding were reportedly torn away following the incident. The Dubai Media Office initially described the development as a "successful interception," but did not specify the nature of the threat that had been intercepted or provide details about its origin. Authorities also did not immediately comment on the extent of the damage to the DIFC building.

The DIFC district is a major economic free zone and one of the region's leading financial hubs, hosting international banks, wealth management firms, trading companies and high-end hospitality venues popular with Dubai's business community. The incident comes amid heightened regional tensions following recent strikes and missile alerts connected to the widening confrontation involving Iran, Israel and the United States. Earlier this week, Iran's joint military command warned that banks and financial institutions in the Middle East could become targets after an airstrike reportedly hit a bank in Tehran, raising concerns about threats to key financial infrastructure in the region. Emergency response teams were quickly deployed to the site to secure the area. Officials said no injuries were reported and the situation was brought under control shortly afterward. In a separate update, the Dubai Media Office confirmed another minor incident in the nearby Dubai Marina area. In a statement, authorities said: "Authorities confirm that debris resulting from a successful interception caused a minor incident on the facade of a tower in Dubai Marina. The situation has been contained. No injuries were reported." Officials emphasised that precautionary measures were implemented immediately and that no evacuations were required at either location.



Bodies of 84 Iranian sailors killed in US submarine attack to be repatriated

The IRIS Dena, which had around 180 crew on board, was sunk off the coast of Sri Lanka on March 4, bringing the Middle East conflict to India's backyard.

Sri Lanka will repatriate the bodies of 84 Iranian sailors who were killed when their warship was torpedoed and sunk by a US submarine in the Indian Ocean earlier this month amid the war in the Middle East, Reuters reported. The development comes two days after a court in Colombo ordered the government to hand over the bodies of the sailors to the Iranian embassy in Sri Lanka. The IRIS Dena, which had around 180 crew

on board, was sunk off the coast of Sri Lanka on March 4, bringing the Middle East conflict to India's backyard. While 32 sailors were rescued by the Sri Lankan navy, the whereabouts of 60 others are not known yet. "All domestic procedures have been completed. The Iranians are bringing a chartered aircraft for the repatriation," a government official told AFP. However, the 32 sailors who were rescued will remain in Sri Lanka. The bodies will be flown out in batches from the Mattala International Airport. The first batch of 46 bodies was sent back on Friday afternoon on an Iranian chartered cargo plane, AFP reported.

US eases Russia oil sanctions for India

Countries can buy Russian oil for 30 days after the US allowed sale of shipments already at sea to ease supply disruptions caused by the Iran war.

The administration of Donald Trump has announced a 30-day waiver allowing countries to purchase sanctioned Russian oil and petroleum products currently stranded at sea, in a move aimed at stabilising global energy markets after benchmark crude prices surged past USD 100 per barrel amid the ongoing war in the Middle East. The decision comes amid severe disruptions in global oil supply triggered by the war and Iran's closure of the strategically vital Strait of

Hormuz, through which a significant share of the world's oil exports normally passes. The US Treasury Department said on Thursday that it had issued a temporary licence authorising the delivery and sale of Russian crude oil and petroleum products that were already loaded on vessels as of March 12. The licence will remain valid until midnight Washington time on April 11. The waiver could unlock access to roughly 124-125 million barrels of Russian-origin oil currently stranded across about 30 locations globally, potentially easing immediate supply shortages caused by disruptions in Gulf shipping routes. The move follows a separate 30-day waiver issued on March 5 allowing India to purchase Russian oil



cargoes stuck at sea, giving importers limited flexibility to secure supplies during the ongoing crisis. US Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent described the measure as "narrowly tailored" and short-term, adding that it would not provide significant financial benefit to Moscow. Trump indicated earlier this week that the administration was considering easing certain sanctions to offset the sudden loss of oil supplies from the market. "So we have sanctions on some countries," Trump told reporters. "We're going to take those sanctions off until the strait is up." The announcement also comes a day after the

US Energy Department said Washington would release 172 million barrels of crude from the Strategic Petroleum Reserve to help curb soaring fuel prices following the outbreak of the conflict involving Iran. The release forms part of a broader effort coordinated with the International Energy Agency, whose 32 member nations have pledged to release about 400 million barrels of oil. The agency said the conflict has triggered the largest oil supply disruption in history. As American and Israeli strikes pound Iran and Tehran attacks Persian Gulf shipping and energy infrastructure with no sign of an end to the war, oil prices have soared back above USD 100 a barrel. Before the US-Israel strikes on Iran began on February 28, crude oil was priced at approximately USD 73-75 a barrel. Iran has effectively closed the Strait of Hormuz since the beginning of the war. The narrow waterway is a vital shipping lane connecting the Persian Gulf with the Gulf of Oman and the Arabian Sea, through which roughly 20-25 per cent of the world's daily oil consumption normally passes. At least 16 vessels have reportedly been attacked in the passage so far, and Tehran has warned that more strikes could follow. In his first statement after assuming office, Iran's new Supreme Leader Mojtaba Khamenei insisted that the strait must remain closed, signalling little hope for an immediate resumption of normal oil flows from the Persian Gulf.

Iran's new Supreme Leader Mojtaba Khamenei lost a leg, is in coma: Report

A report claims Iran's new Supreme Leader Mojtaba Khamenei lost a leg and is in coma after an airstrike that killed his father, raising questions about who is directing the war.



Iran's newly appointed Supreme Leader Mojtaba Khamenei is reportedly in a coma and has lost at least one leg after being critically wounded during an air strike that killed his father, according to a report by The Sun. The British tabloid reported that the 56-year-old son of assassinated Ayatollah Ali Khamenei suffered severe injuries and is currently undergoing treatment in Tehran. Sources cited by The Sun claimed the new leader "lost at least one leg and has also suffered serious stomach or liver damage." The report said it was unclear whether Mojtaba Khamenei was injured during the same strike on February 28 that killed his 86-year-old father, but it added that he is not currently directing Iran's war strategy, which has been blamed for

turmoil in global energy markets. According to The Sun, Khamenei is being treated under tight security at the Sina University Hospital in Tehran. The report cited a source in the Iranian capital who said the leader is in "very serious" condition. "One or two of his legs have been cut off. His liver or stomach has also ruptured. He is apparently in a coma as well," the source told The Sun. The source claimed the hospital unit treating the leader has been sealed off and placed under heavy security as doctors continue intensive care treatment. The report said veteran trauma surgeon Mohammad Reza Zafarghandi, Iran's minister of health and a senior surgeon with experience treating war injuries, is overseeing the treatment. According to The

Sun, Iranian state television has attempted to maintain the appearance of leadership by broadcasting what it described as Khamenei's first statement since taking power. The statement, read by a news anchor rather than the leader himself, warned that Iran would avenge the blood of Iranians and continue attacks targeting regional shipping routes, including threats to block the Strait of Hormuz. The report also claimed Iran's leadership structure may be continuing the war without direct orders from Khamenei. An Iranian analyst quoted by The Sun said the country's military operations could proceed even without an active leader. "His father left behind a system which has kicked into gear which can be run by a ghost," the analyst said. "That is why Iran's missiles and drones are still flying and it's the war will go on." The Sun said the claims could not be independently verified due to internet restrictions inside Iran and the tight security surrounding the leader's reported treatment.

Netanyahu claims Israeli attacks killed senior Iranian nuclear scientist

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said Thursday that Israeli strikes have killed a senior Iranian scientist involved in developing nuclear weapons and dealt significant blows to Tehran's military and security forces, as he addressed reporters for the first time since the war began on February 28.



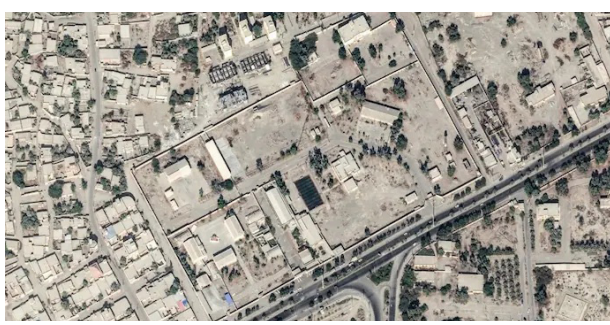
"We are crushing the terror regime in Iran," Netanyahu said. "We are striking and defeating its proxies - Hezbollah in Lebanon." The Israeli leader said the nearly two weeks of joint US-Israeli bombardment had significantly weakened Iran's power structure. According to him, the attacks have targeted the Revolutionary Guards Corps and the Basij paramilitary force that helps enforce the regime's authority. **ATTACK ON IRAN'S LEADERSHIP** Standing between two Israeli flags and answering questions through a video link, Netanyahu also targeted Iran's new supreme leader, Ayatollah Mojt-

ba Khamenei. He described him as a "puppet of the Revolutionary Guards" who cannot safely appear in public following the recent strikes. Netanyahu hinted that Israel could still target senior figures in Iran's leadership, though he declined to provide details about future plans. "I wouldn't issue life insurance policies on any of the leaders of the terrorist organization," he said. "I don't intend to give an exact message here about what we are planning." As the Prime Minister spoke, Israel's military said it detected a fresh barrage of missiles launched from Iran toward Israeli territory, underscoring that the conflict remains active. **MESSAGE TO THE IRANIAN PEOPLE** Netanyahu also addressed the Iranian public directly, suggesting the military campaign could create conditions for political change inside Iran. He said Israel's actions are meant to create "the space needed to go out to the streets." "The moment when you will be able to embark on a new path of freedom is approaching," he said. "That moment is drawing closer." "We stand with you. We are helping you," Netanyahu added. "But at the end of the day, it depends on you. It is in your hands." **CLOSE COORDINATION WITH WASHINGTON** Netanyahu also highlighted Israel's coordination with the United States during the campaign. He said he speaks daily with US President Donald Trump as the conflict unfolds. "Through an unprecedented joining of forces between Israel and the United States, we have achieved tremendous accomplishments," Netanyahu said. The operation, he added, aims to prevent Iran from developing nuclear weapons and ballistic missiles capable of threatening Israel, the United States and other countries. "If we had not acted immediately," Netanyahu said, "within a few months Iran's industries of death would have become immune to any strike."

Iran girls' school hit by US had active website

An Iranian girls' school that took a direct hit on the first day of the war had maintained a yearslong online presence, including dozens of photos of students and school activities, before it was destroyed along with at least six other buildings in an adjacent military compound, a Reuters investigation has found.

strike may have relied on outdated targeting data. Separated from the nearby base by a wall painted with bright murals, the school was the northernmost building hit in the barrage on February 28. The building was destroyed in the strike, and Iran's ambassador to the United Nations in Geneva, Ali Bahreini, said 150 students were killed. **BRIGHTLY PAINTED WALLS, ACTIVE WEBSITE** Satellite imagery from as early as 2018 showed the school's brightly painted outer walls. A version of the school's website archived in 2025 displayed photos of girls dressed in identical pink and white uniforms studying and playing. The school was also listed on a local business listing website, and satellite images from the months leading up to the strike showed



playground markings and other signs indicating the building was functioning as a school. An analysis of satellite imagery, photos and videos of the attack and its aftermath suggests the cluster of buildings was struck by a series of munitions, including at least one American Tomahawk cruise missile. Video of the moment of impact on nearby buildings showed a plume of smoke rising in the background. Satellite images taken after the strike showed at least seven distinct explosions along a roughly 325-meter axis, including the destroyed school, a rooftop punctured by a large hole and another building flattened. **US DECLINES TO COMMENT ON SCHOOL'S PRESENCE** The Pentagon said the strike is under investigation but declined

to comment on the school's online presence, the satellite imagery or the decision to target the Minab compound. US President Donald Trump said on Monday that Iran might have Tomahawk missiles, although he did not explain how and no US officials have provided evidence supporting that claim. **OUTDATED DATA MIGHT HAVE LED TO STRIKE** Two sources, speaking on condition of anonymity, told Reuters that outdated targeting data may have been responsible for the strike, a possibility first reported by The New York Times. Mark Cancian, a retired US Marine officer and defense expert with the Centre for Strategic and International Studies, said US Central Command maintains long-standing lists of potential targets in case of conflict. "The lesson learnt here

would be to review the target lists periodically and more closely," he said. Reuters' analysis found that the school and at least six buildings in the adjacent Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps compound were the only places struck within a five-kilometre radius between February 28 and March 2, suggesting the location was specifically targeted rather than hit as part of a broader bombing campaign on the southern city. Minab, located near the Strait of Hormuz and surrounded by farmland, hosts one of the IRGC's largest missile bases, according to Iranian state media. Satellite analysis tracking ground disturbances after the strike also identified significant changes at the town cemetery. Images from March 2 showed rows of fresh rectangular graves where children killed in the attack were buried.



Pakistan launches fresh strikes on Kabul, bombs fuel depot near Kandahar airport

Pakistan carried out fresh airstrikes in Afghanistan targeting Kabul, Kandahar, Paktia and Paktika, with Taliban authorities claiming civilian homes were destroyed and at least four people were killed.

Pakistan has carried out fresh airstrikes in Afghanistan, targeting Kabul, Kandahar, Paktia, Paktika and other areas, with the Taliban administration alleging that civilian homes were destroyed and women and children were among those killed. The Taliban also accused Pakistan of bombing a fuel depot belonging to private airline Kam Air near Afghanistan's Kandahar airport.

The Taliban government said four members of the same family, including two children, were killed by Pakistani artillery and mortar fire in eastern Afghanistan. The deaths reportedly occurred early on Thursday in the village of Sadqo in Khost province. The strikes, which came during the last ten days of the month of Ramadan and ahead of Eid, were condemned by the Islamic Emirate as "cruel aggression" that it said would not go unanswered.

Taliban spokesperson Zabihullah Mujahid said the company supplies fuel to civilian airlines as well as United Nations aircraft. He added that the attack came

as tensions between the two neighbouring countries escalated again despite diplomatic efforts aimed at easing the conflict. The latest violence follows fighting that erupted last month when Pakistan conducted airstrikes inside Afghanistan, which Islamabad said targeted militant strongholds. Kabul condemned those operations as a violation of its sovereignty and launched retaliatory attacks, leading to cross-border clashes along the roughly 2,600 km border between the two countries. Militancy remains a major point of contention between the two countries. Islamabad accuses Kabul of providing safe haven to militants responsible for attacks inside Pakistan, while the Taliban denies the allegation and says militancy is Pakistan's internal problem. Deputy government spokesperson Hamdullah Fitrat said the victims included a man, a woman and two children, one girl and one boy, while three other children were wounded. The provincial governor's office confirmed the same casualty figures. These deaths bring the reported toll to seven people killed in Afghanistan since Tuesday in cross-border clashes, according to authorities in Kabul. Earlier, Fitrat said three civilians were killed by Pakistani shelling in the border province of Paktia.

Pakistan voices full 'solidarity and support' to Saudi Arabia amid West Asia war

ISLAMABAD: (Mar 13) Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif met Saudi Arabia's Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman and assured him Pakistan's full "solidarity and support", amid escalation in West Asia and Iranian strikes on Gulf states. The two leaders met on Thursday in Jeddah after PM Shehbaz dashed to

Saudi Arabia in the wake of the deteriorating situation in West Asia following US and Israeli attacks on Iran. Prime Minister Shehbaz held a restricted meeting with Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman in Jeddah during which he "expressed Pakistan's full solidarity and support" for Saudi Arabia in these challenging times, said a statement by the PM Office after the meeting.

NMDC Hits Historic 50MT Iron Ore Mark

HYDERABAD, MARCH 13

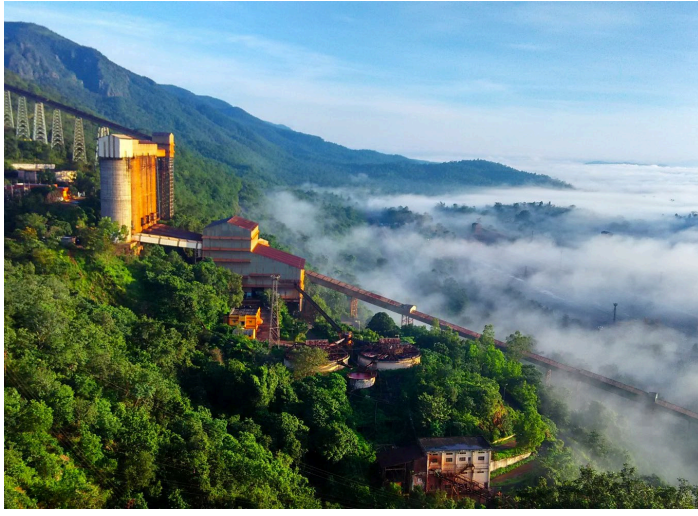
NMDC Limited, India's top iron ore producer and a Navratna public sector enterprise under the Ministry of Steel, has etched its name in history by becoming the first mining company in the country to achieve 50 million tonnes (MT) production in a single financial year—well ahead of FY 2025–26's close.

Founded in 1958 to tap India's iron ore potential, NMDC's output has surged dramatically—from 10 MT in 1978 to this landmark 50 MT today. The past decade tells an even starker growth story: production leaped nearly two-thirds from 30 MT in 2015, with one-fifth of capacity added in the last four years alone during its most rapid expansion phase.

This feat bolsters India's steel ambitions, as the nation eyes 300 MT capacity by 2030, making reliable domestic iron ore supply mission-critical.

"Attaining 50 MT is a proud milestone under NMDC 2.0," said Shri Amitava Mukherjee, Chairman and Managing Director. "Decades of groundwork compressed into swift years through precise execution, sustainable mining, and alignment with national goals. As India's leading producer, we shoulder immense responsibility to fuel the steel ecosystem."

Operating highly mechanised mines in Chhattisgarh and Karnataka, NMDC prioritises efficiency, innovation, and eco-friendly practices to secure iron ore self-reliance and drive future growth.



Vaave rebrands as Hoopstr to Ignite the Future of Learning Through Alumni Networks

From Passive Databases to Active Ecosystems—Fueling Lifelong Learning Through Real-World Wisdom - focuses on major expansion in near future

HYDERABAD, MARCH 13

Vaave, a pioneering alumni management platform founded in 2011, today unveiled its rebrand as Hoopstr, marking its transformation into a dynamic ecosystem that harnesses alumni networks for lifelong learning and career growth. Used by over 1,200 institutions worldwide and connecting 4.9 million alumni across 28 countries, Hoopstr equips educational bodies to link classroom education with real-world expertise through mentorship, networking, and collaborative opportunities.

The company announced its first major external funding of ₹6.6 crore from Aditya Vuchi of VCMint and Raj Narayanan, Founder & Executive Chairman of Zaggie, via RAN Ventures. Hoopstr eyes a Pre-Series A round to expand its offerings and targets 80-100% year-on-year growth. With a team of 80, it aims to onboard 2,500 top Indian institutions in the next 18 months while activating networks to secure 10,000 internships and ₹100 crore in scholarships over three years,



partnering with 30 select institutions.

In a rapidly evolving job market, Hoopstr positions alumni as vital bridges, channeling their career insights, entrepreneurial experiences, and leadership lessons back into education. This creates a virtuous cycle: alumni enrich curricula, while institutions foster sustained professional development.

Hoopstr's framework rests on three pillars. Awakening dormant databases, deploys AI for profile automation, and sparks engagement via virtual reunions, newsletters, and spotlights—boosting participation 2-3x, as seen in mentorship drives. Searchable directories by location, industry, and company ease reconnections.

Reinforcing the System builds feedback loops through industry surveys and alumni advisory boards, aligning curricula with market demands. Guest lectures, hackathons,

and joint projects integrate alumni input, with data-driven tweaks enhancing giving and retention.

Sustaining Progression offers mentorship matching, job boards, webinars, and certifications tailored to career stages. Affinity groups, regional chapters, and volunteer roles ensure lasting ties, tracked by KPIs like 90% retention and event attendance.

"Education doesn't end at graduation, nor should alumni bonds fade to sporadic events," said Paresh Masade, Founder & CEO. "Hoopstr crafts a living loop where real-world stories fuel learning communities. We're expanding to 2,500 top Indian institutions from 1,200 now in 18 months, targeting 80-100% annual growth."

Hoopstr calls on institutional leaders, alumni networks, and educators to collaborate in forging future-proof learning ecosystems.

SEBI issues circular allowing mutual funds to undertake intra-day borrowing

MUMBAI, MAR 13



The Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) has issued a circular allowing mutual funds to undertake intra-day borrowing to manage temporary cash mismatches while processing investor redemptions.

Mutual funds are generally permitted to borrow up to 20% of a scheme's net assets for a maximum period of six months to meet requirements such as redemption payments, income distribution, or the settlement of certain trades. However, this 20% borrowing limit will not apply to intraday borrowings, provided they comply with specific conditions prescribed by SEBI.

SEBI clarified that intraday borrowings may be used only for the repurchase or redemption of units or for the payment of interest or Income Distribution cum Capital Withdrawal (IDCW) payouts to unit holders.

The regulator has also capped the amount of intraday borrowings. It must not exceed the guaranteed receivables due on the same day from the Government of India, Reserve Bank of India, and Clearing Corporation of India Limited.

Bears in Control: Nifty Ends at 23,151

MUMBAI, MAR 13

At the stock market, the bears were leading as the Nifty was dragged below 23,150 intraday amid broad-based selling.

At close, the Sensex was down 1,470.50 points or 1.93pc at 74,563.92, and the Nifty was down 488.05 points or 2.06pc at 23,151.10. During the week, both the indices declined over 5pc, recording their biggest weekly fall in more than a year.

Broader indices underperformed the benchmarks, with the Nifty Midcap and Smallcap each falling 2.5pc. The total market capitalisation of firms listed on the BSE falling to around Rs 430 lakh crore on Friday from Rs 440 lakh crore. Total market capitalisation has declined by over USD 533 billion so far in 2026, the sharpest fall since 2011, when Indian markets saw about USD 625 billion wiped out during the entire year.

Indian rupee depreciated for the second consecutive session to hit a fresh record low of 92.47 against the US dollar.

Among the sectors, all the indices ended in the red. The key sectors like auto, PSU Bank, metal, media, PSU Bank were down 3-4pc. Nifty Metal fell 4.82pc, while Nifty PSU Bank and Nifty



Auto also plunged sharply by 3.72pc and 3.60pc, respectively.

On Nifty, the gainers were Tata Consumer, HUL, Bharti Airtel while the biggest losers were Hindalco, L&T, Tata Steel, UltraTech Cement, JSW Steel.

Over 500 stocks touched their 52-week low on the BSE. These included Sapphire Foods, Birla Corp, Gravita India, Latent View, Jyoti CNC Auto, Tata Motors Passenger Vehicles, Newgen Software, Embassy Developers, Sonata Software, Pira-

mal Pharma, Five-Star Business, Vedant Fashions, Exide Industries, Jyothy Labs, Alkyl Amines, Berger Paints, HDFC Bank, Indegene, KPIT Technologies, among others.

L&T Technology Services gained 9.6pc, while ACME Solar Holdings also rallied 6.5pc. Amid the ongoing geopolitical tension, Adani Total Gas, Jindal Steel & Power, RR Kabel, Hindalco Industries, Reliance Power, Hindustan Copper, and Bharat Forge all have declined over 6pc.

West Asia Conflict Wipes Out 33.68 Lakh Cr in Investor Wealth

MUMBAI, MARCH 13

Investor wealth has evaporated by ₹33.68 lakh crore since the West Asia conflict erupted, now in its 14th day, triggering market mayhem and spiking oil prices.

The turmoil began with US-Israel strikes on Iran on February 28, killing Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei. Iran retaliated by targeting Israeli and US bases across Gulf nations and blocking the Strait of Hormuz, choking

20% of global oil and LNG flows. Brent crude rocketed to USD 100 per barrel.

The BSE Sensex has cratered 6,723 points or 8.27% since February 27, with BSE-listed firms' market cap shrinking to ₹429.82 lakh crore (USD 4.65 trillion). On Friday, the index plunged 1,470 points or 1.93% to settle at 74,564 after intra-day lows of 74,455.

Weak global cues, FII outflows, and crude at USD 100 fuelled the rout. Oil marketers tanked: HPCL -4%, IOC -2.28%, BPCL -2.19%. Paint stocks bled

too, with Asian Paints, Berger Paints, Kansai Nerolac, and Shalimar Paints closing lower. "The conflict shows no de-escalation, sustaining risk aversion worldwide," said Ponmudi R, CEO of Enrich Money. Bajaj Broking noted third straight session losses amid "persistent foreign fund outflows." Aakash Shah of Choice Equity Broking called it one of the steepest single-day drops recently, driven by geopolitics, oil surges, and FII exits. Energy costs now dominate equities, bonds, and forex sentiment.

Rasna Targets Growth with Nutri+ Beverage Launch

NEW DELHI, MARCH 13

Rasna, India's leading beverage concentrate brand, has unveiled Rasna Nutri+, a nutritional drink mix blending its signature flavours with essential vitamins and minerals, timed perfectly for the summer season.

Aiming for 15-20% annual growth, the company—holding over 70% market share—is bolstering its reach in semi-urban and rural areas. Available in 32-glass packs and 500-gram Insta Nutri+ variants, the products come bundled with fun 'Prankies' toys to delight children.

Bollywood star Rakul Preet Singh serves as brand ambassador, starring alongside Areez Khambatta, son of Chairman Piruz Khambatta, in the campaign ads. "Crafted from Indian fruits and ex-



ported to over 60 countries," Khambatta highlighted the brand's global footprint.

Rasna's summer 2026 push spans IPL matches, digital platforms, and TV promotions. The company operates 12 plants, 26 depots, 200 super stockists, 5,000 stockists, and 900 sales staff, serving 1.8 million outlets while upholding ISO, HACCP, HALAL, and FSSAI certifications.

IOB to reduce one month MCLR by 10 bps from March 15

Chennai, Mar 13 (UNI)

The public sector Indian Overseas Bank (IOB) on Friday announced reduction in its Marginal Cost of Funds Based Lending Rate (MCLR) by 10 basis points with effect from March 15. This followed a comprehensive review by the bank's Asset Liability Management Committee (ALCO) meeting on March 12 which reviewed the MCLR workings as of March 10, 2026, and approved a reduction in short-term borrowing costs to better align with current market dynamics.

Specifically, the bank has reduced its one month MCLR by 10 basis points (bps), lowering it to 8.20% from the existing 8.30% and this revised rate structure will be implemented from March 15.



Grand Opening of Mangalya Shopping Mall's 30th Branch in Khammam

Khammam, March 13: Mangalya Shopping Mall, which was established in 2012 in Warangal, Telangana, has been rapidly expanding while creating a new trend in the textile retail sector. By offering quality garments at affordable prices, Mangalya has earned the trust and appreciation of customers. The brand has already established a strong presence across the states of Telangana, Andhra Pradesh, and Karnataka.

Continuing its expansion journey, Mangalya has now grandly inaugurated its 30th branch in Khammam. Telangana State Minister Ponguleti Srinivasa Reddy attended the inauguration ceremony as the chief guest. Speaking on the occasion, he

appreciated the efforts of the management, P.N. Murthy and Kasam Namahshivaya Brothers, who have been working together like Krishna and Arjuna in the textile business. He praised their decade-long experience in providing quality clothing to customers across three states and extended the government's congratulations. He also mentioned that the brand is planning to expand into the state of Tamil Nadu in the near future.

Popular film actress Sreeleela attended the event as the special guest. She inaugurated the mall by lighting the ceremonial lamp. Later, she visited various sections of the mall and interacted cheerfully with her fans.

A large number of people and fans gathered from the morning itself, creating a vibrant and festive atmosphere. After the ribbon-cutting ceremony, actress Sreeleela said,

"I am confident that the people of Khammam will extend great support to Mangalya Shopping Mall. With their blessings, this mall will achieve great success."

Mangalya Shopping Mall Directors Pulluru Narasimha Murthy, Kasam Namahshivaya, Kasam Mallikarjun, Kasam Kedarinath, Kasam Shivaprasad, and Pulluru Arun Kumar stated that their success lies in providing quality garments for every category of customers and for every occasion at affordable prices. They

also mentioned that the company is producing its own handloom products and designing them according to modern market trends, which has helped them stay ahead in the textile business. The mall offers the latest fashion collections for women, men, youth, and children, along with a wide range of grand wedding collections for marriages and special occasions. With the opening of this mall, people of Khammam district no longer need to travel to distant cities for wedding shopping, as they can now purchase quality garments at affordable prices within their own city. Garments are available in a wide price range starting from ₹99 to ₹1 lakh, making Mangalya a complete

family shopping destination.

Currently operating successfully across three states, Mangalya Shopping Mall is planning to launch 9-10 new projects in the near future and is also preparing to expand into Tamil Nadu. Having gained the trust of customers across regions, Mangalya is steadily moving toward becoming a pan-India leading shopping mall brand.

The management invited the people of Khammam district to visit the mall with their families for all their special occasions and experience a new trend in shopping. Directors Vishal, Varun, Karthik, Arun, Puneeth, and Sai Krishna also participated in the event.

Centre ups outlay for fertiliser subsidy by Rs 19,000 crore to boost farm output

NEW DELHI, MARCH 13

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman informed the Lok Sabha on Friday that the country currently holds a robust fertiliser stock of 163 lakh metric tonnes (LMT) for April. The Minister stated that while sufficient stocks are available for the Kharif season, the government is already making provisions through supplementary demands to ensure the Department of Fertilisers can prepare effectively for the upcoming Rabi season.

Addressing the house during the discussion on the second batch of Supplementary Demands for Grants for the 2025-26 Budget, the Finance Minister highlighted that the government is spending approximately Rs 19,000 crore more than the original Budget Estimate for fertiliser subsidies in the second supplementary demands.

She emphasised that the focus remains on boosting domestic manufacturing alongside necessary im-

ports. Domestic urea production has seen a steady rise, growing from 225 LMT in 2014-15 to 306.67 LMT in 2024-25.

The Lok Sabha on Friday approved the second batch of supplementary demands for grants, which will enable the government to spend an additional Rs 2.01 lakh crore in the current financial year.

The government had sought approval to spend a gross additional amount of Rs 2.81 lakh crore. However, with estimated additional receipts of Rs 80,000 crore during the current fiscal year, the net additional cash spending stands at Rs 2.01 lakh crore.

In her reply to the debate in the House, Sitharaman said the new spending will not push the fiscal deficit beyond the government's target.

"There is no increase in expenditure beyond the BE of 2025-26 due to the second supplementary demand for grants," the Finance Minister explained.

NET-ZERO BUILDINGS: PIONEERING INDIA'S SUSTAINABLE FUTURE



Amid rising global warming and climate change, experts are stressing the need for revolutionary changes in the construction sector. On Friday, the Indian Green Building Council (IGBC) released a coffee table report which stated that green and net-zero buildings are the right solution to this problem. The report highlighted that awareness on this issue is increasing in Telangana, and that net-zero buildings will play a crucial role in providing a safe environment for future generations. Globally, 36% of the energy produced is consumed by buildings and the construction sector, while 39% of global carbon emissions come from this sector, according to statistics from the World Green Building Council. The report further noted that, as per the Paris Agreement, limiting global warming to 1.5°C requires inevitable changes in construction practices.

Impact on India

The situation in India is also alarming. More than 20% of total emissions are released from buildings and their allied industries. As one of the fastest-growing construction sectors in the world, India is consuming natural resources excessively. Acting early will benefit the environment.

To overcome these critical challenges, experts recommend promoting net-zero buildings. The distinctive feature of these constructions is that they depend very little on external resources and cause no harm to the environment.

- These buildings produce the electricity, water, and other resources they need on their own.

- They generate power by installing solar and wind energy plants.
- Through measures such as harvesting rainwater, allowing it to percolate into the ground, and treating and reusing wastewater, they achieve self-sufficiency.

Benefits of Green Buildings

Net-zero buildings are also part of the green building category. Although these constructions may initially seem somewhat expensive, the Indian Green Building Council (IGBC) points out that the investment pays back over time through reduced electricity and water consumption.

These buildings naturally come with improved waste and water management systems. Smart meters and dashboards installed here help monitor resource usage, thereby encouraging an environmentally responsible lifestyle.

Compared to conventional buildings:

- **Electricity savings:** 20–30%, which translates to about ₹300–700 per month.
- **Water savings:** 30–50% through advanced methods, saving about ₹500–1000 monthly.
- **Solid waste management:** Up to 70% reduction.
- Better greenery and cooler surroundings further reduce electricity consumption. The design ensures natural light and fresh air, improving residents' health and thereby increasing productivity.
- Since they are built with future needs in mind, green homes tend to have higher property value over time compared to ordinary assets.

First IT Park Recognition

The Ascendas VITP IT Park in Madhapur has become the first IT park to receive the highest Platinum rating in the Green Existing Building category. The innovative practices implemented here are serving as a model for other organizations. Spread across about 19 acres, with a built-up area of 1.283 million square feet, this IT park accommodates 10,500 employees working in three shifts. It follows a zero-discharge policy, recycling 100% of used water for flushing, irrigation, and other needs. To conserve water for plants, drip irrigation methods are employed. Advanced technologies like thermography are used to detect AC leakages. Over the past three years, the park has saved about 138,500 megawatt-hours of electricity, resulting in cost savings of approximately ₹2.86 crore, according to the company.

Genpact Office in Habsiguda

The Genpact office in Habsiguda has been built on a 12-acre campus with a built-up area of 448,000 square feet. More than 7,500 employees work here in three shifts. This building has received a Platinum rating from the Indian Green Building Council (IGBC).

Solar energy: About 83% of the office's electricity needs are met through solar power, with solar panels installed on the rooftops.

If the remaining 17% of electricity is also generated or saved, the building will qualify as a net-zero energy building.

Rainwater harvesting: 100% of rainwater is collected and allowed to percolate into the ground within the premises.

Wastewater treatment: Used water is treated and reused for plants. Smart water use

Model Green Orphanage

The Auxilium Navajeevan Orphanage in Boiguda not only provides shelter to street girls but also stands as a role model in environmental protection. It has become the first orphanage building in the country to receive LEED Silver certification. A 5 kW solar panel system has been installed on the rooftop, significantly reducing electricity consumption. The orphanage has implemented rainwater harvesting systems and advanced methods to prevent water wastage. The building is designed to allow natural ventilation and daylight, eliminating the need for electric lighting during the day. Construction materials include fly ash bricks and paints with low chemical content. This building is more than just a residence—it provides a life lesson for the 100 girls living there, teaching them to segregate wet and dry waste and use water sparingly.

Cappgemini Campus

In the IT corridor, Cappgemini's main campus has received a Platinum rating from IGBC in the Green Existing Buildings category. Spread across 15 acres, with a built-up area of 532,000 square feet, the offices here accommodate 5,500 employees. At Cappgemini, environmental protection practices in building management earned the campus 88 points out of 100. In terms of water usage, it achieved 41% more savings than IGBC guidelines. To ensure every drop of rainwater is absorbed on-site, 30 recharge pits were dug. A 250 KLD sewage treatment plant is in place, and 100% of the treated water is recycled for use in plants. The building design allows natural daylight, and with the use of solar power, electricity consumption has been significantly reduced. 1.2 MW solar plants have been installed on the rooftops, meeting 20% of total power needs. Additionally, a 300 kg biogas plant has been constructed.

Nandi Rurban Community

Located in Moinabad, Ranga Reddy district, the Nandi Rurban Community has received a Platinum rating in the Green Homes category. Spread across 39.46 acres, with a built-up area of 188,000 square feet, it consists of 335 residences. This is the first net-zero community. With solar panels installed on the houses, the community generates 100% of its electricity needs, producing 0.8 MW of power. To save energy, the community has adopted the Earth Air Tunnel system. A biogas plant is also in place to produce fuel from waste. For rainwater harvesting, they follow watershed management practices.

HAVE YOU DONE A FIRE SAFETY AUDIT?

According to reports from the Fire Department, more than 60% of fire accidents in the Hyderabad city occur due to electrical short circuits. These incidents are caused by factors such as the use of poor-quality electrical equipment, not replacing household wiring for 15–20 years, and increased electrical load. With summer approaching, even a small spark can lead to unimaginable damage. There is a risk that a hard-earned dream home could be destroyed in front of your eyes. In this context, officials are advising that a third-party fire safety audit is essential.

Third-Party Fire Audit

The third-party fire audit is conducted by professionals who have completed certified engineering degree or diploma courses in fire safety under the Fire Department. As part of the audit, they prepare a 15–30 page report for each building, covering the complete fire safety system and its performance. The report details the height of the building, its area, activities carried out inside, population residing, required fire safety equipment, and electrical usage, along with an inspection of how these systems are functioning. The audit fee varies depending on the number of floors, size, and type of building. Renewal audits are charged at a lower fee. In some cases, auditors not only certify but also train the staff on the functioning of fire safety systems and fire extinguishing methods. After the audit, they provide recommendations for building protection. Importantly, if any fire accident occurs within one year of the audit, the certifying authority bears full responsibility.

Recent Incidents and Safety Measures

- Poor-quality batteries, switches, sockets, and cables have caused sparks due to power fluctuations, leading to property damage.
- In some cases, fires spread within minutes, causing loss of life.
- The Fire Department advises purchasing quality-certified products only.
- To prevent imports of substandard goods, DPIIT has issued special regulations.
- Under the Electrical Accessories (Quality Control) Act, only equipment with the BIS mark should be used.
- Violators selling uncertified products may face action.
- These rules apply to items such as smart meters, kitchen appliances, fans, and electric stoves.

Electrical Safety Precautions

- Use only BIS-certified electrical equipment everywhere.
- Get electrical repairs done only by qualified professionals.
- Identify faulty equipment and repair or replace it immediately.
- Never use loose or patched wiring.
- Do not insert bare wire ends into sockets.
- Avoid keeping refrigerators or ovens in kitchens.
- Do not run electrical wires under carpets or mats, as stepping on them can cause short circuits.
- For high-voltage appliances, always use 3-pin sockets with proper earthing.
- Switch off power supply when leaving home.
- Do not charge laptops or mobile phones near beds, as overheating or short circuits can cause accidents.
- If electrical equipment catches fire, do not use water to extinguish it. Turn off the power supply and use dry sand or carbon dioxide extinguishers instead.



GREEN BUILDINGS: SAVING COSTS AND RESOURCES

Green buildings are not about extra cost; in the long run, they save resources, add economic value, and improve the health and productivity of occupants," said C. Shekar Reddy, the newly appointed Chairman of the CII–Indian Green Building Council (IGBC). He emphasized the need to increase net-zero buildings, which rely entirely on renewable methods for electricity, water, and waste management without harming the environment. With support from central and state governments, more builders would come forward to construct green projects. Shekar Reddy, who has been associated with IGBC for 25 years in various roles, has now taken charge as the national chairman.

Goals as New Chairman

Currently, green buildings account for less than 5% of total construction area in India. About 2 billion sq. ft. of green buildings are registered annually; the target is to increase this to 2.5–3 billion sq. ft. in the next two years. Expansion beyond metro cities into tier-2 and tier-3 cities.

IGBC has 32 chapters nationwide, which he plans to double, along with expanding stu-

dent chapters. Use of technology to speed up certification processes.

What is the Status of Green Building Movement in India

Initially, India followed U.S. rating systems, but IGBC later developed 32 rating systems suited to Indian conditions (for homes, industries, offices, hospitals, schools, etc.). 12,500 construction materials have received Green-Pro certification based on eco-friendly standards. 6,500 consultants have been trained. Currently, 18,850 projects are registered, covering 15.52 billion sq. ft. of green building area. Globally, the U.S. ranks first, while India is second.

What is the Progress in Telangana

Telangana has 1,211 registered projects, covering 1.6 billion sq. ft., ranking 6th nationally. Awareness among builders and buyers is increasing; once a builder adopts green ratings, subsequent projects often follow suit. Buyers are also asking whether projects have IGBC ratings.

Benefits of Green Buildings

Reduce burden on natural resources

amid rising pollution, temperatures, electricity use, and water scarcity.

Ratings: Platinum, Gold, Silver depending on performance.

Net-zero energy: generating power through solar/wind instead of relying on the grid.

Design features: special glass to allow natural light but block heat, cool roofs, reflective tiles, LED lighting, sensor-based controls.

Net-zero water: reuse 70% of water, harvest rainwater, recharge groundwater, prevent wastage.

Studies show employees in green buildings are healthier and more productive.

Government Incentives

12 states currently offer incentives. In West Bengal, 15% extra built-up area is allowed for Platinum-rated projects, 10% for Gold, and 7.5% for Silver. Some states provide property tax rebates, faster approvals, and lower home loan interest rates.

Telangana currently has no incentives, but has promised support under the Net-Zero policy. IGBC is urging governments to grant green channel approvals for projects with IGBC ratings.



GOLF
Three Indians make the cut in Australian Women's Open



MUMBAI: Diksha Dagar, Vani Kapoor and Avani Prashanth made the halfway cut at the Women's Australian Open, while two other Indians, Hitaashee Bakshi and Pranavi Urs missed the cut. Diksha, who was the top Indian last week also, shot 2-over 74 and was now 2-over for two rounds. Vani Kapoor, who received an invite this week, added 2-over 74 to her first round 72. She was also 2-over for 36 holes and the duo was Tied-31st. Avani, who missed the cut in her last two starts, shot 77 on the first day and added 72 to make the cut on the line at 5-over. She was tied-60th, as 67 players made the cut. Hitaashee Bakshi (77-74) and Pranavi Urs (78-75) missed the cut. Celine Herbin will take a one-shot lead into the weekend after carding a second round 69 (-3).

RACING
Indian racer Akshay Gupta steps up for the 2026 NLS



NURBURG (GERMANY): Indian racecar driver, Akshay Gupta, will take the next step in his endurance racing career by joining Sorg Rennsport to compete in the Nurburgring Langstrecken-Serie (NLS) and the Nurburgring 24 Hours. The 33-year-old driver from Ahmedabad, India will race the #949 Porsche Cayman GT4 CS in the Cup3 class, which forms part of the Porsche Endurance Trophy Nurburgring (PETN) — one of the most competitive categories in the championship. Gupta will share driving duties with 19-year-old German driver Darian Donkel (his former teammate from Mertens Motorsport in 2025) along with fellow German racer Aaron Wenisch. After three seasons competing in the VT2 production classes with Hyundai and BMW machinery.

BAN VS PAK
Salman Agha run out in bizarre fashion



DHAKA: Pakistan batter Salman Ali Agha was involved in a rare and controversial dismissal during the second ODI against Bangladesh played at the Sher-e-Bangla National Cricket Stadium in Dhaka on Friday. The incident occurred in the 39th over of Pakistan's innings when the visitors were building a strong partnership. Agha and Mohammad Rizwan were on the crease and had added 109 runs for the fourth wicket after Pakistan lost three early wickets. On the fourth delivery of the over, bowled by Bangladesh captain Mehidy Hasan Miraz, Rizwan played a gentle push down the ground. The ball rolled towards Agha, who was standing outside his crease at the non-striker's end after backing up

Alcaraz storms into fifth straight Indian Wells semifinal

INDIAN WELLS

World No.1 Carlos Alcaraz reached his fifth consecutive Indian Wells semi-final on Friday, advancing with a 6-3, 6-4 victory against Cameron Norrie. With a win, the Spaniard earned revenge on the Briton, who beat him last November in Paris. Moreover, extended his winning streak to 16 matches in 2026.

With his win, Alcaraz became the third man to reach five consecutive Indian Wells semi-finals, alongside countryman Rafael Nadal (2006-13) and rival Novak Djokovic (2011-16).

Alcaraz and Norrie traded momentum shifts throughout the clash, but the Spaniard largely maintained the upper hand. The first set ended with three breaks of serve across the final four games. Norrie then raced to a 2-0 lead in the second set before Alcaraz responded by tallying four consecutive games, ATP reports. Producing a mix of baseline hitting with delicate drop shots and superb net play, the World No. 1 in the PIF ATP Rankings converted his fourth match point to advance after one hour and 33 minutes.

"Every time I play against him it's always really tough for me. It's a little bit confusing with his style, his heavy topspin forehand, super high. And then the backhand, really flat and really low. Sometimes it's tricky to play against him. I'm finding the right shot. I played well. I played solid. I played aggressive when I could. I'm happy to play this level," said Alcaraz. Alcaraz won the Indian



Wells title in 2023 and 2024, defeating Medvedev in both finals. Medvedev cruised past defending champion Jack Draper 6-1, 7-5, where the 11th seed is into the semi-finals for the fourth consecutive year.

In pursuit of his first Indian Wells trophy, Medvedev is on an eight-match winning streak, having arrived in California following a title run in Dubai.

Should Medvedev advance to the championship match, he will return to the Top 10 of the ATP Rankings for the first time since July.

Medvedev leads the ATP Tour this season with 17 wins. He is the fourth man to reach the Indian Wells semi-finals in four consecutive years, alongside Rafael Nadal (2006-13), Djokovic (2011-16) and Alcaraz (2022-25).

Indian Wells Open: Svitolina stuns Swiatek; Rybakina tops Pegula to enter SFs

Indian Wells, March 13 (SocialNews.XYZ) Elena Svitolina earned a 6-2, 4-6, 6-4 win in 2 hours and 9 minutes to send World No 2 Iga Swiatek packing and reach her second Indian Wells semifinal and first since 2019. After splitting sets with Swiatek, the third set was a tightly contested shootout

that went with serve until the No. 9-seeded Ukrainian broke for 5-4. She swiftly served out the match to earn her second win against the Pole in six meetings. The victory was Svitolina's 11th career win against players ranked inside the Top 2, and her first such triumph since defeating Swiatek at Wimbledon in 2023. With the victory, Svitolina earned just her second win over the current World No. 2 in six meetings at the WTA Tour level, having last defeated her at Wimbledon in 2023. Since 2016, when she upset Serena Williams at the Rio Olympics.

Only Elena Rybakina (14) has earned more wins over Top 2 players than Svitolina (11). The result also marks her tour-leading 19th win of 2026, WTA reports. In the semifinals, she'll face Rybakina, who ended Jessica Pegula's run of seven straight semifinals with a 6-1, 7-6 (4) victory. Svitolina is 3-3 against Rybakina and won their most recent meeting, in Madrid last season, in straight sets.

With Rybakina joining a semifinal quartet that also includes Aryna Sabalenka in the top half, a rematch of this year's Australian Open final is still in play. Earlier, No. 1 seed Sabalenka came through a marquee encounter with No. 10 seed Victoria Mboko, advancing 7-6(0), 6-4 to her third career semifinal at the tournament. The World No. 1 has now reached six consecutive semifinals on the WTA Tour; her last loss before that round was in the Cincinnati quarterfinals last August to Rybakina. Sabalenka's quest for a first Indian Wells title will continue against No. 14 seed Linda Noskova.

India dominates with 208 medals as New Delhi World Para Athletics GP 2026 concludes



NEW DELHI

The New Delhi World Para Athletics Grand Prix 2026 concluded on Friday after three days of thrilling competition, with India delivering a dominant performance across multiple events. Competing against strong international fields, Indian athletes finished first in the medal tally with a remarkable 208 medals, including 75 gold, 69 silver, and 64 bronze.

Russia finished second with 35 medals (15 gold, 14 silver, and 6 bronze), while Bosnia and Herzegovina secured third place with 3 medals, including one gold and two silver. The final day saw several standout performances from Indian athletes across track and field disciplines.

In the Women's 200m T35-T37, Preeti Pal clinched the gold medal with a time of 30.26 seconds, ahead of Russia's Karina Machulskaja, who took silver in 32.22 seconds, while Bina Shambhubha of India secured bronze with 32.35 seconds. This marked Preeti Pal's second gold medal of the Grand Prix. Reflecting on her performance, Preeti said, "I narrowly missed the target I was aiming for at the Grand Prix by a microsecond. Overall, things are going well. In four days, I will be heading to the Nationals, and since this is the off-season, I am satisfied with my performance." She added, "My personal best is 30.03 seconds, and in practice I have already clocked 29.6 seconds, which is encouraging. However, I noticed that I get tired as I approach the finish line, something that

didn't happen before. I am currently working on improving that." India also dominated the Men's Shot Put F57, claiming all three medals. Shubham Juyal won gold with a throw of 14.45 metres, while Bhagat Singh secured silver with 13.29 metres and Priyans Kumar took bronze with 13.07 metres. From a mark of 13.72 metres at the World Championships 2025 to improving by 0.73 metres in just five months, Shubham Juyal's rapid progress highlights his dedication and also reflects the growing strength of Indian Army para athletes on the international stage.

Indian athletes continued their medal sweep across several events. In the Men's 200m T35, Vinay won gold with a time of 28.18 seconds, followed by Anubhav Choudhary with silver in 29.49 seconds, while Chui Yiu Bao of Hong Kong claimed bronze. In the Men's 200m T37-T44, India again secured all three medals, with Rakeshbhai Bhatt winning gold in 25.20 seconds, Siddharth Manju Bellary taking silver in 28.23 seconds, and Ravikiran Asarelli finishing with bronze in 31.50 seconds. Another clean sweep came in the Men's 800m T53-T54, where Manojkumar Sabapathi won gold with a time of 1:57.41, followed by Manikandan Jothi with silver in 2:11.14, and Kamalakanta Nayak with bronze in 2:20.83. India also dominated the Men's Shot Put F11-F12-F20, with Praveen Sharma winning gold with a throw of 13.31 metres, Monu Ghangas taking silver with 11.40 metres, and Janak Singh Harsana securing bronze with 11.22 metres.

Hockey WC Qualifiers: India beat Italy 1-0 to enter final

HYDERABAD

The Indian Women's Hockey team earned their spot in the Final of FIH Hockey World Cup Qualifiers 2026 Hyderabad, Telangana as they beat Italy 1-0 in their Semi-Final contest at the G. M. C. Balayogi Hockey Ground (Gachibowli Hockey Complex) on Friday.

Manisha Chauhan (40') scored the winning goal for India and they will now face England in the Final.

It was an extremely tight contest in the first quarter as both sides constantly battled for possession in the midfield. India started the match strong with a couple of strong circle entries, however, Italy eventually started attacking aggressively and created a few good chances on goal.

India won the momentum back in the second quarter. The hosts used their flanks to push the ball ahead and started attacking in numbers and made crucial circle entries. In the 18th minute, India won the first penalty corner of the evening but Navneet Kaur's shot on goal was stopped well by Italian goalkeeper Lucia Ines Caruso.

In the 27th minute, they were awarded another penalty corner as India played out an interesting vari-



ation. The ball was played back to the injector, Captain Salima Tete, but her shot was stopped on the line by Italy's last defender, denying them a goal. In the 29th minute, India had another opportunity to score through a penalty corner but Navneet Kaur's shot went off target.

In the early minutes of the second half, Italy launched a strong attack on goal as Emilia Munitis was through on goal but India's goalkeeper Bichu Devi Kharibam came out and made a crucial save. In the 40th minute, India were awarded yet another penalty corner and this time they successfully converted

it to break the deadlock. Manisha Chauhan (40') delivered a powerful dragkick down the middle that pierced through the Italian defence and found the net. India won two early penalty corners in the final quarter as they pushed to increase their advantage in the late stage but Italy remained resilient with their defending. Italy gave it their all in the final minutes of the match and won a crucial penalty corner in the 59th minute but India managed to deny their opposition the equaliser and emerged victorious. India will next face England in the Final on March 14 at 7:30 PM IST.

KKR sign Zimbabwe pacer Blessing Muzarabani

NEW DELHI

Kolkata Knight Riders have signed Blessing Muzarabani for the upcoming Indian Premier League 2026. "The 6 ft 8" right-arm quick has emerged as one of Zimbabwe's leading pace bowlers in the shortest format, known for his steep bounce and ability to strike in key phases of the innings. Muzarabani brings significant T20 experience, having claimed over 90 wickets in more than 80 T20 Internationals at an average of around 21, with best figures of 3/8," the franchise said in a release.

He is scheduled to arrive in Kolkata on March 17. His pace and consistency across global leagues and international cricket add further depth to KKR's pace attack heading into the season. Muzarabani arrives after a strong showing in the ICC Men's T20 World Cup 2026, where he was the leading wicket-taker for the Zimbabwe national team, claiming 13 wickets—the fourth-highest in the tournament overall.

The tall fast bowler played a crucial role during the Sri Lanka leg of the competition, achieving match-win-

ning performances against Australia and Sri Lanka. The 6-foot-8 pacer previously joined Islamabad United as a replacement for Samar Joseph in the Pakistan Super League 2026 season. However, he has now withdrawn from that tournament to take this IPL opportunity.

Muzarabani's experience in sub-continental conditions and his recent form could be valuable for the three-time IPL champions. He was part of the title-winning squad for Royal Challengers Bengaluru last season, although he did not play any matches during that campaign.

IPL 2026: 'Chennai wicket will suit Samson's game,' says Piyush Chawla

NEW DELHI

Former Indian spinner Piyush Chawla feels that Chennai Super Kings' (CSK) home ground MA Chidambaram Stadium's pitch will suit the batting style of Sanju Samson, who is gearing up for his first season with the five-time champions.

Samson is coming to the Indian Premier League (IPL) 2026 on the back of some great knocks in the recently concluded ICC T20 World Cup, where the wicketkeeper batter scored back-to-back half-centuries in the Super8s match against the West Indies, the semi-final vs England and the Summit clash



against New Zealand. According to Chawla, Samson getting in good touch before the IPL 2026 is a blessing for CSK.

"Sanju Samson is a match-winner in himself. He proved his doubters wrong with three back-to-back impactful knocks against

West Indies, England and New Zealand in the T20 World Cup. CSK will be very happy with his form because Samson has peaked right before the start of the IPL. That is great news for their fans. Coming to Chennai, the way the wicket plays there will definitely suit his game," Chawla said on JioHotstar.

Samson has been traded from the Rajasthan Royals to CSK in place of Ravindra Jadeja and Sam Curran before the IPL 2026 auction. Samson has played 177 IPL matches and scored 4707 runs at an average of 30.95. Chawla added that Samson's aggressive batting style will help cure CSK's slow opening problem.

'Shame on you SRH': Fans react after Kavya Maran's Sunrisers Leeds sign Pakistan's Abrar Ahmed for The Hundred

NEW DELHI

After Kavya Maran's franchise Sunrisers Leeds bought Pakistan leg-spinner Abrar Ahmed for 190,000 pounds (Rs 2.3 crore) on Thursday in the inaugural men's Hundred auction, the decision drew backlash from many Indian supporters on social media. Abrar became the first Pakistani international signed by an Indian-owned franchise in the tournament.

"Leeds acquired Pakistan spinner Abrar Ahmed for £190k. Abrar was literally used to mock India with the having tea picture and used to mock Indian players with unwanted celebrations in Asia Cup. Shame on you SRH," an X user write on X. The purchase for



Abrar, who came with a base price of 75,000 pounds, came after Sunrisers Leeds, owned by Indian media group Sun TV, prevailed in a bidding contest with Trent Rockets at the auction shortly before the lunch break hap-

pened. Sun TV completed its acquisition of the franchise previously known as Northern Superchargers by buying a 49 percent stake from the England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) and the remaining 51 percent from Yorkshire for about 100 million pounds.

"Sunriser Leeds picked Abrar Ahmed for £1,90,000. He is the same Abrar Ahmed, who never gets tired of mocking Indians with that Tea Cup gesture. I don't know what to say but one thing is clear all agenda & propaganda of British media against Indian owners was baseless!" The conglomerate also runs Sunrisers Hyderabad (IPL) and Sunrisers Eastern Cape (SA20) teams. Earlier reports suggested IPL franchise-owned teams would

avoid bidding for Pakistan players, and the early stages of Thursday's auction appeared to support that expectation till Abrar was picked.

No Pakistan player has featured in the Indian Premier League (IPL) since 2009, and IPL franchise owners who have invested in franchise T20 leagues worldwide have generally avoided signing cricketers from the country. The ECB said last month that selections in the auction would be based solely on "cricketing performance, availability, and the needs of each team." Nine Pakistan players have appeared across the competition's first five seasons, though none of the female cricketers from the country were picked in the women's auction on Wednesday.

Malaika & Harsh Mehta: New Sighting Sparks Dating Rumors

A new video from Kritika Kamra and Gaurav Kapur's wedding reception has added fresh fuel to rumours about Malaika Arora's alleged relationship with businessman Harsh Mehta. In the clip that is now circulating widely online, the man believed to be the actor's rumoured boyfriend is seen deliberately avoiding the paparazzi as he enters the venue.

The video, filmed outside the reception venue in Mumbai, shows Harsh Mehta taking a discreet route into the event, reportedly entering through a back entrance rather than arriving with Malaika or posing for the photographers stationed outside. His attempt to stay away from the cameras quickly caught the attention of fans online, sparking fresh discussion about the duo's relationship.

Rumours began after concert appearance

Speculation around Malaika Arora and Harsh Mehta first began after the two were seen together at Enrique Iglesias's concert in Mumbai in October 2025. Eyewitnesses claimed the pair spent most of the evening chatting during the show before leaving the venue separately.

Their second public appearance together, reportedly on November 26, further intensified the rumours, with several onlookers noting their repeated sightings together.

Soon after, the two were also clicked at Mumbai airport, where they appeared to make a conscious effort not to walk out together. According to paparazzi accounts, Malaika exited the terminal first, while the man believed to be Harsh followed behind, keeping his face partly covered with a mask. Observers also noted that while Malaika entered her car first in the parking area, the same man joined her moments later, further fuelling speculation about their relationship.

Who is Harsh Mehta?

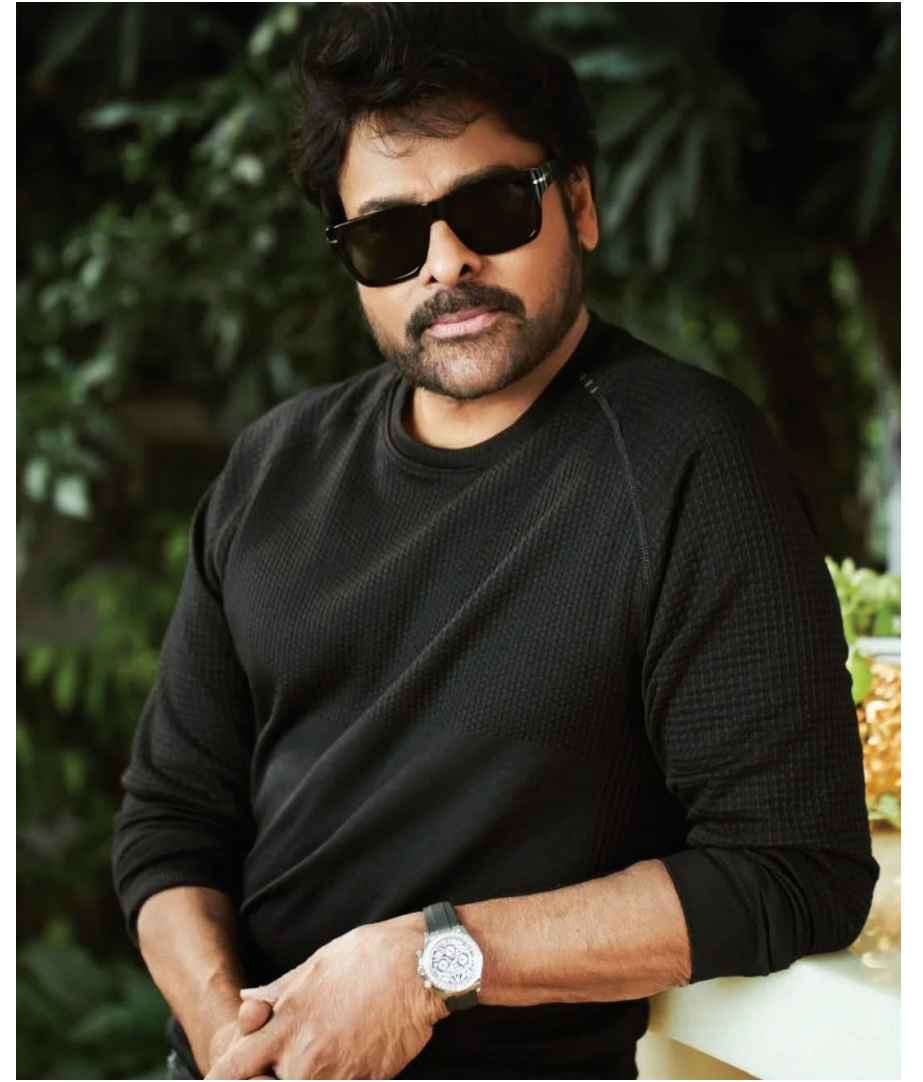
According to media reports, Harsh Mehta is a Mumbai-based diamond merchant, a detail that has piqued additional interest among fans as curiosity around his connection with the actor continues to grow.

Despite the ongoing buzz, neither Malaika Arora nor Harsh Mehta has publicly addressed the rumours surrounding their relationship.

Malaika's past relationships

Malaika was previously in a relationship with actor Arjun Kapoor, with the two dating from 2018 until their reported split in 2024.

Before that, the actor and television personality was married to Arbaaz Khan. The couple got married in 1998 and finalised their divorce in 2017. They share a son, Arhaan Khan.



Exclusive: Chiranjeevi to Start Shooting, KVN to Produce It?

After taking a few months' break, Chiranjeevi is all set to begin shooting for his next film with director Bobby Kolli, and the project is expected to go on floors very soon. "The shoot is likely to begin towards the last week of March and it will be a lengthy schedule," says a source, adding that the script and pre-production work have shaped up well. "Once Chiranjeevi gave his nod for the final draft of the script, the work picked up momentum," the source adds.

"Once Chiranjeevi gave his nod for the final draft of the script, the work picked up momentum," the source adds.

The source also claims that composer S Thaman will score the music for the action-adventure film, although A R Rahman was initially considered for the project. "S Thaman has been roped in and he is expected to deliver a few chartbuster songs along

with a gripping background score," he says.

There have also been reports that leading production house KVN Productions, which is currently backing Jana Nayagan and facing some financial issues, might step away from the project. However, the source dismissed such speculation.

"KVN Productions is a big banner and they are producing the Chiranjeevi-Bobby action-adventure film. There is no change in that. Any rumours about the production changing hands are false and baseless," he clarifies.

Leading actress Priyamani is expected to play the female lead in the film, which is being described as an action-packed entertainer. The project is also seen as an important film in director Bobby Kolli's career.

"After the success of Waltair Veerayya, the actor-director duo expects this film to be another winner," the source concludes.

Rajendra Prasad Apologises, Says 'I have immense respect for MGR'



Telugu actor Rajendra Prasad has once again found himself at the center of controversy after making remarks about legendary Tamil actor and former Chief Minister M. G. Ramachandran, popularly known as MGR. Even though Rajendra Prasad spoke in Telugu, the comment quickly spread on social media and reached Tamil audiences, for whom MGR is revered almost like a deity. The backlash was swift, with many criticizing the actor online. Tamil actor Vishal also reacted on social media, asking Rajendra Prasad to apologize for the remark.

Responding to the controversy, Rajendra Prasad released an apology video. He stated that he has immense respect for MGR and understands how deeply the Tamil people admire him like a god. He explained that while speaking about Kanta Rao's greatness during an award event, he accidentally made a remark that was misunderstood and blown out of proportion.

Rajendra Prasad also recalled that during

his time at the Madras Film Institute, MGR was the Chief Minister and had even visited the institute to watch students perform. He said he would never intentionally speak disrespectfully about such a great personality.

Admitting that it was a mistake, the actor apologized if his words had hurt anyone's sentiments. Notably, he delivered his apology in Tamil, directly addressing the Tamil audience and Tamil Actors Guild.



Ram Charan Quietly Ditches 'Global Star'

After the success of RRR and its Oscar campaign, Ram Charan began using the title "Global Star." However, he has now returned to his earlier title, "Mega Power Star."

This change has sparked discussion in film circles about why he dropped the "Global Star" tag.

During the period of massive international attention following RRR, the title was widely used in promotions and by fans.

According to an inside source, Ram Charan was never very comfortable with the overhyped title from the beginning.

He reportedly agreed to use it for a while as part of the promotional activities surrounding the film's global campaign. Privately, he felt the title was somewhat exaggerated, as his work is still largely within Indian cinema.

Many believe this reflects his grounded nature. Ram Charan appears practical and does not seem interested in overstating his stature.

If one of his future films truly connects with audiences across multiple countries and global markets, he may then genuinely embrace the "Global Star" title.

Let us hope that happens.

ALLU ARJUN IS BECOMING THE BIG REPLACEMENT NOW

One of the happening stars of the country right now is Allu Arjun, whose last outing, Pushpa 2 has done the unthinkable at the Bollywood box office. It took almost a year for the Bollywood industry to churn out a movie like Dhurandhar and break the record collections pocketed by Pushpa 2. Guess what, Allu Arjun is right now becoming the perfect replacement for directors who are getting stunned by Ranveer Singh.

Earlier, director Atlee was supposed to work with Ranveer Singh after the super success of his directorial Shah Rukh Khan's 2023 film Jawan. However, that didn't materialise for unknown reasons, finally Atlee started doing his film with Allu Arjun. Though the director stated that both are different stories, insiders believe that Allu Arjun has replaced Ranveer Singh. Looks like this happened for another time now.

Previously, it was heard that director Basil Joseph, who shot to nationwide fame after the success of his movie, Tovino Thomas starrer Minala Murali, will do a superhero movie with Ranveer Singh. It was heard that the film is loosely based on the lines of the Shaktimaan TV serial. However, the film got scrapped, if sources are to be believed, but not like putting up the script, but actually Allu Arjun replacing Ranveer Singh. That's twice in a row.

With Atlee's film likely going to be a big fantasy sci-fi actioner, it looks like Allu Arjun is choosing only larger-than-life movies, with Lokesh Kanagaraj's movie being a gangster drama, Basil Joseph carving out a superhero film, and Trivikram mostly doing a mythological film with him.

