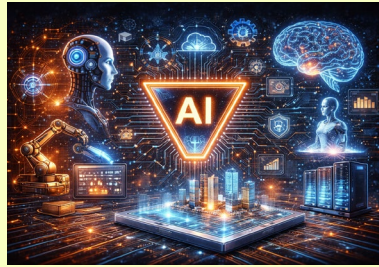


# HYDERABAD HEADLINES

RNI NO.APENG/2010/33328 VOL NO. 16 ISSUE NO.: 320 HYDERABAD PAGES: 12 RS. 1/-

MONDAY, MARCH 16, 2026

WWW.HYDERABADHEADLINES.COM



### AI Seen Driving \$3 Trn Growth for MSMEs by 2047

**MONEY MATTERS 09**

### SREELEELA'S REMUNERATION FOR UBS BECOMES A HOT TOPIC



**BOX-OFFICE 12**



### TRUMP SEEKS 'VERY SOLID' DEAL AMID ESCALATING US-ISRAEL-IRAN CONFLICT

U.S. President Donald Trump said Washington would only agree to a "very solid" deal with Iran to end the conflict, even as tensions intensified with fresh Israeli airstrikes and Iranian missile and drone attacks across the region involving Israel and the United States.

**BEYOND BORDERS 09**

## SHORT TAKES



### The Path of "Review" to Career Growth

Young professionals should regularly seek feedback from seniors and discuss their ideas, work, and career goals. Continuously reviewing and improving your skills is essential to unlock growth opportunities.

**FOCUS POINT 10**



### "RS Poll Eve: Bihar Sees Intense Lobbying"

A closely watched contest for five Rajya Sabha seats in Bihar will take place on March 16, with six candidates in the fray and intense political manoeuvring already visible on the eve of the vote. Voting will be held from 9 am to 5 pm at a polling station set up inside the Bihar Assembly complex.

**HOME LAND 07**



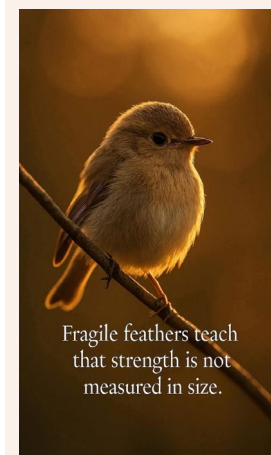
### India-Japan Collaboration Can Enter a New Era

Japan's leadership transition comes amid deep global uncertainty. A Sanae Takaichi government with a clear mandate would give India an opportunity to recalibrate the bilateral partnership not incrementally, but with strategic clarity and urgency.

**OPINION 06**

## THE DAILY MANTRA

SERENITY



Fragile feathers teach that strength is not measured in size.

"A feather is soft and light, yet it carries a bird into the sky.

Strength isn't always loud or heavy—sometimes it is gentle and quiet.

Being light doesn't mean weak; it simply means you were made to rise higher

Collected by

Venna Srinivasa Reddy

## CM REVANTH: Govt Committed to Inclusive Welfare

LB Stadium Hosts State Iftar as CM Calls for a "Developed Telangana"



HYDERABAD, MARCH 15

Chief Minister Revanth Reddy on Sunday stated that his government accords high priority to Muslim minorities and was making every effort to steer them toward progress by allocating a significant share to them in every welfare and development program implemented by the state government. Today, the Chief Minister participated in an Iftar party organized by the state government at the LB Stadium. Speaking on this occasion, he expressed his hope

that the holy month of Ramadan would foster harmony and brotherhood within society. He gave a call to action by declaring that his government belongs to the Muslim minorities. "I am your brother. Let us all work together to take Hyderabad and the state of Telangana forward," He said while adding that the blessings of all the people essential for this government.

The Chief Minister remarked that if hundreds of minority youth are securing educational and employment opportunities today, it is solely due to the

4 percent reservation policy introduced for the minorities by the Congress government. He noted that the government was also extending support through integrated hostels. Observing the prevailing war-like situations across the globe, he cautioned that there would be attempts to sow discord among them here in India. He urged everyone not to fall prey to such machinations and instead to join hands in guiding Telangana onto a path of development that stands out within the entire nation.

**CONTINUED ON PAGE 2 >**

## Telangana Budget session begins today



HYDERABAD, MARCH 15

The eighth session of the Third Telangana Legislative Assembly and the 26th session of the Telangana Legislative Council are scheduled to begin on Monday at 11:45 AM.

A significant event marking these sessions will be the inaugural address by the new Governor, Shiv Pratap Shukla, to the Assembly. Both legislative bodies will commence their proceedings with the Governor address.

The state government, under the leadership of Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy, intends for the sessions to last for ten days. Additionally, the "Telangana Thalli" (Mother Telangana) statue is slated for unveiling on the Assembly premises on Monday, although its design has drawn opposition from BRS leaders. In preparation for the upcoming sessions, Assembly Speaker Gaddam Prasad Kumar and Legislative Council Chairman Gutha Sukhender Reddy convened a preparatory meeting on Sunday.

**CONTINUED ON PAGE 2 >**

## EC Sets Poll Dates for Five States, Puducherry Bengal Gets Two-Phase Poll



NEW DELHI, MAR 15

Assembly elections in Assam, Kerala and Puducherry will be held on a single day on April 9, in Tamil Nadu on April 23 and in two phases in West Bengal on April 23 and 29, while votes will be counted for all polls on May 4, the Election Commission announced on Sunday. Compared to eight voting days spread across almost a month in 2021, there will be three polling days in a 20-day period in these elections, which will see the BJP trying to retain power in Assam, while it will be pitted against ruling parties in West Bengal, Kerala and Tamil Nadu. Puducherry is governed by NDA partner All India N R Congress. A total of 17.4 crore voters are eligible to vote in the elections to five assemblies with 824 constituencies, Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar said at a press conference here.

"Voting for all seats in Assam will be held on April 9. Voting in West

Bengal will take place in two phases on April 23 and April 29. "The voting for all seats in Kerala and Puducherry will take place on April 9, while all Tamil Nadu seats will go to polls on April 23," said Kumar, who was flanked by the two Election Commissioners -- Sukhbir Singh Sandhu and Vivek Joshi.

The model code of conduct has come into effect immediately with the announcement of the poll schedule. Tamil Nadu, West Bengal and Kerala are currently ruled by opposition DMK, Trinamool Congress and Left Front, respectively. There are 234 assembly seats in Tamil Nadu where DMK leader M K Stalin has been the chief minister since 2021. West Bengal has a total of 294 assembly seats with TMC leader Mamata Banerjee in power since 2011. Kerala has 140 seats and Left leader Pinarayi Vijayan has been the chief minister since 2016, leading the Left Democratic Front (LDF) government.

**CONTINUED ON PAGE 2 >**

## Stop Political Scores in Drug Cases: KTR

HYDERABAD, MARCH 15

BRS working president KT Rama Rao has expressed his strong disapproval of drug use and all illicit activities, emphasising his personal opposition to the consumption of narcotic or illegal substances.

He stated that drug abuse transforms individuals into 'monsters' and advocated for severe penalties for anyone involved in the use or distribution of narcotics.

In a statement released on Sunday, Rama Rao declared, "Drugs turn people into monsters. It is regrettable that individuals in positions of responsibility are also engaging in drug use. Anyone found using or supplying drugs must face legal consequences, irrespective of their political affiliation. I personally maintain a firm stance against drugs and the consumption of illicit substances."

Concurrently, Rama Rao voiced his objection to attempts to politically associate the BRS with drug-related cases, deeming such efforts highly reprehensible. He characterised the use of drug cases to

**CONTINUED ON PAGE 2 >**

## Govt to release Rythu Bharosa funds on March 22

HYDERABAD, MARCH 15

The State Government has given a good news to farmers across Telangana. As part of its election promises, the government has finalized the date for the release of funds under the prestigious 'Rythu Bharosa' scheme. It has decided to release the funds on the 22nd of this month. Chief Minister Revanth Reddy is set to launch the initiative. Through the release of this first tranche of funds, cash will be directly deposited into the bank accounts of lakhs of farmers across the state. This comes as a major relief to the farmers, who have been eagerly awaiting these funds for some time now.

Narmetta in the Siddipet district has been chosen as the venue for the launch ceremony of this scheme. During this visit, Chief Minister Revanth Reddy will officially release the

**CONTINUED ON PAGE 2 >**



## Women's Hockey Qualifier Ends Grandly in Gachibowli

Hyderabad, March 15: The city of Hyderabad has once again emerged as a global sporting hub. The Women's Hockey World Qualifying Tournament, hosted at the Gachibowli Hockey Stadium in the city, concluded successfully. It captivated

the entire sporting world of the country. Organized with immense prestige under the aegis of the Telangana Sports Authority, these competitions went beyond the realm of sports alone. They showcased to the world Telangana's renowned hospital-

ity, its organizational prowess, and the State Government's unwavering commitment to sports. State Chief Minister Revanth Reddy graced the inaugural ceremony held on March 8th as the Chief Guest and formally inaugurated the tournament with great fanfare. The stadium was packed to capacity with athletes, officials and spectators arriving from various nations and creating a festive and electrifying atmosphere.

**CONTINUED ON PAGE 2 >**

**CEMENTING DREAMS WITH SUPERIOR STRENGTH.**

**Bharathi CEMENT**  
SUPERIOR QUALITY, GUARANTEED.  
**ULTRAFAST**  
FAST SETTING CEMENT

**3 TIMES BETTER**

GERMAN TECHNOLOGY  
ROBOTIC QUALITY CONTROL  
TAMPER PROOF PACKING



### Azharuddin inspects arrangements for Dawat-e-Iftar at LB Stadium



**HYDERABAD:** Minorities Welfare Minister Mohammed Azharuddin visited Lal Bahadur (LB) Stadium to review the arrangements for the Dawat-e-Iftar being hosted by the Chief Minister of Telangana on Sunday. During the inspection, the Minister was accompanied by Shafiqullah, Secretary of the Minorities department, and Mohammed Asaduddin, General Secretary of TPCC and son of Mohammed Azharuddin. The team carefully reviewed all arrangements at the venue. They inspected the facilities prepared for offering prayers, the arrangements for Iftar and dinner, the stage setup, and other necessary arrangements to ensure the smooth conduct of the event. Speaking to the media, Minister Mohammed Azharuddin stated that all preparations are being made in a well-organized manner. He invited people to attend the Dawat-e-Iftar in large numbers, participate in the gathering, enjoy the Iftar meal, and listen to the message of the Chief Minister

### BIRED to offer free self-employment training to rural unemployed youth

**HYDERABAD:** Bankers Institute of Rural and Entrepreneurship Development (BIRED) invited applications from rural / urban unemployed youths (Gents) in Telangana State. The institute offers free training in technical courses for self employment. BIRED conducting 37 days free vocational training programme. The course will be offered from April 6 to May 12. Candidates in the age group of 19-30 years are eligible for this training which will be offered at the institute premises located at Rajendra Nagar. The training courses include mobile servicing (for SSC and above), Refrigerator & AC Repair (SSC and above). During the training, all facilities including boarding and laboratory will be offered free of cost. Applications can be registered online from March 3 onwards. For more information visit: [www.bired.org](http://www.bired.org).



## GHMC mega E-waste drive collects record 15 tonnes in two days

HYDERABAD

The Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation's E-waste mega collection drive conducted on March 14 and 15, as part of the 99-day action plan under Praja Palana Pragathi Pranalika programme, has recorded an unprecedented public participation with over 15,000 kilograms of electronic waste collected across all 30 circles of the city.

The two-day mega drive, organised at 110 collection points across the city, saw enthusiastic participation from citizens, recyclers, NGOs, and Self-Help Groups, marking a significant milestone in responsible electronic waste management.

Jalagam Vengal Rao Park and Jubilee Hills circle emerged as one of the most successful collection points, with citizens dropping off 450 kg of e-waste and earning 4,500 reward points in return. The collection point witnessed a steady stream of residents throughout the day, bringing in old mobile phones, laptops, chargers, keyboards, and other electronic items. Indira Park, Kavadiyuda Circle recorded the collection of 510 kg of e-waste, with participating citizens receiving an impressive ₹20,874/- in cash rewards.

The cash-back incentive proved to be a major draw, encouraging residents to responsibly dispose of their defunct electronic items instead of discarding them with regular waste.

**City-Wide Collection Summary:**  
Total E-Waste Collected: 15,000 kg  
Large Appliances: 100 units



Collection Points: 110 across GHMC limits  
Circles Covered: All 30 circles  
Duration: March 14-15, 2026 (Weekend Drive)

The twin incentives of reward points and cash-back schemes played a crucial role in driving public participation. Citizens were rewarded based on the quantity and type of e-waste deposited, with authorized recyclers on-site providing instant rewards. This innovative approach not only promoted responsible disposal but also created awareness about the value recovery from electronic waste.

The success of the drive was made possible through active collaboration. Certified recycling firms participated across different zones.

GHMC appeals to all citizens to make use

of the upcoming e-waste collection drives and take advantage of the reward points and cash-back incentives. Instead of hoarding defunct electronic items or disposing them with regular garbage, residents can contribute to environmental sustainability while earning rewards.

E-waste contains hazardous materials that can harm the environment if not disposed of properly. At the same time, it contains valuable materials that can be recovered and recycled. Through this initiative, GHMC aims to ensure that electronic waste is channeled to authorised recyclers for scientific processing. For more information about accepted e-waste categories, collection points, and drive schedules, citizens can contact the GHMC helpline or visit their nearest ward office.



### Prof. G. Pushpa Chakrapani Director Academic, BRAOU attend as Chief Guest

Empowering Women through Education: Prof. G. Pushpa Chakrapani

HYDERABAD

Dr. B. R. Ambedkar Open University, Prof. G. Ram Reddy Centre for Research & Development (GRCR&D) organise Orientation Program for Women Students on "Personality Development & Career Opportunities" (as a part of G. Ram Reddy Memorial Activities (GRAMA)) at, Indira Priyadarshini Government Degree College For Women on Sunday.

Prof. G. Pushpa Chakrapani Director Academic, BRAOU attend as Chief Guest for the program. She Spoke extensively on the university's rapid progress and the transformative vision of the Vice-Chancellor, Prof. Ghanta Chakrapani. She highlighted the VC's commitment to making BRAOU a "hub for skill development" rather than just a

degree-granting institution. Under his leadership, the university has embraced digital transformation and strategic MoUs with organizations like WE-HUB to ensure students are industry-ready. She urged students to utilize the 'Samata' scholarship for empowerment and the 'Nipuna' scholarship for skill-based training.

Prof. H. Srinivas Rao (Retd.) Dept. Of Commerce, Indira Priyadarshini Government Degree College for Women, Nampally, was the Guests of Honour for the program. He focused on the mechanics of achievement. He challenged students to embrace "Practical Knowledge" over rote learning and shared his '4 Ps' formula for success: Planning, Preparation, Practice, and Presentation. He asserted that while we cannot control our birth, we have the absolute power to choose our careers and shape our own futures through disciplined decision-making.

## I will serve Siddipet people till I can: Former Minister Harish Rao

SIDDIPET

Former Minister and BRS party Deputy Floor Leader Harish Rao has unequivocally stated that he would remain dedicated to serving the people of Siddipet for as long as he possesses the strength to do so. He remarked that Siddipet had transformed into a hub for educational institutions. He noted that the Government General Hospital had been expanded to a 1,000-bed facility, equipped with a comprehensive range of amenities. He acknowledged that while all these developmental initiatives are successfully completed with the blessings of the people, there remains a great deal of work yet to be done.

Harish Rao participated in a program held at Milan Garden in Siddipet, organized under the aegis of the Siddipet Foundation,

wherein Ramadan gift kits were distributed to the underprivileged Muslim families. Speaking on this occasion, Harish Rao lauded Saadat Nazeer, the head of the Siddipet Foundation, for establishing the organization and for consistently undertaking numerous service activities to assist the destitute. He praised the Foundation for standing in solidarity with the needy—irrespective of caste or religion—by distributing essential commodities during festive seasons.

Rao recalled that during his tenure as Chief Minister, KCR introduced the 'Shaadi Mubarak' scheme, through which the government provided financial assistance of one lakh rupees to eligible beneficiaries. He added that the women, who delivered babies at the government hospital, received a 'KCR Kit' in addition to



financial assistance amounting to 13,000 rupees. He highlighted that KCR was the first Chief Minister to provide salaries to Imams and Muezzins.

Furthermore, he noted that KCR, believing that the eradication of poverty is achievable only through education, established 204 minority residential schools

(Gurukuls) across the state. He pointed out that these institutions provide high-quality education in the English medium, alongside religious instruction

(Namaz). He stated that the government incurs an expenditure of one lakh rupees per student in these schools. He stated that high-quality education—on par with that offered by corporate schools—had been provided in these Gurukulam schools. He noted that the students educated in the Gurukuls were not only becoming doctors and engineers but were also securing high-ranking positions in various fields.

He alleged that the Congress party made numerous false promises in order to come to power but failed to fulfil them after coming into power. He lashed out at the Revanth government by pointing out that far from introducing any new schemes, it was instead discontinuing the welfare programs originally initiated by KCR.

CONTINUATION FROM PAGE 1

## CM REVANTH: Govt Committed to Inclusive Welfare

FROM PAGE 1

He affirmed that this government would stand firmly by the minorities extending its support to the fullest extent required. He highlighted the government's commitment by citing specific measures: inducting minority leader Azharuddin into the Cabinet; appointing Shabbir Ali—who played a

pivotal role in implementing the 4 per cent reservation for minorities—as a government advisor; appointing eight individuals from minority communities as chairpersons of various corporations and felicitating sports personalities like Siraj and Nikhat Zareen. State Ministers, MLAs, MIM Chief Asaduddin Owaisi, and others participated in this Iftar feast.

## Stop Political Scores in Drug Cases: KTR

FROM PAGE 1

settle political scores against the BRS as indicative of "disgusting politics." Rama Rao welcomed the remarks made by TPCC chief B. Mahesh Kumar Goud, affirming his readiness to undergo any form of testing. He also endorsed the proposition that all public representatives, regardless of their party affiliation, should be subjected to similar tests. "I have consistently stated my

willingness to undergo any test. I support the suggestion that elected officials from all parties should undertake such examinations. Let us set a precedent," he added. Furthermore, K.T. Rama Rao issued a stern warning of legal action should his name be implicated in drug cases without substantiating evidence. He stated, "I strongly caution that any attempt to involve my name in every drug case will be met with legal notices," KTR said. (NSS)



## Women's Hockey Qualifier Ends Grandly in Gachibowli

FROM PAGE 1

The opening ceremonies stood out as a memorable occasion that beautifully blended the rich culture of Telangana with the spirit of sportsmanship.

These qualifying tournaments hold immense significance within the global hockey calendar. These matches were conducted to determine the teams that would qualify for the Women's Hockey World Cup, which is scheduled to take

place in the Netherlands and Belgium from August 14th to 30th of this year. The Participating teams in this tournament included India, alongside nations such as Austria, England, Italy, Korea, Scotland, Uruguay and Wales. Every match unfolded with nail-biting intensity while keeping the spectators thoroughly enthralled. The Players from various nations across the globe showcased their talent & truly embodying the spirit of sportsmanship.

## Telangana Budget session begins today

FROM PAGE 1

Held in the Assembly building's Committee Hall, the meeting involved senior state government officials and high-ranking police officers to meticulously review logistical, amenity, and security arrangements. Attendees included Deputy Chairman Banda Prakash Mudiraj, Minister for Legislative Affairs Duddilla Sridhar Babu, Minister for Roads and Buildings Komatireddy Venkat Reddy, Legislative Council Secretary V. Narasimha Char-yulu, and Assembly Secretary Rendla Tirupati. Also present were Chief Secretary Ramakrishna Rao, Principal

Secretaries Sandeep Sultania (finance) and Rahul Bojja (GAD), Finance Secretary Gaurav Uppal, and Special Secretary (Finance) Sikta Patnaik. The police contingent comprised DGP Shivadhar Reddy, ADG (Law & Order) Mahesh Bhagwat, Additional DGP (Intelligence) Vijayakumar, Commissioners of Hyderabad, Malkajgiri, and Cyberabad (V.C. Sajjanar, Avinash Mohanty, and M. Ramesh respectively), Intelligence IG Karthikaya, and the Chief Marshals of the Assembly and Council, Karnakar and Sanjeeva Reddy. During the meeting, the Speaker emphasised the necessity of continued full cooperation from the State government and officials,

mirroring past support. He highlighted the paramount importance of the Budget Sessions, noting their extended duration and daily proceedings. The Speaker asserted that a peaceful environment, both within and outside the legislative chambers, is crucial for the smooth conduct of these sessions.

He further stressed the need for stringent precautions to avert any untoward incidents or undesirable situations, ensuring that neither the government nor the Legislative Assembly faces disrepute. The Speaker also directed that information requested by Members be furnished with the utmost promptness.

## Govt to release Rythu Bharosa funds on March 22

FROM PAGE 1

First installment of the funds. The Officials have already completed all necessary arrangements for this event. As part of the first installment, the cash will be deposited into the accounts of 70 lakh farmers, who own agricultural land. It is well known that the Congress government had announced that it would implement the Rythu Bharosa scheme replacing the previous government's 'Rythu Bandhu' scheme—by providing enhanced investment support. The release of these funds will provide the farmers with the financial security needed to cover their cultivation expenses.

## AP MP Putta Mahesh gets station bail in Moinabad Farmhouse drugs Case

HYDERABAD

A significant development has occurred in the Moinabad farm house drugs party case, which created a sensation across the two Telugu states. In this case, AP TDP MP Putta Mahesh Yadav has been granted station bail by police. The police Officials granted the station bail to MP Putta Mahesh Yadav. The police granted the station bail to Putta Mahesh Yadav in light of the parliamentary sessions scheduled for Monday. To ensure he remained

out of the media's sight, the police escorted Mahesh Yadav out through a back exit. They brought police vehicles to the front and had the MP board his own car and sent him on his way.

Meanwhile, the 'Eagle Team' has intensified its investigation into the Moinabad farmhouse case. Having registered cases against a total of 11 individuals, the police are currently extracting crucial information from the accused. The police are conducting inquiries from specific angles seeking to determine how

the drugs were procured and who supplied them? Urine tests were conducted on those detained in connection with the drugs case. A total of six persons tested positive in the tests.

The EagleTeam SP Giridhar former MLA Pilot Rohit Reddy, Eluru MP Putta Mahesh Yadav, Ritesh Reddy, Kaushik Ravi, Namit and Arjun Reddy tested positive in the drugs test. There is a possibility that the Moinabad farmhouse will be seized by the police now as it had become a hub for a series of illicit activities.

## CPI Calls for Nationwide Protests Against War Tensions, Gas Shortage: K. Ramakrishna

HYDERABAD

Communist Party of India (CPI) National Secretary and former MLA K. Ramakrishna has called upon party cadres and democratic forces across the country to organize protest demonstrations against the ongoing war situation and the severe shortage of gas affecting the common people.

He expressed serious concern over the growing international war tensions and stated that wars only bring destruction, economic instability, and suffering to ordinary people. He emphasized that the government must work towards peace and diplomatic solutions instead of allowing global conflicts to escalate.

Ramakrishna also highlighted the difficulties faced by the public due to the scarcity of domestic gas cylinders and the rising prices



of essential commodities. He said that the shortage of cooking gas is creating severe hardship for poor and middle-class families, especially women who depend on LPG for daily cooking.

He urged CPI cadres to actively mobilize people and organize protest demonstrations, public meetings, and awareness programs in towns and villages to raise their voices against war and demand immediate measures from the

government to ensure adequate gas supply at affordable prices. He further appealed to all progressive, democratic, and peace-loving citizens to unite in the struggle for peace, social justice, and protection of the rights of the common people. Ramakrishna reiterated that the CPI will continue to stand with the people and intensify democratic struggles against policies that harm the interests of the poor and working classes.



## Hyderabad braces for week-long relief as IMD forecasts cooler days

HYDERABAD

People in Hyderabad and districts of Telangana who witnessed sweltering early summer heat with maximum temperatures consistently hovering between 36 and 40 degrees Celsius, are all set to experience relief with India Meteorological Department (IMD), Hyderabad issuing thunderstorms and gradual temperature drop warning till next Friday, March 20, 2026. The IMD, Hyderabad weather forecast issued on Sunday morning said "There will be a gradual fall by 2 to 4 degrees Celsius in maximum temperatures during the next 5 days. Light to moderate rain or thundershowers are very likely to occur at isolated places in Telangana from Sunday," the IMD Hyderabad forecast said. From Monday, March 16 onwards to Friday, March 20, multiple locations (in isolated pockets) in Hyderabad and districts are expected to witness thunderstorms accompanied by lightning and gusty winds, reaching speeds of 30-40 kmph, IMD said. Independent weather trackers have attributed the sudden shift in weather to the prevalence of moisture-laden south-easterly winds and rising thermal instability in the atmosphere. As a result, the present weather forecast of thunderstorms accompanied with drop in temperatures are likely to continue till Sunday, March 22, they said.

# Errabelli Swarna takes charge as Telangana Mahila Congress President

By Dr Srinivas Vooradi

HYDERABAD

Senior Congress leader and Warangal former Mayor Errabelli Swarna formally assumed charge as the President of the Telangana State Mahila Congress at a ceremony held at Gandhi Bhavan on Sunday. She took over the responsibilities from outgoing President Mogili Sunitha Rao. The programme was attended by All India Mahila Congress President Alka Lamba, TPCC President and MLC Bomma Mahesh Kumar Goud and several party leaders. Speaking after taking charge, Swarna said that the progress of any nation or State is directly linked to the status and empowerment of its women.

"When women are strong, society becomes strong. Economic, social and educational advancement of women is essential for real development," she said. Swarna highlighted that the Congress government in Telangana is prioritising women's welfare as part of its governance agenda. She recalled that among the six guarantees



announced by Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy on the first day of assuming office, significant emphasis was placed on 'women-centric' initiatives.

She noted that the Mahalaxmi scheme, offering financial assistance and free RTC bus travel for women, has not only eased daily commuting for lakhs of women but has also enhanced their self-confidence. To soften the

impact of rising LPG prices, the government is providing gas cylinders to eligible families for Rs. 500. The process of offering Rs. 2,500 monthly financial support to eligible women is also being accelerated, she added.

Swarna stated that the government's vision extends beyond welfare measures and aims at building economically self-reliant women leaders. "When

women are empowered, families grow stronger, and as families strengthen, society prospers," Swarna said.

She reiterated that the Congress government, led by Chief Minister Revanth Reddy, is committed to fulfilling the promises made by Sonia Gandhi and ensuring that every woman in Telangana moves forward with confidence and emerges as a force for change.

## INFLUX INTO BJP CONTINUED

HYDERABAD

Prominent leaders of social organization and political parties joining BJP continued today also who expressed their confidence in the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

This was second event of joining BJP within 24 hours in Telangana. A large number of people from Maheshwaram Assembly constituency joined yesterday into BJP attracting to the visionary leadership of PM Narendra Modi and the party's uncompromising fight against the anti-people policies of the Congress government in Telangana.

Today prominent social worker, President of the Gowda Sangham and BRS leader Panjala Giridhar Goud officially joined the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) along with his supporters in the presence of BJP State President N Ramchander Rao. Besides this Advocate Kavitha (from the family of a former TDP corporator) and Pruthviraj also joined the party alongside their followers. They were welcomed with

party shawl. Rao said that the people of Hyderabad were eagerly waiting for a clear change with women and youth stepping forward with the resolve to bring the BJP into power in the state. He urged all new members to work collectively with a spirit of public service.

BJP state chief criticized the "dark nexus" between Congress, BRS, and MIM in Hyderabad politics. He further alleged that the unscientific division of the GHMC into three parts was a conspiracy driven by hidden political motives.

Rao appealed to the public, stating that if a BJP Mayor is elected, the city will finally witness transparent administration and comprehensive development.

On the occasion Dr. Gautam Rao -BJP State General Secretary, Banda Karthika Reddy -BJP State Vice President, Lankala Deepak Reddy -Hyderabad Central BJP President, Vital -State Official Spokesperson and other senior leaders were present in the function.

## Rs.300 Crore Fresh Investment in Life Sciences Sector: Minister D. Sridhar Babu

HYDERABAD

US-based Cambridge Isotope Laboratories (CIL) and Hyderabad-based Chemtatva Chiral Solutions have come forward to establish an advanced manufacturing facility in Telangana. The two companies will jointly invest ₹300 crore over the next three years, said Minister for IT, Industries and Commerce D. Sridhar Babu.

The project will be set up in Genome Valley Phase-4 in Hyderabad and is expected to generate employment for about 250 people, the Minister said.

Speaking after meeting with the CEOs of the two companies at the Secretariat on Sunday, the Minister said Telangana continues to attract global investments in high-value sectors.

"Telangana is emerging as a global hub for life sciences and specialty chemicals. The partnership between Cambridge Isotope Laboratories and Chemtatva reflects the strong confidence that international



companies have in the state. This investment will further strengthen Telangana's capabilities in advanced chemistry and materials science," Sridhar Babu said.

He added that the proposed state-of-the-art facility will manufacture iso-

tope-labelled compounds, which are currently largely imported into India. Once operational, the project will help reduce the country's dependence on imports.

These compounds are widely used in pharmaceutical research, metabolic studies, diagnostic testing, advanced electronics, organic electroluminescent materials (OLEDs), and the semiconductor sector, he noted. The Minister said the companies chose Genome Valley for the project due to the state's industry-friendly ecosystem, availability of highly skilled scientists, world-class infrastructure, and progressive government policies.

Dr. Vishal Rajput, CEO of Chemtatva Chiral Solutions, said that the partnership with Cambridge Isotope Laboratories will help develop world-class manufacturing capabilities in Telangana. The meeting was attended by Cliff Caldwell, CEO of Cambridge Isotope Laboratories, Shakti Nagappa, Director of Telangana Life Sciences, and other officials.

## Asthanams line up in Tirumala temple

TIRUMALA

Three Asthanams have been lined up in the month of March this year in Tirumala temple following the upcoming important festivals including Telugu Ugadi and Sri Ramanavami.

Asthanam – the traditional Temple Court is usually observed in the Garudalwar Sannidhi on the special occasions earmarked in the temple.

Ugadi Asthanam: On the auspicious day of Sri Parabhava Nama Samvatsara

Ugadi, a set of new clothes is being draped to both main and processional deities. The Vedic scholars present the year's Panchangam in front of the deities and perform Asthanam between 7am and 9am. Sri Rama Navami Asthanam: On the occasion of Sri Rama Navami on March 27, the temple court is being observed between 9pm and 10pm at Garudalwar Sannidhi.

Earlier, the Hanumanta Vahana Seva will also be observed on the occasion in Tirumala between 6:30pm and 8pm.

As a part of Asthanam, the Vedic Pundits presents Sri Rama Jananam (Birth of Sri Rama) chapter from Srimad Ramayana and perform Asthanam.

Pattabisheka Asthanam: On the succeeding day of Sri Rama Navami, the Pattabisheka Asthanam is being observed in Tirumala temple between 8pm and 9pm.

The Vedic scholars present the Coronation Ceremony episode of Ramachandra Murty from the sacred epic Srimad Ramayana on the occasion.

## CPI leader Narayana condemns demolition drive by Hydra at Praneeth Antilia

HYDERABAD

CPI National Control Commission Chairman Narayana on Sunday condemned the demolition drive conducted by HYDRA on the premises of Praneeth Antilia venture in Bachupally and protested the actions taken by the Hydra team. He asserted that no official possesses the authority to take measures—specifically within designated 'Green Belt' areas—without obtaining prior permission, especially when a court issued stay order is already in effect.

He stated that the demolition carried out by the Hydra today constituted an act in direct violation of the law. He made these remarks while speaking to media persons after visiting the



demolition site and speaking on this occasion, he remarked that the CPI had welcomed the establishment of the Hydra in the past.

He noted that had the Hydra been constituted solely for the purpose of protecting lakes and government lands—with Ranganath serving as its presiding officer—their party would have

been delighted to support it? However, he stated that today's actions necessitated a reconsideration of their support for the agency. He added that while they had previously dismissed certain allegations levelled against the agency as baseless, today's events compelled them to accept the veracity of those claims.

He emphasized that it was imperative for the Hydra to exercise due diligence and careful consideration before undertaking any further actions. "It is clearly evident that political pressures and real estate interests lie behind the actions taken by the Hydra authorities. The CPI party affirmed its unwavering support for the colony residents by emphasizing that the future Hydra

operations must be conducted in a manner that causes no detriment to the residents. While the public generally perceives that positive work is being undertaken regarding the beautification of the Musi River and the conservation and development of lakes, actions such as these create a negative impression of about the Hydra," he noted. He stated that it would be compelled to closely monitor every program and initiative undertaken by the agency.

He condemned the demolition of walls—carried out under the pretext of road widening—as a repressive act while demanding that the Hydra Commissioner immediately apologize for these errors. He further pointed out that the residents had been facing severe inconvenience over the past week due to disruptions in street lighting, drainage lines, and electrical cables and urged the authorities to resolve these issues without further delay.

He suggested that the matter be resolved expeditiously through legal channels and assured the residents that the CPI would extend its full support toward finding a resolution to the issue.

SOUTHERN RAILWAY	
Tender Notice	
E-Tenders are invited by the Senior Divisional Mechanical Engineer, Southern Railway, Salem-636005 for the following work:	
S.No.	Description
1	Tender Notice Number and date
2	Name of work
3	Estimate Value
4	Tender Closing date and Time
5	Tender Opening date and Time
6	Web address
The Tender has been uploaded on the GeM portal <a href="http://www.gem.gov.in">http://www.gem.gov.in</a> on 13.03.2026 As Custom Bid.	
The firms registered in GeM Portal are only eligible to participate in this tender. Complete details of the above tenders are given on the GeM portal " <a href="http://www.gem.gov.in">www.gem.gov.in</a> "	
For Details of bid submission, please refer website portal " <a href="http://www.gem.gov.in">www.gem.gov.in</a> "	
For Details about scope of work, approximate value of tender, location and other documents, please refer website portal " <a href="http://www.gem.gov.in">www.gem.gov.in</a> "	
Senior Divisional Mechanical Engineer, Southern Railway, Salem 636 005	

SOUTHERN RAILWAY			
M-TRD-29-I-OT-2025-26-10R, 26, 27 and 28 Dt. 13.03.2026			
For and on behalf of the President of India, the Divisional Railway Manager/Traction Distribution Branch, Chennai Division, Southern Railway, Chennai 3, invites online tender from the experienced Contractors for the following works for further details, please refer to <a href="http://www.ireps.gov.in">www.ireps.gov.in</a>			
Sl. No.	Tender No./Name of the work	Value (Rs.)	Closing date/time
1.	Tender No. M-TRD-29-I-OT-2025-26-10R	5239630.71	06/04/2026 (15.00 hrs.)
	Fabrication, Repair & Replacement work in 2 Nos of 8 wheeler tower wagon-RU 05879, RU-97880 and 1 No of 4 Wheeler Tower Wagon RU 9512 in Chennai Division.		
2.	Tender No. M-TRD-29-I-OT-2025-26-26	8598670.30	06/04/2026 (15.00 hrs.)
	Modification to existing OHE arrangements in connection with Provision of up loop line at Rettandapatti(KDY) in All-JTJ section of Chennai-Division.		
3.	Tender No. M-TRD-29-I-OT-2025-26-27	4229074.09	06/04/2026 (15.00 hrs.)
	Modification to existing OHE arrangements in connection with Provision of 2. Nos of stabling lines at car shed, Avadi		
4.	Tender No. M-TRD-29-I-OT-2025-26-28	23014130.00	06/04/2026 (15.00 hrs.)
	Replacement of existing 65 sq.mm weak catenary wire in MAS-RU and AJJ-JTJ section of Chennai Division		
(Sr.DEE/TRD/MAS) Divisional Railway Manager, Traction Distribution Branch, Chennai Division, Chennai-3			

**RAJAPUSHPA**  
PROPERTIES PVT LTD  
Shaping Innovations

WHEREVER THERE IS A DREAM,  
THERE IS RAJAPUSHPA

**18**  
YEARS OF  
XCELLENCE

**48.67 +**  
MILLION SQ.FT.  
PORTFOLIO

**11.2**  
MILLION SQ.FT  
COMPLETED PROJECTS

**37.47**  
MILLION SQ.FT  
UNDER CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS

**18000+**  
HAPPY RESIDENTS

**20+**  
PROJECTS

ONGOING PROJECTS

**RAJAPUSHPA**  
PROVINCIA  
NARSINGI

**RAJAPUSHPA**  
IMPERIA  
TELLAPUR

**RAJAPUSHPA**  
PRIZENTIA  
KOKAPET

**RAJAPUSHPA**  
AURELIA  
TELLAPUR

**RAJAPUSHPA**  
CASA LUXURA  
NEOPOLIS

**RAJAPUSHPA**  
INFINA  
MANCHIREVULA

**RAJAPUSHPA**  
skira  
NEOPOLIS

**766 000 55 00** [www.rajapushpa.in](http://www.rajapushpa.in)

SOUTHERN RAILWAY	
Salem Division	
Office of the Sr. Divisional Electrical Engineer Electric Loco Shed, Erode	
E-Tender Notice	
Online tender is invited for the following work:	
Tender No	SA_A_RS_ED_OT_25_26_23, Dated: 13-03-2026
Description of Work	Works contract for Calibration of Measuring Instruments available at Electric Loco Shed, Salem Division, Southern Railway, Erode.
All details regarding the tender are available at <a href="https://www.ireps.gov.in">https://www.ireps.gov.in</a>	
DEE/RS/ED For Sr.DEE/RS/ED	



## 485 held for drunk driving in Malkajgiri, Cyberabad over weekend



**HYDERABAD:** As many as 485 people were arrested for driving in an inebriated state in the Malkajgiri and Cyberabad commissionerates during a special drive on March 13 and 14. In the Malkajgiri commissionerate, 223 people were arrested. Among those arrested, 194 were two-wheeler riders, 21 four-wheeler drivers, and eight three-wheeler drivers. As many as 204 offenders recorded a Blood Alcohol Concentration (BAC) ranging from 36-200, 10 recorded a BAC ranging from 201-300, and nine recorded a BAC of 301-550.

In a statement, the Malkajgiri police said, "Malkajgiri Police reiterate that driving under the influence of alcohol is a serious offence." Add as a preferred source on Google If anyone is found to be driving in an inebriated condition and causes a fatal accident, such individuals will be booked under Section 105 of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), 2023 (Culpable Homicide Not Amounting to Murder). The maximum punishment under this section is 10 years of imprisonment along with a fine.

## Kavitha claims Musi river lands being mortgaged to World Bank

HYDERABAD

Telangana Jagruthi president K Kavitha on Sunday, March 15, alleged that the Telangana government is trying to mortgage the lands of the Musi River to the World Bank in the name of the Musi Riverfront development project.

She demanded that the government explain to people how the project is going to benefit them. Talking to media persons, Kavitha claimed that the fact that the Detailed Project Report (DPR) has not been prepared shows that the government is trying to hide something.

She also announced that she will file a defamation case against Hyderabad Disaster Response and Asset Protection Agency (HYDRAA) Commissioner AV Ranganath for levelling certain allegations against her. She reminded him that he had previously written a letter alleging that Aditya Constructions was engaging in land encroachment, and when she staged a protest over the same allegations, he tried to defame her.

Kavitha warned the official that if he fails to remove the videos posted by him by this evening, she will drag him to court. "Until very recently, they maintained that any structures — even those situated 30 meters away from the Musi riverbed — would be demolished. Just the other day, we visited a private estab-



lishment and staged a protest; we raised our voices against the fact that this property is being constructed right in the middle of the Musi River. Generally, HYDRAA officials do not speak out on any issue. However, following our protest, they posted five videos on their official X handle," she said. She said they have so far submitted six formal complaints along with supporting evidence to Ranganath, but no action was taken on any of them.

"You appear to be selectively demolishing the homes of the poor, while completely avoiding any action against the properties of the wealthy," she said "Do you only seek to defame those

who speak the truth? Are you — and your government — merely graphics designers or content creators?" she asked. Kavitha said that the Musi River rejuvenation initiative must be designed to genuinely benefit the public. Stating that under the previous government, permissions were denied for construction within the Musi riverbed, she wanted to know the reasons for granting such permissions now. "What kind of shady dealings or manipulation lie behind the granting of these permissions?" she asked. She alleged that ever since assuming power in the state, the Congress government has unleashed a monstrous menace upon the public.



## Should lead by example: KTR takes on Congress' challenge, agrees to drug test

HYDERABAD

The Telangana Congress Committee (TPCC) chief Bomma Mahesh Kumar Goud has challenged Bharat Rashtira Samithi working president KT Rama Rao to undergo a drug test, following the arrest of former BRS MLA Rohith Reddy during a drug party at his farmhouse in Moinabad, on Saturday, March 14.

Speaking to media persons, Mahesh Kumar said that the "entire batch" is suspected to be addicted to drugs. "Tomorrow we are going to have our Assembly session. In the Assembly, you and all people have the test. I will call doctors to the Assembly, let's prove innocence."

He alleged that the previous BRS government allowed the drug problem to grow during its decade-long rule in Telangana. "This is a very sensitive and heinous crime. For the last 10 years of BRS rule, drugs were flown like anything. Most of the young people got ha-



bituated to drugs; there were doubts about even KTR." "The then PCC president and now CM, Revanth Reddy, challenged KTR to a test, but he did not come. Now the whole KTR batch is habituated to drugs. We have serious doubts; I demand that KTR come for a test. Tomorrow we are going to have our Assembly session. In Assembly, let's all have test. We are going to prove our innocence," Goud said.

Six persons, including Telugu Desam Party (TDP) MP Putta Mahesh Kumar and former BRS MLA Pilot Rohit Reddy, tested positive for drugs following a police raid at a farm-

house in Moinabad in Rangareddy district. The raid was carried out by the Elite Action Group for Drug Law Enforcement (EAGLE) team on Saturday after receiving information about a party being held at the farmhouse without permission. Superintendent of Police, EAGLE team, R Giridhar, said the police had taken 11 people into custody. Five individuals initially tested positive on the on-site urine test. Later, as per procedure, a blood sample was taken in the morning at a government hospital, and six people tested positive for the drug test. Those who tested positive are Rohith Reddy, P Mahesh Kumar, Ritesh, Namit, Kaushal and Arjun.

"All of them will be produced before the magistrate for further legal action," said R Giridhar.

The official said that one person had fired on noticing the police. "When we went inside, the man had raised his hand and held a gun. We seized the weapon," the official added.

## Four of a family die in sleep after bike fumes fill home

AMARAVATI

Four members of a family died due to asphyxiation after inhaling smoke from a bike kept on for the entire night in Andhra Pradesh's Annamaya district, police said on Sunday. The tragic incident occurred in Punganur town on the intervening night of Saturday and Sunday. All four people died in their sleep at their home on Tyagaraja Street.

The deceased were identified as the grandfather, his two granddaughters and a grandson. According to police, one Murali, who runs a hair salon, had his motorbike serviced at a mechanic on Saturday. Due to a problem in the

engine, the mechanic replaced the bore piston. He had reportedly advised Murali to keep the engine on for the entire night. Murali closed all the windows of the house and kept the bike on. While Murali and his wife Revati went to sleep on the terrace, his father Ramachandraiah, their son Karthik, and twin daughters Charita and Chandana slept in the house.

The smoke from the bike filled the house as all doors and windows were closed. Ramachandraiah (70), his twin granddaughters Charita and Chandana, aged 8, and grandson Karthik (15) were found dead on Sunday morning.

Murali and his wife escaped as they

slept on the terrace. Police shifted the bodies for post-mortem examination. Preliminary investigation shows that they all died due to asphyxiation after inhaling carbon monoxide.

The incident shocked the residents in the town. Police registered a case and took up further investigation. Meanwhile, two people died in a road accident in Visakhapatnam on Sunday. According to police, the accident occurred at BHPV Junction when a truck ran over vehicles which had stopped at the intersection. Two people died on the spot. One Ramakrishna, who was on his way to Simhachalam with his daughter, died in the accident.

## 'FASTag annual pass fee revised to Rs 3,075 from April 1 for FY27'

NEW DELHI

The National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) on Sunday announced a revision in the FASTag annual pass fee for the financial year 2026-27. The fee has been increased from Rs 3,000 to Rs 3,075 and the revised rate will come into effect from April 1, 2026. "NHAI has announced the revision of the applicable fee for the FASTag Annual Pass from the current Rs 3,000 to Rs 3,075 for the Financial Year 2026-27," the Ministry of Road Transport & Highways said.

According to NHAI, the revision has been made in line with the provisions of the National Highways Fee (Determination of Rates and Collection) Rules, 2008. The FASTag Annual Pass has been gaining popularity among private vehicle owners, with more than 56 lakh users currently availing the facility. The revised annual pass will continue to be available for eligible non-commercial vehicles that have a valid FASTag. It can be used at around 1,150 fee plazas located on national highways and express-

ways across the country.

The FASTag Annual Pass allows users to avoid frequent recharges by paying a one-time fee that remains valid for one year or for up to 200 toll plaza crossings, whichever comes earlier. The facility is designed to make highway travel more convenient and cost-effective for regular commuters. Once the payment is made, the annual pass is activated on the existing FASTag linked to the vehicle within two hours.

Users can purchase or renew the pass through the Rajmarg Yatra App or the official website of NHAI. "The annual pass gets activated within two hours on the existing FASTag linked to the vehicle after payment of the one-time fee through the Rajmarg Yatra App or the National Highways Authority of India website," it added. The FASTag Annual Pass was launched on Independence Day, August 15, 2025, and has received strong response from highway users. NHAI said the growing adoption of the pass reflects the convenience it offers to people travelling frequently on national highways across India.

## Dr. Peruka Raju has been Selected "Sahiti Kala Seva Award – 2026"

HYDERABAD

Renowned national poet, writer, and multilingual scholar Dr. Peruka Raju has been selected for the prestigious "Sahiti Kala Seva Award – 2026" in recognition of his outstanding contributions to literature. The award has been announced in appreciation of his exceptional literary service across various Indian languages, along with his powerful writings in Telugu that reflect strong social consciousness. This was stated in a press release by Mrs. Swapna Kishore, Founder President of the Sahiti Kala Seva Committee.

The award will be presented to Dr. Peruka Raju during a special ceremony to be held in Bhagyanagar (Hyderabad) on the occasion of Ugadi celebrations.

Dr. Peruka Raju, a proud son of Telangana who brings honor to the nation, is currently serving the country as a Junior Officer in the Madras Regiment, Indian Army. As a national poet, writer, and



translator, he has earned recognition for building bridges between emotions and cultures across several Indian languages.

His writings beautifully blend the bitterness of neem blossoms, the tanginess of raw mango, and the sweetness of sugarcane, creating a literary flavor that leaves readers with a nectar-like experience.

Apart from literature, Dr. Raju is also actively involved in social service. With the aim of supporting the upliftment of poor and

marginalized communities, he founded a voluntary organization called "My Gift." Guided by his life philosophy—"Encouragement itself is the greatest gift"—he continues to inspire and serve society.

Dr. Peruka Raju has received several prestigious honors including the Swarna Kankana Award and the Nandi Award. In addition, he was recently honored with the Sankranti Vishishta Kavi Ratna Award, the Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam Vishva Sahiti Kala Vedika Award, the International Mother Language Distinguished Literary Award, and the Nava Bharata Kala Kshetra Award, among many others. Through these recognitions, he has firmly established himself as a prominent literary voice at the national level.

Friends from his native place, admirers of literature, members of the "My Gift" organization, and his colleagues in the Indian Army have expressed great joy and pride over his selection for this prestigious award.

## Congress, BJP trade blame over LPG cylinder shortage after urea row in Telangana



HYDERABAD

As people, especially households, continue to struggle to obtain LPG cylinders, the two national parties, Congress and BJP, are engaged in a blame game over the crisis.

Last year too, both parties were involved in a similar tussle and held each other responsible for the urea shortage in the State. While farmers struggled due to the scarcity of urea last year, this year households, hotels, eateries as well as restaurants are bearing the brunt of insufficient LPG supplies. Turning a blind eye to the people's sufferings, both parties are sparing no opportunity to blame each other for the current crisis.

On Saturday, Civil Supplies Minister N Uttam Kumar Reddy claimed that domestic gas supplies were near normal levels, but admitted that there was a severe shortage of commercial LPG supplies. He said commercial LPG supplies were currently meeting only about 20 percent of the demand, raising serious concerns among key commercial LPG consumers.

Hotels and restaurants across the State are facing acute difficulties, forcing many to cut down their menu options and even temporarily close outlets. The Hotels and Restaurants Association of Telangana has raised complaints about



the non-availability of LPG supplies, with smaller establishments being badly affected. However, the BJP State unit has been countering the Congress government's accusations and dismissing them as false campaigns.

BJP State president N Ramchander Rao argued that the demand for gas cylinders had increased due to artificial scarcity created by the Congress government. Stating that Prime Minister Narendra Modi had been categorically asserting that there was no shortage of LPG supply in the country, he maintained that supply disruptions were linked to the ongoing situation in the Gulf region. He also alleged that since the country imports crude oil and gas from other nations, the Congress governments were deliberately creating an artificial shortage. Claiming that there was no such issue in BJP-ruled States, he charged that people were facing difficulties only in Congress-ruled States.



## Two-wheelers barred from flyovers for Shab-e-Qadar on March 16

HYDERABAD

The Hyderabad Traffic has issued a traffic advisory for the intervening night of March 16 and 17 March in view of the holy night of Shab-e-Qadar in Ramzan, or "Jagne Ki Raat" as it is known. According to Joel Davis, Joint Commissioner of Police, Hyderabad, two-wheelers will not be allowed on the following flyovers after 10 pm: Dr Manmohan Singh Express Flyover (Zoo Park to Aramghar flyover), Bahadurpura Fly-

over (Devi Bagh to Zoo Park gate no 2), Chandrayangutta flyover (entrance from Nayara Petrol pump Hashamabad to Phoolbagh DLRL) and Dr APJ Abdul Kalam Flyover (Phisalbanda to Laxma Reddy Garden Function Hall). The general public/commuters are requested to make note of the restrictions and cooperate, said a press release from the Hyderabad Traffic Police. In case of any inconvenience in commuting, the public may contact the traffic helpline 9010203626, it added.

## HYDRAA fences govt land near Sikh graveyard worth Rs 250 crore

HYDERABAD

The Hyderabad Disaster Response and Assets Protection Agency (HYDRAA) on Sunday, March 15, erected a fence around 2.34 acres of government land in Rambagh, Atapur, ending a long-standing dispute between the Sikh community and another group.

The land secured by HYDRAA has an estimated worth of Rs 250 crore. According to HYDRAA, the disputed site is surrounded by temples with a government land in the middle. Adjacent to the land is a burial site of the Sikh community. For a long time, a dispute existed locally with one group demanding that the land be allotted to temples and another insisting it be given to the Sikh community. Recently, members of the Sikh community approached the High Court seeking allotment of the land, and



on January 29, the High Court directed the District Collector to take an appropriate decision within three months.

Meanwhile, members of the Sikh community erected a tin-sheet enclosure around the 2.34 acres and took control of the land, which triggered tensions between the two groups.

Following media reports, HYDRAA Commissioner AV Ranganath visited the site and examined relevant documents.

After interacting with revenue officials and both concerned parties, HYDRAA confirmed the land as government property. Officials were asked to remove the tin-sheet enclosure, erect fencing, and install boards declaring it as government property.

However, the area containing the Sikh burial site, measuring 366 square yards, was left untouched, and fencing was carried out around the remaining land, HYDRAA said.

Following media reports, HYDRAA Commissioner AV Ranganath visited the site and examined relevant documents. After interacting with revenue officials and both concerned parties, HYDRAA confirmed the land as government property. Officials were asked to remove the tin-sheet enclosure, erect fencing, and install boards declaring it as government property.



## Paradip will emerge as a major economic zone: Odisha CM

BHUBANESWAR: (MAR 15)

Odisha Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi on Sunday said Paradip in Jagatsinghpur district will emerge as a major economic zone in the country in the coming days. Majhi made the remark during a meeting to review progress of setting up of large industries in the coastal town. The meeting discussed in detail the expansion of the Paradip Port, ship building and repair facility, and industrial projects to be developed by Indian Oil and JSW, an official statement said.

## “Odisha Set for RS Polls After 12 Years”

BHUBANESWAR: (MAR 15)

Amid fear of cross-voting and horse trade charges, Odisha will witness voting for the Rajya Sabha elections after a gap of 12 years on Monday, as five candidates are in the fray for four seats in the Upper House of the Parliament. The Rajya Sabha elections this time has turned out to be a prestige battle between BJP president Naveen Patnaik and the BJP, which unseated the five-time chief minister from power in the 2024 general elections. Patnaik made allegations of “horse trading” against the ruling BJP and its three candidates in the fray.

## “EC Schedule May Leave Bengal Voters in Limbo”

KOLKATA: (MAR 15)

With the Election Commission announcing the assembly poll schedule on Sunday, stating that elections in West Bengal will be held on April 23 and 29, the fate of over 60 lakh under adjudication electors, whose voting eligibility is currently under judicial scanner, hangs in balance, observers say. The announcement of the two-phased polls in Bengal, without the supplementary lists of the state's electoral rolls getting published so far, there's little clarity on whether those who are found eligible post-adjudication will be able to exercise their franchise in the current state elections. As per commission rules, voters who are enrolled in electoral rolls published before the last day of withdrawal of nominations of candidates are eligible to exercise their franchise.

## “Rs 100-Crore Kochi Fraud Nets Three Directors”

KOCHI (KERALA): (MAR 15)

Police on Sunday arrested three directors of a firm accused of cheating hundreds of investors of over Rs 100 crore through a fake investment scheme linked to agricultural tourism here, officials said. The accused were identified as Muraleedharan, Ashik Murali and Akhil Murali, all natives of Thrissur. The arrests were made by the Kalamassery police in connection with a fraud involving ATCOS (Agri Tourism Cooperative Society), a firm headquartered at Pathadipallem here.

# Andhra MP, former MLA test positive for drugs after raid, say police

HYDERABAD, MARCH 15

A Member of Parliament from Andhra Pradesh and a former MLA from Telangana have tested positive for drugs after police raided a farmhouse in Moinabad near Hyderabad on Saturday night, a senior official said on Sunday. The MP reportedly belongs to the Telugu Desam Party (TDP), and the former MLA is from the Bharat Rashtra Samithi (BRS). They were among six who tested positive after blood tests were conducted on them, the police official said. The MP had tested negative in the rapid test conducted on Saturday night immediately after the



raid. On reliable information that a drug party was on at a farmhouse, a team of Elite Action Group for Drug Law Enforcement (EAGLE), along with Special Operations Team (SOT) and local police, raided the place. EAGLE Superintendent of Police R. Giridhar told the media that the raid-

ing team heard gunshots and acted swiftly to overpower the man who had opened fire. He was identified as Nimit Sharma, said to be a resident of New Delhi. According to police, the accused had opened fire in the air. Police seized the revolver and a live cartridge. Used cartridges were found in

the possession of another person present there. Police believe that the man opened fire as part of a celebration during the party, as those present there had not noticed the police personnel.

The SP said a total of 11 people, including a woman attending the drug party, were taken into custody, and a rapid drug test was conducted on them. Five of them tested positive in the rapid test. As per the procedure, the accused were taken to a government hospital to collect blood samples. One of the six who tested negative in the rapid test was found positive in the blood test. The six were handed over to the Moinabad police, who

will take further legal action. The accused will be produced before a magistrate.

The police officer said action would be taken against the accused under the NDPS Act. Politicians, realtors and businessmen were among those who attended the party.

Two grams of white powder were also seized from the farmhouse. The samples have been sent to the Forensic Science Laboratory (FSL) for testing. Interestingly, it was at the same farmhouse that Cyberabad police conducted a raid in October 2022 and arrested three people for allegedly trying to bribe some MLAs of the then ruling party, BRS.



## Woman hacked to death by husband at Tamil Nadu bus stand

A man in Tamil Nadu's Tirunelveli allegedly chased his estranged wife at a bus stand and hacked her to death in broad daylight before surrendering at a police station.

followed her and waited for an opportunity to confront her. When Pechiyammal got down at Sandipu bus stand, Sudhakar allegedly pulled out a sickle and began chasing her in public view. He then attacked her repeatedly, killing her on the spot. Investigators suspect that Sudhakar carried out the attack because he believed his wife was involved in an illicit relationship. Police reached the spot soon after the incident and recovered Pechiyammal's body. The body has been sent for autopsy as part of the investigation. Meanwhile, Sudhakar surrendered at Sandipu police station following the attack. Police have taken him into custody and a detailed probe into the incident is under way. Further details are awaited as investigators continue to question the accused and gather evidence related to the case.

A man allegedly chased his estranged wife at a bus stand and hacked her to death in broad daylight in Tamil Nadu's Tirunelveli district on Sunday before walking into a nearby police station and surrendering, police said. The accused, identified as Sudhakar from Palamadai, was married to Pechiyammal and the couple have two children. According to preliminary information, the couple had been living separately due to differences of opinion. Police said the incident took place when Pechiyammal was on her way to work. Sudhakar allegedly

## “Drug Row: YSRCP Targets TDP MP”

AMARAVATI, MARCH 15

YSR Congress Party has demanded that Andhra Pradesh's ruling Telugu Desam Party sack Eluru MP Putta Mahesh Yadav for allegedly taking drugs at a rave party. South Cinema news



Former MLA TJR Sudhakar Babu told the media here on Sunday that Chief Minister and TDP president N. Chandrababu Naidu should sack his MP after testing positive for taking drugs at a party held in Hyderabad. Terming TDP as ‘Telugu Drugs Party’, he alleged that liquor and drugs are freely available in

Chandrababu Naidu, though in coalition with Jana Sena and BJP, has an active hotline channel with Congress leadership, which he has used to sabotage the Rayalaseema Lift Irrigation project, and now it remains to be seen what he does with the MP.

The MP is the son of a former TTD Chairman, and his taking drugs and being at the scene where bullets were fired defines his character, said the YSRCP leader. YSRCP spokesperson Konda Rajeev Gandhi said it is deeply shocking and disgusting to see reports that TDP MP Mahesh Yadav was caught in a drug-related case

during a police raid at a farmhouse in Moinabad.

He said the incident exposes the hypocrisy of Chandrababu Naidu and Nara Lokesh, who loudly campaign “Say No to Drugs Bro” while claiming drug use is under control. He noted that the MP comes from a family close to Chandrababu Naidu, with his father being the current Mydukur MLA and former TTD Chairman, and that the MP is close to Nara Lokesh. Gandhi said the coalition's record from harassment allegations against a Jana Sena MLA to drug cases and other scandals has become its defining feature.

## “7 TN Pilgrims’ Bodies to Be Repatriated”

CHENNAI: (MAR 15)

Steps are being taken to bring back the bodies of seven pilgrims, including five women, who lost their lives in a bus accident in Nepal, the Tamil Nadu government said on Sunday. The bodies of seven people, hailing from Pollachi and Devakottai in Tamil Nadu, who lost their lives after the bus they were travelling in veered off the road and plunged down a slope in Central Nepal on March 14, are being taken to Kathmandu for an autopsy.

# “Karnataka Flags Andhra UKP Objections”

BAGALKOTE (KARNATAKA), MARCH 14

Karnataka Deputy Chief Minister and State President, D.K. Shivakumar, on Saturday said that a meeting will be held in New Delhi with Members of Parliament from the State to discuss the objections raised by Andhra Pradesh over the third phase of the Upper Krishna Project (UKP) and to exert pressure on the Central government. South Cinema news

Speaking to reporters in Bagalkote, Dy CM Shivakumar, who also holds the

Water Resources portfolio, said the meeting would take place on next March 17 at Karnataka Bhavan in New Delhi. Dy CM Shivakumar said the State would strongly raise its voice against the stand taken by the Andhra Pradesh government, which has objected to the implementation of the third phase of the Upper Krishna Project, one of Karnataka's major irrigation projects, and has also not cooperated in efforts to prevent wastage of water from the Tungabhadra dam. He said the Andhra Pradesh government had written to

the Centre objecting to the implementation of the Upper Krishna Project and the land acquisition process related to it. Following this, the Central government has sought clarification from Karnataka. Dy CM Shivakumar stated that the State was implementing the project in accordance with the tribunal's order to utilise its rightful share of water. He added that works worth about Rs 26,000 crore under the project had already been initiated. He clarified that the Karnataka government was not currently planning to increase the height

of the Almatti dam. “We are only preparing to utilise our share of water in accordance with the order issued in 2010. However, the Andhra Pradesh government has raised objections to this as well,” he said. The Deputy Chief Minister further stated that nearly 30 TMC of water meant for Karnataka was being wasted from the Tungabhadra dam, and alleged that the Andhra Pradesh government was not cooperating in finding an alternative solution to prevent the wastage. Shivakumar said he would travel to New Delhi on Tuesday along with Minis-

ters H.K. Patil, M.B. Patil and Boseraju to discuss the issue with Karnataka MPs and to mount pressure on the Central government regarding the matter.

The third phase of the Upper Krishna Project (UKP-III) in Karnataka is a massive, approved irrigation initiative aimed at raising the Almatti dam's height from 519.6 metres to 524.256 metres. With an estimated cost of Rs 70,000 crore to over Rs 1.22 lakh crore, it aims to utilize 130.90 TMC of water to irrigate nearly six lakh hectares in northern Karnataka.

# “Karur Case: Vijay Leaves CBI HQ”

Actor and Tamilaga Vetri Kazhagam president Vijay spent nearly seven hours at the Central Bureau of Investigation headquarters in Delhi on Sunday in connection with the 2025 Karur stampede case, leaving the premises in the evening and waving at supporters gathered outside.

Vijay arrived at the CBI headquarters earlier in the day and was questioned by investigators about the circumstances surrounding the stampede that occurred during his political out-

reach programme in Tamil Nadu last year. As he exited the building, the actor-politician briefly acknowledged the crowd waiting outside, smiling and waving before leaving the premises. The tragedy took place on September 27 during a public outreach programme organised by Vijay's party in Karur. A massive crowd had gathered for the event when a stampede broke out, leaving 41 people dead. The case initially came under investigation by a state-level Special Investigation Team. The Supreme Court later ordered that the probe be transferred to the Central Bureau of Investigation, calling for an independent and impartial inquiry



into the incident. QUESTIONS OVER DELAY AND CROWD MANAGEMENT

Investigators have been examining several aspects of the event, including crowd management arrangements and the sequence of events on the day of the rally. One of the key issues under scrutiny is

an alleged seven-hour delay between the scheduled start of the programme and Vijay's arrival at the venue. Officials are probing whether the delay contributed to the swelling of the crowd and the eventual loss of control. The agency is also reviewing documents related to permissions obtained for the rally and seeking clarity on who organised the programme in Karur.

Within the party structure, investigators are examining how the event was planned, who made the decision to hold it in Karur and when Vijay was informed about the programme. Officials are also looking into whether Vijay's team carried out any prior

risk assessment in coordination with the district administration, and whether arrangements such as drinking water facilities and designated entry and exit points were in place for the crowd. The movement of Vijay's modified caravan through the gathering is another focus of the investigation. The CBI is examining how the vehicle moved through the dense crowd and whether there was adequate coordination with the local police. Investigators are also trying to determine when Vijay became aware of the stampede and what events followed, including the exact timeline of his arrival at and departure from the venue.

# Odisha Congress MLAs offered Rs 5 crore to cross vote in Rajya Sabha: DK Shivakumar

Two Odisha Congress MLAs were offered Rs 5 crore each to cross vote in Rajya Sabha elections, DK Shivakumar alleged. Police have arrested two suspects, seized a cheque, and launched an investigation into the incident.



Karnataka Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar on Sunday accused some unknown people of attempting to lure Odisha Congress MLAs with Rs 5 crore each to influence the March 16 Rajya Sabha elections, terming it part of the BJP's alleged “Operation Lotus”. Two peo-

ple have been arrested for allegedly attempting to bribe the legislators. Speaking to reporters at his residence in Sadashivanagar and later at AICC President Mallikarjun Kharge's home, Shivakumar said the MLAs were housed at a resort in Bidadi when four individuals approached

them with cash to cross vote. “Four people have come. One local person named Suresh helped them; they contacted him (an MLA) online. In the morning they picked up our MLA. Our MLA told us that they offered Rs five crore for each vote. He (Congress MLA) said he is not for horse-trad-

ing,” he said. “The cheque and everything should be seized. A complaint will be filed at the police station. After that, whatever legal action is required will be taken,” the Deputy Chief Minister added. He also said that those caught have accepted that they came for the “same purpose”. “They have admitted it and the process is on to trace others. This is the great Operation Lotus carried out by BJP friends in Karnataka,” the Deputy CM said.

The Congress uses the term “Operation Lotus” to describe alleged BJP efforts to topple non-BJP governments. It also refers to attempts to se-

cure support from opposition MLAs for BJP-backed Rajya Sabha candidates. When asked about internal disputes in Davanagere over tickets, he dismissed any confusion, saying, “Where is the confusion? All leaders have agreed to abide by the high command's decision”. Meanwhile, sources told news agency PTI that Congress MLAs are flying to Bhubaneswar on Sunday night. They will take part in the voting in the Upper House on Monday morning. The BJP has fielded one more candidate, which raised apprehensions of horse-trading. The Congress and the Biju Janata Dal have fielded a candidate.

## “Bike Left Running Overnight, Four of Family Dead”

AMARAVATI, MARCH 15

Four members of a family died due to asphyxiation after inhaling smoke from a bike kept on for the entire night in Andhra Pradesh's Annamayya district, police said on Sunday. Online news portal The tragic incident occurred in Punganur town on the intervening night of Saturday and Sunday.

All four people died in their sleep at their home on Tyagaraja Street. The deceased were identified as the grandfather, his two granddaughters and a grandson. According to police, one Murali, who runs a hair salon, had his motorbike serviced at a mechanic on Saturday. Due to a problem in the engine, the mechanic replaced the bore piston. He had reportedly advised Murali to keep the engine on for the entire night. Murali closed all the windows of the house and kept the bike on. While Murali and his wife Revati went to sleep on the terrace, his father Ramachandraiah, their son Karthik, and twin daughters Charita and Chandana slept in the house. The smoke from the bike filled the house as all doors

and windows were closed. Ramchandraiah (70), his twin granddaughters Charita and Chandana, aged 8, and grandson Karthik (15) were found dead on Sunday morning. Murali and his wife escaped as they slept on the terrace. Police shifted the bodies for post-mortem examination. Preliminary investigation shows that they all died due to asphyxiation after inhaling carbon monoxide. The incident shocked the residents in the town. Police registered a case and took up further investigation. Meanwhile, two people died in a road accident in Visakhapatnam on Sunday. According to police, the accident occurred at BHPV Junction when a truck ran over vehicles which had stopped at the intersection. Two people died on the spot. One Ramakrishna, who was on his way to Simhachalam with his daughter, died in the accident. Another deceased was identified as Santoshi. A car and two two-wheelers were damaged in the accident. Police arrested the truck driver and launched an investigation.

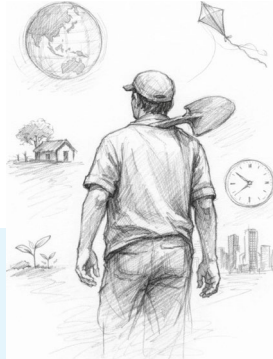
EDITORIAL

MOB VIOLENCE AND  
THE POLITICS OF OTHERING  
IN INDIA

In the closing weeks of 2025, a series of violent incidents across India exposed a disturbing pattern of mob violence directed at migrants who were labelled foreigners — Bangladeshis and Chinese — by their attackers. In these cases, the three victims were Indian citizens from various parts of the country. Suspicion based on language, region, appearance or presumed nationality is escalating into mob violence in different regions. This is extremely worrying and the police must act strictly. The political leadership in States and the Centre must make it clear that such violence is unacceptable. In Palakkad district, Kerala, Ram Narayan Baghel, a 31-year-old migrant worker from Chhattisgarh was lynched by a mob on December 17. Baghel was accused of theft and repeatedly questioned about his identity, with his attackers allegedly asking him whether he was “Bangladeshi” before beating him to death. Kerala is heavily dependent on migrant labour, and prides itself on its high levels of education and law and order. The lynching is a blot on its reputation. On December 24, in Sambalpur in Odisha, a young migrant worker from West Bengal was beaten to death by a mob that accused him of being a “Bangladeshi”. Juel Sheikh, a daily wage labourer, was confronted at a tea stall by unidentified persons who demanded his identity documents and accused him of being an illegal Bangladeshi immigrant. Two days later, in another incident from Odisha, a Bengali-speaking street vendor from West Bengal was assaulted.

In Tamil Nadu, a man from Odisha was attacked while travelling on a train, in Tiruvallur district, by juveniles armed with machetes and sickles. The assault was filmed and circulated on social media. In Dehradun, on December 28, Anjel Chakma, a 22-year-old student from Tripura, was stabbed by a group that had allegedly hurled racial slurs at him and his brother. He died in hospital later. People from the northeastern States are often treated as perpetual outsiders in other parts of India; Chakma was called “Chinese” by his attackers. These are not isolated incidents: they occur amid numerous other cases of mob intimidation, sometimes targeting worshippers of minority communities, at other times, even young students celebrating a friend’s birthday. The police in the States have responded to these horrible crimes by making some arrests, but that is not sufficient. The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) has turned its incendiary campaign against “illegal infiltration” from Bangladesh as a central plank in the forthcoming Assembly elections in Assam and West Bengal. It is no coincidence that mobs across the country feel emboldened to raise this bogey at random against helpless people. The BJP should realise the dangers of its campaign and restrain itself.

THE INVISIBLE AXIS



Buried in the heart of the earth  
not a noise,  
but a resonance  
rippling through silence  
the human.  
Like unseen roots  
holding a towering tree  
upright,  
deep beneath the soil  
he nourishes life  
with invisible strength.  
When his sweat falls,  
it is no mere drop  
it is the sky  
whispering rain  
to the waiting earth.  
Where he walks  
there are no footprints  
only the future  
etching  
its earliest alphabet.  
Like a hidden gear  
inside the clock of time,  
his motion turns the world  
and if it falters,  
time itself  
pauses to breathe.  
He is not the sand  
along a river’s edge  
he is the unseen womb  
from which the river rises.  
Not the sun,  
yet the patience  
of the eastern sky  
awaiting  
the first flame of dawn.  
He is the oil within the lamp  
unseen in the glow;  
without him  
the flame of light  
would vanish in a heart-  
beat.

The pulse of seedlings  
breaking through village soil,  
the quiet anthem  
of bricks rising in city walls  
he is both.  
Not the letters written in  
books,  
but the breath  
that gives those letters  
their voice.  
Not the kite in the sky,  
but the invisible wind  
that lifts it toward the clouds.  
Like the earth  
turning silently in darkness,  
he spins day into night  
the hidden gravity  
of existence.  
A drumbeat sounding in  
silence,  
a moon trembling  
in a bead of sweat,  
the unseen axle  
of the wheel of time  
he is that.  
Great names  
shine across the pages of  
history,  
yet the stone  
on which they stand  
is him.  
However high the sky may  
rise,  
however deep the earth may  
fall,  
the force that quietly  
holds the world together  
is this  
nameless labor,  
uncelebrated strength,  
the silent human  
who turns the world.

...: Dr. Peruka Raju ...  
7810032847

Economic Highlights

Trump And  
His America  
Are Fast Losing  
Touch With Reality

FUEL SHORTAGES IN PLACES LIKE KALIMPONG REFLECT HOW GLOBAL GEOPOLITICS CAN QUICKLY AFFECT EVERYDAY LIFE. THE ARTICLE ARGUES THAT US PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP IS PURSUING AN UNUSUALLY AGGRESSIVE FOREIGN POLICY BECAUSE THE UNITED STATES PERCEIVES ITSELF AS STILL DOMINANT IN A “FAUX UNIPOLAR” WORLD. DESPITE THE RISE OF CHINA AND A SHIFTING BALANCE OF POWER, THIS INFLATED SENSE OF AMERICAN STRENGTH—COMBINED WITH POPULIST POLITICS—MAY PUSH WASHINGTON TOWARD RISKIER DECISIONS, PRODUCING BOTH DRAMATIC SUCCESSES AND COSTLY MISCALCULATIONS IN GLOBAL AFFAIRS



In Kalimpong, a small hilly town of West Bengal, the news of oil shortage seems to be spreading across the city. The petrol pump down the road from our Airbnb hasn’t had any fuel supplies over the past forty-eight hours. Meanwhile, in faraway lands governments and international organisations are urgently releasing their strategic fuel reserves to temper down crude oil and gas prices. How protracted will the fuel crisis in India and across the world be, is beside the point. The question worth asking is, when was the last time the application of a superpower’s might resulted in household-level shortages across the world? China shutting itself down as the sole factory to the world is arguably the closest instance. But that was during a once-in-a-century pandemic.

How A President Got Carried Away

To even the most passive observers of foreign affairs, it is evident that US President Donald Trump has become significantly more casual when it comes to deploying American power abroad. From restricting access to American markets via astronomical tariffs to taking out the Venezuelan President to now attempting regime change in the Iranian Republic, there is a certain undertone in US foreign policy that harkens back to the unipolar moment.

Generally, it is during a unipolar world that a hegemon tends to get a bit carried away and overestimates its ability to bring about dramatic change at either the system-level or within specific nation-states. But here lies the paradox. The prevailing global balance of power is quite some distance away from such a distribution of power.

The current world can best be described as one tilting towards bipolarity, but with a few caveats. If security and economy are

the central criteria, then the US is the dominant security power, while China is the key manufacturing and trading power. Now here come the caveats. While the US continues to be the only power capable of global power projection, the Chinese have accumulated adequate power to deny any serious notions of American security hegemony. Similarly, the scale, dynamism and the centrality of the US currency in the global economy mean that although China is the leading manufacturing power, America continues to be the financial hegemon.

Beyond Simple Explanations

Now, given the US no longer enjoys any semblance of pure hegemony, it begs the question, why exactly is the US behaving like a superpower does at the height of unipolarity? What is the guiding logic of the rather brash turn in American foreign policy? It is all too easy to box Trump as an irrational player, and frankly, it is a bit of an analytical copout.

Instead, a more compelling explanation is that the very design of the global balance of power, with all its intricacies, coupled with a generational populist leader in Trump, has

created a sense of faux unipolarity in the American strategic mind.

Under actual unipolarity - what the US enjoyed from the end of the Cold War to arguably the Global Financial Crisis - the significant power differential that a hegemon enjoys made it conclude that it could use its instruments of statecraft to instill change beyond its borders.

Sometimes such conclusions are correct. The US-led Operation Desert Storm under the leadership of President HW Bush is a leading example of what a hegemon can achieve when it has monopoly over power. In a deft operation, the US-led coalition forced the Iraqi forces to withdraw from Kuwait, and more importantly, in almost record time. Unipolar moments also result in superpower delusions regarding its capacity to enforce change abroad. Such miscalculations were on display during the US’ war efforts in Afghanistan and Iraq, all under a deluded notion of democracy promotion.

An Inflated Sense Of Self  
However, unlike actual unipolarity, its faux counterpart is inherently a revisionist construct. Three interconnected features of today’s geopolitical

Chickens Out.

Losing Touch With Reality

Raising US tariffs almost six-fold and thinking it won’t result in a hike in inflation or lead to severe domestic political costs. Repeatedly threatening Russia to end the war without having any real capacity to compel Moscow into a meaningful negotiation. Attempting regime change in Iran without thinking through Tehran’s capacity to respond and the disastrous ramifications for the oil markets.

These are all nothing but symptoms of a superpower that is rapidly losing touch with reality. Major foreign policy decision-making should be grounded in correctly estimating the first and second order effects of a decision. The thing is, all political entities create folklores and myths about themselves. Indulging in such mythmaking and buying into it are vastly different things. The US under Trump is drifting towards the later, which eventually compels it to backtrack.

Going ahead, we should expect Trumpian foreign policy to get even more unrestrained. But it won’t always result in disastrous outcomes. The US is a behemoth of a superpower, and its abilities far outweigh most others. There were riskier foreign policy choices that Washington could have made in the preceding decades and achieved some of its long-standing objectives. Under Trump, it would no longer feel the need to err on the side of caution. As the brakes come off, there will be some generational successes. However, these will also be accompanied by some glorious foreign policy failures.

SRIJAN SHUKLA,  
ASSOCIATE FELLOW AT  
ORF

Disclaimer: These are the personal opinions of the author

Open Forum

With A Takaichi Mandate,  
India-Japan Collaboration Can Enter a New Era

Japan’s leadership transition comes amid deep global uncertainty. A Sanae Takaichi government with a clear mandate would give India an opportunity to recalibrate the bilateral partnership-not incrementally, but with strategic clarity and urgency.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the late Shinzo Abe shared rare personal rapport and alignment. Together, they shaped the idea of a free, open, and rules-based Indo-Pacific. Abe’s tragic assassination disrupted that momentum. Now, political authority coupled with continuity in Tokyo provides space to adapt this framework to today’s volatile environment. The ongoing conflict involving Iran is a stark reminder of the fragility of global energy and trade systems. With the Strait of Hormuz under tension and oil markets highly volatile, both India and Japan face heightened risks to energy security and economic stability. Coordinated strategies-ranging from diversified energy sourcing to resilient supply chains for critical technologies-would not only safeguard national interests but also enhance the strategic credibility of the bilateral partnership.

The planned March 19 meeting between Japan’s new leadership and President Donald Trump provides a timely peg for this recalibration. Discussions are expected to focus on the Iran crisis, energy security, and long-term defence cooperation, underscoring how immediate geopolitical pressures are reshaping alliance priorities. The summit offers India and Japan a concrete reference point for aligning strategies on energy diversification, resilient supply chains, and shared security architecture,



reinforcing the practical necessity of closer collaboration.

India and Japan share more than contemporary geopolitics. Deep civilisational links-Buddhism, shared spiritual traditions, and cultural values-create a reservoir of trust rare in international relations. In an era of transactional diplomacy, this foundation is a strategic asset.

The partnership’s strength lies in complementarity. Japan’s mastery of advanced manufacturing and technology aligns with India’s demographic scale, innovation ecosystem, and market depth. Past successes-Suzuki-Maruti, metro systems, industrial corridors-demon-

strate the power of this synergy. The next phase must decisively address strategic vulnerabilities. Semiconductors, critical minerals, batteries, clean energy technologies, and resilient supply chains are now central to national competitiveness and security. Coordinated India-Japan strategies across sourcing, manufacturing, and innovation can shape future value chains rather than simply react to them.

Defence and security collaboration also requires pragmatism. Co-development, modular projects, and selective co-production can build operational familiarity and strategic trust.

Demographics offer another point of convergence: Japan’s ageing workforce contrasts with India’s youth. Structured collaboration in skills, technology transfer, and managed labour mobility can strengthen both economies. Joint initiatives in Africa and Southeast Asia, combining Japanese technology and financing with Indian entrepreneurship and regional knowledge, can offer a credible alternative to extractive or transactional models of development.

Both countries value ties with the United States. Coordinated approaches where interests align can enhance leverage, resilience, and strategic autonomy in a turbulent global order. Acting together in multilateral fora can also help sustain a rules-based system threatened by retreating powers. Shintaro Ishihara and Akio Morita urged a self-confident Japan capable of speaking firmly when confronted with unfairness. Today, a closer India-Japan partnership can enable both countries to act similarly-not in opposition to the global order, but in defence of fairness, credibility, and balance. Persistent bureaucratic differences remain, but sustained institutional engagement and clear accountability can ensure that ambition is translated into results.

As global crises - from the war in Iran to instability in the Indo-Pacific - test the resilience of nations, a reinvigorated India-Japan partnership anchored in shared values, strategic confidence, and practical cooperation offers a model for meaningful international engagement. With decisive leadership in Tokyo and attention to the March 19 summit, both countries have a rare opportunity to transform longstanding goodwill into actionable strategic momentum.

(Milinda Moragoda is a former Sri Lankan Cabinet Minister and diplomat, and the Founder of the Pathfinder Foundation, a strategic affairs think tank.)



## “Dozens of Vehicles Stuck in Kishtwar in Snowfall”

JAMMU: (MAR 15)

More than 30 light motor vehicles were stranded after moderate snowfall in Sinthan top and Margan top in Kishtwar district on Sunday, prompting a joint rescue operation by police and civil administration, officials said. The vehicles got stuck due to fresh snowfall and slippery road conditions at the high-altitude passes, disrupting traffic movement on the road connecting Kishtwar in Jammu with south Kashmir's Anantnag district, they said. The officials said soon after receiving information, teams of the police, Army, and the civil administration rushed to the spot and launched a rescue operation to ensure the safety of the stranded passengers.

## Punjab Investors' Summit: Nahar Group to invest Rs 1,500 cr

MOHALI: (MAR 15)

Nahar Group chairman Kamal Oswal on Sunday announced an investment of Rs 1,500 crore on modernisation of existing units of textiles, renewable energy, besides setting up a data centre in Mohali.

Addressing a gathering at the concluding day of the Progressive Punjab Investors' Summit 2026 here Oswal said the three-day-long Progressive summit underlined that Punjab is once again ready for industry, investment and growth. He said the Summit has demonstrated that Punjab is emerging as an attractive investment destination with announcements of significant investments from the country's leading industrial houses.

## “Rain, Hail Disrupt Traffic Near Atal Tunnel in HP”

SHIMLA: (MAR 15)

Shimla and its surrounding areas experienced a thunderstorm on Sunday, accompanied by rain, while the higher regions in Kullu and Lahaul and Spiti districts received another round of fresh snowfall, Met office said. More than 1,000 vehicles were stranded at the south portal of the Atal Tunnel, Rohang, in the late evening after the snowfall in the higher reaches of Manali disrupted traffic, officials said. A police team from Manali reached the spot and began the rescue operation, guiding the stranded vehicles towards Manali till the filing of the report.

## “WB BJP President Pushes for SIR Before Polls”

KOLKATA: (MAR 15)

West Bengal BJP president Samik Bhattacharya on Sunday said his party wants the SIR exercise to be completed before the upcoming assembly elections to ensure that no eligible voter is left out and ineligible names are removed. Bhattacharya alleged that the ruling TMC has deprived people of their basic rights, asserting that a “new dawn” awaits the state if his party comes to power in the upcoming elections.

# PM Modi writes to Om Birla after no-confidence motion defeat, praises patience

Amid concerns over disruptions, Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla wrote to MPs stressing their responsibility to protect Parliament's dignity and calling for serious reflection on recent conduct inside the House.



A week after the Lok Sabha rejected a no-confidence motion against the Speaker, Prime Minister Narendra Modi wrote to Speaker Om Birla praising his conduct during the heated proceedings, even as Birla separately urged political leaders to rein in unruly behaviour and restore discipline in Parliament.

The exchange of letters comes amid rising concerns over disruptions in the House, including the display of placards and banners by members inside the chamber and the Parliament complex.

**PM PRAISES SPEAKER'S CONDUCT DURING PROCEEDINGS**

In his letter, Prime Minister Modi commended the

“patience, restraint, and impartiality” shown by Birla during the debate and voting on the no-confidence motion brought against him in the Lok Sabha last week. The Prime Minister wrote that the proceedings had given birth to a “new political culture” in the House and stressed the importance of protecting democratic institutions. He also expressed concern over what he described as a “dynastic and feudal mindset” among certain individuals who, according to him, seek to confine democratic institutions within their limited spheres and resist the emergence of new leadership. Emphasising the role of Parliament, Modi wrote

that it remains the sanctum for “dialogue, reason, and deliberation”, where voices from every region of the country deserve representation.

**BIRLA THANKS PM FOR SUPPORT**

Responding to the letter, Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla conveyed his gratitude to the Prime Minister and said Modi has consistently shown deep faith in the rules, procedures and traditions of India's parliamentary democracy. Birla said the Prime Minister's letter reflects the moral values of public service that he has upheld throughout his political life, both as the Prime Minister and earlier as the Chief Minister of Gujarat.

**SPEAKER RAISES CONCERN OVER CONDUCT OF MPS**

Soon after, Birla wrote to leaders of all political parties in the Lok Sabha, raising concerns over the behaviour of members inside the House and in the Parliament complex. “For some time now, the dignity and prestige of our parliamentary democracy have been compromised by certain Honourable Members within the chamber and on the Parliament House complex,” Birla wrote. “The manner in which banners, placards, and posters are being displayed, the nature of the language being used, and the overall conduct and behaviour exhibited inside the House and the premises are matters of grave concern for all of us,” he said, calling for serious reflection by all parties.

**CALL TO UPHOLD PARLIAMENTARY TRADITIONS**

The Speaker reminded leaders that Parliament has long maintained a tradition of dignified debate and dialogue. He referred to past instances when concerns over declining

standards of conduct led to discussions among political parties and resolutions at conferences of presiding officers.

Birla also said he has repeatedly raised the issue in meetings of the Business Advisory Committee and in interactions with party leaders, urging them to maintain decorum inside the House.

“The entire country observes our conduct, and the message from India's Parliament resonates across all democratic institutions in the nation,” he wrote. Calling for collective responsibility, Birla urged party leaderships to ensure discipline among their members in the chamber and across the Parliament complex. “If we all strive together in this direction, the public's faith in parliamentary democracy will surely be further strengthened, and the prestige and dignity of the House will continue to grow,” he wrote, expressing confidence that political leaders would cooperate in preserving the traditions of Parliament.

# Arvind Kejriwal moves Supreme Court to transfer CBI plea in liquor policy case

Arvind Kejriwal and Manish Sisodia approached the Supreme Court seeking transfer of CBI's plea against their discharge in the now-scrapped excise policy case, citing apprehension over impartiality of Justice Swarana Kanta Sharma's bench.



Am Aadmi Party (AAP) national convener and former Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal on Sunday approached the Supreme Court, requesting that the CBI's appeal against his discharge in the excise policy case be transferred from the Delhi High Court bench of Justice Swarana Kanta Sharma to another judge.

Kejriwal, along with former Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia, also challenged the High Court's summons in the Supreme Court. Sisodia filed

a separate petition seeking to contest the summons issued against him in the same matter. The move came after the trial court, on February 27, discharged Kejriwal, Sisodia, and 21 others in the alleged liquor policy case, sharply criticising the CBI for filing a chargesheet that “could not survive judicial scrutiny” and was “discredited in its entirety”. The central probe agency subsequently approached the Delhi High Court against this order, with the matter now slated for hearing before Jus-

stice Sharma. In his plea to the Supreme Court, Kejriwal argued that he harboured a “grave, bona fide, and reasonable apprehension” that Justice Sharma might not conduct the proceedings impartially. The representation highlighted that Justice Sharma had, at the very outset of hearing the CBI's revision petition, recorded prima facie observations that the trial court's detailed order was “erroneous”, without giving the other side a chance to be heard. The petition also pointed to Justice Sharma's record of handling related cases arising from the CBI FIR, including Kejriwal's petitions against arrest and bail applications of AAP leaders, as well as other accused such as Telangana Jagruti president K Kavitha.

The AAP chief contended that the judge had consistently sided with the prosecu-

tion, and several of her observations had already been set aside or referred to larger benches by the Supreme Court. On March 9, Justice Sharma had stayed the trial court's recommendation to initiate departmental action against the CBI officer investigating the liquor policy case. Her order also issued notices to all 23 accused on the CBI's plea, noting that certain findings by the trial court at the stage of framing charges appeared prima facie erroneous and required further examination. Kejriwal emphasised that his request for transfer was not personal but grounded in the objective standard of a “reasonable apprehension in the mind of a fair-minded and informed litigant seeking justice”. The Supreme Court is yet to decide whether to entertain the transfer plea before the next scheduled hearing in the High Court.

## “Delhi Flat Horror: Child Dies, Sister Falls Ill”

NEW DELHI: (MAR 15)

A two-and-a-half-year-old girl died while her elder sister fell unconscious after a suspected chemical smell was reported from a flat in east Delhi's Ghazipur area on Sunday, an official said. According to the police, a PCR call was received at around 2.19 pm regarding a suspected chemical odour emanating from a flat in Ashirwad Apartment located in Ghazipur. The caller informed that two children had fallen unconscious inside a room where their mother was also present. The children were immediately rushed to a nearby hospital in Sector 11 in Noida, where doctors declared the younger child brought dead.

# CEC Gyanesh Kumar avoids questions on removal bid by opposition

Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar on Sunday ducked questions on the opposition's notice to move a motion in Parliament for his removal from the post.



At a press conference held to announce Assembly election schedules in four states and a Union Territory, Kumar did not answer questions on the opposition notice. While the Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) can be removed only by Parliament, Election Commissioners can be removed through a recommendation by the CEC to the President.

In a first, the opposition has submitted notices in both the Lok Sabha and the Rajya Sabha seeking to move a motion to remove Kumar from the post, alleging a partisan attitude. The opposition parties accused the CEC of aiding the ruling BJP on several occasions, especially during the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls, which they alleged was aimed at helping the saffron

party at the Centre. The process for removing the CEC is similar to that for the removal of a Supreme Court or a high court judge, meaning an impeachment can be effected only on the ground of “proven misbehaviour or incapacity”. Article 324(5) of the Constitution says the CEC shall not be removed from office except in like manner and on like grounds as a Supreme Court judge, and the conditions of service of the CEC shall not be varied to his disadvantage after his appointment. The motion for removal of CEC must be introduced in either House of Parliament and must be passed by a special majority -- a majority of the total membership of the House and a two-thirds majority of the members present and voting.

# LPG is lapata gas: Akhilesh Yadav attacks govt over shortage fears amid Iran war

Akhilesh Yadav brands LPG ‘lapata gas’, blaming the central government as West Asian tensions disrupted supply.



Samajwadi Party chief and former Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Akhilesh Yadav on Sunday launched a scathing attack on the Centre over rising LPG concerns, dubbing the fuel “lapata gas” [missing gas]. Addressing a press conference in Mumbai, Yadav also taunted that Prime Minister Narendra Modi missed a diplomatic opportunity to halt the ongoing conflict in West Asia by not stopping in Iran during his recent visit to Israel, a move Yadav claimed could have strengthened the Prime Minister's credentials as ‘vishwaguru’ [world leader].

“The new word for LPG is not liquified petroleum gas but ‘lapata-gas’. The prices of petrol, diesel and essential commodities are rising,” Yadav said. “Our Prime Minister had a historic chance to position himself as vishwaguru. Imagine if he had stood between Israel and Iran and firmly declared that he would not allow the two countries to fight. Last month, he visited Israel. He could have also landed in Iran without permission, much like his earlier unannounced visit to another country. Had he taken this step, India would have truly emerged as a vishwaguru,” he added. Akhilesh Yadav's remarks came as tensions in the Middle East disrupt crude oil and petroleum supply following the closure

of the Strait of Hormuz, the narrow passage between Iran and Oman. Despite government assurances that domestic LPG stocks are sufficient and prioritised for essential use, including hospitals and household cooking, shortages and disruptions are being felt across the country. Two Indian LPG carriers, Shiv-alik and Nanda Devi, safely crossed the Strait of Hormuz early Saturday morning and are en route to Gujarat ports: Mundra and Kandla. Together, they carry 92,700 tonnes of LPG, with expected arrivals on March 16 and 17. Meanwhile, 22 other vessels remain on standby as the government coordinates with regional authorities to secure their passage, according to Rajesh Kumar Sinha, Special Secretary in the Ministry of Shipping. The supply disruption has forced restaurants to adjust operations nationwide. Many eateries, especially in Delhi's Connaught Place, have trimmed menus, scaled back bookings for large groups, and turned to coal or wood-based cooking to manage the crunch. Hotels and restaurants in Chennai and other parts of Tamil Nadu are adopting similar alternatives to keep businesses running.

# “RS Poll Eve: Bihar Sees Intense Lobbying”

Ahead of voting for five Rajya Sabha seats in Bihar on March 16, parties have begun consolidating MLAs, with the Grand Alliance keeping its legislators together in Patna.



A closely watched contest for five Rajya Sabha seats in Bihar will take place on March 16, with six candidates in the fray and intense political manoeuvring already visible on the eve of the vote. Voting will be held from 9 am to 5 pm at a polling station set up inside the Bihar Assembly complex, where Members of the Legislative Assembly will cast their ballots. Counting

will begin later the same evening and the results are expected to be declared on the same day. The election has drawn attention as the contest involves multiple parties and alliances, with six candidates competing for five seats. From the BJP, the candidates are the party's national president Nitin Naveen and Shivesh Kumar. The JDU has fielded Chief Minister Nitish Kumar and Rammath Thakur. Rashtriya Lok Morcha president Upendra Kushwaha is contesting as an NDA-backed candidate, while the RJD has fielded AD Singh as the candidate of the Grand Alliance. Political activity intensified

in Patna ahead of the election, with the Grand Alliance moving its legislators to a hotel in what observers described as a familiar round of “hotel politics”. Grand Alliance MLAs were accommodated at Hotel Panache, where RJD leader Tejashwi Yadav met them ahead of the vote. According to party leaders, the legislators were asked to stay together there overnight before casting their ballots. RJD MLA Bhai Virendra claimed the alliance had the numbers on its side. “We have the support of 48 MLAs with the Grand Alliance,” he said. The administration has said all arrangements have been put in place to ensure a smooth election.

Patna Senior Superintendent of Police Kartikeya Kumar Sharma said the authorities were prepared to maintain order during the polling process. “All administrative preparations for the Rajya Sabha election have been completed. It will be ensured that the election is conducted fairly,” he said. “We will keep a close watch to ensure that no irregularities take place. If anyone creates trouble, action will be taken according to the law.” With alliances marshalling their legislators and the numbers game under scrutiny, the outcome of the vote on March 16 is set to determine which five candidates secure a seat in the Upper House of Parliament.

# “NFR Achieves Breakthrough in Tunnel No. 8”

MALIGAON, 15 MARCH, 2026:

In The New Sivok-Rangpo Rail Project



Northeast Frontier Railway (NFR) has achieved a major milestone in the Sivok-Rangpo Railway Project with the successful breakthrough of Tunnel No. 8 on 12th March 2026. The breakthrough was achieved jointly by NFR and IRCON International Ltd., marking significant progress in this strategically important rail connectivity project for the NE region.

Tunnel No. 8 is one of the major tunnels of the project, with a total length of 4.148 km and an additional adit of 1.010 km. The excavation and mining of the tunnel were carried out under extremely challenging geological conditions, including highly weak, weathered and fractured rock strata. The work also faced ad-

ditional challenges due to the uncertainties of hilly terrain and sensitivities related to the nearby NH-10 corridor. With the successful completion of mining in Tunnel No. 8, tunnel excavation has now been completed in 13 out of the total 14 tunnels of the Sivok-Rangpo Railway Project. This achievement marks a crucial step forward in the overall progress of the project. Significant progress has also been made in other major components of the project. Tunnel lining works, covering a total length of 32.4 km, have already been completed in 12 tunnels. In addition, ballastless track laying has been completed over 21 km inside

the tunnels, further advancing the project towards operational readiness.

The Sivok-Rangpo New Rail Link Project is one of the crucial connectivity projects for the NE region. The project aims to connect the state of Sikkim with the national railway network and is part of the broader initiative of Indian Railways' Capital Connectivity project. The total length of the project is 44.96 km, out of which 41.55 km lies in West Bengal and 3.41 km in Sikkim. About 38.623 km (around 86%) of the route runs through tunnels, 2.24 km through bridges, and 4.79 km consists of open cutting and station yards. Construction work involves 14 tunnels, with the longest tunnel measuring about 5.30 km and the shortest around 538 metres. The project also includes 13 major bridges and 10 minor

bridges. The new railway line will have five stations i.e. Sivok, Riyang, Melli, Rangpo, and an underground halt station at Teesta Bazar, which will be among the unique infrastructure features of the project. Once completed, the project will connect Sikkim significantly improving transportation, ensuring uninterrupted supply of essential commodities, and boosting economic development in the region. Construction activities across all fronts are progressing steadily, including civil works, track installation and railway electrification. The NFR is continuing its efforts to complete the remaining works and commission the Sivok-Rangpo Railway Project by December 2027, which will greatly enhance rail connectivity to the state of Sikkim and boost regional development and mobility.

# Security forces strike major blow to Maoists in Chhattisgarh's Kanker district

RAIPUR, MARCH 15

In a significant setback to Naxalite activities in the Bastar region, security forces have demolished four memorials erected by Maoists in the dense forests of Kanker district, while recovering a substantial cache of improvised explosive devices (IEDs) and other insurgent materials. Movie reviews platform. The operation was launched in the remote, forested areas of “Hapa Tola” and “Bingunda”, where joint teams conducted an intensive search and area domination drive. The memorials, built to honour Naxalites killed in past encounters, served as symbolic sites for propaganda, recruitment rallies, and ideological reinforcement

by the insurgents. By dismantling these structures, forces aimed to erode the Maoists' psychological hold and prevent their use for glorifying violence, said the officials. During the same sweep, troops uncovered four heavy IEDs cleverly concealed among trees and bushes — a clear attempt to target patrolling security personnel. The explosives were safely detonated on the spot by bomb disposal experts, averting potential casualties. In addition to the IEDs, security forces seized various daily-use items belonging to the Naxalites, including literature promoting Maoist ideology and a stock of medicines likely intended for cadre sustenance in jungle hideouts.

## “Gul Plaza Fire: Delayed Rescue Alleged”

ISLAMABAD, MARCH 15

Pakistan's judicial commission investigating the devastating January 17 fire at Gul Plaza mall in Karachi was told that rescue services arrived late and failed to evacuate people trapped inside during the crucial early hours of the blaze, local media reported. Movie reviews platform The claim was made by Gul Plaza Mall Management Committee President Tanveer Pasta while submitting his response to a questionnaire from the single-judge commission, headed by Justice Agha Faisal of the Sindh High Court, claiming that the building's exits were open and functional during the incident. The massive fire that erupted at Gul Plaza on the night of January 17 killed 80 people and injured many others. The incident triggered public outrage, with people slamming the Sindh government and the Karachi mayor for the delayed action.



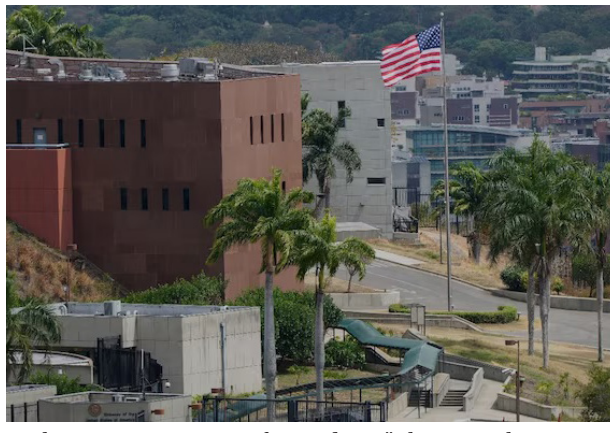
Rejecting the fire department's version that the first fire tender reached the scene at 10:37 p.m. on January 17, Pasta stated that the first vehicle arrived at 10:55 p.m.; however, it ran out of water within 20 minutes, with two more fire tenders arriving around 11:30 p.m., Pakistani daily Dawn reported. He stated that at the time of the incident, the complex had 1,153 shops with 3,456 shopkeepers and employees, along with 250 to 300 customers inside the building. However, he maintained that most people were successfully evacuated through the management committee's "hectic efforts" using the available exits, though those on the mezzanine floor could not be rescued.

## American flag raised over US Embassy in Venezuela for first time in 7 years

The move comes after several statements from US President Donald Trump in support of Maduro's successor, acting President Delcy Rodríguez, who has tried to keep negotiations open with the American government.

The American flag was raised Saturday over the US Embassy in Venezuela for the first time since 2019, a move that highlighted the recent shift in relations between the two countries since then President Nicolás Maduro was captured by American troops in January.

Though the flag is now waving, the building is undergoing renovations, and it remains unclear when it will fully reopen.



The move comes after several statements from US President Donald Trump in support of Maduro's successor, acting President Delcy Rodríguez, who has tried to keep negotiations open with the American government.

The flag was raised "exactly seven years after it was taken

back too because that's what we need; progress, to move forward with good relations with the rest of the world, as it should be".

Alessandro Di Benedetto, another Caracas resident, noted the positive atmosphere among those witnessing the moment.

"I found several people here surprised and happy because today they raised the US flag at the embassy," he said. "This is positive; this is another step".

Despite the initiative, large chunks of Venezuelan society and the political establishment remain critics of Trump, his decision to forcefully remove Maduro from office and jail him in New York with his wife, and growing US influence in the South American country's oil industry.

## Netanyahu's office rebuts rumours of his death, says Israeli PM is fine

The office of Benjamin Netanyahu on Saturday dismissed viral social media claims suggesting the Israeli Prime Minister had been assassinated amid the escalating conflict involving Israel, US and Iran.



Responding to a query from Turkey-based Anadolu Agency about the circulating reports, the Prime Minister's Office denied the claims outright. "These are fake news; the Prime Minister is fine," the office said.

The rumours gained traction after a video shared by Netanyahu on his X account on Friday showed him addressing a press conference on the ongoing Israel-US-Iran conflict. Soon after the video was posted, some social media users claimed they had spotted what appeared to be six fingers on Netanyahu's right hand when he briefly raised it during the speech.

A screen grab from a video posted on X by @netanyahu At around the 35-second mark of the video, a patch of extra flesh next to the little finger was interpreted by some users as a sixth finger — something they described as a "classic AI finger glitch," often associated with artificially generated imagery.

The speculation spread further after US conservative commentator Candace Owens raised questions on X. "Where's Bibi?" she wrote, referring to Netanyahu by his nickname. "Why is his office releasing and deleting fake AI videos from him, and why is there mass panic at the White House?" Other users pointed to visual details in the background of the clip, including the movement of curtains while two Israeli flags ap-

peared largely still, suggesting the footage could have been manipulated. One user wrote that the curtain "moves in the exact same pattern throughout the entire video, almost like it's looping," arguing that it indicated artificial generation. However, some users pushed back on the claim, noting that many broadcasts and videos now use digital or virtual backgrounds, which could explain the visual inconsistencies.

TENSIONS ESCALATE AFTER STRIKES ON IRAN

The online rumours emerged against the backdrop of sharply escalating hostilities in the region. Israel and the United States launched joint strikes against Iran on February 28, an operation that killed Iran's then-supreme leader, Ali Khamenei, leading to a full-fledged war. Iran has since retaliated with drone and missile strikes targeting Israel and several neighbouring countries it accuses of hosting US military assets. In a major escalation, Iran has also shut the Strait of Hormuz, one of the world's most critical maritime energy routes. The narrow waterway normally carries around 20 million barrels of oil shipments daily and roughly 20 per cent of global liquefied natural gas trade. The closure has disrupted shipping across the Gulf and raised concerns about the stability of global energy supplies as the conflict deepens.

## “UAE Arrests 35 Over Misleading Online Posts”

DUBAI: (MAR 15)

The UAE on Sunday ordered the arrest of 35 individuals, including 19 Indians, for publishing video clips on social media platforms that contained misleading and fabricated content amid regional tensions due to the Israel-US-Iran war. The United Arab Emirates (UAE) official news agency Wam said the accused have been referred for an expedited trial. The latest list has 25 individuals of various nationalities, including 17 Indians, listed under different sections, separate from the 10 people, including two Indians, who were named and ordered to be arrested on Saturday.

## “US Issues Exit Alert After Baghdad Missile Attack”

The US Embassy in Baghdad has urged American citizens to leave Iraq immediately in an updated security alert issued on Saturday, following an overnight missile attack on the diplomatic mission's building.

The US Embassy in Baghdad has urged American citizens to leave Iraq immediately in an updated security alert issued on Saturday, following an overnight missile attack on the diplomatic mission's building.

"U.S. citizens choosing to remain in Iraq are strongly encouraged to reconsider in light of the significant threat posed by Iran-aligned terrorist militia groups," the embassy said.

The fresh advisory came hours after a missile struck a



helipad inside the US Embassy compound in Baghdad on Saturday (local time). No one immediately claimed responsibility for the attack.

The advisory also strictly asked US citizens to refrain from visiting both the embassy in Baghdad and the US consulate in Erbil, citing "ongoing risk of rockets, drones, and mortars in Iraqi airspace."

US EMBASSY IN IRAQ'S ADVISORY

"Iran-aligned terrorist militias have attacked the International Zone in central Baghdad on multiple occasions. The International Zone remains closed, with limited exceptions. Repeated attacks have also occurred in the vicinity of Erbil International Airport and the Consulate

### IRAQI MILITIAS UP ATTACKS

The ongoing war between Iran and the joint front of Israel and the US has rapidly engulfed the broader Middle East region, with Shia militias targeting American interests in Iraq with a growing frequency over

the past few days, per multiple sources cited by Reuters. On Saturday, the UAE's consulate in Erbil was targeted in a drone attack for at least a second time since the outbreak of prevailing hostilities in the region.

General. Do not attempt to come to the Embassy in Baghdad or the Consulate General in Erbil due to the ongoing risk of rockets, drones, and mortars in Iraqi airspace," the advisory, originally in Arabic, read. The attack closely followed strikes that killed three members of an Iran-aligned Shia Muslim militia in Baghdad, according to security sources cited by news agency Reuters. The embassy com-

plex, one of the largest US diplomatic facilities in the world, has been repeatedly targeted by rockets and drones fired by Iran-backed militias. On Friday, the US Embassy had renewed its Level 4 security alert for Iraq, warning that Iran and Iran-aligned militia groups have previously carried out attacks against US citizens, interests and infrastructure and "may continue to target them."

## UAE arrests 10, orders fast-track trial for spreading fake Iran war videos online

Authorities in the UAE have arrested 10 people of different nationalities and ordered a fast-tracked trial for allegedly spreading misleading and AI-fabricated videos about attacks and explosions in the country amid regional tensions linked to the Iran war.



The United Arab Emirates (UAE) has ordered the arrest and urgent trial of 10 people of various nationalities for publishing video clips on social media platforms containing misleading and fabricated content amid regional tensions due to the war in Iran. In a statement released by the country's

official news agency Wam, UAE Attorney-General Dr Hamad Saif Al Shamsi said the action follows the continuous monitoring of digital platforms amid regional developments. The attorney-general did not reveal the nationalities of the accused. "Such events have

been exploited to disseminate misinformation intended to deliberately mislead the public while undermining national security, order and stability," he said. Investigations revealed that the defendants published videos featuring real footage of air defence systems intercept-

ing attacks. Other clips depicted projectiles on the ground or crowds observing events. Dr Al Shamsi said the under trial circulated fabricated footage created using AI to falsely suggest explosions, strikes on prominent landmarks, or large fires with rising smoke across various areas of the UAE. "The incidents also involved exploiting children's emotions in videos falsely implying security threats. Other footage claimed the destruction of military facilities within the country or attributed foreign incidents to UAE locations, aiming to mislead public opinion and spread anxiety," he added.

According to him, the public prosecution has commenced

interrogating the defendants and ordered their remand in custody. The attorney-general explained that such acts constitute crimes punishable under the law by imprisonment for a period of no less than one year and a fine of no less than AED 100,000. He said that the public prosecution will not tolerate any attempt to exploit cyberspace or modern technologies to spread misleading information or fabricated content that affects the security of the state or disturbs public order, including the circulation of clips showing the interception of attacks by the country's defence systems and the consequences that may result from publishing them.

## Parents, sons shot in head in West Bank gunfire, 2 children survive to tell story

On a quiet Sunday in the occupied West Bank, a family of six set out in their car for what should have been an ordinary drive home. By the time the gunfire stopped, four of them were dead, and two young boys were left behind to recount a moment that would shatter their lives forever.



Palestinian health authorities say Israeli forces shot and killed Ali Khaled Bani Odeh, 37, his 35-year-old wife Waad, and two of their children, Mohammad, 7, and Othman, 5, in the village of Tamnun. The parents and the two young boys were shot in the head while inside their vehicle. Two other children in the car survived but were wounded by shrapnel. One of the survivors,

12-year-old Khaled, described the final moments inside the vehicle from his hospital bed. "We came under direct fire; we didn't know the source," he told Reuters, recalling the chaos that erupted inside the family car. "I heard my mother crying, my father praying but I didn't hear the voices of my brothers. Then there was silence." According to the boy, the shooting left everyone in the vehicle dead except him and his brother Mustafa. "Everyone in the car was martyred, except

my brother Mustafa and me," he said. Khaled also alleged that soldiers pulled him out of the car after the shooting and beat him. He said the troops shouted, "We killed dogs." The Israeli military said its forces had been operating in Tamnun to arrest Palestinians wanted for involvement in "terrorist" activity. In a statement, the army said a vehicle accelerated toward soldiers during the operation, prompting them to open fire after perceiving an "immediate threat".

## “Cycle of Attack and Retaliation Continues”

Pakistan launched overnight air strikes inside Afghanistan's Kandahar province, targeting what it described as "terrorist hideouts and military infrastructure," escalating tensions between the two neighbouring countries. Islamabad said the strikes were part of its ongoing cross-border operation against militant groups it accuses of staging attacks on Pakistani territory from Afghan soil.

TARGETED 'TERRORIST HIDEOUTS'

According to Pakistan's Information Minister Attaullah Tarar and state-run TV, the military carried out overnight strikes in Kandahar under Operation Ghazab lil-Haq, which was launched in late February after what Islamabad described as unprovoked firing from across the border. Pakistan TV said the armed forces had successfully hit "military installations, including terrorist hideouts of Afghan Taliban and Fitna al-Khawarij." The term Fitna al-Khawarij is used by the Pakistani state to refer to the banned Tehreek-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP), a militant group responsible for numerous attacks inside Pakistan. According to the report, Pakistani forces destroyed technical support infrastructure and an equipment storage facility in Kandahar that was



allegedly being used to support cross-border militant operations. Another strike targeted a tunnel believed to house technical equipment used by militants. Officials said the campaign would continue. "Operations under Operation Ghazab lil-Haq will continue until attainment of objectives," Pakistan TV quoted security sources as saying.

TALIBAN STRIKES PAKISTAN MILITARY CAMP

Afghanistan's Taliban

government confirmed that Pakistani strikes had occurred but disputed the claims about the targets. Taliban spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid said the attacks caused some damage to a drug rehabilitation centre and an empty container in Kandahar. "The places they are talking about are far away from these two places," he said. In retaliation, Afghanistan's Taliban attacked a military camp in Waziristan. Sadeequllah

Nasrat, deputy spokesperson for Afghanistan's defence ministry, said on X that Afghan air force units carried out a retaliatory strike on a Pakistani military camp in Wana, South Waziristan. "Today, once again an attack was carried out on a special military camp of the army in the Wana area of South Waziristan," Nasrat wrote, claiming the strike damaged facilities and caused "heavy human and material losses" for Pakistani forces.

DRONE ATTACKS ON PAKISTAN

The latest strikes followed accusations from Pakistan that Afghanistan had launched rudimentary drones into three locations across Pakistani territory on Friday night. Pakistani authorities said the drones were intercepted before reaching their targets, although debris injured civilians, including two children

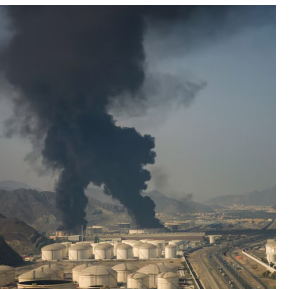
in Quetta. Pakistan's President, Asif Ali Zardari, condemned the drone attacks and warned that Afghanistan had "crossed a red line by attempting to target our civilians". Earlier this week, Tarar also said Pakistan had hit about 70 militant-linked installations across Kabul, Paktia and Kandahar provinces, including logistical bases and training camps believed to support attacks on Pakistani civilians. The cross-border fighting marks the most serious escalation between the two countries in months. According to United Nations data, between February 26 and March 5 alone, at least 185 civilian casualties were reported in Afghanistan, including 56 deaths linked to indirect fire and air attacks. The UN refugee agency estimates that around 115,000 people have been forced to flee their homes because of the fighting.

## UAE slams Iran over claim US strike on Kharg Island launched from its territory

The United Arab Emirates has hit back at Tehran over claims that the US strike on Kharg Island — an oil hub handling about 90 per cent of Iranian exports — originated from the Gulf state, saying Iran's policy was confused and lacked wisdom. In a post on X early Sunday, Anwar Gargash, diplomatic adviser to UAE's President Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, said the country had the right to defend itself but "continues to prioritise reason and logic."

FUJAIRAH FIRE

The remarks came shortly after the media office of Fujairah, one of the seven emirates of the UAE, confirmed that a fire broke out at the Fujairah Oil Industry Zone (FOIZ) due to debris from an aerial interception. Saying that efforts were underway to contain the blaze, it added that a Jordanian national was lightly injured in the incident. Meanwhile, industry and trade sources cited by news agency Reuters said that oil-load-



ing operations had been partially suspended in Fujairah following a drone attack and fire on Saturday. Fujairah, a major bunkering hub and crude export terminal, lies outside the Strait of Hormuz and is the outlet for about 1 million barrels of crude oil per day, a volume that translates to about 1 per cent of world demand. The fire was officially acknowledged hours after Iran openly threatened to strike three ports in the UAE as it warned residents to leave areas near Jebel Ali port in Dubai and Khalifa port in Abu Dhabi as well as Fujairah.

## AP Emerges as Role Model in Energy-Efficient Innovations

VIJAYAWADA, MARCH 15

The Government of Andhra Pradesh has decided to provide energy-efficient induction stoves to all Anganwadi Centres (AWCs) in the State under the National Efficient Cooking Programme (NECP), setting a national benchmark in adopting clean and energy-efficient technologies in welfare institutions.

Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu has approved the proposal to supply induction stoves to all Anganwadi centres through the Women Development and Child Welfare (WD&CW) Department with support from Energy Efficiency Services Limited (EESL), a public sector undertaking under the Union Ministry of Power.

The initiative comes at a time when the world is witnessing energy supply challenges, highlighting the State government's proactive approach to sustainable energy solutions and cost-effective cooking technologies.

Under Phase-I of the programme, EESL has already supplied 11,400 energy-efficient induction stoves along with utensils to Anganwadi centres. Following the successful implementation of the pilot phase, the government has now ordered procurement of induction stoves and utensils for the remaining 44,346 Anganwadi centres to ensure 100 per cent coverage across the State.

According to officials, the shift to



File photo. Hon'ble Chief Minister Sri.N.Chandra Babu Naidu in the presence of Union Minister of Power, Housing and Urban affairs Sri Manohar Lal has distributed Star Rated Energy Efficiency Appliances to the Beneficiaries in Vijayawada.

1200-watt induction cooktops will significantly reduce the use of LPG in Anganwadi kitchens, leading to estimated annual savings of around ₹24 crore. The programme is also expected to reduce nearly 28,327 tonnes of carbon dioxide emissions each year.

Officials said induction stoves will improve safety in Anganwadi kitchens by eliminating open flames, reducing the risk of fire accidents. The technology will also create cleaner and cooler cooking environments for Anganwadi workers, especially during summer.

The initiative aligns with the Union government's "Go Electric" campaign promoted by the Bureau of

Energy Efficiency (BEE) along with EESL.

Chief Minister Naidu had earlier emphasised the importance of adopting clean cooking technologies during a meeting attended by Union Minister Manohar Lal Khattar, stressing the need to promote energy efficiency and environmentally sustainable solutions at the grassroots level.

Secretary to the Chief Minister P.S. Pradyumna said the programme represents an important step towards energy efficiency, women's empowerment and sustainable development in the State.

WD&CW Secretary A. Surya Kumari said Anganwadi workers have

welcomed the initiative, especially after the successful Phase-I pilot project launched by Minister Gummadi Sandhya Rani on the occasion of World Environment Day.

Welcoming the State government's decision, EESL Chief Executive Officer Akhilesh Kumar Dixit said the move is a significant step toward promoting clean energy, protecting the environment and improving working conditions for women at Anganwadi centres.

With the large-scale adoption of energy-efficient technologies in welfare institutions, Andhra Pradesh is emerging as a model for other States in promoting sustainable and modern cooking solutions.

## Medicover Marks World Kidney Day with Awareness Drives

Bike Rally at Financial District and Zumba Session at Hitec City



Hyderabad, March 15:

On the occasion of World Kidney Day, Medicover Hospitals organized a series of awareness programmes in Hyderabad to promote kidney health and encourage preventive healthcare practices.

A large-scale bike rally titled "Medicover - World Kidney Day Ride" was held at the Financial District to spread awareness about kidney diseases and the importance of early screening. The rally was organized in association with the Harley Owners Group - Banjara Chapter and was flagged off by M. Ramesh, Commissioner of Police, Cyberabad. Actor Mahesh Achanta also took part in the rally, extending support to the awareness cam-

aign. As part of the celebrations, a special Zumba fitness session was also organized at Medicover Hospital in Hitec City to encourage people to adopt an active and healthy lifestyle. Actor Viraj Ashwin attended the event as the chief guest and participated in the session.

Speaking on the occasion, M. Ramesh said initiatives that raise awareness about public health are vital for society. He noted that kidney diseases can often be prevented or detected early through proper lifestyle habits and regular medical check-ups.

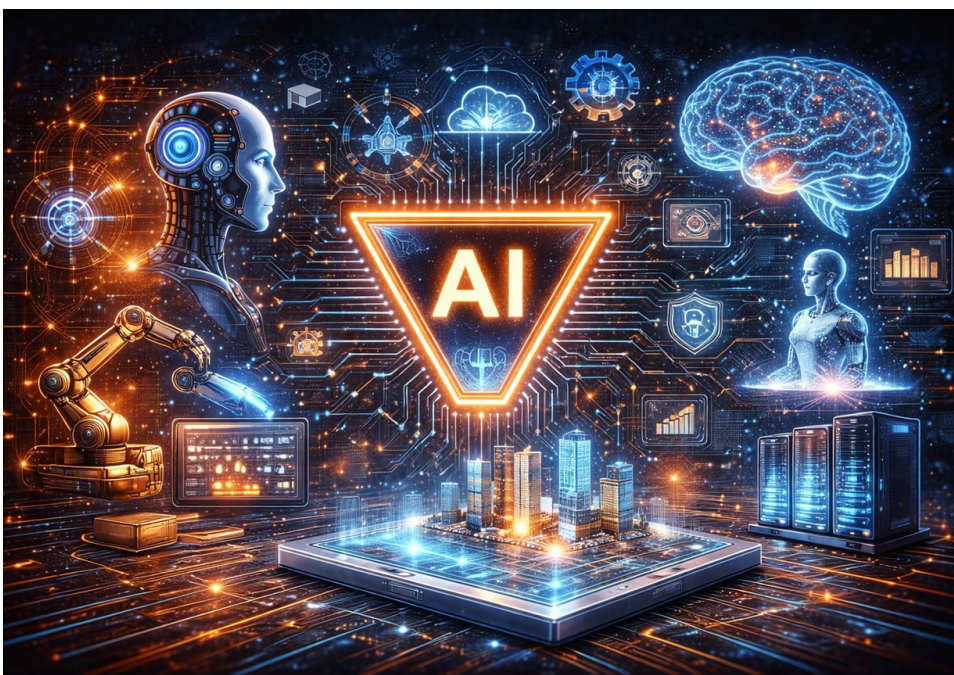
Viraj Ashwin emphasized the importance of maintaining a healthy lifestyle, stating that regular

exercise, a balanced diet and disciplined daily routines play a key role in protecting kidney health.

Medical experts from Medicover Hospitals also highlighted the importance of preventive screening. Kamal Kiran, Head of Nephrology, said chronic kidney disease often does not show symptoms in its early stages, making timely screening essential. Nephrologist Arun advised people with diabetes and hypertension to undergo regular kidney health check-ups.

Mahesh Degloorkar, Chief Business Officer of Medicover Hospitals, said the hospital aims not only to treat patients but also to create awareness about preventive healthcare.

## AI Seen Driving \$3 Trn Growth for MSMEs by 2047



NEW DELHI, MARCH 15

Artificial Intelligence (AI) could significantly transform India's micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs), potentially unlocking economic opportunities worth over USD 3 trillion by 2047, according to a joint report by PwC India and the Observer Research Foundation (ORF).

The report, "Unlocking the AI Edge for MSMEs," highlights that MSMEs already play a critical role in India's economy, contributing 35.4 percent of manufacturing value added, around 48.6 percent of total exports, and employing more than 33 crore people. With AI integration, the sector could emerge as a major driver of India's manufacturing growth, supporting the country's ambition to become a global manufacturing hub.

The study projects that if In-

dia increases manufacturing's share of GDP to 25 percent and MSMEs raise their contribution to manufacturing GVA to 50 percent by 2047, the sector could unlock economic opportunities worth USD 3.13-3.21 trillion. AI adoption alone could contribute USD 135.6-149.9 billion by 2035 through technologies like predictive maintenance, intelligent supply chain management, demand forecasting, and automated quality inspection, which improve efficiency, reduce costs, and enhance product quality.

The report also notes the emerging opportunities in AI infrastructure. The expansion of data centres, computing systems, and related equipment could create an additional USD 100-150 billion demand for MSMEs supplying industrial components, cooling systems, and AI ecosystem hardware.

However, barriers remain.

Many MSMEs lack digital readiness, face high costs, have limited technical expertise, and are uncertain about the ROI of AI investments. To overcome these challenges, the report recommends a structured adoption framework that includes building awareness among business owners, improving access to AI tools, integrating solutions into workflows, and embedding AI in core business processes.

Experts stress that a collaborative ecosystem involving government, tech providers, financial institutions, and industry bodies will be critical to accelerate adoption. The report concludes that enabling MSMEs to harness AI could strengthen their competitiveness, boost India's manufacturing potential, and position the country as a global hub for advanced manufacturing and innovation over the coming decades.

## India's New Era of Tech-Led Development: Singh

NEW DELHI, MARCH 15

India is entering a new phase of technology-led national development, where advanced sectors such as space, nuclear energy and artificial intelligence will play a key role in strengthening the country's security and economic growth, Union Minister Dr Jitendra Singh said on Sunday. "Traditional man-to-man combat is gradually declining as modern technologies begin to play a decisive role in strategic preparedness and national security," he stated.

Singh, who holds key portfolios related to science and technology, said sectors such as space, nuclear energy, artificial intelligence and advanced scientific research will shape India's future security architecture and development.

Referring to recent reforms in the space sector, the minister said opening the sector to private companies and startups has helped create a strong ecosystem of innovation.

"India now has a rapidly growing space startup ecosystem and the country's space economy is expected to expand significantly in the coming years as industry, research institutions and young innovators work together," Singh mentioned.

He said India has no shortage of scientific talent and the government is working to create an environment that supports innovation from an early stage.

Singh highlighted initiatives aimed at encouraging students at school and university levels to pursue careers in science and



HON. BI

technology.

The minister said programmes such as Vigyan Jyoti are helping students, particularly girls, explore opportunities in research and innovation.

Singh also stressed the importance of strengthening India's scientific base by encouraging students to identify their interests early and pursue research in emerging fields.

He said the National Education Policy has introduced greater flexibility for students, allowing them to move across disciplines and explore new areas in science and technology.

Highlighting the importance of energy security in the digital era, Singh said nuclear energy will play an important role in supporting technologies such as artificial intelligence and large data centres, which require a reliable and uninterrupted power supply.

## Rising Oil, FII Selling Push Markets Lower

MUMBAI, MARCH 15

Benchmark indices ended sharply lower on Friday, with sustained crude oil price increases and heavy foreign institutional investor (FII) selling weighing on sentiment. The Nifty 50 fell about 2% to close at 23,151.10, while the

of 92.3 against the U.S. dollar and massive FII selling of ₹52,704 crore in a single day—the highest daily outflow since January 2025, when full-month FII net sales totaled ₹78,027 crore.

"Market volatility is expected to persist in the near term as geopolitical tensions



BSE Sensex dropped 2% to 74,563.92.

Nifty opened at 23,462.50 and briefly touched an intraday high of 23,492.40 before sliding to a low of 23,112.00. The decline was broad-based, with all sectoral indices falling; Nifty Metal and Nifty PSU Banks fell the most, down 4.8% and 3.7%, respectively.

The fall was triggered not only by surging crude oil prices but also by the Indian rupee hitting a record low

in West Asia continue to disrupt the energy sector and push crude prices higher," said Siddhartha Khemka, Head of Research, Wealth Management, Motilal Oswal Financial Services Ltd. He added that uncertainty around shipping routes through the Strait of Hormuz is keeping risk sentiment fragile and that market movements will remain sensitive to developments in West Asia, crude prices, and foreign fund flows.

## Air India Probes Misuse of Employee Leisure Travel

Air India has found large-scale misuse of its Employee Leisure Travel policy involving over 4,000 staff. Some employees allegedly claimed ineligible relatives and sold free tickets. The airline has begun imposing penalties, seeking refunds, and tightening the policy.

NEW DELHI/MUMBAI:

Air India has detected large-scale discrepancies in the utilisation of its leisure travel policy, involving more than 4,000 employees and has initiated corrective actions, including imposing penalties on the erring staff, according to sources.

Loss-making Air India was acquired by the Tata Group in January 2022, and the airline, which has faced multiple headwinds in recent times, is also in the midst of implementing an ambitious transformation plan. The airline has more than 24,000 employees.

The sources in the know told PTI that the large-scale

discrepancies in the use of Air India's Employee Leisure Travel (ELT) policy were detected after a detailed internal investigation.

The ELT policy allows a specified number of free air tickets for individual employees and their nominees, including spouse and parents. These are subject to certain conditions.

Many employees were found to have misused the policy by showing those not related to them as relatives to avail the benefits. Some were reported to have even availed the free tickets and sold them to people at a higher price, the sources said.

A detailed set of queries sent to Air India on Thursday seeking comments on

the issue and the actions taken remained unanswered.

One of the sources said more than 4,000 staff were found to have misused the ELT policy.

Violations dating back to the last financial year, claims were also detected, sources said.

Specific details about the number of employees, the amount involved due to the misuse of the policy and the time period for which the violations have been detected could not be ascertained.

Air India has started taking corrective actions, and the employees concerned have been asked to refund the amount that was availed in a fraudulent manner. Heavy penalties were also



imposed on many of the staff who indulged in such practices, the sources said.

There seems to have been failures at various levels, and the whole issue raises the "question of morality and conduct", one of the sources said.

Another source claimed that most of the employees, who were found to have misused the policy, had joined the airline post-privatisation.

As a fallout of the fraudulent practices, Air India has

tightened the requirements for availing the benefits under the ELT policy, the sources said.

For the policy benefits, an employee has to provide nominee details, along with proof of the relationship to the company.

A total of 14 passages or return air tickets are provided for staff in a financial year. This can also include open-jaw tickets, which refer to booking a ticket for a flight that is from a different point to the origin destination.



# CBSE Scholarship Schemes 2026: Eligibility, Selection Criteria, Benefits Explained



The Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) offers several scholarship schemes and financial assistance programmes to help students continue their studies after classes 10 and 12. Among the key initiatives is the Merit Scholarship Scheme for Single Girl Child (SGC), aimed at encouraging families to support girls' education while recognising academic merit. Under the scheme, eligible students who performed well in the Class 10 board examination and are enrolled in Class 11 in CBSE-affiliated schools can apply for financial support.

Selected candidates receive a monthly scholarship to help cover academic expenses during higher secondary studies. Interested students can submit applications through the scholarship section on the official CBSE website after reviewing the eligibility criteria and required documents.

### Single Girl Child Scholarship (Class 10)

CBSE invites online applications from single girl students who passed the Class 10 board examination in 2025 and are currently studying in Class 11 in CBSE-affiliated schools. Under the scheme, a single girl child refers to a girl who is the only child of her parents and has no siblings. However, in the case of twins or multiple girls born together, each child is treated as a single girl child under the scheme. To qualify, students must have secured at least 70 per cent marks in the Class 10 board examination and must be enrolled in Classes 11 and 12 in a CBSE-affiliated school. The tuition fee for eligible candidates should not exceed Rs 2,500 per month in Class 10 and Rs 3,000 per month

in Classes 11 and 12. For NRI students, the maximum tuition fee allowed is Rs 6,000 per month.

### Renewal Of Last Year's Scholarship

Students who received the Single Girl Child Scholarship last year can apply for renewal this year. Renewal is granted after the successful completion of Class 11, provided the student secures at least 70 per cent marks and is promoted to Class 12.

### Scholarship Amount And Duration

Under the scheme, selected students receive Rs 1,000 per month for up to two years to support their studies in Classes 11 and 12. The scholarship amount is transferred directly to beneficiaries through ECS or NEFT.

### Eligibility And Selection Criteria

The scholarship is awarded based on merit in the Class 10 board examination. Applicants must be Indian nationals, studying in CBSE-affiliated schools, and continuing their education in Classes 11 and 12. Students from families with an annual income of up to Rs 8 lakh are eligible. Parents are required to submit a self-declaration of income on a notarised non-judicial stamp paper during the application process. Schools must verify each application. Students are also required to upload documents such as the first quarterly fee slip verified by the school principal.

### Application Process

Students can submit their applications online through the scholarship link available on the official CBSE website. Candidates must ensure that the application form is filled out completely and submitted before the deadline. In case of any issue related to scholarship payment, students can contact the CBSE scholarship branch for assistance. The CBSE scholarship schemes aim to support deserving students and promote access to education, while encouraging families to prioritise schooling for girls.

# THE PATH OF 'REVIEW' TO CAREER GROWTH

Young employees who join corporate organizations must make it a habit to regularly seek feedback from senior colleagues. Do not assume that your work alone will speak for you. Your ideas, work-related matters, and future aspirations should be discussed with team leadership. You must be ready to review yourself and improve your skills. Only by following these practices will you get opportunities to grow in your career.

### Nikhil's Experience

Nikhil joined a software company as a senior developer. He completed his assigned projects efficiently and on time. However, he felt dissatisfied because his team leader never praised him or spoke about promotions and salary hikes. He even considered resigning, feeling his work was not recognized. When he shared this with his team leader, the leader explained that he trusted Nikhil's work completely but was unaware of his career aspirations or desire for leadership responsibilities. Realizing his mistake, Nikhil changed his decision.

### Aparna's Approach

Aparna, working in the same company, followed a different method. Every fifteen days she met her team leader to discuss problems she faced, her failures, and areas needing improvement. She sought feedback on her performance and asked for suggestions to grow in her career. Though her persistence initially seemed bothersome, over time her leader noticed the changes in her performance and her willingness to improve. She was given tough projects, which she completed successfully, earning recognition as a capable employee. Within a year, she was promoted to team leader and excelled in that role.

### Why Ask for Feedback?

By asking for feedback, management sees you as a learning-oriented employee. If you don't ask, your needs and development goals remain unknown to others. Many young employees believe their work will speak for itself and that self-promotion is unnecessary. While publicity may not be needed, asking for feedback is not wrong—it helps you dis-

cover opportunities to improve. Waiting for annual performance reviews wastes valuable time. Feedback gives you clarity about where you stand. In today's fast-paced work culture, you must take responsibility for your own growth. Silent hard work alone will not guarantee recognition.

### Anil's Lesson

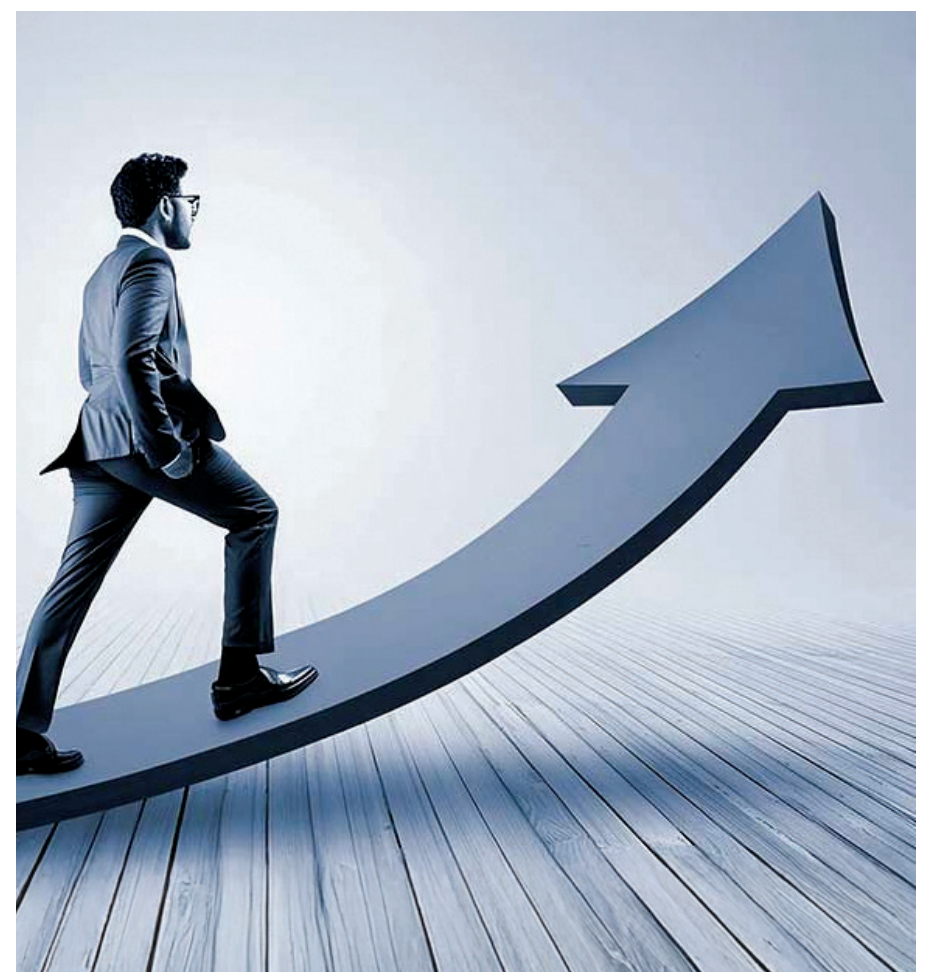
Anil joined the marketing department as an officer. He achieved his targets on time but spoke bluntly and harshly, which distanced colleagues and team members. As a result, his human relationships suffered. He ignored feedback from coworkers. During the annual performance review, he was judged as unable to work with the team or communicate effectively with clients, and was denied promotion. Later, realizing his mistake, he accepted suggestions, changed his behavior, understood where he went wrong, and eventually succeeded. Sometimes waiting may be wise, but not in every situation.

### Sushmita's Transformation

Sushmita joined a software company as a junior officer. She completed every project efficiently. However, when the annual performance review came, her name was missing from the promotion list. She discussed this with her team leader, who explained that although she was a good performer, she did not express her ideas in meetings, so management did not see leadership qualities in her. After learning this, she began actively participating in meetings, sharing her thoughts, and voluntarily taking up small projects. Within a few months, she was recognized as an employee with leadership potential and was promoted to team leader.

### Key Takeaway

- Feedback is the fuel for career growth.
- It helps you identify strengths and weaknesses.
- It shows leadership that you are eager to learn and grow.
- It prevents missed opportunities due to silence or assumptions.
- It builds recognition and opens doors to promotions.



# GOVT OF INDIA LAUNCHES FREE "SATHEE" APP FOR STUDENTS TO PREPARE FOR COMPETITIVE EXAMS

The SATHEE (Self Assessment Test and Help for Entrance Exams) app has been introduced as a digital learning platform aimed at supporting students preparing for major competitive examinations in India. The initiative has been launched by the Ministry of Education, Government of India, with the objective of expanding access to exam preparation resources. The application will help students prepare for various competitive exams such as the JEE, NEET, SSC, IBPS, and CUET through a single platform. It will offer various facilities to the students to help them prepare for the competitive exams. Initiative by Ministry of Education and IIT Kanpur. The SATHEE app has been launched as a part of an initiative undertaken by the Ministry of Education in association with the Indian Institute of Technology, Kanpur. The initiative has resulted in the development of the application, which has been created to provide academic support to the students through digital platforms such as mobile phones. The educational content on the app includes video lectures and academic notes provided by experts from the Indian Institute of Technology and other educational institutions. It will help the students understand the topics related to the examination and the concepts required to be learned for the competitive exams.

The platform also offers study materials that cover important points of the syllabus and question papers of pre-

vious years. These study materials are meant to help students get used to the pattern of exams and questions that are usually asked in these exams. Free learning platform for preparation of competitive exams. The SATHEE app is a free learning platform that can be used by students to prepare themselves for various competitive exams. The initiative has been taken to help students who cannot afford to join any academy or pay to prepare for these exams. The students can study through their homes using their mobile devices. This is a very convenient option for students to study at their own time and pursue their regular studies as well. Study materials in various Indian languages. It has been observed that the app offers study materials in various Indian languages such as Hindi and English, among others. This has been done in order to allow the students of various regions in the country to access the study materials provided through the app. It has been stated that the study materials provided through the app are regularly updated in order to align them with the changes in the examination patterns. It has been observed that the SATHEE app has been designed in such a manner that the interface of the app is simple in order to allow the students in the rural areas of the country to access the study materials provided through the app for the competitive exams.

## SATHEE App FEATURES

- Live Classes by IIT/AIIMS students
- Crash courses
- Live doubt clearing sessions
- Recorded courses
- Daily practice problems
- Performance analysis
- Previous Year Papers
- Mock tests



## Winning a World Cup in any format for the country is the ultimate goal

### Indian Open Jumps

#### Rising female long jumper Mubassina Mohammed wins



**BENGALURU:** Rising female long jumper Mubassina Mohammed won the long jump gold at the Fifth Indian Open Jumps Competition held at the Anju Bobby George Foundation Campus in Bengaluru on Sunday. On her way to winning gold with a jump of 6.38m, the 20-year-old representing the Anju Bobby George Sports Foundation also improved her personal best of 6.36m. Mubassina was steady in her performance on Sunday. She had a series of 6.18m, 6.24m, 6.29m, 5.81m, 6.15m, and 6.38m. Bhavani Yadav (Railway) won silver with a distance of 6.27m.

### CRICKET

#### Winning World Cup meant a lot, had dreamt about lifting ICC trophy: Harman



**NEW DELHI:** India captain Harmanpreet Kaur said lifting the 2025 Women's ODI World Cup had fulfilled a dream that had driven every woman who had ever played cricket for the country and meant a lot to her team. In the final, India beat South Africa by 52 runs to lift the trophy for the first time at the DY Patil Stadium in Navi Mumbai. Harmanpreet, who took the last catch of the final to seal the title in India's favour, spoke with deep emotion about what the victory meant to a generation of cricketers who had waited years for the moment.



### NEW DELHI

India Test and ODI captain Shubman Gill said winning the 2027 ODI World Cup in South Africa is the thought that runs through his mind at times, adding that winning the global trophy is still the ultimate goal for him. India had come close to winning the 2023 Men's ODI World Cup, but finished runners-up to Australia. With the next edition of the mega event coming up next year, all eyes

will be on whether Gill will be able to lead the team to glory in South Africa, Zimbabwe, and Namibia. "Sometimes, definitely it does. I mean, that is the ultimate goal. I think we felt like we were so close last time when we were here in India.

## Tried to make as few changes as we could till the 2026 T20 World Cup came: Surya

### NEW DELHI

India's 2026 Men's T20 World Cup winning captain Suryakumar Yadav said the bedrock of the recent title triumph was down to a deliberate policy of minimal selection changes and unflinching trust in a settled group of players.

Speaking in a panel discussion at the BCCI Awards ceremony in New Delhi, Suryakumar laid out the thinking that underpinned two years of careful squad management. "See, it was not that difficult. I think from where we left in 2024 under Rahul sir, from then, we knew that we needed to show a lot of trust, belief in the players. Because you see, sometimes in sport, you won't be seeing good things happening around.

"There'll be lots of ups and downs, but then you have to show a lot of trust in players, belief in them, and that's what we wanted to do when we started that new cycle for the 2026

sometimes runs in my mind," said Gill in a panel discussion during the BCCI's Naman Awards in New Delhi on Sunday.

Gill also traced his own journey from a wide-eyed schoolboy watching India's 2013 Champions Trophy triumph in England to lifting the same trophy in Dubai in 2025 - a moment he described as nothing short of a dream becoming a reality.

"Definitely, watching that as a kid in 2013, all my idols, Virat bhai, Rohit

bhai, Ash bhai, Mahi bhai, watching it on the screen and watching them win the final in England against England was a very special feeling. As a kid, you would want to replicate that feeling.

"When you think about playing for the country, you dream about winning ICC trophies for your country, and those are the moments that you really dream about. To be able to accomplish one of them obviously felt like a dream, and it was a very big moment for all of us. Winning the Champions Trophy, I think, after 12-odd years, would always be very special," he added. On the demands of leading India in Tests and ODIs, Gill said he had simplified the weight of captaincy by anchoring himself first and foremost in his primary role as an opener. "Honestly, I think it's easier said than done, but if you just keep focusing on the things that you have to do. I think the primary job of mine, firstly as a player and as a batsman, is to score runs.

"So I think if I'm able to score runs, then everything else falls in place. So that was my primary focus: how can I contribute to the team, how can I score runs? At the end of the day, you're playing the game to win the game, and you just have to focus on how you can make your team win the game."

"Not yet, I am still like, when I get up in the morning, I'm like, 'has it really happened'. So honestly, that's the feeling. But I feel that in the coming years, with the quality of players we have in our country, this is going to be repeated. The number of players who are coming up in India is definitely going to do this more and more often," said Samson to broadcasters on the sidelines of the BCCI awards in New Delhi on Sunday.

Samson was named Player of the Tournament for scoring 321 runs at a strike rate of nearly 200 in just five innings despite not being part of the starting line-up. He delivered scores of 97 not out in the must-win Super Eight match against West Indies, before hitting 89 each in the semi-final against England and final against New Zealand.

"You can only dream where you want to go, but you can't definitely ride the path towards it. So my life or my career has been one of the best examples. I definitely wanted to do this a couple of years ago. I want to win a World Cup for my country, but it had its own plan, its own script. So, it's more like a movie. I enjoyed it.

"As I said before, I wanted to do something like this, then I got pulled out of my journey, and then suddenly, the team wanted me to come and contribute, and that's when I actually mentally flipped a bit... I think, before that, in the New Zealand series, the focus was all about me.

"But in the World Cup, the focus is all about the team, what the team requires. And in the Zimbabwe game, right from that moment, everyone wanted me to contribute. I had a role to play. So that's when the shift happened and the confidence that, okay, the team needs you, Sanju, and let's do what you can to the best. So that's where everything started from.

"And then I had the experience, I was working mentally. I was working physically, so I knew that I was ready, and I knew that this was meant for me, so I just had to do what I know best," he elaborated.

Samson was not the only against-the-odds story to emerge from India's triumph. Pace bowler Mohammed Siraj was not part of the original squad and only joined as a replacement for the injured Harshit Rana, describing his own journey to a second T20 World Cup winners' medal in believable terms. "I was not in the initial squad, then I got it, played a game, and now I have been part of two World Cup-winning squads. I would say it's a miracle for me," he said.



## India is going to get World Cup titles more and more often, says Sanju Samson

### NEW DELHI

India's star distance runner, Gulveer Singh, has improved the national men's half-marathon (21km) record in a competition in New York on Sunday. According to information received from the Athletics Federation of India (AFI), the 27-year-old army runner clocked 59:42 to finish third in the New York City Half Marathon. Adriaan Wildschutt of South Africa was first with a time of 59:30, followed by Moroccan-born American long-distance runner Zouhair Talbi, whose time was 59:41.

The previous national record of 1:00:30 was set by steeplechase specialist Avinash Sable in 2020 at the Delhi Half Marathon. Gulveer Singh has now become the first Indian distance runner to hold multiple national records, ranging from the 3,000m track to the 25km road race. The Asian Games medalist also holds the men's 5,000m and 10,000m track records.

"You rightly said we were favourites going into the tournament. But at the same time, when you know that you're going to play at home, in front of your home crowd, yes, there is going to be excitement.

"But there was a lot of pressure. We were having a lot of nerves, and you must have seen that in the first game when we started against the USA. But there was a lot of pressure. When you play at home, there is a lot of pressure."

Suryakumar further credited the batting unit's collective selflessness as a key driver of totals that regularly breached 200, and singled out Sanju Samson's repeated willingness to sacrifice personal milestones for the team's cause to win.

## Gulveer Singh breaks the national half-marathon record

### NEW DELHI

India's star distance runner, Gulveer Singh, has improved the national men's half-marathon (21km) record in a competition in New York on Sunday. According to information received from the Athletics Federation of India (AFI), the 27-year-old army runner clocked 59:42 to finish third in the New York City Half Marathon. Adriaan Wildschutt of South Africa was first with a time of 59:30, followed by Moroccan-born American long-distance runner Zouhair Talbi, whose time was 59:41.

The previous national record of 1:00:30 was set by steeplechase specialist Avinash Sable in 2020 at the Delhi Half Marathon. Gulveer Singh has now become the first Indian distance runner to hold multiple national records, ranging from the 3,000m track to the 25km road race. The Asian Games medalist also holds the men's 5,000m and 10,000m track records.

## Tanzid, Taskin, Mustafizur shine as Bangladesh beat Pakistan to clinch series

### DHAKA

Tanzid Hasan struck a superb maiden century while fast bowlers Taskin Ahmed (4-49) and Mustafizur Rahman (3-54) shared seven wickets between them as they propelled Bangladesh to a series-clinching 11-run win over Pakistan in a tense third and final ODI at the Shere Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur on Sunday.

Bangladesh had won the series opener by dismissing Pakistan for 114 in Dhaka before the visitors came back strongly to win the second game easily. But the hosts had the last laugh in the decider.

Chasing Bangladesh's challenging 290/5 built on a run-a-ball 107 by Tanzid Hasan, Pakistan lost five wickets with only 82 runs on the board as the hosts' pacers came up with a superb



performance. Their top batters, Sahibzada Farhan and Maaz Sadaqat, who scored a century in the second ODI, both fell cheaply, scoring just six runs each, while former skipper Mohammad Rizwan was out for 4, as Taksin Ahmad and Nahid Rana struck repeatedly. Pakistan were eventually all out for 279 in 50 overs, losing the match despite a fighting century by Salman Agha (106).

Salman Ali Agha, Pakistan's T20 captain, fought back for the visitors, scoring a 98-ball 106, blasting four sixes and nine fours to take the visitors close to the target with Saad Masoon (38) and skipper Shaheen Shah

### Afridi (37) playing vital hands.

Pakistan needed 30 runs from the last 15 balls, and things could have gone their way. But the seasoned Taskin Ahmed returned to action and sent back Salman Agha, before Mustafizur and Rishad snuffed out the tail and claimed a memorable series victory for the hosts.

For the hosts, Taskin Ahmed claimed 4-49 off his 10 overs while Mustafizur Rahman bagged 3-54. Nahid Rana ended with 2-62 to hamper Pakistan's progress.

Earlier asked to bat by Pakistan, Bangladesh opener Tanzid produced a scintillating century to help the Tigers post a formidable total in the decider. Asked to bat first, Tanzid Hassan led the charge with a sparkling 107, hammering six fours and seven towering sixes.

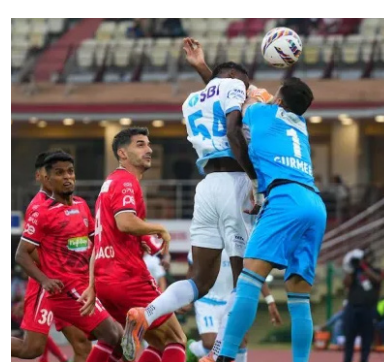
## ISL 2025-26: Rodríguez brace against Jamshedpur earns NorthEast first win

### GUWAHATI

Andy Rodríguez struck two second-half goals to help NorthEast United FC power to a 2-1 victory over Jamshedpur FC in the Indian Super League (ISL) 2025-26 season at the Indira Gandhi Athletic Stadium in Guwahati on Sunday.

The Highlanders secured their first victory of the campaign and moved up to seventh in the standings with six points, while Jamshedpur FC suffered their first defeat of the season but remains second with 12 points. Rodríguez was adjudged the Player of the Match for his decisive two-goal performance.

NorthEast United FC head coach Juan Pedro Benali made three changes to his starting lineup, introducing Bekey Oram and Laishram Danny Meitei in midfield along with defender Dinesh Singh in a 4-3-2-1 formation. Jamshedpur FC head coach Owen Coyle also made two alterations in midfield, bringing in Rei Tachikawa and Rosenberg Gabriel while retaining the same tactical setup.



The contest began at a brisk pace with both sides exchanging possession in the opening minutes but struggling to break into the final third. Jamshedpur keeper Albino Gomes produced a sweeping clearance outside the box in the 13th minute to deny a potential attacking opportunity for the hosts.

Jamshedpur created the first real chance in the 19th minute when Messi Bouli rose to meet Mohammed Sanan's cross, but his header drifted narrowly

wide. NorthEast responded soon after with midfielder Macarthon Nickson testing Gomes from distance, though the goalkeeper comfortably gathered the effort.

The Highlanders looked increasingly dangerous in attack, with Parthib Gogoi troubling the defence before being brought down by center back Pratik Chaudhari during a promising run in the 27th minute. NorthEast were forced into an early change in the 39th minute when captain Michel Zabaco was substituted due to a hamstring injury, with Asheer Akhtar coming on in his place.

The Highlanders nearly found the breakthrough just before the interval when midfielder Danny Meitei headed over from an Andy Rodríguez corner, as the first half ended goalless. NorthEast broke the deadlock eight minutes into the second half. Andy Rodríguez stepped up to take a free-kick in the 53rd minute and produced a precise left-footed strike into the bottom-right corner to give the Highlanders the lead.

## 'Don't know how I got 77-10 record last season, getting to play Olympics will be unmatched'

### NEW DELHI

After a brilliant season in which she finished with a 77/10 win/loss record, India's young squash sensation Anahat Singh is hoping to continue with the momentum in the next two seasons and is looking forward to showcasing her skills when squash makes its debut in the 2028 Olympic Games in Los Angeles.

Speaking at the Golden Jubilee National Convention 2026 of the Sports Journalists Federation of India (SJFI), Anahat noted she

has represented the country in the Commonwealth Games and Asian Games, and they have been the best events of her life. She hoped the experience would help her at the Olympics.

"This is the first time that squash will be a part of the Olympics. Getting the chance to play at such a big major Games and representing India at that level is something that's unmatched by any of the four events that I play. Like I mentioned, playing for India...I've played in two events, the Commonwealth and the Asian

Games. They've been some of the best events of my life," she said.

Talking about her brilliant record in the 2025 season, Anahat said, "To be honest, I don't know how I got that (77-10 Win-Loss record). I've just been focusing on practicing. It's not too much that I think about the record or the scores, as to how many I've won and how many I've lost. It's like a bonus hearing about it. It's just something that pushes me to do better."

Anahat said that she has had the most fun being around squash



players on court or off-court. She said she has learnt the most by being with senior teammates like Joshna Chinappa, Dipika Palikal, and Saurav Ghoshal.

"If anyone ever asks me whether it's squash or outside squash, it's the most that I've learnt and the most fun that I've had as well outside the court. Getting to meet so many people, spending time with my teammates like Joshna, Dipika, Saurav...they've been in the game for so long, and I've been really inspired, and I'm really lucky that I have them by my

side. I get to learn so much from them every day. Of course, getting to play at the Commonwealth Games in India would be really amazing. Getting to be on home soil in front of your family and friends," said Anahat.

She also talked about playing for the country and said she could not have done that with the support of corporates, the government, and the whole country. Anahat said she would like to return the favour by getting some medals in the big games and making the country proud.

"Playing in India is not the same as playing anywhere else. Getting that chance would be really amazing. I don't think I would be talking about any of this if I didn't have the support of corporates, the government, the docs, just the whole country. They've been by my side through all of it. Getting this opportunity is something that I'm always really grateful for. It would be really amazing if I could return the favour by getting some medals in the big games and making the country proud," she said.



## Allu Sirish Wears Necklace, Says Gender Norms Are A New Construct

Actor Allu Sirish recently opened up about the trolling he faced for wearing jewellery during his wedding celebrations with Nayanika Reddy. The actor said he deliberately chose to break stereotypes surrounding gender norms.

During his pre-wedding and wedding ceremonies, Allu Sirish wore diamond and gold jewellery and even got mehendi with Nayanika's name, apart from sporting Lord Balaji's namam, shanku and chakra for the wedding day.

Reacting to the trolling, Sirish said, "Gender norms are a new construct. In ancient times, people were more gender fluid. Men also wore jewellery, and until about a hundred years ago, there was no separate perfume for men and women. But now everything is divided into blue for boys and pink for girls."

He added that he wanted to challenge such perceptions. "I thought even if I get trolled, let me break that. We need to start somewhere," he said.

Speaking about convincing those around him, Sirish recalled, "They asked me, 'Enduku, ipudu avasarama haralu veskovadam?' (Do you really need to wear a necklace now?). I told them, 'Urukundi. Manam kuda try cheyyakapote inkevaru chestaru. Ilage untundi inko iravai ellu kuda.' (Let it be. If we also don't try it, nobody will. Things will remain the same even after 20 more years)."

He further said, "Men usually don't get to experiment much with clothing, only with accessories. I think that itself is restricting. I am pretty self-assured, so I don't need others to dictate what's masculine or feminine. I will decide what I can wear."

## SREELEELA'S REMUNERATION FOR USTAAD BHAGAT SINGH BECOMES A HOT TOPIC

The upcoming Telugu movie Ustaad Bhagat Singh, starring Power Star Pawan Kalyan, is creating huge excitement among fans. The film is scheduled to release in theatres on March 19 as a special Ugadi treat. Ever since the songs and trailer were released, the movie has been trending on social media and fans are eagerly waiting for its grand release.

The movie is directed by Harish Shankar, who earlier worked with Pawan Kalyan in the blockbuster film Gabbar Singh. Because of that successful combination, expectations for Ustaad Bhagat Singh are very high. In this movie, Pawan Kalyan will be seen playing a powerful police officer once again. Fans believe that his role will be full of action, strong dialogues, and mass moments.

The film features Sreeleela as the main heroine, while Raashi Khanna is also playing an important role. The movie is produced by Mythri Movie Makers, one of the leading production houses in Telugu cinema. The music for the film is composed by Devi Sri Prasad, while the background score is reportedly handled by Thaman. The songs and trailer have already received a strong response from audiences.

Meanwhile, the remuneration of Sreeleela for this film has become a hot topic in the film industry and among fans. According to reports, Sreeleela is charging between ₹2.5 crore and ₹3 crore for her role in Ustaad Bhagat Singh. This is considered a big amount, especially since some of her recent movies did not perform well at the box office.

Sreeleela entered Tollywood with the film Pelli SandaD. Later, she gained good popularity with the hit movie Dhamaaka, which helped her become one of the most busy young actresses in the industry. However, after that success, several of her films did not achieve strong results. Even though she appeared in the movie Bhagavanth Kesari with Balakrishna, the credit for the success mostly went to the senior star. Now, Sreeleela hopes that Ustaad Bhagat Singh will bring her a big hit again. Working with a big star like Pawan Kalyan is also expected to boost her career.



## ACTOR MADHAVAN ISSUES FRAUD ALERT, CAUTIONS FANS



Kollywood actor R. Madhavan has alerted fans about a fraudulent social media account impersonating him. The actor issued a warning stating that the account has no connection to him or his team. In a post, Madhavan wrote that the person behind the account falsely claims to represent him and interacts with people on social media on his behalf. He emphasized that it is a completely fake account and urged fans to remain cautious. He also clarified that no other account represents him or speaks on his behalf on Instagram or

any other platform. Madhavan shared a screenshot of the fake account on his Instagram page and said that steps are being taken to identify the person behind it and hold them accountable. On the professional front, Madhavan recently played a key role in Ranveer Singh's upcoming film Dhurandhar. He will also appear in its sequel, Dhurandhar: The Revenge, scheduled to release on March 19, 2026. Madhavan gained popularity among Telugu audiences with films like Sakhi and Amrutha, and later appeared in Savyasachi and Silence alongside Anushka Shetty.

## Kareena Kapoor Khan Calls 'Favourite Girl' Alia Bhatt 'Gold' In Birthday Wish | Photo



Alia Bhatt is celebrating her birthday today, and wishes are pouring in. Celebrities, including Sharvari and others, have wished her. Kareena Kapoor also took to her social media handle and shared a throwback photo to wish the actress. Alia is currently in Hong Kong and celebrating her birthday.

Taking to her Instagram stories, Kareena Kapoor shared the photo with Alia Bhatt and wrote, "Happy birthday favourite girl..You are gold...Love you alots.." Taking to her Instagram stories, Sharvari shared an unseen photo from their Kashmir shooting diaries. "@aliabhatt sending you a BIG tight hug! You are the best!! Love you lots!! Happy birthday to you Aloooooo." Earlier, Soni Razdan also shared a series of photos and wrote, "Happy Birthday to a very special girl, our baby girl, our life. You are the most generous, kind and loving soul — and always have been. They say that in life you receive what you give to others. May you receive all that goodness and so much more in return. May you continue to inspire us, and everyone whose life you touch, with your warmth and your beautiful spirit. And may your tribe always grow. Love you to the moon, the stars and back again."

### Alia Bhatt's work front:

She will be next seen in 'Alpha', the first female-led installment of Yash Raj Films' Spy Universe. The film release has been postponed once again, and YRF has now confirmed a new release date. Alpha is scheduled to hit theatres on July 10. While rumours of a direct OTT release had been circulating on social media, YRF put the speculation to rest, revealing in the official poster that the film will premiere in cinemas. Yash Raj Films shared a new poster of Alpha on Instagram, confirming that the film will now release theatrically on July 10. The poster offers a partial glimpse of Alia Bhatt's character, showing wounds on her face and arm. The poster also features the names of the main cast: Alia Bhatt, Sharvari, Anil Kapoor, and Bobby Deol. It also confirms the release date, stating, "10.07.26. Only in cinemas," thus dismissing rumours of a direct OTT release and confirming that Alpha will release in theatres.



## CHINMAYI SLAMS KAMAL HAASAN FOR PRAISING VAIRAMUTHU

Playback singer and dubbing artist Chinmayi Sripaada has criticised Kamal Haasan for congratulating poet-lyricist Vairamuthu on winning the Jnanpith Award, India's most prestigious literary honour. Chinmayi, who accused Vairamuthu of molestation in 2018, took to social media to express her disappointment, saying that men in power often stand by their own despite the trauma faced by women.

Kamal Haasan had praised Vairamuthu, calling him a friend and expressing pride in his achievement. Responding to the message, Chinmayi pointed out that Vairamuthu has faced sexual harassment allegations from multiple women. She questioned the decision to celebrate someone facing such accusations, calling it disheartening for women who had spoken out. Chinmayi also recalled that Vairamuthu had declined the ONV Literary Award in 2021 following backlash over the allegations. She further claimed that after speaking out against him, she was allegedly sidelined from singing and dubbing opportunities in Tamil cinema, and said several other women, too, had paid a price for sharing their experiences.

The issue has triggered a debate on social media, with many discussing whether public figures facing such allegations should continue to be honoured.

