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BOX - OFFICE 12

DEMOCRACY IN THE AGE OF THE SILENCED QUESTION

RAJDEEP VS. MODI

THE WAR OVER ONE SIMPLE QUESTION

“PM MODI HASN'T DONE A SINGLE PRESS CONFERENCE IN 12 YEARS.”

From unscripted press conferences to scripted politics — Rajdeep Sardesai takes on India's new culture of silence, controlled messaging and the leaders who fear the toughest question.

BY C. SUBRAHMANYAM

India's political class has discovered a powerful modern weapon: communication without interrogation. From Prime Minister Narendra Modi avoiding open press conferences through twelve years in office, to Rahul Gandhi increasingly preferring carefully curated digital interactions, from Sonia Gandhi's long standing guarded silence to Tamil Nadu Chief Minister Vijay entering office without facing a formal media grilling, the pattern is now impossible to ignore. The politician speaks endlessly, the cameras roll endlessly, the slogans travel endlessly, but the unscripted question has begun disappearing from the centre of democratic life. This is not merely a media debate. It is a battle over accountability itself in the world's loudest democracy.

India has never suffered from shortage of speeches. Every hour, somewhere in this vast republic, a politician is speaking from a stage, from a helicopter landing ground, from a studio chair, from a social media feed, from a mobile screen glowing in the palm of a voter. The nation is flooded with communication. Yet something vital has quietly begun evaporating from public life. The unscripted political question. The uncomfortable interruption. The follow up that corners power. The moment when a leader cannot simply walk away from scrutiny. Senior journalist Rajdeep Sardesai has now hurled this uncomfortable truth into the centre of national debate through his "Straight Bat" vlog. His provocation is sharp and impossible to dismiss casually. Across ideologies, across parties, across regions, India's political establishment has steadily reduced direct exposure to hostile questioning. The ruling side does it. The opposition does it. Regional satraps do it. Cinema politicians do it. The methods differ. The objective remains identical. Control the script. Control the optics. Control the atmosphere. Above all, never surrender the microphone to unpre-

dictability. TWELVE YEARS. THREE ELECTION VICTORIES. NOT ONE OPEN PRESS CONFERENCE

Prime Minister Narendra Modi has rewritten the grammar of political communication in India. No Indian leader in recent memory has mastered mass messaging with such discipline, precision and relentless consistency. From giant rallies to digital warfare rooms, from "Mann Ki Baat" to high voltage campaign imagery, Modi has built perhaps the most formidable direct communication machine in Indian political history. And electorally, the machine has delivered spectacularly. Three consecutive mandates. Complete dominance over national narrative. An emotional bond with millions that bypasses traditional gatekeepers entirely.

But there remains one stubborn fact that critics refuse to let disappear. Twelve years in office. Not one traditional open press conference in India where independent journalists could ask unrestricted follow up questions before the national media. That silence has now become political symbolism in itself.

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Cabinet Clears Mega Welfare, Housing and Investment Push

2.5 Lakh Indiramma Houses Approved; Mid-Day Meals Extended to Junior Colleges

HYDERABAD, MAY 24

In a major boost to welfare, infrastructure and economic development, the Telangana Cabinet chaired by Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy on Saturday approved a series of key initiatives, including sanctioning 2.5 lakh houses under the Indiramma Housing Scheme, introduction of mid-day meals in Government Junior Colleges, and implementation of the ambitious Next-Gen Life Sciences Policy 2026-30. The Cabinet meeting was held at the Dr. B.R. Ambedkar Telangana State Secretariat. Ministers Ponguleti Srinivas Reddy, Adhuri Laxman Kumar and Vakiti Srihari later briefed the media on the decisions taken.

2.5 Lakh Houses Under Indiramma Scheme

The Cabinet approved the second phase of the Indiramma Housing Scheme, under which 2.5 lakh houses will be sanctioned across the State. Each Assembly constituency will receive an allocation of 2,000 houses. The second phase will be formal-



Foundation Stone Laid for Veda Pathashala at Yadagirigutta Temple

YADAGIRIGUTTA, May 23: Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy on Friday participated in the Bhoomi Puja for the construction of a Veda Pathashala at the Sri Lakshmi Narasimha Swamy Temple. The ceremony was held in the presence of Jagadguru Shankar Vijayendra Saraswati Swami of the Kanchi Kamakoti Peetham. The Chief Minister also laid foundation stones for temple development works worth ₹99.55 crore, including construction of the Veda Pathashala, Nitya Kalyana Mandapam, pilgrim dormitories and infrastructure facilities. Several ministers, MPs, legislators and senior Endowments Department officials attended the programme.

ly launched by Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy on June 1 at Sirpur Kaghaznagar. In a special initiative aimed at eliminating thatched huts in rural areas, the government de-

cidated to immediately issue housing sanction letters to around 15,000 families identified as still living in poor hutsments.

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"True strength of any system is its people"

PM Modi distributes 51,000 employment letters during Rozgar Mela

NEW DELHI, MAY 23

A Rozgar Mela was organised at the Ambedkar International Centre in Delhi, where nearly 51,000 appointment letters were distributed nationwide to selected candidates. Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal and Union Science and Technology Minister Jitendra Singh attended the event. Prime Minister Narendra Modi joined the programme virtually and extended his congratulations and motivational message to the newly recruited candidates across the country.

Prime Minister said that the Rozgar Mela is an important initiative aimed at empowering the youth of the country with new opportunities. Attending the event virtually being held in different states, he said that young people taking up responsibilities in sectors such as banking, railways, defence, education and other departments would play a key role in fulfilling the vision of a developed India. "Amidst this campaign of policies and decisions, you must



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GOVT SHIFTS BAKRID HOLIDAY TO MAY 28

HYDERABAD, MAY 23

The Telangana Government has officially changed the holiday for Eid-ul-Azha (Bakrid) under the Negotiable Instruments Act, 1881, from May 27, 2026 (Wednesday) to May 28, 2026 (Thursday).

The decision was taken following representations from the Telangana Wakf Board and the Minorities Welfare Department. An extraordinary gazette notification will be issued accordingly.

As per the notification, the holiday declared earlier stands modified, and May 28, 2026, will now be observed as the official Bakrid holiday across Telangana under the N.I. Act.

The order was issued by state chief secretary K. Ramakrishna Rao.

Sridhar Babu slams Harish over threats to scrap 'Bharat Future City'

HYDERABAD, MAY 23

Minister for IT and Industries Duddilla Sridhar Babu has found fault with the statement made by former minister and BRS MLA T. Harish Rao, who said that the BRS party would terminate the current Bharat Future City project and reinstate the Pharma City initiative if they regain power in Telangana. The Minister argued that Harish Rao's remarks are obstructing the state's development.

Speaking to the media at the

CLP office in the Assembly on Saturday, Sridhar Babu pointed out that when in the opposition, one should make constructive criticism, but should not indulge in destructive thinking that hinders development.

"Politics is temporary, but the interests of the state are permanent. Unfortunately, BRS leaders have still not come out of the disappointment of their election



defeat. That is why Harish Rao, even while visiting America, is still daydreaming. He is boasting that once BRS comes back to power, they will cancel the "Bharat Future City" project," he said.

"In the Assembly elections, people removed the BRS from power. In the Parliament elections, they gave you zero seats. In the subsequent local body and municipal elections too, the people of Telangana pushed the party into political irrelevance.

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PONGULETI HITS BACK AT HARISH OVER "FUTURE CITY" REMARKS

Hyderabad, May 23 : Minister Ponguleti Srinivasa Reddy on Saturday launched a scathing attack on senior BRS leader T. Harish Rao over his criticism of the proposed "Future City" project. Posting on X, Ponguleti questioned Harish Rao's right to comment while in the United States and taunted his political future within the BRS. He accused the previous BRS government of failing to complete a single Metro station in its decade-long rule and alleged that BRS leaders obstructed projects like the Musi River rejuvenation and industrial development in Lagacharla. Charging the opposition with conspiring to block youth employment, Ponguleti expressed confidence that Congress will return to power and vowed the Future City will proceed, declaring, "The BRS has no future; the Future City is unstoppable."

HEATWAVE ALERT IN TELANGANA: MINISTER URGES EXTREME CAUTION

HYDERABAD, MAY 23:

Revenue minister Ponguleti Srinivas Reddy on Saturday urged the people across Telangana to remain highly cautious over the next three days as temperatures continue to soar across the state. During an emergency review meeting held at the Secretariat in

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NEXT GOVT WOULD BE OF BJP IN TG: NRR

HYDERABAD, MAY 23

Over 300 people including educated, Intellectuals, Youth and Women today joined in BJP in Ranga Reddy district attracting by developmental programmes of NDA government led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi. The people from various villages under Turkyanjali municipality under the auspices of Spurti Foundation joined BJP in the presence of state party president N Ramchander Rao, former governor Bandaru Dattatreya and state party Vice-President Boora Narsiah Goud.

Speaking on the occasion BJP state chief said all walks of people joining in the party and everyone today is observing the functioning of the BJP and the corruption-free, good



governance provided under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi over the past twelve years.

He said the PM is not only a leader who works tirelessly for the nation but also as an embodiment of corruption-free administration. Inspired by the same spirit, people are observing the good governance being delivered by the BJP governments across the country. The

people of the country, especially the youth, are looking towards the BJP with hope, he asserted.

Lashing out Congress government for failing to implement welfare programmes in the state, BJP state chief said the people of Telangana have witnessed and realized how the Congress and the BRS Parties have looted the state. The people have already rejected the BRS Party, which acted with

political arrogance, corruption, and commissions in the name of lakhs of crores of rupees worth of projects.

Now, the perception is strengthening among the people that the congress government is also walking down the very same path, Rao accused and said people are noticing that by preparing DPRs (Detailed Project Reports) worth

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3 TIMES BETTER

Goreti Venkanna and Narayana Swamy Honored in Hyderabad: A Night of Culture, Citizenship, and Celebration



HYDERABAD, MAY 23

In a dignified ceremony at Nizampet, a gathering that brought together talent, history, and civic pride marked a memorable moment for Telangana's cultural and political landscape. Senior journalist and Telangana Rashtra Udyamakara Sankshema Samiti Media Cell President B. Venkateshwarlu formally honored two luminaries: MLC Goreti Venkanna, a celebrated singer and poet, and Padma Awardee Band Narayana Swamy. The event underscored Venkanna's enduring contribution to Telangana's awakening through his evocative songs, poetry, and performances that energized people during the long and arduous movement for a separate state.

From the outset, the atmosphere was charged with a sense of reverence and communal warmth. The organizers emphasized that the honors were not merely ceremonial acknowledgments but a recognition of lasting cultural influence and civic engagement. Goreti Venkanna's body of work, spanning folk melodies, revolutionary ballads, and contemporary compositions, was highlighted as a driving force that galvanized communities, sustained morale, and lent a distinctly regional voice to the

broader struggle for Telangana's identity. Narayana Swamy, whose literary and artistic achievements have earned national and Padma recognition, was lauded for enriching the cultural tapestry with his prose, poetry, and essays that resonate with readers across generations.

The evening's program featured a cross-section of attendees from the worlds of journalism, politics, literature, and music. A.S. Kani, the Tuvj(143) Telangana State General Secretary Askaani Maruthi Sagar were among the dignitaries present, alongside veteran journalists Vordhelly Venkateshwarlu and Nagendra Chari. The presence of such figures underscored the ceremony's significance as a convergence point for voices advocating regional pride, social welfare, and cultural continuity.

A standout moment came when B. Venkateshwarlu took the stage to perform a revered ballad that has become a symbol of regional resilience—the classic "Aa Challani Samudra Garbham." The rendition, delivered with sincerity and melodic nuance, drew applause from the audience and drew a warm response from Goreti Venkanna, who attended the performance with a sense of admiration and congratulations. The exchange highlighted the deep mutual respect

among scholars, artists, and media advocates who continue to champion Telangana's heritage.

In addition to the musical tribute, speakers reflected on the broader significance of honoring artists who played pivotal roles during Telangana's statehood movement. They spoke about how art and culture can serve as powerful instruments of social change, helping to articulate collective aspirations and sustain momentum during challenging times. The ceremony also offered an opportunity to acknowledge ongoing efforts in cultural preservation, education, and media outreach that aim to keep Telangana's history alive for future generations.

As the evening concluded, attendees expressed renewed commitment to supporting artistic excellence and civic engagement. The honored guests—Goreti Venkanna and Narayana Swamy—shared their gratitude for the recognition and reiterated their dedication to using art and literature to inspire contemporary audiences. They emphasized the importance of mentorship, community involvement, and responsible storytelling as essential components of a thriving cultural ecosystem in Telangana.

Cabinet Clears Mega Welfare, Housing and Investment Push

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One Lakh Houses Planned in Hyderabad Region

Focusing on urban housing needs, the Cabinet approved construction of one lakh houses in the 24 Assembly constituencies falling under the Hyderabad Core Urban Region (CURE).

As many urban poor families do not possess house sites, the government decided to identify suitable land parcels within existing residential localities to facilitate construction of houses for poor and middle-class families.

Mid-Day Meals for Junior College Students

In a major welfare measure for students, the Cabinet approved extension of the Mid-Day Meal Scheme to all Government Junior Colleges in Telangana from the coming academic year. The government said the move is aimed at improving student attendance, nutrition and academic performance among intermediate students.

1,000 Crore for Godavari Pushkaralu

The Cabinet also sanctioned ₹1,000



crore for infrastructure and development works related to the Godavari Pushkaralu 2027 celebrations scheduled in 2027. Funds will be utilized for improving roads, bathing ghats, sanitation and pilgrim amenities at various locations along the Godavari river.

Funds Cleared for Palamuru-Rangareddy

To accelerate execution of the Palamuru-Rangareddy Lift Irrigation

Scheme, the Cabinet approved ₹587 crore for land acquisition, rehabilitation and infrastructure development works.

Telangana Targets Global Life Sciences Leadership

In a major economic initiative, the Cabinet formally approved the Next-Gen Life Sciences Policy 2026-30, aimed at transforming Telangana into one of the world's top five life sciences hubs by 2030. The policy seeks to at-

tract investments worth \$25 billion over the next five years and create nearly five lakh jobs in the sector.

The government plans to shift the sector's focus from traditional manufacturing to innovation-driven areas such as research and development, biotechnology and digital health.

As part of the reforms, innovation and R&D units will now be officially classified as industries, enabling them to avail various government incentives and benefits.

Power Sector Reforms and Administrative Restructuring

The Cabinet also approved participation of Telangana Discoms in the Central Government's Revamped Distribution Sector Scheme (RDSS) aimed at modernization of the electricity distribution network.

In another administrative reform measure, the government decided to merge all District Cooperative Marketing Societies (DCMS) into MARKFED, while the Rural Infrastructure Corporation will be merged with HACA to improve operational efficiency and streamline governance.

From Promises to Practice: Congress Leader Challenges BRS Leadership Before GHMC Polls

MEDCHAL-MALKAJGIRI, MAY 23

Congress Party Kukatpally A Block Vice-President Madireddy Yugandhar Reddy issued a pointed critique of BRS leadership, targeting Working President K. Taraka Rama Rao (KTR) and Kukatpally MLA Madhavaram Krishna Rao. He accused them of repeatedly deceiving their own party cadre and urged workers to question the assurances they've been given.

In a media briefing, Reddy warned BRS workers not to fall for "false promises" ahead of the upcoming BRS



workers' meeting slated for the 25th at NKNR Garden in Kukatpally. He argued the gathering is another tactical move to sway activists, particularly in the run-up to the Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (GHMC) elections. Reddy recalled past pledges made by KTR prior to the MLA and Corporator elections, noting that public promises to nominate loyal activists who stood with the Telangana movement have not materialized.

"KTR and MLA Madhavaram Krishna Rao have treated party workers like curry leaves in lentils—used for flavor

and discarded after the dish is served," he remarked. He also targeted the three-term Kukatpally MLA and his family, alleging that while the legislator and his son have accumulated substantial wealth and opportunities for growth, the loyal workers who trusted them have seen little development or recognition. With the BRS leadership expected to visit on Monday, Reddy appealed to the BRS cadre in the Kukatpally constituency to look beyond rhetoric, engage in honest self-criticism, and resist being misled by the party high command once again.

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DEMOCRACY IN THE AGE OF THE SILENCED QUESTION

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Supporters argue that Modi communicates directly with the people and needs no intermediary class to validate his politics. They point toward election victories as the ultimate democratic audit. The counter argument refuses to die. Elections test popularity. Press conferences test accountability. The two are not interchangeable. A rally is performance. An interview can be choreography. But an uncontrolled press conference remains one of the last surviving democratic arenas where power can unexpectedly sweat. That is precisely why modern politics increasingly avoids it.

WHEN THE QUESTIONS VANISH, POWER BEGINS SPEAKING ONLY TO ITSELF

RAHUL GANDHI SPEAKS MORE FREELY. BUT EVEN HE PREFERS THE SOFTER CAMERA

Rahul Gandhi occupies the opposite trench in India's political battlefield, yet the broader pattern remains surprisingly similar. Rahul Gandhi undoubtedly engages with media more frequently than Modi. He conducts interactions, takes spontaneous questions and appears more accessible in conventional political settings. But even here, a subtle transformation is visible. Long form digital conversations. Friendly podcast environments. Influencer style interactions. Carefully curated atmospherics where politics is wrapped in conversational warmth rather than adversarial challenge. The hard political press conference increasingly competes with the soft focus digital encounter.

And when difficult questions emerge, sections of the opposition ecosystem often react exactly like ruling party loyalists react when their own icons are challenged. The journalist is immediately classified. Labeled. Suspected. Politically profiled. Reduced into ideological categories before the question itself is examined. This is where India's democratic culture enters dangerous territory. The ruling ecosystem distrusts sections of the press. The opposition ecosystem distrusts other sections of the press. Regional parties distrust nearly everybody. The result is devastating. Every tough question is now treated as conspiracy. Every interrogation becomes evidence of hidden allegiance. Every criticism is presumed sponsored. In such a climate, journalism slowly mutates into tribal warfare. And once journalism becomes tribal, accountability becomes selective.

"THE MODERN POLITICIAN DOES NOT FEAR SILENCE. HE FEARS THE SECOND QUESTION."

SONIA GANDHI REPRESENTED THE OLD WALL OF DISTANCE. THE NEW ERA HAS BUILT A DIGITAL FORTRESS

Sonia Gandhi was never a naturally conversational political figure before cameras. Her public style remained guarded, restrained and highly controlled for decades. Yet even during that era, there existed an institutional acceptance that the

press had a constitutional place within democratic life. Today's ecosystem has gone several steps further. Now the leader can entirely bypass the institutional press. The smartphone has replaced the press gallery. The algorithm has replaced the editor. The supporter network has replaced political intermediaries. The leader speaks directly into millions of screens while critics are digitally buried beneath orchestrated outrage, hashtags, emotional mobilisation and instant narrative warfare. Power no longer merely manages media. Power now manufactures its own parallel media universe.

VIJAY'S CINEMATIC ASCENT TO POWER EXPOSES THE NEW POLITICAL TEMPLATE

Tamil Nadu's new Chief Minister Vijay represents perhaps the purest modern example of image driven politics entering constitutional power. The cinema superstar arrived wrapped in extraordinary public emotion, disciplined branding and immense fan mobilisation. His political rise carried the rhythm of a blockbuster release rather than a conventional party expansion. Yet one fact stunned even seasoned observers. He ascended to the Chief Minister's office without facing a formal open press conference. No prolonged interrogation. No sustained questioning. No institutional grilling before assuming executive authority. That single reality reveals the changing psychology of Indian politics more dramatically than a hundred academic essays. Cinema has always depended on image control. Modern politics has now borrowed the same grammar. The leader appears. The public reacts. The visuals dominate. The emotion triumphs. The questioning becomes secondary. Perhaps even inconvenient.

THE MEDIA MUST ALSO STAND IN THE DOCK

But the political class alone cannot be blamed for this crisis. Sections of the Indian media spent years damaging their own credibility with astonishing recklessness. Television debates degenerated into nightly warfare theatres. Anchors behaved like prosecutors, defenders, party strategists and ideological combatants. Sensationalism replaced investigation. Partisan loyalty replaced professional distance. The public watched this degeneration carefully. Trust cracked.

And politicians noticed the opportunity immediately. Why submit to unpredictable questioning from institutions the public itself increasingly distrusts? Why risk hostile confrontations when digital platforms provide perfectly controlled communication ecosystems? Why walk into a press conference minefield when millions can be reached directly through a mobile phone camera? The collapse of trust between politics and journalism did not happen overnight. It was manufactured slowly through vanity, political proximity, propaganda instincts and spectacle masquerading as news.

"A LEADER WITHOUT QUESTIONS MAY STILL WIN ELECTIONS. BUT A DEMOCRACY WITHOUT QUESTIONS EVENTUALLY LOSES ITS NERVE."

THE REAL LOSER IS NOT THE JOURNALIST. IT IS THE CITIZEN

This entire debate is larger than bruised media egos or political messaging wars. The real issue is the citizen's right to witness power under pressure. A true press conference is not valuable because a journalist asks a question. Its value lies in unpredictability. In persistence. In follow up. In the possibility that power may momentarily lose complete control over the script. That moment matters enormously in a democracy. Because governments are not elected merely to speak. They are elected to answer.

And once political systems begin treating questioning itself as hostility, democracies slowly drift toward personality driven governance where optics dominate over interrogation. India is nowhere near democratic collapse. The republic remains fiercely electoral, politically energetic and emotionally participative. But the political culture is undeniably changing. The age of the mass rally has merged with the age of the algorithm. The politician is now performer, broadcaster, influencer and narrative manager rolled into one. Meanwhile, the old fashioned press conference stands abandoned in the corner like an unwanted witness to a changing republic.

THE DAY POLITICIANS STOPPED NEEDING NEWSROOMS

There was a time when India's most powerful politicians still viewed the newsroom with caution mixed with necessity. From the early decades after Independence through the turbulent years of coalition politics, leaders understood that hostile editors, aggressive reporters and uncomfortable interviews were part of democratic survival.

Today the equation has radically shifted. Social media platforms now provide instant mass outreach without interruption, without cross examination and without editorial filtering. A leader with digital command can directly enter millions of homes before the morning newspaper even leaves the printing press. The political class has discovered that emotional connection travels faster than institutional scrutiny. That discovery has fundamentally altered the balance between power and the press in twenty first century India.

THE DAY INDIAN POLITICS STOPPED ANSWERING BACK

India's politicians still ask the people for votes with folded hands. But increasingly, they no longer wish to face folded notebooks carrying difficult questions. That is the real story of this moment. Not merely one Prime Minister. Not merely one opposition leader. Not merely one actor turned Chief Minister. The entire political class has discovered the intoxicating comfort of communication without interruption. And democracy must now decide whether applause alone is enough substitute for accountability.

NEXT GOVT WOULD BE OF BJP IN TG: NRR

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laks of crores of rupees in the name of new projects, they are prioritizing their selfish interests over public welfare. In the name of development, they are pushing the state further into debt and creating a situation that imposes a heavy burden on the people, Rao lambasted.

Raising the issue of the farmers BJP state chief alleged that the Congress government has also completely failed in procuring grain from farmers. Chief Minister

Revanth Reddy, who promised to purchase every last grain of maize, jowar, and other crops, is now failing to keep those promises and is deceiving the farmers, he alleged and said by not providing proper information to the farmers and delaying the procurement process, they are causing severe hardships.

He demanded that the state government, at least now, stop deceiving the farmers, immediately expedite the procurement of grain

at purchasing centers across the state and implement the promises made by the government. Expressing confidence that BJP would form government in Telangana in coming days he appealed to the people not believe the deceptive politics of the Congress and BRS parties anymore and give a chance to BJP in Telangana. Rao assured that the party will definitely provide an administration that is transparent, corruption-free, and prioritizes public welfare.

Sridhar Babu slams Harish over threats to scrap 'Bharat Future City'

>FROM PAGE 1

Yet the BRS leaders have not learned any lesson. Instead, they continue dreaming of returning to power while playing cheap, diversion, and blackmail politics," Sridhar Babu said. The Minister stated that the Bharat Future City is not limited to one region or one government and it is a step forward toward making the Telangana brand more globally

recognised. In the coming days, "Bharat Future City" will become the engine of Telangana's economy. The people of Telangana will give a fitting reply to Harish Rao and the BRS party, who are dreaming of canceling it, Sridhar Babu said.

The Minister stated that the state government has already clarified that Pharma City is not being cancelled and it has con-

veyed the same to the High Court as well. "A "Life Sciences Park" will be established on the lands acquired for Pharma City. The previous BRS government tried to spread pollution in the name of Pharma City. But, Our government stopped that attempt. We are committed to establishing pharma industries without pollution. We are dedicated to the Green Pharma," Sridhar Babu said.

HEATWAVE ALERT IN TELANGANA

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Hyderabad, the Minister directed the officials to identify mandals and villages recording the highest temperatures and issue advance warnings to residents. Special awareness campaigns are also being planned in vulnerable areas.

The Minister advised elderly people and children to avoid going outdoors unless absolutely necessary. Officials were instructed to arrange buttermilk and ORS packets at bus stands, railway stations, busy roads and labour-intensive work areas to help people cope with the heatwave conditions.

According to reports submitted by the District Collectors, heatwave-related deaths were reported from several districts:

- > 4 deaths in Jayashankar Bhupalpally
- > 3 deaths each in Warangal, Karimnagar and Nizamabad
- > 1 death each in Joggulamba, Gadwal, Ranga Reddy and Suryapet

The state government announced an ex gratia compensation of Rs.4 lakh for the families of the deceased. District Collectors have been instructed to personally monitor the situation and ensure emergency medical services remain on standby for immediate treatment of heatstroke victims.

The Minister also directed the officials to arrange drinking water through tanks and earthen pots for birds and animals during the severe summer conditions.

"True strength of any system ..

>FROM PAGE 1

remember one more thing. The true strength of any system is its people... Government jobs are a means to make people's lives easier. Whatever department you work in, your behaviour, sensitivity, and work ethic will be of great importance. Therefore, every young 'Karmayogi' should see their work as ongoing," he said. Prime Minister Modi praised the hard work and dedication of the youth and said that behind every success lies the contribution of family, society and citizens of the country. He urged the newly appointed candidates to continue learning new technologies and serve the nation with honesty, dedication and responsibility.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi said the world is highly enthusiastic about India's youth and technological progress following his recent five-nation tour, during which he held discussions with global leaders and top companies. Candidates who received appointment letters during the event expressed joy and gratitude. Jagmohan Singh Pawar from Uttarakhand, selected as a Junior Engineer in Northern Railway, said his dream came true after years of hard work. Suhail Tomar from Uttar Pradesh credited discipline and consistency for his success, while Suhani, appointed as a Technician in Northern Railway, called it a proud and emotional moment. Abhinav Mishra from Mizoram said self-confidence and dedication helped him overcome challenges and advised aspirants to stay focused and revise regularly.

Hyd police launches "AI Copwriter" app; introduces AI-based complaint app

HYDERABAD

Hyderabad City Police has launched "AI CopWriter", an Artificial Intelligence-powered mobile application aimed at eliminating language barriers in police complaint registration, marking a first-of-its-kind initiative in the country.

The app was unveiled on Saturday at TGICCC, Banjara Hills, by city police commissioner V. C. Sajjanar. The technology will soon be deployed in more than 80 police stations across Hyderabad.

Designed to assist migrant workers, tourists and non-Telugu speakers, the app can instantly record, transcribe and translate complaints narrated in over 10 Indian languages, including Hindi, Tamil, Bengali and Marathi. Police said the system significantly reduces delays in FIR registration caused by language barriers and removes the need for translators.

Developed in collaboration with BlueCloud Softech Solutions and intern Pagro Chandu, the app converts spoken

complaints into official records within seconds. It also embeds details such as the recording officer's name and time stamp into PDF documents, ensuring transparency and preventing tampering.

Officials said the app can separately identify statements made by victims, accused persons and witnesses, improving investigation quality and standardising police documentation.

Speaking at the launch, Sajjanar said the initiative reflects Hyderabad Police's commitment to "Smart Policing" and technology-driven public services. He expressed confidence that the app would enhance trust in policing, especially among women, elderly citizens and migrant communities.

Additional CP (Crimes and SIT) M. Srinivasulu, Additional CP (Law and Order) Tafsir Iqbal, DCP (SMIT) Ch. Rupesh, IT Cell Inspector Ramesh, the representatives from the BlueCloud Softech Solutions and others participated in the app launch event.

"Rozgar Mela" is a program that empowers youth

- Union Minister Kishan Reddy
- 19th Phase of "Rozgar Mela" Held in Secunderabad
- Union Minister Kishan Reddy Distributed Appointment Letters to 218 Candidates

HYDERABAD

Union Minister for Coal and Mines, Shri G. Kishan Reddy, stated that Prime Minister Narendra Modi conceptualized the "Rozgar Mela" program not only to provide jobs to unemployed youth but also to empower them. He said that since 2022, lakhs of young people have secured Central Government jobs through these job fairs.

The 19th phase of the "Rozgar Mela," organized by the Central Government simultaneously at 47 locations across the country, was held on Saturday at Rail Kalarang in Secunderabad. Union Minister Shri Kishan Reddy attended the event as the chief



guest and distributed appointment letters to 218 young men and women who were newly selected for jobs in six departments of the Central Government.

Addressing the gathering, Shri Kishan Reddy said that the Central Government is filling vacancies across all government departments and public sector undertakings (PSUs), thereby creating employment opportunities for unemployed youth. He noted that today's youth are transforming from job seekers into job creators. He also

highlighted that startups are generating lakhs of jobs and that the "Make in India" initiative is creating large-scale employment opportunities in the manufacturing sector.

Speaking to the selected candidates, he said that obtaining a government job gives them the opportunity to serve the nation for 20-30 years. He urged them to work with dedication and a spirit of service for the country's development and public welfare. He also advised them not to neglect their parents, who worked hard for their success,

and encouraged them to support their parents in old age.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi addressed the 19th phase of the Rozgar Mela, held simultaneously across the country, through a virtual speech.

South Central Railway General Manager Shri Sanjay Kumar Srivastava, Principal Chief Personnel Officer Shri Siddharth Kati, Secunderabad Divisional Railway Manager Dr. R. Gopalakrishnan, and others participated in the event.

Malkajgiri MP Etala Rajender Assures Support to ABV Puram Bhoodan Victims

HYDERABAD

Malkajgiri Member of Parliament Etala Rajender stated that Hyderabad is a "Mini India," where poor people from different states have come in search of livelihood and are living in the city.

He said that women working in households, daily wage laborers, and people doing small jobs do not have the financial capacity to build their own houses. As a result, many poor families are living in small huts constructed on government, Bhoodan, and temple lands.

He pointed out that these families are not demanding large plots of 300-400 square yards, but only small house sites of about 60-70 square yards to build homes for themselves. Etala Rajender said that thousands of such poor colonies have emerged around Hyderabad, and ABV Puram is one among them.

He stated that people are currently residing on 7 acres of land, while there is a demand to allot 60-square-yard plots each to about 850 families on another 17-18 acres.



According to him

The State Government claims that the land belongs to the Bhoodan category,

While the IDPL organization claims ownership over the same land.

He urged the State Government and IDPL officials to hold discussions together and provide a permanent solution to the issue. As the local MP, he assured that he would work towards resolving the problem.

He further said that poor people do not have the financial ability to fight court cases

and are requesting the government to provide legal house pattas without corruption or bribes.

Etala Rajender clarified that no one has the right to sell Bhoodan lands and emphasized that such lands should be allotted only to poor people. He said governments must understand the hardships of the poor and resolve their issues compassionately. Vaddepalli Rajeswar Rao, Kantha Rao, Srikanth Rao, Peetla Manohar, and revenue officials also participated in the program.

Advocate killed after car attack in Hyd

HYDERABAD

A city-based advocate, Khaja Moinuddin, died after being allegedly rammed by a car driven by unidentified assailants in the Masab Tank area on Saturday morning. According to police, the incident occurred when Moinuddin approached his parked vehicle outside his residence.

A car reportedly struck him from behind with force, leaving him critically injured. He was shifted to a hospital, where he later succumbed to his injuries. CCTV footage of the incident has surfaced on social media, and police have launched an investigation. Initially registered as a hit-and-run case, the matter has now been converted into a murder case. Special teams have been formed to trace the accused.

Family members of the deceased alleged the involvement of ruling party member Alam Khan in the killing. Moinuddin's son, Farhan, claimed his father had fought several legal battles related to alleged encroachments on Waqf Board properties and had faced multiple attacks in the past.

Farhan stated that his father had survived five earlier attacks and alleged that threats had been issued by the accused six months ago. He appealed to the state government for protection for his family.

"Farmer Suicides in the State Are Due to Congress Government's Inefficiency"

- Teacher MLC Malka Komaraiah Expresses Anger Over State Government's Handling of Paddy Procurement

HYDERABAD

Teacher MLC Malka Komaraiah strongly criticized the Telangana State Government, alleging that the Congress government has completely failed in paddy and maize procurement, leading to severe distress among farmers and resulting in suicides across the state.

In a media statement released from his camp office on Saturday, he said that due to government negligence in grain procurement, harvested paddy has been lying in procurement centers for nearly 20 days without being purchased.

"All False Claims"

Komaraiah accused the state government of presenting "false statistics" regarding procurement. He said that although the government claims to have procured 4.8 lakh metric tonnes (80%) during the Rabi season, the reality on the ground is entirely different.

He stated that despite receiving funds and clear instructions from the Central Government, the state government



failed to formulate a proper procurement plan, resulting in major delays.

"If the government is truly sincere about procurement, it should explain why thousands of tonnes of paddy are still lying in procurement centers across the state," he demanded.

"Unable to Procure, So Creating Obstacles"

The MLC alleged that the Congress government's lack of administrative experience was clearly visible in the handling of procurement operations.

He questioned why farmers were facing difficulties such as: Deduction of 4% moisture content, Shortage of gunny bags, Lack of transport lorries, Delay in procurement, Failure

to ensure Minimum Support Price (MSP). He said these issues reflected the inefficiency of the government.

Komaraiah further criticized the state government for not opening procurement centers on time despite the Central Government announcing MSP. As a result, unexpected rains damaged paddy stocks, causing losses to farmers.

"Does the Government Not Value Farmers' Lives?"

Expressing deep concern, Komaraiah said the Congress government had "betrayed not only the public but also farmers."

He said farmers who worked tirelessly throughout the season were now being pushed into

despair because the government failed to purchase their produce. He alleged that farmers were being driven to suicide due to mounting distress and asked: "Even as farmers are dying one after another, does the government not care?"

He termed these suicides as "government murders" and demanded that the government take moral responsibility and provide support to affected families.

"We Will Not Stop Until Every Grain Is Procured"

Komaraiah demanded that the government purchase every grain produced by farmers without imposing conditions.

He said the government should stop making tall claims about establishing record numbers of procurement centers and instead focus on field-level monitoring and speedy procurement operations.

He warned that if the situation does not improve, the BJP would launch a statewide campaign titled: "Rythu Gosa - BJP Bharosa" (Farmers' Distress - BJP Assurance) starting from Monday.

Under this initiative, BJP leaders would visit farmers directly, understand their problems, and continue protesting until the government procures all pending grain, he said.

Cyberabad police tightens nose on drugs network; rs.3.69 cr worth narcotics seized

Hyderabad: The Cyberabad Police intensified its crackdown on narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances under the NDPS Act between April 1 and May 22, 2026, registering 61 cases and arresting

154 accused persons. Police seized drugs worth an estimated Rs.3.69 crore during intelligence-led operations carried out jointly by Cyberabad Enforcement teams and Law & Order Police.

SOUTHERN RAILWAY					
PALAKKAD DIVISION					
Sr. Divisional Engineer / Co-ordination / Southern Railway / Palakkad invites E- TENDERS for the following works.					
E -TENDER NOTICE No. PGT/07/11/2026 dated: 22/05/2026					
Sl No.	Name of work	Approximate Cash value in (₹) lakhs	Bid Security Amount (₹)	Tender closing date on 15.00 hrs	completion Period in months
1	Palakkad Division: Construction of new TRD depot at Palakkad (PGT).	99.33	1,98,700/-	15/06/2026	Ten
2	Removal of vegetation, bushes in midsection along side track in between the tracks, side drain, catch water drain cleaning in Senior Section Engineer / Permanent Way / Calicut section for a period of 2 years.	241.00	4,82,000/-	23/06/2026	Twenty Four
3	Removal of vegetation, bushes in midsection along side track in between the tracks, side drain, catch water drain cleaning in Senior Section Engineer / Permanent Way / Quilandy section for a period of 2 years.	186.32	3,72,600/-	23/06/2026	Twenty Four
4	Removal of vegetation, bushes in midsection along side track in between the tracks, side drain, catch water drain cleaning in Senior Section Engineer / Permanent Way / Kannur section for a period of 2 years.	156.20	3,12,400/-	23/06/2026	Twenty Four
5	Removal of vegetation, bushes in midsection along side track in between the tracks, side drain, catch water drain cleaning in Senior Section Engineer / Permanent Way / Kasaragod section for a period of 2 years.	140.48	2,81,000/-	23/06/2026	Twenty Four
6	Removal of vegetation, bushes in midsection along side track in between the tracks, side drain, catch water drain cleaning in Senior Section Engineer / Permanent Way / Mangalore section for a period of 2 years.	194.70	3,89,400/-	23/06/2026	Twenty Four
7	Assistant Divisional Engineer / Kannur Jurisdiction: Proposed Standardization of LCs & overhauling of LCs for a period of 2 years (location attached separately as annexure).	392.48	7,85,000/-	23/06/2026	Twenty Four
8	Assistant Divisional Engineer / Mangalore Jurisdiction : Proposed Standardization of LCs & overhauling of LCs for a period of 2 years (location attached separately as annexure)	312.15	6,24,300/-	23/06/2026	Twenty Four
9	Palakkad division-Augmentation of existing Track Machine rest houses at Shoranur, Payyanur, Kasaragod & Mangaluru central.	309.78	6,19,600/-	23/06/2026	Twelve

1. All the contracts on Works / goods / services will be subject to the new GST Act as applicable from time to time.
2. Contractors / Suppliers have to register themselves with GST authorities and to furnish the GST registration number in order to process the bills from 01.7.2017 onwards.
3. For complete details of the above tenders please visit Web site "http://www.ireps.gov.in".
Note: It is the responsibility of the Tenderer to check any corrigendum issued for any correction or modifications uploaded subsequently in website; the same shall be taken in to account while submitting Tender.

Sr. Divisional Engineer / Co-ord / Southern Railway / Palakkad (For and on behalf of the President of India)

SOUTHERN RAILWAY			
TENDER NOTICE.No. SR-TVCSnT (TEND) /3/2026/06, Dated: 22.05.2026			
Senior Divisional Signal & Telecommunication Engineer, Southern Railway, Thiruvananthapuram-14 for and on behalf of The President of India invites e-tenders for the following works.			
Sl No.	Tender No.	Name of work	
1	TVC-SNT-SIG-26-27-01	Provision of S&T arrangements in connection with provision of Track Machine Siding at KOLLAM & KAYANKULAM stations and proposed extension of shunting neck at THRISSUR stations of TVC division.	
Sl No.	Cash Value (Approx.) (₹.Ps)	Earnest Money Deposit (₹)	Last Date for Receipt of Tender Completion period
1	25089671.52	501800.00	15.06.2026 up to 15.00 Hrs 09 months.

Complete details & tender document will be available at www.ireps.gov.in
Sr. Divisional Signal & Telecom Engineer/TVC.

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SHORT TAKES

Narsingi police arrest accused in Alkapur Township molestation case



HYDERABAD: Narsingi Police Station has solved a molestation case reported from Alkapur Township and apprehended the accused. According to police, the incident occurred on May 14 at around 1:30 pm when a woman returning after picking up her 2.5-year-old child from a nearby play school was allegedly followed by an unidentified man who behaved indecently by pulling her dress from behind. The accused fled after the victim raised an alarm. A case was registered under Sections 78 and 79 of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS). CCTV footage of the incident later circulated widely on social media. Special police teams launched an investigation and identified the accused as Vadde Nagaraju (26), currently residing in Puppalguda under Gandipet Mandal and originally from Mahabubnagar district. Police said the accused has no prior criminal record or involvement in similar offences. The investigation was supervised by SHO Harikrishna Reddy of Narsingi Police Station.

“We Will Accelerate Tourism Projects Through Private Participation”

- “The Government Will Provide Complete Support for Tourism Development”
- “Come Forward With Proposals... Let Us Complete Projects Together”
- “Permissions Will Be Granted Without Obstacles”
- “Priority for Innovation and Creativity in Tourism Sector”
- Tourism Minister Jupally Krishna Rao at Tourism Conclave



HYDERABAD

Tourism, Culture, and Archaeology Minister Jupally Krishna Rao stated that the Telangana Government aims to transform tourism into a major engine of economic growth and develop Telangana into an international tourism destination. The Minister attended as the chief guest at the prestigious tourism conclave titled “Destination Telangana – Road Ahead”, organized on Saturday at the National Institute of Tourism and Hospitality Management (NITHM), Gachibowli. The conclave was held as part of the closing celebrations of the Tourism Week organized under the State Government’s “99 Days Praja Palana – Pragati Pranalika” initiative.

Addressing the gathering, the Minister said the government would provide complete support for the development of the tourism sector and accelerate tourism projects through private participation. He stated that the government has already introduced a new tourism policy with the objective of transforming Telangana into a global tourism destination.

He called upon industrialists and private organizations to come forward with investments in the tourism sector. The Minister assured that if investors submit proposals along with Detailed Project Reports (DPRs), permissions would be granted without delay.

As part of the government’s “Ease of Doing Business” policy, he said full support and incentives would be provided to entrepreneurs under the new tourism policy. The Minister also announced that the government is ready to allocate underutilized assets on long-term lease for tourism purposes, which would simplify the management of tourism projects. He encouraged interested parties to submit innovative and creative proposals for tourism development.

He further stated that the government would soon issue Expressions of Interest (EOIs) for the development of selected tourism destinations. Under this initiative, the government would bear the costs of project designs and estimated expenditures for selected firms. Focus on Infrastructure and Modern Tourism Facilities The Minister observed that several tourist destinations currently lack even basic amenities such as:

Drinking water, Restrooms, Accommodation facilities, Restaurants. To address these shortcomings, he invited private players to establish modern infrastructure facilities including: Mobile glass houses, Canvas tents, Advanced tourism accommodations. He assured complete government cooperation for such initiatives.

“Tourism Is a Key Economic Driver” Jupally Krishna Rao emphasized that

tourism is not merely a source of entertainment but a crucial sector capable of improving both the state and national economy. He pointed out that several developed small countries rely heavily on tourism for economic growth.

The Minister said promoting and developing tourism is a collective responsibility and noted that growth in the tourism sector would benefit allied industries while generating large-scale employment opportunities for youth. He added that the government is committed to creating infrastructure capable of attracting both domestic and international tourists. As part of these efforts, he mentioned that the government is already focusing on tourism attractions such as the proposed ropeway project at Bhongir Fort.

The event was attended by

Special Chief Secretary for Tourism, Language & Culture Vani Prasad, TGT-DC Chairman Patel Ramesh Reddy, Tourism Director Lakshman Rajinith Naik, NITHM Director Venkataramana, Archaeology Department Director Prof. Arjun Rao, Ramoji Film City Vice President A. Vishwamhar Rao, Experium Park Chairman Ramadugu Ram Dev Rao, Pragati Resorts Chairman GBK Rao, Veda Kumar, Alankrita Resorts MD Aditya Deen Dayal, and several other dignitaries.

Brother - A Friend, Protector, Mentor and God’s Gift

(On the occasion of “National Brother’s Day” on 24 May)

Some bonds don’t need daily calls or endless conversations - they thrive on unspoken loyalty, shared jokes, and a lifetime of memories. Your brother, a silent protector, deserves a day to be celebrated. While we often associate brotherly love with playful teasing and casual insult, the truth is - brothers are one of life’s greatest blessings. They offer fierce loyalty, quiet protection, and a unique brand of unconditional love and support. The word ‘brother’ comes from the Latin root ‘frater’ and the Proto-Germanic word ‘brothar,’ which itself comes from the Proto-Indo-European root ‘bhrater.’ Regardless of origin, both in words and in blood, our brothers have our backs over and over again. They’re our closest friends and, sometimes, the most annoying people we know. But we love them anyway.

National Brother’s Day

Unlike Raksha Bandhan, which is deeply rooted in Indian tradition, National Brother’s Day observed annually on 24 May since 2005, is more of an emotional celebration without specific rituals. It’s a simple reminder to cherish, honour, and strengthen that God-given specific bond. National Brother’s Day was first observed by C. Daniel Rhodes of USA in the early 2000s. The aim of the day is to honour the role of brothers in our day-to-day lives.

It’s a chance to appreciate the brother who’s stood by you in silence, cheered you from behind the screen, or pick you up when you least expected it.

Whether he’s your twin, elder, younger, cousin, or even a chosen brother-like friend, this day is meant for him. Brotherhood is also very strong among men. Whether it is a blood relation or not, men take their ‘bro code’

their unconditional support, strengthen your bond through small but meaningful gestures, and create new memories that go beyond childhood nostalgia.

A little effort, a thoughtful gesture, or even a simple ‘thank you’ can go a long way in reminding your brother just how much he means to you. The significance of National Brother’s Day lies in its



VERY seriously. The theme of National Brother’s Day is “Celebrating the Bond” focuses on strengthening emotional connections, honouring brotherhood and friendships, and appreciating lifelong support.

Brother’s Day Celebrations

With globalisation, digital influence, and the rise of expressive modern families, the tradition has taken root in Indian households too. People from all walks of life are beginning to embrace this heartfelt Brother’s Day celebrations in a various ways. It’s a chance to acknowledge

focus on family, bonding and emotional connection.

Brothers play multiple roles in one’s life-protector, best friend, mentor, rival, and confidant. This day serves as a reminder of the value of sibling relationships and encourages people to cherish the presence of their brothers. Spend quality time together - plan a movie, go on a road trip, or have a gaming session. Surprise your lovable brother with a gift that reflects his interests or a special warmest hug.

- Prof Burra Madhusudan Reddy
994970037.

Youth Sports Festival Conducted to Identify Young Talent



- Grand Closing Ceremony Held at Gachibowli Stadium
- Distribution of Job Appointment Letters, Medals, and Certificates of Appreciation

HYDERABAD

Telangana Sports Authority Chairman Shivasena Reddy stated that the Youth Sports Festival, organized by the State Government as part of the “Praja Palana – Pragati Pranalika” initiative, was a grand success across the state. He said the primary objective of the program was to identify and encourage hidden sporting talent among Telangana’s youth.

The closing ceremony of the Youth Sports Festival was held on Friday at Gachibowli Stadium. Telangana Sports Authority Chairman Shivasena Reddy attended the event as the chief guest along with Telangana Sports Authority Managing Director and Commissioner of Youth Services Dr. A. Soni Bala Devi.

On the occasion

Appointment letters were distributed to youth selected in recent job fairs conducted in Hyderabad.

Medals and trophies were awarded to winners of the Sports Day competitions held on May 21.

Certificates of appreciation were presented to participants who demonstrated talent in various sports, cultural, and youth programs conducted over six days.

Representatives of organizations that participated in the job fairs were also felicitated.

Addressing the gathering, Chairman Shivasena Reddy said:

“Telangana’s soil is filled with talented youth like precious gems. The government’s main objective is to identify such talent and provide opportunities for them. The Praja Palana – Pragati Pranalika initiative is becoming a key platform to guide youth toward sports, employment, and personality development.”

He further stated that, under the directions

of Chief Minister Revanth Reddy, the 99-day-long large-scale initiative had gained special recognition through the Youth Sports Festival. He praised officials and sports department staff across the state for their coordinated efforts, which contributed to the program’s success.

Speaking at the event, Sports Authority MD Dr. Soni Bala Devi said that job fairs were conducted successfully at district headquarters from May 1 to May 11 as per the State Government’s directions. She noted that programs organized daily from May 18 to May 23 with unique themes received enthusiastic participation from youth, athletes, students, and parents.

She explained that departments including

Industries Department, IT Department, District Administration, Sports Authority, and Youth Services Department worked collectively to organize activities related to sports, employment, skill development, and youth awareness.

According to her, the statewide festival played a crucial role in attracting youth toward sports and promoting sporting culture even at the rural level.

The event was attended by

Youth Services Department Joint Director Venugopal, Sports Authority Director Basha, Telangana Olympic Association Secretary Malla Reddy, “DEET” Director Rajeshwar Reddy, TASK CEO Nithin Reddy, along with officials and staff from the Sports Authority, Youth Services Department, and Industries Department. Organizers stated that the program received an overwhelming response from youth, students, and athletes across the state. They added that the initiative played an important role in boosting self-confidence among youth and expanding sports culture to the grassroots level.

Agricultural University Must Provide Modern Technologies to Farmers: Minister Tummala

- “Farmers Should Cultivate Crops That Have Market Demand” – Minister Tummala
- Minister Tummala Inaugurates Agricultural University Seed Festival 2026

HYDERABAD

State Agriculture Minister Shri Tummala Nageswara Rao visited the Professor Jayashankar Telangana Agricultural University (PJTSAU) at Rajendranagar today.

During his visit, the Minister first toured the Center for Digital Agriculture and Technology (C-DAT), established last year, and reviewed research activities related to the use of modern agricultural drones. He noted that labor shortages in agriculture are likely to increase in the future and emphasized the growing importance of drone technology in farming.

The Minister appreciated the university’s development of various drone-based agricultural applications.

He also visited the Robotics and Sensor-Based Laboratory, which was recently developed with support from SBI CSR funds. The Minister praised university scientists for successfully developing robots suitable for use in the agriculture sector.

As part of his visit, he inspected the



RS & GIS Laboratory under C-DAT and learned about the satellite-based statistical data recently provided to the Telangana Government. Officials informed him that nearly 9.3% of the agricultural land under farmers’ ownership in the state is currently not under cultivation.

Seed Festival 2026 Launched

As part of the “99 Days Praja Palana – Pragati Pranalika” initiative, the Minister formally inaugurated the Seed Festival 2026 organized by the Agricultural University.

On the occasion, he distributed high-quality foundation seeds of various crops to ten farmers.

The Minister appreciated the university’s efforts in providing quality seeds directly to farmers. He advised farmers not to fall victim to misleading promises made by certain seed companies and encouraged them to use quality seeds to achieve higher yields at lower costs. “Farmers Must Focus on Market-Oriented Crops”

Tummala Nageswara Rao urged farmers to cultivate crops that have strong market demand and to adopt crop rotation practices.

He observed that the agricultural university, established 60 years ago, has achieved a prominent position in the country with the support of several eminent leaders, including former

Prime Minister Indira Gandhi.

The Minister expressed confidence that under the support of Chief Minister Revanth Reddy, the university would achieve even greater progress in the future.

He instructed university scientists to:

Remain closely connected with farmers, Provide practical solutions to farming challenges, Introduce advanced global agricultural technologies to the farming community.

He stressed that modern technologies should be made accessible to farmers for improving agricultural productivity.

Vice Chancellor’s Remarks

Agricultural University Vice Chancellor Aldas Janayya stated that the seed distribution program was launched last year with the objective of ensuring the supply of quality seeds, which are essential for successful cultivation.

The event was attended by:

Director of Research Dr. Marathi Balaram, Dr. Balaji Naik, Dr. Neelima, Dr. Venkateswarlu, Dr. Jella Sanyanarayana, Dr. Y. Chandramohan, Scientists, farmers, and other participants.

“Tech Team” Set Up at DGP Office

- for Extensive Use of Artificial Intelligence in Policing: DGP C.V. Anand

HYDERABAD

Director General of Police (DGP) C.V. Anand has directed police officials to extensively utilize advanced technologies and Artificial Intelligence (AI) to further strengthen crime investigation, law and order maintenance, and overall policing efficiency in the state.

During a review meeting held in connection with the establishment of a special “Tech Team” at the DGP office, DGP C.V. Anand said that all major technological platforms – including the Telangana Police official website, HawkEye, CCTNS, and HRMS – should be brought under the purview of the DGP office and integrated into a unified system. The meeting was attended by DG (Technical Services) V.V. Srinivasa Rao and other officials.

The DGP announced that this “Tech Team” is being established on a permanent basis within the DGP office to

ensure uninterrupted continuation of technology initiatives irrespective of transfers or changes in officers. He stated that young police personnel with an interest in technology and a willingness to volunteer would be included in the team, enabling them to learn and actively contribute to the development of new AI systems.

He instructed officials to develop a centralized high-speed platform to facilitate rapid integration of additional data layers. He also proposed the formation of a special AI Task Force at the DGP office, similar to “Marvel,” to oversee all AI-related projects undertaken by the police department.

The DGP further directed the development of a unified mobile platform named “TS-COPS,” integrating existing systems such as CCTNS and HRMS. Through this platform, police personnel would be able to access multiple applications through a single mobile interface. Officials were also instructed to prepare a joint action plan for Effective implementation of AI-based platforms like CCTNS 2.0, Creation of data-driven dashboards, and

Expansion of digital monitoring systems.

In addition, he emphasized integrating all offices under the DGP Establishment wing with the “e-Office” system to ensure seamless tracking of file movement. He clarified that technological initiatives should not remain limited to paperwork but must produce practical, field-level results. To ensure completion of these AI-based projects within the stipulated timeframe, the DGP constituted a special “Core Team” comprising five IPS officers. He set a target of making key platforms operational within the next six months.



Responsibilities Assigned to Officers:

Hyderabad Joint Commissioner of Police N. Swetha Development of CCTNS 2.0, Supervision of HRMS, Coordination with the CID department. DIG R. Bhaskaran Integration of AI technologies into the CCTNS project.

DCP (SM & IT) Chennuri Rupesh Oversight of social media, Video analytics, AI-based drone technologies. SP K. Apoorva Rao Data intelligence, Training programs, System designing responsibilities. IPS Officer Avinash Mohanty Monitoring traffic and road safety modules. The review meeting was attended by Hyderabad Joint CP N. Swetha, CI Cell DIG Bhaskaran, SP Apoorva Rao, DCP C.H. Rupesh, and technical staff members.



BY C. SUBRAHMANYAM

The Andhra Pradesh Government's G.O.RT.No. 789 has accidentally achieved something remarkable. It has transformed administrative helplessness into official policy language. The State now openly says temple lands are difficult to protect from encroachments, and therefore the practical solution is to sell them away. One must admire the honesty if not the logic. For decades, governments promised to act as guardians of Hindu religious institutions. Today, the same guardians appear before the public like a defeated landlord hold-

ing auction papers. The issue is no longer just about Sri Pushpagiri Mutt. It is about a government system that cannot protect what it controls, yet insists on continuing that control with full confidence and enormous paperwork. **THE GOVERNMENT HAS DISCOVERED A NEW THEORY OF PROTECTION** Just imagine a police station announcing: "We could not prevent thefts in this locality. Therefore, we have decided to sell the locality." That is roughly the philosophical brilliance behind this GO. Temple lands were encroached. Governments failed to stop encroachments.

Revenue machinery slept peacefully for years. Political intermediaries flourished like monsoon mosquitoes. Files travelled slower than bullock carts. Cases dragged longer than mythological serials. And now comes the majestic administrative conclusion: "Since the land is under encroachment pressure, let us sell it." One must congratulate the State for inventing governance through surrender. **FIRST THE GOVERNMENT FAILS TO PROTECT THE PROPERTY. THEN THE GOVERNMENT PROTECTS THE FAILURE THROUGH A GO.**

THE MOST SECURE THING IN THE STATE IS THE ENCROACHER Today in Andhra Pradesh, the safest long term investment may not be a bank FD. It may be illegal occupation. Because once enough time passes, the encroachment itself becomes an argument for disposal. The logic is fascinating. If a temple owns valuable land: encroach it; complicate it; politicise it; delay recovery; exhaust the administration; and finally the government may decide: "This property has become difficult to manage." What a magnificent reward system. The honest devotee gets sentiment. The encroacher gets leverage. The bureaucracy gets a committee. And the temple gets a condolence note.

THE GOVERNMENT BEHAVES LIKE A DISTRESSED REAL ESTATE BROKER The language used in these matters is always beautiful: "Optimal utilisation." "Better financial management." "Generating stable institutional income." This is how ancient endowed lands quietly become spreadsheet entries. A mutt that survived kings, invasions, famines and colonial rule now faces the modern Indian administrative genius called "asset monetisation." "Encroachment is

no longer treated as a crime. It has become a negotiation tool." **THE STATE WANTS CONTROL WITHOUT RESPONSIBILITY** This is the heart of the contradiction. Governments insist temples must remain under state supervision because: public interest, accountability, proper management, protection of religious assets, etc. Excellent. Then naturally the public asks: "Where exactly is the protection?" If temple lands disappear under your watch, if records become chaotic under your administration, if illegal occupations multiply under your enforcement machinery, then on what moral basis do you continue claiming superior management capability? A trustee who repeatedly loses the property cannot keep introducing himself as an efficient custodian. At some point, the devotees will ask whether the trustee is guarding the tem-

ple or merely guarding the chairmanship. **EVERY GOVERNMENT BLAMES THE PREVIOUS GOVERNMENT** This is another sacred Indian tradition. The present government says: "These problems are..."

TEMPLES ARE TREATED LIKE ORPHANED INSTITUTION
Observe carefully how the State behaves with different categories of institutions. For temples: direct control, audits, approvals, permissions, commissioner sanctions, political supervision. But when it comes to actual land recovery: suddenly the government develops philosophical helplessness. The State becomes weak only while protecting temple assets. During takeover, it is powerful. During revenue collection, it is powerful. During appointment powers, it is powerful. During publicity campaigns, it is powerful. But during encroachment eviction, the mighty State suddenly behaves like a confused tenant searching for old survey maps.

abroad. The only permanent resident in the system is administrative excuse. **THE FD THEORY OF CIVILISATION** The argument says: "Sell land and keep the money in fixed deposits for institutional welfare." Wonderful. Land appreciates historically. Civilisations preserve land permanently. But the modern bureaucratic imagination prefers bank interest. One wonders whether ancient kings who endowed these lands centuries ago imagined that future governments would convert sacred endowments into fixed deposit receipts. If this logic continues, museums may sell sculptures and keep the money in savings accounts because maintenance is difficult.

A GOVERNMENT THAT CANNOT REMOVE ENCROACHMENTS SHOULD NOT SPEAK TOO CONFIDENTLY ABOUT "ASSET MANAGEMENT." **THE REAL ISSUE IS NOT THIS GO** This GO is merely the sim-

ple fever. But, the disease is much older. The real problem is a governance culture where: • encroachments are tolerated, • land records remain weak, • political patronage protects occupations, • enforcement lacks seriousness, • and temple administration becomes excessively bureaucratic. By the time action begins, the original purpose of the endowment is already bleeding slowly. Then comes the final act: auction notification. Very efficient. Like conducting a post-mortem before attempting treatment.

WHEN TRUST COLLAPSES, CONTROL ITSELF COMES UNDER QUESTION The Andhra Pradesh Government may legally defend this GO. Procedures may technically survive scrutiny. But the larger political and moral embarrassment remains impossible to hide. Because the public now sees an uncomfortable reality very clearly: The Government wants permanent authority over temples. But it does not display permanent capacity to protect temple property. And when a guardian repeatedly says, "We could not save the land," people eventually begin asking a dangerous question: "Then why are you still the guardian?"

AP to provide World class health care for all

PUTHALAPATTU (CHITTOOR DISTRICT):

As a move towards make available world class health services to all Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu said that Sanjeevani project aimed at safeguarding public health will be launched statewide from August 15 this year. The Chief Minister attended the Sanjeevani programme held at Yadamarri in Puthalapattu constituency of Chittoor district today and described Sanjeevani as not merely a software platform but a comprehensive digital public health operative system. He said Andhra Pradesh is progressing from "illness to wellness", calling Sanjeevani a Citizen Wellness Mission of state government. The system, he explained, will function on three principles—preventive, predictive, and curative healthcare—with a focus on early detection, disease prevention and timely treatment. The Chief Minister said doctors will continuously monitor individual digital health records through the system. It may be noted that initially Sanjeevani project is launched as a pilot project in Kuppam and implemented across Chittoor district since March. The Chief Minister stated that

Sanjeevani project to be launched statewide from August 15 this year:CM
AP Government to introduce AI-enabled doctor services soon:CM
Andhra Pradesh is progressing from "illness to wellness":CM



the government has initiated measures to conduct 42 medical tests at citizens' doorsteps and provide reports directly. Through the Sanjeevani Project, every aspect of public health will be monitored, including doctor appointments, virtual consultations, and digital health record tracking via the Sanjeevani Card. He also announced that the government is working towards introducing AI-enabled doctor services soon. The Chief Minister noted that many families are suffering financially due to unaffordable medical expenses and said the government introduced innovative projects like Sanjeevani to address these hardships. He reiterated

that the coalition government gives top priority to education and healthcare. He stated that Rs 19,305 crore has been allocated to the health sector in this year's budget and Andhra Pradesh secured the highest health grant of Rs 2,601 crore from the 15th Finance Commission. Under the Universal Health Policy, he said every citizen—regardless of economic background—will receive healthcare benefits worth Rs 2.5 lakh, while treatment costs up to Rs 25 lakh will be covered through NTR Vaidya Seva and the Chief Minister's Relief Fund. The government is also filling vacant posts in government hospitals to ensure better healthcare access

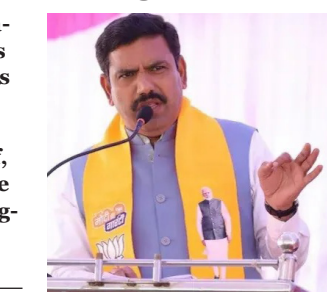
for the poor. Referring to water conservation the Chief Minister stressed the need for environmental conservation and responsible water usage. He said efficient water management has helped the state preserve water resources and improve groundwater levels. He stated that through the Handri-Neeva canal, water has reached the tail-end regions of Rayalaseema. He said government interventions in Annamaya district have improved groundwater levels, contributing to increased greenery and lower temperatures. Referring to the El Niño effect, he noted severe heat conditions and said Piduguralla recorded temperatures as high as 49°C. Given expectations of lower rainfall, he urged people to conserve water. Reaffirming the government's commitment to completing irrigation projects, he said works are progressing according to a published calendar. He announced that Neeva project works will be completed to bring Krishna water through Puthalapattu to Chittoor, symbolically stating that wa-

ter would flow from Srisailem Mallanna to Tirupati Venkana. The Chief Minister added that Galeru-Nagari up to Koduru and Mallemadugu Balaji Reservoir will be completed by December 2028. Somasila-Swarnamukhi Link Canal is targeted for completion by June 2028. Rayalaseema to become a fighter jet manufacturing hub. He said foundation stone has been laid in Puttaparthi for a 5th-generation fighter aircraft manufacturing project, transforming Rayalaseema into a defence manufacturing hub. He highlighted upcoming projects including Google Data Center in Visakhapatnam, drone manufacturing facility in Kurnool, Aerospace, Space City, and Electronic City projects in Anantapur, bullet motorcycle manufacturing unit in Tirupati. He further announced that gold mining operations in Kurnool are expected to begin next month and said the government plans to invest Rs 1 lakh crore in horticulture development in Rayalaseema, including Rs 40,000 crore from government funding and Rs 60,000

crore in private investments. Addressing concerns over rising fuel prices due to conflict in West Asia, he described the situation as temporary. The Chief Minister alleged that the success of the coalition government's Super 5J welfare schemes and development initiatives has unsettled the opposition, which he repeatedly referred to as the "axe party". He said people should carefully distinguish between politics aimed at protecting lives and promoting welfare and politics based on fear and deception. Without naming individuals directly, he accused opposition leaders of repeatedly spreading falsehoods and dramatizing issues before the media. He also stated that he was arrested and jailed without proper notice and said the coalition government restored freedom to all after coming to power. The Chief Minister reiterated that the coalition government is working toward the vision of a "Healthy, Wealthy, Happy Andhra Pradesh." Later, he inspected various stalls set up at the public venue. District in-charge minister Mandipalli Ramprasad Reddy, MP Daggumalla Prasad Rao, MLA Murali, public representatives and large number of people participated.

BJP Karnataka president race: BY Vijayendra emerges frontrunner again

A flurry of consultations, Delhi meetings and caste calculations has pushed the BJP close to naming its next Karnataka chief, with one familiar face emerging as the strongest contender in the final stretch.



OTHER NAMES IN THE RACE Apart from Vijayendra, BJP state General Secretary V Sunil Kumar is also being seen as a contender for the post. Sunil Kumar, who belongs to the OBC community, served as a minister in the previous BJP government in Karnataka. Another prominent name under consideration is Arvind Bellad, a leader from the influential Lingayat community. Bellad belongs to the Panchamasali sect, considered the largest sub-group within the Lingayat community and estimated to account for nearly 60 per cent of the Lingayat population. The caste balance within Karnataka BJP is believed to be a key factor in the leadership decision, especially with the party looking to strengthen its position ahead of future electoral battles in the state. **NITIN NAVEEN TO HOLD KEY MEETINGS** BJP National President Nitin Naveen is scheduled to arrive in Bengaluru on Saturday night and is expected to hold a breakfast meeting with BS Yediyurappa on Sunday morning. He will also attend a core committee meeting of Karnataka BJP office-bearers before returning to Delhi on Monday evening. Sources indicated that the announcement on the Karnataka BJP president could come immediately after Naveen returns to Delhi. **FOCUS ON OTHER STATES TOO** The BJP is also expected to announce state presidents for three other states soon after Karnataka. According to sources, the party's decisions in Harayana and Delhi are likely to be shaped by political calculations linked to the Punjab Assembly elections next year. Party strategists are believed to be weighing appointments that could send a wider political message ahead of the Punjab polls.

The BJP appears close to finalising its Karnataka state president, with incumbent chief BY Vijayendra emerging as the frontrunner after a fresh round of consultations involving senior party leaders and central observers. Efforts to seal the leadership decision gathered pace after BJP central observers Bajajant Jay Panda and Joint General Secretary (Organisation) Shivprakash returned to Delhi following meetings with senior Karnataka leaders. The observers individually consulted around 33 senior state leaders to gather feedback on the leadership issue. Two other leaders, who were expected to participate in the consultations, could not attend as they were abroad. After returning to Delhi on Friday, the observers also met Union Minister Pralhad Joshi, who could not travel to Bengaluru earlier because of a Cabinet meeting in the national capital. The feedback collected from Karnataka leaders has now been submitted to BJP National President Nitin Naveen. **VIJAYENDRA EMERGES AS FRONTRUNNER** According to sources, there is a strong possibility that BY Vijayendra could be handed a second term as Karnataka BJP president. Party insiders said a majority of state leaders backed Vijayendra during interactions with the central observers, pushing his name back to the top of the race. Vijayendra, son of veteran BJP leader and former Karnataka Chief Minister BS Yediyurappa, is currently serving as the party's Karnataka unit chief. His present term is due to end in November this year. As part of the consultation exercise, senior leaders also held discussions with Yediyurappa before preparing the final feedback report.

Ayushman Bharat Rollout in Bengal From July After 7-Year Gap

The BJP government in West Bengal, led by Chief Minister Suwendu Adhikari, announced that Ayushman Bharat cards will be issued from July, nearly seven years after the TMC had withdrawn from the Centre's flagship health scheme. West Bengal Chief Minister Suwendu Adhikari on Saturday announced that Ayushman Bharat health cards will be issued from July, marking the state's return to the Centre's flagship health insurance programme nearly seven years after the then Mamata Banerjee government pulled out of it. The announcement came after a virtual meeting between Adhikari and Union Health Minister JP Nadda. According to Adhikari, around six crore beneficiaries currently covered under the state-run Swasthya Sathi scheme will be brought under Ayushman Bharat. He said the move would extend benefits not only to residents within West Bengal but also to people from the state who are working elsewhere in the country. The Ayushman Bharat scheme was originally launched in West Bengal on September 23, 2018. But the then Trinamool Congress government withdrew from the programme on January 10, 2019, choosing instead to focus on its own Swasthya Sathi health cov-



erage model. A controversy had also erupted with the TMC slamming the Centre over the scheme branding and credit sharing. As part of the renewed health push, Adhikari said the Centre had earmarked a central share of Rs 976 crore for Ayushman Bharat in West Bengal and that funds allocated over the previous two years but not accepted by the previous government would now be reimbursed. The Chief Minister also announced a broader package of health interventions for the state. More than seven lakh vaccine doses will be supplied to West Bengal by the Centre, with the programme scheduled to be launched on May 30 from Bidhannagar Hospital in Kolkata. A campaign aimed at making West Bengal TB-free will also begin, aligning the state with a programme already implemented in several other parts of the country. In another major healthcare expansion measure in West Bengal, a proposal is being sent to the

Centre to set up 468 Pradhan Mantri Jan Aushadhi Kendras (government-owned medical stores providing medicines at highly discounted rates) across the state. Adhikari said these outlets would offer medicines at discounts of 70-80 per cent, reducing out-of-pocket healthcare costs for patients. The state will also focus on improving child health outcomes in seven districts where mortality among children below five years remains high. Recruitment of doctors, nurses and other health personnel is expected to be completed within the next three months, with health coverage targeted to rise from the current 53 per cent to at least 98 per cent. Under the National Health Mission, West Bengal has been allocated Rs 2,103 crore, of which Rs 500 crore has already been released, Adhikari said. During the Assembly election campaign, the BJP had repeatedly accused Mamata Banerjee of obstructing Ayushman Bharat and other central schemes and vowed to implement them if the saffron party came to power. The BJP ended the TMC's 15-year reign in the eastern state, winning 208 of 294 Assembly seats, forming the government for the first time in West Bengal. The TMC suffered huge losses, with its tally dipping to 80.

Living off others' labour

DMK youth wing slams Congress for 'parasitic politics'

The youth wing of the DMK, in a strongly worded resolution, accused the Congress of betraying the party after years of relying on DMK cadre and organisational machinery for electoral success.

The DMK youth wing claimed that even in the recently concluded Assembly polls, Congress won five seats solely because of the efforts of DMK cadre. The youth wing of the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK) on Saturday passed a strongly worded resolution accusing the Indian National Congress of "backstabbing" the party and "living parasitically off the labour of others" after abruptly severing ties after benefiting for years from the Dravidian party's organisational strength and electoral support. The resolution, adopted amid the widening political rift between the two parties in Tamil Nadu, alleged that Congress leaders rose to power and secured electoral victories largely due to the efforts of DMK cadre, only to abandon the alliance overnight after the 2026 Assembly election results, with two Congress MLAs later inducted into the new CM Vijay-led government. "In several past elections, Congress contested as part of the DMK-led alliance and secured many MLAs and MPs. Even though Congress failed to effectively utilise its own cadre for field work, it was DMK



workers who played the key role in Congress victories," the resolution stated. The DMK youth wing claimed that even in the recently concluded Assembly polls, Congress won five seats solely because of the efforts of DMK cadre. It also pointed out that the Congress had secured a Rajya Sabha seat before the elections with the backing of DMK legislators despite its limited independent strength in the state. "After receiving all this support, Congress shifted alliances overnight without even expressing gratitude. Blinded by the desire for power, they failed to uphold even basic political civility," the resolution said. Launching a scathing attack on the Congress leadership, the resolution accused the party of surviving "parasitically off the labour of others" and betraying allies for political convenience. "The betrayal they committed against DMK today will tomorrow be committed against their new allies as well. Congress leaders are like people who drill holes in the very boat in which they travel," it added. The resolution further argued

that Congress ministers were in government only because voters wanted the DMK alliance to form power, and not due to the Congress's own political base. "Yet they behave as though they have created history through their own efforts," it said. The development comes amid a dramatic collapse of the INDIA bloc in Tamil Nadu following Congress's decision to break its 22-year alliance with the DMK and instead support CM Vijay's Tamilaga Vettri Kazhagam to form the new government in the state. The 2026 Tamil Nadu Assembly elections saw TVK emerge as the single largest party with 108 seats, falling short of the 118 needed for a majority in the 234-member Assembly. The DMK suffered a crushing defeat, winning only 59 seats, while party president and outgoing Chief Minister MK Stalin also lost his Kolathur constituency. Sensing a shift in political momentum, Congress, which secured five seats, announced support to Vijay's TVK, saying it wanted to "respect a strong public mandate for change and ensure the formation of a secular government". The move triggered outrage within the DMK, with senior leader TKS Elangovan declaring that the INDIA bloc was effectively finished. "What the BJP did to other states, Congress did to DMK in Tamil Nadu," another DMK resolution stated.

Odisha faces power outages as demand surges amid scorching heat

BHUBANESWAR: (May 23) With reports of power outages pouring in from several districts of Odisha amid the ongoing heatwave conditions, the state government on Saturday said the situation was caused by overloading and rising electricity demand. Deputy Chief Minister K V Singh Deo, who is in charge of the energy depart-

ment, said transformers were burning out due to scorching heat and electrical installations were facing excessive load. "It is seen that transformers are burning out due to scorching heat, and electrical installations have been encountering overloading. We are trying our best to restore power as and when there is an outage," he said.

EDITORIAL

RUBIO VISIT
CAN REIGNITE
AMBITION IN
INDIA-US TIES

The upcoming visit of US Secretary of State Marco Rubio comes at a significant moment for India-US relations. At a time when some analysts believe the partnership has lost momentum amid trade tensions, sanctions concerns and differing approaches toward Pakistan, Rubio's visit offers an opportunity to restore ambition and strategic clarity to ties between the world's two largest democracies. Despite recent irritants, the broader foundation of the relationship remains strong. Shared concerns over China's rise, supply chain vulnerabilities, emerging technologies and Indo-Pacific security continue to bind New Delhi and Washington closer together. Rubio's visit can therefore serve as more than a diplomatic engagement — it can become a signal that both nations remain committed to building a long-term strategic partnership.

US Ambassador Sergio Gor has already played an important role in stabilising ties during a challenging period. A possible Quad foreign ministers' meeting involving India, the US, Japan and Australia could further revive momentum within the grouping, which has remained relatively subdued over the past year. However, both governments must move beyond symbolism and focus on concrete areas of cooperation.

One key sector is critical minerals. India and the US should work together to secure supply chains for minerals essential to semiconductors, defence equipment, electric vehicles and clean energy technologies. Joint investments in mineral-rich countries could help reduce overdependence on China and strengthen economic security for both nations. Technology collaboration is another area with enormous potential. Through initiatives such as TRUST — "Transforming Relationship Utilising Strategic Technology" — India can combine its strengths in digital public infrastructure with America's leadership in artificial intelligence and advanced innovation. Such cooperation would create mutual economic benefits while enhancing technological resilience.

Civil nuclear energy also deserves renewed attention. Recent policy changes in India have opened greater space for American participation in nuclear projects. With the rapid expansion of data centres and AI-driven infrastructure, nuclear power could emerge as a reliable clean-energy solution supporting future digital growth.

Defence cooperation must also become more practical and production-oriented. Past disagreements over fighter aircraft deals have often created frustration on both sides. Instead of revisiting old disputes, India and the US should prioritise joint production of critical defence technologies such as drones, where India's growing private-sector innovation can complement American expertise. The Quad, meanwhile, can expand its role beyond strategic dialogue. Coordinated naval shipbuilding among India, Japan, Australia and the US could help counter China's growing maritime dominance and strengthen Indo-Pacific security cooperation.

Healthcare supply chains present another strategic opportunity. A large share of pharmaceutical precursors still comes from China, exposing vulnerabilities in both countries. Encouraging joint manufacturing and diversified sourcing can improve healthcare security while deepening industrial collaboration. Equally important is the need for stronger economic engagement. Despite decades of expanding ties, India and the US still lack a comprehensive trade framework. Advancing trade negotiations and offering greater policy certainty to investors would strengthen confidence on both sides.

At the same time, India must continue pursuing domestic reforms. Higher investment in research and development, along with reforms in governance, judiciary and business regulations, will be essential if India hopes to remain competitive in an AI-driven global economy. Rubio's visit can therefore become more than a routine diplomatic exercise. If both countries use this opportunity to deepen cooperation in strategic sectors, it will reinforce confidence in the partnership and send a strong global message that India-US relations remain firmly on an ambitious and forward-looking path.



WHEN AUTUMN WAITS AT THE DOOR

When the lamps of memory
Begin to lose their flame,
And our words wander like homeless birds
Across the ruins of the mind—
Do not grow weary of us, child...

For once,
Within the dawn of your broken syllables,
We discovered entire universes of meaning.
When our footsteps slow
Into the sorrowful rhythm of age,
And our trembling hands
Search the walls for balance,
Do not walk ahead in impatience...

Remember—
When your first uncertain step
Quivered upon the earth,
A mother became your bridge of courage,
A father became the ground beneath your fear.

If the price of our medicines
Feels heavier than your ambitions,
Open the forgotten scriptures of your childhood...

There you shall see—
How quietly we buried
Our hungers beneath your happiness,
How gently we strangled
Our own desires
To keep your smallest wishes alive.
Do not abandon our old age
Like rain-soaked furniture
Left in the corner of a darkened house...

A mother carried you
Nine eternal months
By turning pain into prayer,
Blood into breath,
And heartbeat into hymn...
A father carried you
For years beyond counting
Inside his eyes—
Like a pilgrim protecting
The final flame of a sacred temple.
We gave birth
To your life—
Not to your pride...
Seek not in us
The cold arithmetic of inheritance,
But the oceans of love
That learned eternity
By flowing without return.
Child...

Time is a silent sculptor.
The wrinkles upon our faces today
Are merely mirrors
Waiting for your tomorrow.
The frailty in our voices
Is the prophecy of your own winter.



Do not mock
The staff within our trembling hands—
One day,
Time itself may become
The staff beneath your footsteps.
Do not silence
Our fading voices today—
Tomorrow,
That same silence
May sit beside you
Like an uninvited ghost.
And when the final dusk descends,
Let your voice be the last light we hear...
For at the doorway of this world,
It was our voices
That first welcomed you
Into existence.
At the end of all things,
We shall not ask for wealth,
Nor palaces,
Nor garlands of praise...
Only this—
A hand that does not withdraw,
A tear that does not pretend,
A voice that softly whispers,
"Mother... Father..."
Before eternity closes our eyes.
That alone is heaven.
That alone is grace.
That alone becomes
The invisible crown of tears
Worn by every parent
Who loved beyond exhaustion,
Beyond sacrifice,
Beyond themselves...

Dr. Peruka Raju ...
National Poet
7810032847

ECONOMIC HIGHLIGHTS

Rs Nears 100, Inflation Soars
THE ECONOMY STUMBLES!

The rupee has breached Rs 96-a-dollar mark and is now racing towards crossing the psychological Rs 100 barrier, despite repeated efforts to steady its fall. As the dollar surges, markets grow nervous, policymakers scramble for answers, and ordinary Indians brace for rising costs.

Four factors are driving the rupee slide. First, foreign investors are pulling money out. As global funds exit Indian equities and bonds, they sell rupees and buy dollars, increasing demand for the US currency and pushing the rupee lower. It has led to almost over a year-long busting of the stock market.

is around \$ 109 and petrol prices at Bengaluru -Rs107.14/L, Diesel Rs 95.04/L (Delhi- Petrol Rs 98.64/L, Diesel Rs 91.58/L).

FDI, Private Funding & Stats

Former economic adviser Surjit Bhalla has warned that the government's electoral dominance has pushed India into an "economic comfort zone," breeding policy complacency. He points to stalled private investment despite higher public spending, a sharp fall in FDI—from 2.5 percent to 0.8 percent of GDP, and restrictive investment policies, including the scrapping of investment treaties. Bhalla also challenges claims that India is the world's fastest-growing major economy, noting that in per capita dollar GDP growth, countries like Bangladesh and Ethiopia are ahead. His central warning: political dominance may be reducing the urgency for difficult but necessary economic reforms.

India's retail inflation (CPI) has "generally followed a moderating trajectory from 2023 through mid-2026", though recent global energy constraints have caused upticks. Possibly stats don't capture all as the government transitioned to a new CPI series (base year 2024=100) to reflect modern consumption habits, that shows inflation within the RBI tolerance band.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi warned that ongoing global wars, the pandemic, and an energy crisis have created a "decade of disasters". Speaking to the Indian diaspora at The Hague in the Netherlands, he cautioned that if left unchecked, these challenges could reverse decades of progress and push massive global populations back into poverty.

A falling rupee weakens Indian purchasing power by making imports—like crude oil, electronics, pharmaceutical raw materials, fertilisers, construction goods like paints and machinery, transport and food—significantly more expensive. This translates into higher domestic inflation,

increased costs for foreign education and travel, and pressure on household budgets, though it slightly benefits export sectors like IT and pharmaceuticals.

India remains vulnerable because it depends heavily on imports, foreign investment, and a global financial system centred on the dollar. Every time the rupee falls sharply, it exposes that dependence. Its core sectors and manufacturing are not vibrant as individual purchasing power sinks.

The challenge, therefore, is not simply to defend the rupee in moments of stress. It is to build resilience—by reducing imports, strengthening exports, expanding domestic manufacturing, and deepening confidence in India's own economic foundations. The BRICS effort thaws.

Four factors are driving the rupee slide. First, foreign investors are pulling money out. As global funds exit Indian equities and bonds, they sell rupees and buy dollars, increasing demand for the US currency and pushing the rupee lower. It has led to almost over a year-long busting of the stock market.

Second, India's rising oil bill is intensifying pressure. Since India imports over 80 percent of its crude oil and pays in dollars, higher global oil prices mean India needs far more dollars to meet its energy needs, widening the trade deficit.

Alt Energy Myth

And those advocating for alternative energy dependent tech batteries fail to appreciate that electricity storage technique is again imported, far less efficient and lets dollar rise further. In comparative terms batteries increase foreign exchange outgo, dump yards flood with toxic materials and the problems compound. The replacement costs of battery are higher as many government departments which purchased battery cars realise. In four years, batteries deplete critically leading

to faster junking of vehicles, while an ICE vehicle could be functional for about 40 years.

Third, the US dollar itself has strengthened. Higher American interest rates, rising treasury yields, and global uncertainty have made the dollar a preferred safe haven. Finally, policy choices matter. The RBI has at times allowed the rupee to soften rather than aggressively defend it, hoping to preserve export competitiveness and support growth amid economic stress.

RBI Loss? The RBI says it incurred no losses from currency operations in 2024–25, reporting Rs 1.11 lakh crore in forex gains and Rs 97,007 crore in interest income from foreign securities. These earnings helped fund a record Rs 2.69 lakh crore surplus transfer to the government. Even after selling around \$43 billion to defend the rupee, the RBI says its forex interventions boosted both its balance sheet and government finances—though how much of this reflects real gains remains open to debate.

The rupee's fall is not just a market fluctuation; it exposes India's structural dependence on dollar-dominated imports. A weaker rupee raises import costs, fuels inflation, squeezes businesses, and makes overseas education and travel costlier. The real challenge is not merely to defend the rupee, but to reduce vulnerability—through deeper domestic resilience. Until that change, every rise in the dollar will continue to reverberate across India's economy.



SHIVAJI SARKAR

Cracking the Mirror: What the Crackdown on Online Satire Reveals

A mature democracy is not measured by how it rewards flattery, but by how it endures the absurd. Satire has long served as a civic thermometer, revealing where public anger, frustration and disillusionment simmer beneath the surface. In recent months, the heavy-handed response to the viral, Gen Z-driven "Cockroach Janta Party" (CJP) movement has opened a window onto a worrying trend: when a political establishment reacts to parody as if it were sedition, it betrays an insecurity about the

Digital satire's power lies in its capacity to lower barriers to engagement. When conventional civic spaces—party meetings, town halls, mainstream newsrooms—feel impenetrable or performatively hostile to young people, satire becomes an entry point. A parody video is easier to share than a policy paper; a biting joke can crystallise a grievance more accessibly than an op-ed. The humour itself is not incidental. It is a pedagogical device: it packages critique in a form that invites replication, remix and collective improvisation.

thereby clarifies the contours of public frustration. The real target of their satire is not the constitutional order but the everyday failures of governance: runaway inflation, stagnant job markets, and a sense that bureaucratic inertia trumps citizen welfare. To conflate these provoked images with actual threats to public order is to misunderstand both the medium and its audience.

The consequences of this misreading extend beyond individual creators. Criminalising, deplatforming or chilling satire has a

counts as permissible speech, they do so under asymmetric pressures and without the procedural safeguards a democratic society should expect from state actors.

A confident democracy does not panic at a meme. It recognises that political satire, however irreverent or unconventional, functions as a safety valve. Satire reduces pressure in the public sphere by allowing grievances to be voiced in forms that are social and often therapeutic. It also performs an evidentiary role: the popularity of a joke can signal the salience of an underlying issue to demographics that mainstream institutions might otherwise miss. Attempting to "crack" the mirror rather than address the reflection is a failure of political imagination.

If the political establishment genuinely wants to reconnect with younger citizens, the answer is not suppression but engagement. That means acknowledging the legitimacy of unconventional political expression, opening channels for dialogue, and responding to the material complaints that fuel satirical movements. It also means insisting that platform takedowns be governed by transparent rules, narrow definitions and robust appeals processes, so that enforcement cannot be wielded as a blunt instrument of political control.

Ultimately, satire is not a threat to democracy; it is one of its healthiest noises. When institutions respond with disproportionate legal measures and platforms comply without scrutiny, the result is a quieter but more pernicious degradation of public discourse. Democracies that can laugh at themselves demonstrate resilience; those that reflexively silence laughter reveal a fragility that will harden civic divides rather than heal them. If authorities truly seek to reclaim the narrative, they should start by learning to take a joke—and by answering the criticisms that inspired it.

When authorities moved to silence the viral, Gen-Z-led "Cockroach Janta Party" — a satirical performance movement that turns political frustration into memeable parody — they didn't just ban accounts: they exposed a democracy uneasy with the very languages its youngest citizens use to complain.

new languages of dissent being invented online.

At first glance, the CJP looks like the kind of internet subculture easy to dismiss. It mobilises insect imagery, exaggerated political manifestos and performance-art livestreams that riff on tropes of corruption and incompetence. Its aesthetic is absurdist and meme-native: puppet politicians who promise implausible fixes, mock rallies, and satirical policy briefs that lampoon everyday governance failures. To many older observers, this is mere noise—juvenile, unserious and bereft of the decorum traditionally associated with political protest. But that judgment misses the point. Underneath the irony is a sophisticated form of political commentary, tailor-made for a generation raised on short videos, remix culture and participatory networks. The CJP is not aiming to field candidates; it is teaching millions of first-time voters to recognise patterns of broken promises, rising costs and bureaucratic neglect, and to translate frustration into a shared, culturally intelligible critique.

Young creators iterate on symbols, spread them across platforms, and in the process produce a vernacular critique that speaks directly to their peers.

The state's response to CJP has been blunt and uncompromising. Authorities have invoked sweeping digital governance provisions, labelled content "misinformation," and pressed platforms to suspend accounts. Platforms, in turn, have executed takedowns with little public explanation or transparent recourse. This combination of legal muscle and platform compliance reads less like a calibrated response to genuine harm and more like a reflexive attempt to police a language the establishment does not control.

Treating performance art as a literal threat to national stability is a category error. The movement's symbolism—its insect rallies, satirical manifestos and deliberately grotesque caricatures—operates in the register of allegory. Participants are not trying to overthrow institutions; they are holding up a funhouse mirror that distorts and

cumulative effect: it narrows the range of cultural practices through which political critique is produced and circulated. For a generation already skeptical of institutional transparency and frustrated by barriers to participation, being told that dissent—even in jest—could invite legal consequences is disempowering. The chilling effect is not merely the loss of a few viral accounts; it is the erosion of a civic apprenticeship that teaches young people how to translate grievance into public conversation.

Equally troubling is how readily platforms acceded to takedown demands. Major social media companies operate according to a mix of commercial incentives and compliance pressures. When governments issue broad, vaguely worded directives about "misinformation" or "public order," platforms often respond by removing content preemptively to avoid legal risk. That logic privileges risk avoidance over the protection of expression. It also exposes a structural flaw in our digital public square: when private companies become arbiters of what

Gurugram Fraudster Held for Mortgaging, Selling Rented Luxury Cars

GURUGRAM: (MAY 23)

The Gurugram Police on Saturday said it has busted a gang that allegedly defrauded a person by mortgaging and selling his luxury vehicles after acquiring them on the pretext of renting them out for weddings and events. The alleged mastermind, Krishna Dixit (23) -- a resident Uttar Pradesh's Mainpuri district -- has been arrested in this connection, an official said. Earlier, police had arrested another suspect associated with the gang, and recovered a Fortuner from his possession, he added.



Yogi Adityanath directs strengthening of weather warning systems across UP

LUCKNOW: (MAY 23)

Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath has directed officials to make the weather warning systems in the state more accurate, faster and people-centric. Chairing a review of the relief and disaster management department here on Saturday, Adityanath emphasised that timely and accurate information during natural disasters can save many lives, an official statement said. "Arrangements should be ensured, so that weather forecasting and warning systems are not limited only to technical mechanisms but effectively reach the last person," he said, directing officials to strengthen last-mile reach of weather alerts.

Women's Voice Against Militarism and Nuclear Armament

Women have been at the forefront of peace and disarmament initiatives in history. Even though women are working for peace, they rarely get the deserved focus and attention. For generations, the women were allowed to play in armed conflict was that of the grieving women left behind, while their sons, husbands, brothers went off to war. To bring significant change in women's role in the conflicts, "International Women's Day for Peace and Disarmament" is observed annually on 24 May. It's a day to celebrate women's voices for a world free from the threat of nuclear arms. Let's celebrate diplomacy, human decency, and a violence-free, peaceful future. It's also to spread awareness of the terror of nuclear weapons.

History of International Women's Day for Peace and Disarmament:

A group of pro-pacifist feminists from Europe in 1980s decided to lend their voice to the already loud cries demanding nuclear disarmament and military forces around the globe. In 1985, the total number of active nuclear warheads, globally, was approximately 62,000. To bring in-depth awareness, International Women's Day for Peace and Disarmament was established and celebrated all over the globe. The pacifist feminist, women-led movements and

India flags off first indigenous 300-km Suryastra rocket system in Maharashtra

India's push towards next-generation warfare gathered pace in Maharashtra as the country flagged off its first 300-km rocket launch system alongside a sweeping defence manufacturing expansion led by the private sector.



India on Saturday flagged off its first indigenous 300-km Universal Rocket Launching System "Suryastra" in Maharashtra, with Defence Minister Rajnath Singh calling it a "strategic game-changer" that would significantly strengthen the country's future warfare capabilities. The long-range rocket system was unveiled during the inauguration of a private-sector Defence Manufacturing Complex developed by the NIBE Group in Shirdi. Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis was also present at the event. Along with flagging off the Suryastra system, Rajnath Singh laid the foundation stone for a missile complex linked to the project. "Powered by indigenous technology, this rocket system will multiply our strike capability manifold and prove to be a

strategic game-changer," the Defence Minister said. The newly inaugurated complex will manufacture advanced artillery systems, missile and space technologies, rocket systems, energetic materials and autonomous defence platforms. "Future wars will be decided by technology," he added. Rajnath Singh said modern conflicts were increasingly being shaped by automation, precision weapons and advanced military technologies rather than sheer troop numbers. "The outcome of future wars will be determined by the nation's advancements and capabilities in munitions

'FUTURE WARS WILL BE DECIDED BY TECHNOLOGY'

and automation, and not by the size of its forces," he said. Referring to the Russia-Ukraine conflict and tensions in West Asia, he said global wars were already showing how technology-driven warfare was reshaping military strategy. "India demonstrated this capability during Operation Sindoor," he added. The Defence Minister urged all stakeholders to work towards transforming India into a global hub for munitions and automated defence systems. "We stand ready to take every necessary step to ensure that India emerges as a frontrunner in munitions and automated systems," he said. PRIVATE SECTOR DE-

FENCE PUSH

Rajnath Singh said India's defence manufacturing ecosystem had changed dramatically over the past decade after the sector was opened to private industry. "There was a time when private sector contribution in defence production was negligible. It has now reached approximately 25-30 per cent," he said. "Our objective is to take this figure to 50 per cent in the coming years."

He added that Indian private companies were now emerging as manufacturers of sophisticated weapon systems instead of remaining component suppliers. "This is the New India where the private industry is not merely a supplier of nuts and bolts, but is emerging as the innovator and manufacturer of state-of-the-art weapon systems," he said.

NEW TECHNOLOGIES UNVEILED

The event also saw the unveiling of indigenous TNT Plant Technology, RDX Plant Technology and a Renewable Bio-Energy Compressed Biogas Plant. An agreement was also exchanged between the NIBE Group and Black Sky

for cooperation in satellite assembly technologies.

Rajnath Singh said the newly inaugurated plants were expected to emerge as research-driven hubs that would strengthen India's defence production ecosystem while supporting MSMEs and local industries. "The production of ammunition, missiles, rocket systems and satellite components will engage ancillary units, suppliers and vendors. It will generate employment and empower the youth of this region with cutting-edge technological skill sets," he said.

FADNAVIS PRAISES AATMANIRBHAR PUSH

Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis praised the Centre's push for self-reliance in defence manufacturing under the Aatmanirbhar Bharat and Make in India programmes.

He described Operation Sindoor as proof of both the bravery of Indian soldiers and the country's growing indigenous defence capability.

Fadnavis said India's defence ecosystem had transformed because of the increasing participation of both public and private sectors.



NFR successfully Hosts Rozgar Mela Programmes at Guwahati, Dimapur and Siliguri

MALIGAON, 23 MAY, 2026:

Northeast Frontier Railway (NFR) successfully organised Rozgar Melas at Guwahati, Dimapur and Siliguri on 23rd May, 2026 as part of the Government of India's flagship nationwide employment initiative. These events, aligned with the Hon'ble Prime Minister's commitment towards employment generation and youth empowerment, marked another significant step in providing meaningful career opportunities to newly recruited candidates selected for various Central Government departments.

In a major initiative towards large-scale employment generation, Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi participated in the Rozgar Mela programme through video conferencing at 11:00 AM and addressed the newly appointed candidates on the occasion. During the programme, more than 51,000 appointment letters were distributed to selected candidates across the country. Addressing the appointees, the Prime Minister encouraged the youth to dedicate themselves towards nation building and public service while highlighting the Government's continuous efforts towards transparent, merit based and technology driven recruitment processes.

This edition of the Rozgar Mela was simultaneously conducted at 47 locations across India, including three venues under the jurisdiction of NFR. Around 400 participants attended physically at each venue, including nearly 200 newly recruited candidates. Appointment letters were formally handed over to selected candidates by the dignitaries present during the programme. The initiative further reflects the Government of India's continued emphasis on employment generation, streamlined recruitment and empowering the youth through meaningful opportunities in public service. At Guwahati, the Rozgar Mela was organised at Rang Bhawan Auditori-

um, N.F. Railway Headquarters, Maligaon in the august presence of Shri Sarbananda Sonowal, Hon'ble Union Cabinet Minister for Ports, Shipping & Waterways and Smt. Bijuli Kalita Medhi, Hon'ble Member of Parliament (Lok Sabha). Senior railway officials led by Shri Veer Bhadra Vishwakarma, Additional General Manager of NFR along with other dignitaries were also present during the programme. The dignitaries handed over appointment letters to newly appointed candidates and congratulated them on joining government service. Similarly, the Dimapur programme was held at Town Hall, Dimapur in the presence of Shri Pabitra Margherita, Hon'ble Minister of State for External Affairs & Textiles, along with senior officials and invited dignitaries. Appointment letters were distributed to selected candidates during the programme. The Siliguri programme was organised at Officer's Club, Kashmir Colony, New Jalpaiguri (West Bengal) in the presence of Shri Kamlesh Paswan, Hon'ble Minister of State for Rural Development, Hon'ble Member of Parliament from Jalpaiguri, Dr. Jayanta Kumar Roy, along with Hon'ble local MLAs were also present on the occasion. The programme witnessed enthusiastic participation of newly recruited candidates and officials from various departments. The appointments covered various Ministries and Departments of the Government of India including the Ministry of Railways, Ministry of Home Affairs, Department of Posts, Department of Financial Services, Ministry of Health & Family Welfare and several other departments.

The Rozgar Mela initiative continues to serve as a vital platform for connecting youth with secure and impactful careers in government service. NFR remains steadfast in its commitment towards supporting national development and youth empowerment through such inclusive employment-oriented initiatives.

Centre treating RBI like personal treasury while states denied due share: AAP

Punjab Finance Minister and AAP leader Harpal Singh Cheema on Saturday accused the BJP-led Centre of treating the RBI as its "personal treasury" after the record Rs 2.87 lakh crore dividend transfer, alleging states were being denied their rightful share.

His remarks came a day after the RBI announced a record surplus transfer of Rs 2.87 lakh crore to the Centre for the year ended March 2026, providing a major fiscal boost amid rising import costs and supply-chain disruptions linked to the Middle East war. Cheema claimed that since 2014, the Centre had drawn nearly Rs 14.29 lakh crore from the RBI, with more than half of that amount transferred in the last three years alone. "The financial structure of the country is

based on federalism. Every Indian contributes to the economy, and every state contributes to national growth and revenue generation. Then, why are states denied their rightful share of such extraordinary gains? The rights of the states must be protected, and the Central Government should not deprive states of their rightful share," Cheema said in a video statement.

He argued that RBI surpluses are generated through economic activity across states and should not remain entirely centralised. Highlighting the rise in annual transfers, Cheema pointed out that the RBI transferred Rs 2.10 lakh crore in 2023-24, Rs 2.68 lakh crore in 2024-25 and now nearly Rs 2.87 lakh crore in 2025-26, with the last three years accounting for more than 53 per cent of all transfers since 2014. "The scale and frequency of these transfers are unprecedented.



Earlier, such extraordinary withdrawals from RBI reserves were seen only during exceptional circumstances or periods of major financial stress. But now, continuous extraction of RBI surplus has become the norm. This raises serious questions about fiscal management and the long-term institutional strength of the central bank," he said. Calling the issue a challenge to cooperative federalism, Cheema said states were facing the same global uncertainties and supply shocks as

the Centre while also carrying welfare obligations, inflation pressures and rising expenditure. "Federalism cannot mean that states bear the burden while the Centre keeps the entire RBI windfall. Extraordinary gains of this nature should be brought into the divisible pool and shared fairly with all states," he said. Cheema also questioned the Centre's broader economic management, alleging that despite repeated transfers from the RBI, people continued to face high fuel and LPG prices and inflation.

"The economic crisis of the nation is before the country today. Withdrawal of Rs 2.87 lakh crore out of the collection from all states is very dangerous. The BJP is trying to dismantle the federal structure of the country. PM Modi and the BJP should clear their stand on the economic system of the country. It seems that the economic system of

the country is getting ruined gradually," he said. Expressing concern over the RBI's financial strength, Cheema said reducing the fiscal deficit should not come at the cost of weakening the central bank's reserves and policy flexibility.

"The RBI serves as the nation's economic shock absorber and monetary stabiliser during periods of crisis. Excessive extraction of reserves may weaken the long-term resilience and economic immunity of the country," he added. Urging the RBI leadership to protect the institution's autonomy, Cheema said, "India cannot aspire to build a strong and resilient economy with a weakened central bank and financially constrained states."

He also called on PM Modi to explain the state of the economy and address concerns over inflation and rising fuel prices despite repeated financial transfers from the RBI.

Community Farm Tanks to Ensure Irrigation Water Reaches Every Field

Micro-Irrigation to be Implemented- Chief Minister

CHANDIGARH, MAY 23

Haryana Chief Minister Sh. Nayab Singh Saini said that the State Government is committed to ensuring adequate irrigation water reaches every field. For this purpose, the Irrigation Department should form farmer groups and construct community tanks for every 10 acres or more of agricultural land. These tanks will be filled with canal water, and irrigation will be carried out through micro-irrigation systems. The Government will provide 85 per cent subsidy for the construction of such tanks, said Sh. Nayab Singh Saini. The Chief Minister said this while chairing a review meeting of the Irrigation and Water Resources Department's five-year action plan under Haryana Vision-2047 held at the Civil Secretariat on Saturday. He said that the department must move beyond traditional irrigation systems and, in line with the concept of "Per Drop - More Crop" of Prime Minister Sh. Narendra Modi, the department must prepare future-ready plans aligned with developed countries that efficiently manage limited water resources, in order to achieve the goals of Viksit Bharat-2047. He said that despite limited water resources, their optimum utilisation is possible, and departmental schemes must be visible on the ground. He directed that farmers



Haryana Chief Minister, Sh. Nayab Singh Saini presiding over the review meeting of Haryana Vision 2047 Action Plans, at Chandigarh on May 23, 2026.

be made aware to reduce open-field irrigation practices. The cost of irrigation for farmers will be minimized, and under the new system, farmers will not need to install tube wells for irrigation. The Chief Minister directed that this initiative should initially be implemented in nine districts namely Bhiwani, Charkhi Dadri, Gurugram, Mahendragarh, Nuh, Rewari, Hisar, Jhajjar and Sirsa where farmer groups will be formed and community tanks constructed for land holdings of 10 acres or more, with 85 per cent government subsidy. He said that water will be supplied to these tanks through canal pipelines, and solar panels will be installed on them. The Chief Minister said that drip and sprinkler irrigation systems will be implemented in the connected fields, enabling farmers to irrigate crops as per requirement. This will eliminate the need for tubewells and reduce dependence on electricity and water availability. Open-field irrigation will be discontinued, enabling more area

to be irrigated with less water. He said that micro-irrigation systems should be introduced in sugarcane and cotton crops from this year, said Sh. Nayab Singh Saini. The Chief Minister said that the Irrigation Department may initiate tenders this year to convert entire village agricultural land into micro-irrigation systems in the selected nine districts, involving modern agri-technology companies. This will enable farmers to receive irrigation water in a smart and efficient manner without additional expenditure, he said. The Chief Minister further directed the Principal Secretary, Department of Future, Smt. Annet P. Kumar, to study irrigation technologies used in developed countries such as Israel and assist in modernising irrigation systems in the State. The Chief Minister further said that a comprehensive plan should be prepared for repair, renovation, and strengthening of all canals in the State, with fixed timelines, and regular progress reports should be submitted. He said that month-

ly reviews will be conducted to assess water savings and farmer benefits. Additional Chief Secretary, Irrigation & Water Resources Department, Sh. Anurag Agarwal informed that there is a shortage of technically skilled manpower in the micro-irrigation sector. In response, the Chief Minister directed that a new micro-irrigation trade be introduced in all Industrial Training Institutes (ITIs) of the State from this year to develop skilled manpower and provide employment opportunities to youth. The Chief Minister also directed joint awareness campaigns by the Irrigation and Agriculture Departments to encourage farmers to adopt micro-irrigation and reduce dependence on tubewells, while promoting government subsidy schemes. He further emphasized maximum use of treated wastewater for agricultural irrigation and issued comprehensive directions regarding water management. Chief Principal Secretary to Chief Minister, Sh. Rajesh Khullar, Chief Secretary, Sh. Anurag Rastogi, Principal Secretary to Chief Minister, Sh. Arun Gupta, Principal Secretary, Department of Future Smt. Annet P. Kumar, Commissioner & Secretary, Energy Department, Smt. Ashima Brar, OSD to the Chief Minister, Dr. Raj Nehru and other senior officers also remained present during the meeting.



PWF Disburses Rs 1.40 Lakh in Medical Assistance Under MFA Scheme

Imphal, 23 May 2026 : The Paomee Welfare Foundation (PWF), a trust of the All Manipur Working Journalists' Union (AMWJU), has disbursed a total of Rs 1.40 lakh under its Medical Financial Assistance (MFA) scheme for Phase II of 2025-26. The assistance covers treatment expenses incurred between October 1, 2025, and March 31, 2026. Seven applications were received during the period. Following scrutiny by its Medical Board, headed by Dr Kh. Palin, MD, Shija Hospital, and Dr Kh. Lokeshwor Singh, Superintendent, JNIMS, and approval by the Board of Trustees, financial assistance was extended to all seven beneficiaries. The distribution ceremony

was held at the Manipur Press Club on Saturday in the presence of PWF Chairperson N. Tombiraj, AMWJU President Asem Bhakta, PWF Secretary Borun Thokchom, and other executive members.

Beneficiaries:

- Senior journalist Salam Bharat Bhusan received Rs 50,000 for treatment of prostate carcinoma.
- Ningthoujam Amuba of ISTV was granted Rs 25,000 for treatment of left temporo-parietal haemorrhage.
- Angom Ranjit Singh of Poknapham received Rs 20,000 for treatment of malignant neoplasm.
- Kojiam Suraj of Pandam was provided Rs 10,000 for his son's pneumonia treatment.

India plays an 'important role', at cornerstone of US approach to Indo-Pacific: Rubio

NEW DELHI

Asserting that India-US partnership continues to deepen, US Secretary of State Marco Rubio on Saturday said that relationship with New Delhi remains at the cornerstone of Washington's approach to the Indo-Pacific and both countries will have some "exciting and new announcements" to make about the development and the strengthening of the relationship in the coming months.

Addressing the gathering before inaugurating the US Embassy's Support Annex building in New Delhi, Rubio spotlighted the "important role" India plays in the US approach to the Indo-Pacific.

"It is a sign of our commitment to this important relationship between the United States and India. This relationship between our two countries

is at the cornerstone of our approach to the Indo-Pacific," said Rubio.

Rubio recalled that the first major discussions he held after being sworn in as the US Secretary of State in January 2025 were during the Quad Foreign Ministers' Meeting in Washington DC, a grouping that also includes India.

External Affairs Minister (EAM) S Jaishankar and Rubio had also met shortly after the Quad meeting, which was the first foreign policy engagement, not only for Rubio but also for the Trump administration in its second term.

"A lot of people aren't aware of this, but I was sworn in as Secretary of State on Tuesday, or Wednesday, it was a Tuesday after the inauguration. Within the hour, I was at the State Department, spoke briefly, as is tradition, in the lobby of that building to our staff. And then



went immediately upstairs to the eighth floor. And my first meeting, my very first meeting officially as Secretary of State, was a meeting of the Quad. And we were going to renew that. We did it again last year in

a second, in a different setting, and we chose to do it here," Rubio said on Saturday.

"We wanted to do it here, not just because of our commitment to that structure of work, but also as a tangible

sign of what an important role India plays in the United States and in our posture and in our approach to the Indo-Pacific," he asserted. He highlighted that "personal relationship" between Prime Minister Nar-

endra Modi and US President Donald Trump continues to solidify the India-US ties.

"Anchoring that is the relationship between the President and the Prime Minister. It's a personal relationship that

dates back to the first administration, when the President had a chance to visit here. And it has carried over into this second administration, and you can just see the connection between them. And I think that's incredibly important. It is. The connection between leaders is incredibly important. These are two very serious leaders that are focused not just on the short term, but on the long term," he said.

The US Secretary of State asserted that the partnership between Washington and New Delhi has deepened "in ways that don't often make headlines or aren't splashy", but are important and real and tangible and enduring.

"We've expanded commercial ties now with more than \$20 billion in investments, \$20 billion in investments from Indian companies in the United States. We've deepened

a security partnership through military exercises in the Indo-Pacific. And of course, as part of that, we recognise that an orderly and a secure consular system is vital to solidifying this important relationship. That's why we're introducing a new America First visa scheduling tool that prioritises business professionals that strengthen these ties," Rubio stated.

He ended his remarks by reiterating that the partnership between US and India remains an "incredibly important" one.

"It's the reason why I'm here on this visit to reaffirm those ties, to build upon them. And we think in the months ahead, we're going to have even more exciting and new announcements to make about the development and the strengthening of the relationship between the two countries," remarked Rubio.



Pakistan's bid for Muslim world leadership under strain amid economic and political crisis: Report

LISBON

Pakistan's government and media have attempted to project the country as a link between the Muslim world and the West, alongside renewed aspirations to position itself as a leading voice of the global Muslim community. Yet serious doubts remain about how far a state marked by economic underdevelopment, governance challenges, and strained public welfare systems can effectively claim such leadership.

"Pakistan is at one of its toughest economic crisis in recent years. The country has been relying on IMF bailout loans time and again to keep its economy afloat. Foreign currency reserves have dipped to alarmingly low levels at various points, the price of essential commodities is skyrocketing, and energy supply is still an issue in daily life. The high cost of electricity, joblessness and the drop in buying power have led to a lot of frustration among millions," a report in the Lisbon Post detailed.

"Life is in itself a struggle for many in Pakistan. Middle-class families are cutting spending,

small businesses are closing down, and young graduates are looking for work overseas. However, the politics in Islamabad seem to be more preoccupied with their own grandiose geopolitical agenda and symbolic aura in the Muslim world rather than with their internal problems," it added.

According to the report, Pakistan seeks recognition as a peacemaker and a contributing force within the Muslim world in the international arena. However, it continues to face serious criticism over democratic backsliding, restrictions on press freedom, political polarisation, and human rights concerns, with enforced disappearances and state repression remaining persistent issues, particularly in Balochistan province. "How can a nation be called a leader of others when it doesn't lead itself well? How can a nation be called a leader of other nations if it can't be a leader of itself in the areas of stability, economic security, and equal rights? While symbolic diplomacy can serve as an aid to support strong institutions, economic resilience and public trust, it cannot substitute for it," the report noted.

Pakistan's new land route corridor plan sparks concerns over alienation of Balochistan: Report

ISLAMABAD

The Balochistan province of Pakistan has long occupied a "paradoxical place" in the national imagination, often described as remote when its people demand rights but treated as central when strategic interests come into focus. It is frequently neglected in discussions on basic services and political autonomy, yet it becomes indispensable in debates on Gwadar port, the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) and regional connectivity.

"Pakistan's decision to open six land routes to Iran is being presented by Islamabad as a technical trade measure. In reality, it is much more than that. It is a geopolitical manoeuvre built almost entirely on the back of Balochistan — a province the Pakistani state has long treated less as a homeland of the Baloch people and more as a corridor, a military zone, a resource base, and a bargaining chip. On April 25, 2026, Pakistan's Ministry of Commerce issued the Transit of Goods through Territory of Pakistan Order 2026, bringing it



into immediate effect," a report in 'Stringer Asia' detailed.

"The order formalises the movement of third-country cargo goods not originating in Pakistan — from Pakistani ports to Iran by road. The timing is crucial. With maritime routes under pressure because of regional tensions and restrictions around the Strait of Hormuz, Pakistan has opened a land-based alternative that allows cargo destined for Iran to move through its territory. But the map tells the real story. Every significant route runs through Balochistan," it added.

According to the report, while Islamabad views it as strategic geography, the Baloch people consider it yet another example of their land being used without their consent. It added that there is no clear evidence that the people of Balochistan were included as stakeholders in this decision.

"The corridors pass through their land, expose their towns and roads to greater militarisation, increase the value of infrastructure already viewed by many locals as extractive, and create new security risks. But the benefits will likely flow upward — to Islamabad, the mil-

itary establishment, transport contractors, customs networks, politically connected business groups and external actors. The burdens will remain local," the report noted.

It highlighted that the land routes in Balochistan must be understood not only as trade corridors but also as "instruments of control", warning that no corridor can remain stable if the people living along it perceive it as "another form of occupation". The Pakistani authorities, the report said, usually respond to security challenges with force, increasing convoys, checkpoints, paramilitary deployments, intelligence operations and road security measures.

"But security imposed from above does not create legitimacy. It may protect a convoy for a day, but it cannot turn an alienated population into willing partners. In fact, each new layer of militarisation risks reinforcing the Baloch perception that their homeland is being transformed into a guarded passageway for others," the report stated, highlighting deep governance failures and growing political alienation in Balochistan.

Death toll from Starobilsk college drone strike rises to 18

MOSCOW

The death toll from the attack on a dormitory in Starobilsk in Russia's Luhansk region, has risen to 18 with more bodies being found in the rubble, local media reported. There may be three more children under the rubble, the press service of Russia's Ministry of Emergency Situations stated.

"The bodies of two more people were recovered from the

rubble. This brings the total to 60 injured, 18 of whom died," Russia's Tass news agency quoted a ministry official as saying. Russian President Vladimir Putin had on Friday condemned the Ukrainian attack on the Starobilsk college.

According to the Russian Investigative Committee spokesperson Svetlana Petrenko, the college was targeted by the Ukrainian Armed Forces with

four fixed-wing UAVs. 86 children aged 14 to 18 were present in the premises when the attack happened.

The United Nations has also condemned the attack with

Stephane Dujarric, the UN Secretary-General's spokesman, saying: "We strongly condemn any attacks on civilians and civilian infrastructure, wherever they occur. Regarding Ukraine, I would like to note that we are

following with concern reports of the overnight shelling of a college building and dormitory in the city of Starobilsk ..., which resulted in the death and injury of numerous people, including children."

Attacks like this are prohibited by international humanitarian law. "We urge all parties concerned to refrain from any actions that could further escalate an already dangerous situation," Dujarric added.

Pakistani forces kill another civilian in Balochistan amid rising atrocities



QUETTA

Yet another civilian has been extrajudicially killed in Balochistan by Pakistani forces, a leading human rights organisation alleged on Saturday.

This latest incident comes against the backdrop of a growing wave of extrajudicial killings and enforced disappearances across the province.

Human rights body Baloch Yakjehti Committee (BYC) mentioned that 27-year-old shopkeeper Mehran Baloch was shot dead in broad daylight by Pakistan-backed death squads on May 21 while leaving his shop

in the Surap Bazaar area in the Kech district.

Condemning the brutal killing, the BYC said, "Despite the presence of checkpoints and heavy military surveillance, Baloch civilians are continuously being targeted, while criminal networks and drug traffickers move freely without fear. During the days of Eid, instead of celebrations, many Baloch families are receiving the dead bodies of their sons. Fear, sorrow, and silence have spread across the region as more families lose their loved ones."

The rights body called on international human rights or-

ganisations, the United Nations, and the global community to urgently take notice of the worsening human rights situation in Balochistan. "Whenever Baloch voices speak out against oppression, enforced disappearances, and killings, they are met not with justice, but with arrests, harassment, and further repression," it added.

Meanwhile, Sabiha Baloch, the central leader of the BYC, on Saturday sharply criticised the violent raid on the residence of Zareef Baloch, who was extrajudicially killed by Pakistani forces last year, calling it a continuation of state

repression against Baloch families. "Security forces entered the house at night, confiscated women's belongings, damaged household property, and terrorised family members already grieving the loss of their loved one. The targeting of families after custodial killings has become a recurring reality in Balochistan, creating fear and insecurity within entire communities," Sabiha wrote on X.

Zareef Baloch was forcibly disappeared on December 26, while his tortured and mutilated body was abandoned near a neighbouring house the following day. "His body bore signs of severe torture, including burns inflicted on his tongue, constituting torture and cruel, inhuman treatment prohibited under international law," Sabiha stated. The BYC leader said that the continued harassment of families after the killing of their relatives reflects the absence of accountability and weak protection of basic human rights.

"Raids on civilian homes, humiliation of women, confiscation of personal belongings, and intimidation of traumatised families are violations of fundamental human dignity and justice," Sabiha said, slamming the Pakistani forces.

India emerges as key maritime power shaping security in Indo-Pacific region: Report

TOKYO

India's expanding maritime outreach, including its 'Necklace of Diamonds' counter-strategy, logistics agreements with Australia, France and Japan, coastal surveillance networks, naval base arrangements in Seychelles and BrahMos missile sales to the Philippines beginning in 2024 signals the most "proximate and credible structural pushback" to Chinese maritime assertiveness in the Indo-Pacific region.

No other Quad members possess India's geographic and strategic positioning to perform this role, a report has mentioned.

"China's 'String of Pearls' strategy is, at its operational core, a strategy directed at India. The network of Chinese-funded ports at Gwadar in Pakistan, Hambantota in Sri Lanka, Kyaukpyu in Myanmar, and Chittagong in Bangladesh encircles India's maritime perimeter. Since 2008, Beijing has sent more than 45 naval missions to the Indian Ocean Region, and China now operates at least 13 ports across it," a report in Japan Forward detailed.

According to the report, the Western discourse on the Free and Open Indo-Pacific (FOIP) often overlooks a key point — In-



dia entered the framework not merely as a junior partner absorbing an external doctrine.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi articulated SAGAR (Security and Growth for All in the Region) in March 2015 from Port Louis in Mauritius, two years before the United States formally adopted the FOIP framework.

"The doctrine prioritises trust, respect for international maritime norms, peaceful dispute resolution, and cooperative security in the Indian Ocean. It was, in essence, India's own rules-based order doctrine, rooted in its immediate strategic neighbourhood," the report

highlighted. "Over the decade that followed, the Indian Navy advanced SAGAR through anti-piracy operations in the Gulf of Aden, humanitarian missions, COVID-19 relief dispatched to Mauritius, Maldives, Madagascar, Comoros, and Seychelles, and a network of coastal surveillance radars installed across IOR littoral states from Sri Lanka to Bangladesh," it added.

The report noted that in March 2025, India broadened the initiative into MAHASAGAR (Mutual and Holistic Advancement for Security and Growth Across Regions), a framework explicitly framed as an inclusive

alternative to China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI).

It added that practical implementation followed quickly, with the AIKEYME (Africa-India Key Maritime Engagement) naval exercise with Tanzania in April 2025 bringing together ten African nations, while India's IOS SAGAR mission carried out joint EEZ patrols with personnel from African and South Asian navies.

India's refusal to enter a formal security alliance with the US, the report said, is precisely what prevents FOIP from being perceived across the Global South as a Western containment project.

Union Power Secretary visits MP thermal plant, praises operational efficiency

BHOPAL: (MAY 23)

Union Power Secretary Pankaj Agarwal visited the Sanjay Gandhi Thermal Power Station at Birsinghpur in Umaria district of Madhya Pradesh on Saturday and reviewed its performance, coal quality management and environmental systems, officials said. He praised the functioning of the thermal power station and described it as an example of efficient power generation practices, said MP Power Generating Company (MPPGC) senior public relations officer Pankaj Swamy. Agarwal inspected the coal-fired 1340-mega watt plant's operational efficiency and processes related to coal loading, sampling and testing, Swamy told PTI.

Centre, Raj govt woo investments in electronics and semiconductor manufacturing

JAIPUR: (MAY 23)

Highlighting incentives, policy support and infrastructure push for the sector, the Centre and the Rajasthan government on Saturday pitched the state as a key destination for electronics and semiconductor manufacturing, urging investors to set up units while assuring full support. Union Electronics and IT Minister Ashwini Vaishnav said Rajasthan has "immense potential" to emerge as a major hub in electronics manufacturing, noting that the sector has seen rapid growth under the leadership of Narendra Modi. He said the groundwork for setting up around 450 factories has been laid in the past two years, while 75 factories have been approved under the Electronic Components Manufacturing Scheme (ECMS) in the last year.

Raheja, Ramky and Yashoda groups announces CSR funds

Representatives of 3 corporate companies signs agreement with TG government today

HYDERABAD, MAY 23:

The Raheja Group, Ramky and Yashoda Foundations have come forward to support the government in the construction of the schools in different parts of the state. The three organizations joined as partners with the government to construct the educational institutions under the Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiatives.

The representatives of the 3 corporate companies signed an agreement with the government in the presence of Chief Minister Shri A Revanth Reddy at the Secretariat today. Neel C. Raheja (President, Raheja Group), Alla Dakshayani (Managing Trustee, Ramky Foundation), and Gorukanti Devender Rao (Director, Yas-



hoda Group) handed over the agreement documents to CM Revanth Reddy.

As part of the agreement, Ramky Foundation will contribute 40 per cent of the total cost, amounting to ₹19.66 crores, towards the construction of a new campus in Jawa-

har Nagar, Medchal-Malkajgiri district. The campus will accommodate facilities from pre-primary to Intermediate level classrooms. As part of the upgradation of the ZPHS (Zilla Parishad High School) in Tukuguda, Maheshwaram Mandal, Ranga Reddy district, the Ramky Foundation will also spend 40 per cent of the total expenditure - Rs 10.4 crores for the construction of facilities for pre-primary to 5th-grade classes and also Intermediate classes.

The Raheja Group will bear the entire cost of ₹50.50 crores required for the construction of facilities for classes ranging from pre-primary to Intermediate levels in Kondapur, Ranga Reddy district. The Yashoda Hospitals will bear the necessary expenditure of ₹12.20 crores for Pre-Primary, 6th, and 7th-grade classes at the MPPS in Subhash Nagar, Uppal, Medchal-Malkajgiri District. Secretary to Education Department Yogita Rana, Commissioner of Technical Education Devasena, Special Secretary to the CM Ajith Reddy, Indian Green Building Council (IGBC) Chairman C. Shekhar Reddy, and Telangana Education Welfare Infrastructure Development Corporation (TGEWIDC) MD Ganapathi Reddy were also present.



RECPDCL and BSPTCL Sign MoU to Revolutionize Bihar's Power Transmission Infrastructure

NEW DELHI, MAY 23:

REC Power Development & Consultancy Limited (RECPDCL) and Bihar State Power Transmission Company Limited (BSPTCL) have officially signed a landmark Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to develop intra-state transmission projects through the Tariff Based Competitive Bidding (TBCB) mode. This strategic initiative is set to create a modern, reliable, and future-ready power transmission network capable of supporting Bihar's rapidly growing energy demands and accelerating industrial expansion. The high-profile signing ceremony was graced by the Hon'ble Energy Minister, Govt. of Bihar, Shri Shailesh Kumar (alias Bulu Mandal). Also in attendance were key administrative leaders, including Shri Ajay Yadav (IAS), Energy Secretary & CMD of BSPHCL; Shri Prince Dhawan (IAS), Chief Executive Officer of RECPDCL; and Shri Rahul Kumar (IAS), Managing Director of BSPTCL, alongside senior officials from the Energy Department of the Government of Bihar, BSPTCL, and

BSPHCL. Key Objectives of the Partnership

The collaboration is designed to fundamentally upgrade Bihar's power architecture. The core focus areas of the MoU include:

(1) **Grid Modernization:** Building a resilient, high-tech network to minimize transmission losses and improve power quality.

(2) **Transparent Bidding:** Leveraging the TBCB mode to ensure cost-effective, competitive, and highly transparent project allocations.

(3) **Accelerated Execution:** Streamlining timelines to fast-track the implementation of critical transmission projects.

(4) **Private Investment:** Encouraging greater private sector participation to bring global best practices and robust funding into the state's power sector. Hon'ble Energy Minister Shri Shailesh Kumar alias Bulu Mandal highlighted that this initiative will significantly contribute to Bihar's industrial growth vision for 2025-30 by ensuring reliable and efficient power infrastructure for upcoming industries.

"Renergize 2026"

India's Clean Energy, Startup & Policy Leadership Forum

The national-level conclave "Renergize 2026," organized under the leadership of the AI-powered residential energy platform "Rengy (RENGY)," was held on Saturday at Hyderabad Knowledge City. The event aimed to bring together Central and State Governments, industries, startups, investors, and technology experts onto a single platform to shape India's energy future.

Union Minister for Coal and Mines, Shri G. Kishan Reddy, attended the event as the chief guest. Chevella Lok Sabha MP Shri Konda Vishveshwar Reddy, My Home Group Chairman Shri Rameshwar Rao, Cyberabad Police Commissioner M. Ramesh Reddy, Telangana REDCO Managing Director Anila Vavilala, and several others participated in the conclave. On this occasion, Union Minister Kishan Red-

dy launched the key features of "Rengy (RENGY)," India's first AI-based residential solar services platform. He appreciated the efforts of Rengy founder Akula Manikantha for creating awareness among the public about the use of non-conventional energy resources. The Minister stated that Prime Minister Narendra Modi has brought about a "Clean Energy Revolution" that not only protects the environment but also strengthens the nation's economy while reducing dependence on conventional energy resources. He said that renewable energy in India has now evolved from being merely a government policy into a powerful people's movement.

Kishan Reddy highlighted several Central Government initiatives, including:

- PM Surya Ghar Yojana to provide solar electricity to households,
- PM Kusum Yojana to help farmers generate solar power



er in their fields, and

- The National Solar Mission, aimed at making India a global leader in energy production.
- Dissatisfaction Over State Government's Delay - Union Minister Kishan Reddy. The Minister expressed dissatisfaction over the Telangana State Government's delay in responding to renewable energy investment proposals. He said that in October last year itself, Central Public Sector Enterprises such as Neyve-

li Lignite Corporation (NLC) and Coal India Limited (CIL) had written to the State Government expressing readiness to invest ₹10,000 crore in Telangana for:

Solar and wind energy projects,

- Pumped storage projects, and
- Battery Energy Storage Systems (BESS).
- However, he noted with concern that no response had yet been received from the State Government. He urged the government to respond at least now and allocate land so that these investments can be utilized.

About Rengy (RENGY)

"Renergize 2026" served as a platform for meaningful discussions on:

- India's energy transition,
- Decentralized energy systems, and
- Large-scale implementation of clean energy solutions at the grassroots level.

One of the major highlights of the conclave was Rengy's

announcement of its upcoming Peer-to-Peer (P2P) Energy Trading Platform. Through this system, residential consumers will be able to sell their surplus solar power to others through a connected network. **This initiative is expected to:**

- Create new income opportunities for consumers,
 - Improve grid efficiency, and
 - Support decentralized energy systems.
- Additionally, Rengy launched its Customer App and AMC (Annual Maintenance Contract) Platform to address gaps in after-sales service and lifecycle management for rooftop solar users. These services are expected to improve the performance, reliability, and long-term usability of solar systems.

The conclave emphasized the need for technology-driven and environmentally sustainable solutions to accelerate rooftop solar adoption and build self-reliant energy infrastructure in India.



Ensure Smooth Coal Production During Monsoon

SINGARENI BHAVAN, MAY 23, 2026:

In view of weather forecasts indicating the arrival of the southwest monsoon within the next ten days, the Singareni Collieries Company Limited (SCCL) management has initiated special measures to ensure uninterrupted coal production during the rainy season. Following directions from the Central and State Governments to maintain adequate coal supply to thermal power stations even during the monsoon, SCCL Chairman and Managing Director (CMD) Dr. N. Balaram Jyothi conducted a detailed review meeting on Saturday with General Managers of all areas. Currently, around 95% of SCCL's coal production comes from open-cast mines. During heavy rains, water accumulation in open-cast mines often disrupts production activities. To address this issue, SCCL has already installed more than 100 heavy pumps and motors across all open-cast mines to remove accumulated water and continue mining operations. However, considering the possibility of increased water inflow during heavy rainfall, the CMD instructed Area General Managers to: Arrange additional private pumps alongside company-owned pumps, prevent water stagnation near overburden and coal benches, Strengthen haul roads, and Ensure sufficient pumping infrastructure is available in advance. He also directed the concerned General Managers at the corporate office to initiate tender-related procedures required for procuring additional pumps and related equipment. Dr. Balaram Jyothi reviewed mine-wise preparedness plans and proposals and advised officials to continuously monitor weather department alerts at the local level. He particularly instructed managers of surface mines that suffered major production

losses due to rains over the past two years to remain extra vigilant this year.

In the backdrop of rising electricity consumption due to international developments, the CMD stressed the importance of maintaining uninterrupted coal supplies to thermal power plants that have fuel supply agreements with SCCL. He instructed management teams across all areas to take necessary steps to ensure regular supply.

The CMD also conducted a detailed review of:

- Coal production achieved so far this financial year,
- Coal transportation,
- Overburden removal activities across all areas.

He emphasized maximizing coal production before the onset of the monsoon, stating that strong first-quarter production would significantly help offset the impact of reduced production during the rainy season.

Dr. Balaram Jyothi also held detailed discussions regarding reasons why certain major open-cast mines failed to achieve production targets.

He instructed officials to ensure:

- Full utilization of working hours for heavy machinery,
- Effective deployment of manpower resources.

He noted that these issues were already being discussed in multi-departmental team meetings and called upon officials to create awareness among workers regarding the company's current challenges so that every employee actively contributes to the organization's growth.

- Director (Operations) L.V. Surya Narayana,
- Director (Projects & Planning) K. Venkateswarlu,
- Director (Personnel & Finance) Gautham Potru,
- Director (E&M) M. Tirumala Rao,
- ED (Coal Movement) B. Venkanna, GM (Coordination & Marketing) T. Srinivas.

Honda launches the New Honda City

NEW DELHI, 22 MAY 2026

Honda Cars India Ltd. (HCIL), a leading manufacturer of premium cars in India, today announced the launch of New Honda City and the India Premiere of its Global Hybrid SUV in the premium SUV segment. The model has received strong success in global markets with cumulative sales exceeding 8 lakh units since 2022 and is targeted at discerning Indian customers seeking a distinct and aspirational SUV experience. Commenting on the launch, Mr. Takashi Nakajima, President & CEO, Honda Cars India Ltd said, "Today's event marks the beginning of HCIL's New Phase of accelerated growth in the market. India is among the top 3 focus markets to realize Honda's future growth competitiveness. This year is a landmark year for us with 6 strategic launches that will sharpen our competitive edge and reinforce our brand position in the market. The launch of the new Honda City and the India premiere of our globally acclaimed Honda ZR-V represent Honda's commitment to bringing sporty, premium, and technologically advanced products to Indian customers. We look forward to an exciting year ahead with several new model introductions planned as part of Honda's continued growth strategy for the Indian market."

Two Sporty Icons for a new Era

The new Honda City continues its iconic legacy with enhanced sporty styling, modern sophistication, enriches interiors with new features and Honda's signature engaging driving dynamics. The model will be available in both Petrol and e:HEV Strong Hybrid variants offering customers a choice between Refined Petrol Performance and Advanced Electrified Mobility. The All New Honda ZR-V will be company's new flagship SUV for Indian market. Globally recognised for its striking and sophisticated SUV

styling, exhilarating performance, remarkable fuel efficiency and premium craftsmanship, the ZR-V comes with Honda's advanced 2.0L e:HEV Sports Hybrid powertrain making it one of the most advanced and sporty hybrid SUVs in the premium SUV segment. The model has received strong success in global markets with cumulative sales exceeding 8 lakh units since 2022 and is targeted at discerning Indian customers seeking a distinct and aspirational SUV experience. Commenting on the launch, Mr. Takashi Nakajima, President & CEO, Honda Cars India Ltd said, "Today's event marks the beginning of HCIL's New Phase of accelerated growth in the market. India is among the top 3 focus markets to realize Honda's future growth competitiveness. This year is a landmark year for us with 6 strategic launches that will sharpen our competitive edge and reinforce our brand position in the market. The launch of the new Honda City and the India premiere of our globally acclaimed Honda ZR-V represent Honda's commitment to bringing sporty, premium, and technologically advanced products to Indian customers. We look forward to an exciting year ahead with several new model introductions planned as part of Honda's continued growth strategy for the Indian market."

Two Sporty Icons for a new Era



PRODUCT HIGHLIGHTS

- New Honda City 'All New Vibe'
- The Grand Concept of the New City is 'Sharpen' - designed to deliver Pride of Ownership and Next level Joy of Driving through its signature sportiness and advanced sophistication.
- Longest Sedan in the segment with an overall length of 4594 mm (+11 mm vs previous model) which translates into a sharp aerodynamic silhouette.
- All New Front Face featuring Sharper and Sporty design with new Blade Eye Signature LED Lighting System featuring Bi-LED projector headlamps, Front Grille Connected Centre Light Bar and Integrated split LED DRL with Turn Signal; new wide stance Aerodynam-

ic bumper with Air curtain, new Signature Matrix-Mesh Black Painted Front Upper Grille and new placement position of H Logo.

- Striking Sporty rear design featuring Distinct Signature Z-Edge wrap LED tail lamps with clear lens, new Signature Matrix-Mesh Lower Bumper Garnish and Sporty Trunk Lip Spoiler together creating a modern, premium and dynamic road presence.
- New Sporty R16 Dual Tone (Berlina Black & Dark-Clear Cut) Aero Blade Diamond Cut Alloy Wheels
- 6 colour options with addition of new 'Crystal Black Pearl' to Honda City's fascinating colour palette.
- Luxurious Ivory and Black Two-Tone interiors featuring a larger 25.6 cm (10.1 inch) Floating Touch-

screen Display Audio with Wireless Smartphone Connectivity, new stylish Dark Iron 3D Pattern Garnish with Welcome Ambient Light for an enhanced cabin experience.

- Enhanced convenience and comfort with 360-degree Multi View camera, newly designed Active Front Ventilated Seats and USB-C charging ports in front and rear.
- Host of active and passive advanced safety features including Honda SENSING Intelligent ADAS technology - Collision Mitigation Braking System (CMBS), Adaptive Cruise Control with Low-Speed Follow* (in e:HEV only), Road Departure Mitigation System, Lane Keep Assist System (LKAS), Lead Car Departure Notification System, and Auto High-Beam.
- Two Powertrain choices o Honda's original Self-charging Two Motor Strong Hybrid e:HEV system with e-CVT delivering Combined Max Power of 126 PS power, Max Torque of 253 Nm @ 0 - 3000 rpm and outstanding fuel efficiency of 27.26* km/l, while seamlessly switching between EV, Hybrid and Engine drive modes. Pure Petrol 1.5L i-VTEC

DOHC engine with VTC paired with a 6-speed MT or 7-speed CVT, delivering a good balance of Sporty performance and Fuel Efficiency with Max Power of 121 PS @6600 rpm, Max Torque of 145 Nm @ 4300 rpm. It delivers fuel efficiency of 17.77* km/l for MT and 17.97* km/l for CVT.

- City Petrol available in four grades SV, V, ZX and ZX+ in MT and V, ZX and ZX+ grades in CVT transmission. The City e:HEV comes in ZX+ grade.
- Complete peace of mind with 3-year Unlimited kilometres Standard warranty, Extended Warranty up-to 7 year Unlimited kilometres, Anytime Warranty Upto 10 year/120,000 kms from the date of purchase. Additionally, e:HEV variant comes with a standard 8-year/160,000 kms (whichever is earlier) warranty on Lithium-ion Battery and newly introduced 5-year/100,000 kms (whichever is earlier) warranty on Hybrid System components.
- New Honda City is now available across Honda Dealerships in India with sales and customer deliveries beginning immediately.



Chilled Fruits Can Beat Heatwave Stress

North India is going through a difficult spell of summer heat. Delhi, parts of Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, Punjab, and Haryana have seen temperatures crossing 44 degrees Celsius, while some places in Uttar Pradesh have touched close to 48 degrees Celsius. Weather alerts have also been issued as hot winds and very warm nights continue across many areas. The situation has increased the risk of dehydration, heat exhaustion, and heatstroke, especially for children, older adults, outdoor workers, and people who spend long hours in the sun. Due to these conditions, many people are looking for simple ways to stay cool, and chilled fruits often become a popular choice. Watermelon slices from the refrigerator, cold muskmelon, grapes, and oranges are common summer snacks in Indian homes. But can eating chilled fruits really help during heatwaves? The short answer is yes, but only when they are eaten in a balanced way and combined with enough water, rest, and protection from extreme heat.

Why Chilled Fruits Feel Helpful In Hot Weather

Chilled fruits give two kinds of comfort during extreme heat. First, they feel cool. Second, many fruits naturally contain a large amount of water. This helps the body replace some of the fluids lost through sweating. During heatwaves, the body works harder to control temperature. Sweating increases, and water loss becomes faster. Fruits with high water content may support hydration and provide light energy without making people feel

heavy or uncomfortable. However, chilled fruits are not a treatment for heatstroke or severe dehydration.

Best Fruits to Eat During Indian Heatwaves

Watermelon
Watermelon is one of the most popular summer fruits in India. It contains high amounts of water and feels refreshing when served cold. A bowl of chilled watermelon can be a light snack between meals and may help reduce the feeling of dryness during very hot afternoons.

Muskmelon

Muskmelon is another good option because it is juicy and easy to digest. It also gives natural sweetness without heaviness.

Oranges and Sweet Lime

Citrus fruits provide water and are easy to carry while travelling. Chilling them slightly before eating can make them more enjoyable in hot weather.

Grapes

Cold grapes are easy to store and can be eaten quickly. Many people keep them in the fridge for a simple summer snack.

Papaya

Papaya may not feel as cooling as watermelon, but it is gentle on the stomach and can fit well into summer diets.

Can Very Cold Fruits Cause Problems?

Some people believe that consuming chilled fruits immediately can cause illness, but this is usually not true for healthy individuals. However, extremely cold foods may feel uncomfortable for people who have sensitive teeth, throat irritation, or digestion issues. It is better to avoid eating

fruits straight from an icy freezer. Fruits cooled in the refrigerator are usually enough. Allowing them to sit outside for a few minutes before eating may also help. Large portions can also be a problem. Eating too much watermelon or several fruits at once may cause stomach discomfort. It is important that you consume fruits in moderation.

Chilled Fruits Are Helpful, but Water Is Still Essential

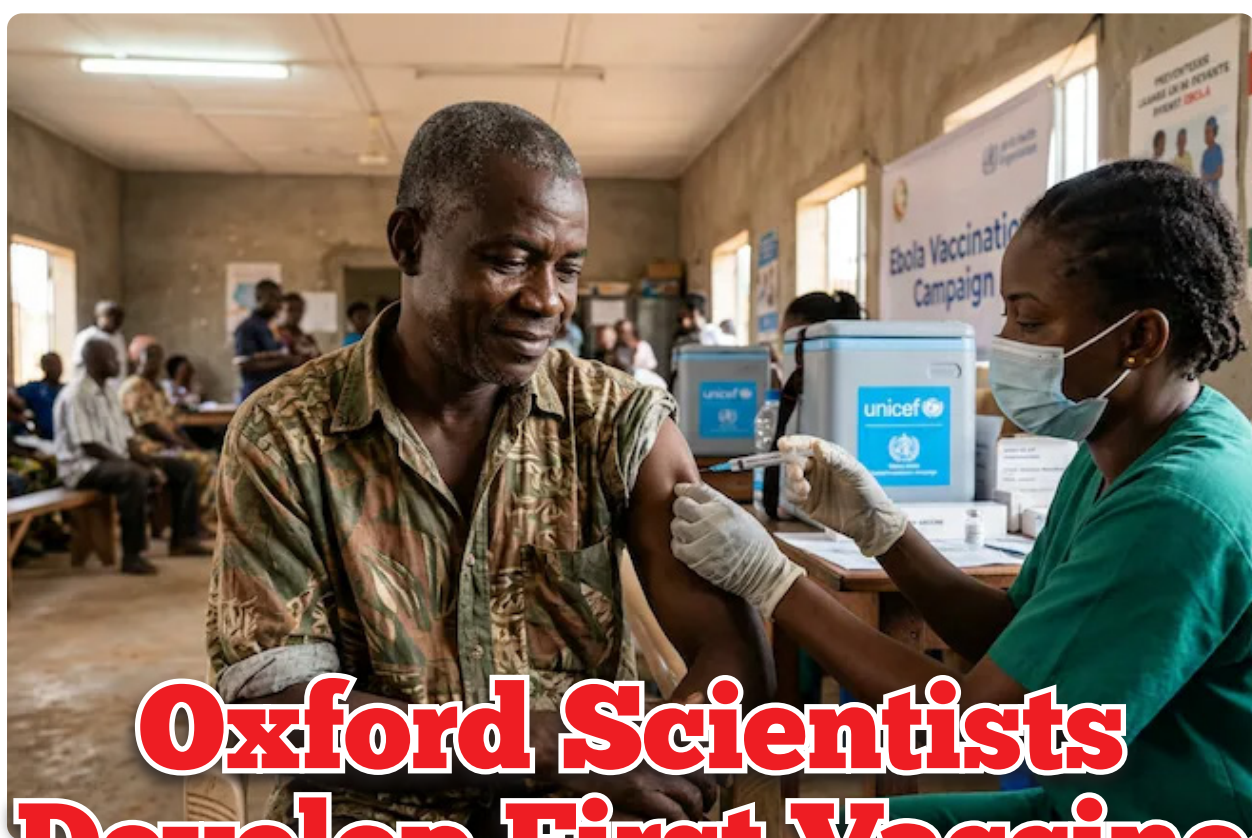
Many people think fruits can fully replace drinking water during heatwaves. That is not

correct. Even if fruits contain water, regular drinking water is important to prevent dehydration. During extreme heat conditions, people may also need oral rehydration solutions, homemade drinks such as lemon water, or fluids advised by doctors. Chilled fruits should be seen as an extra support rather than the main solution. Eating chilled fruits can help people feel more comfortable during heatwave conditions because they are refreshing, light, and often rich in water. Watermelon, muskmel-

on, grapes, oranges, and similar fruits can fit well into a summer diet. However, they are only one part of staying safe. Hydration, shade, rest, and avoiding long exposure to intense sunlight are far more important.

Disclaimer:

This content including advice provides generic information only. It is in no way a substitute for a qualified medical opinion. Always consult a specialist or your own doctor for more information.



Oxford Scientists Develop First Vaccine for Rare Ebola Strain

Scientists in the UK are working to create a vaccine against the Bundibugyo strain of Ebola, a rare version of the virus linked to the recent outbreak in Central Africa. Unlike the other strain, Zaire, which already has approved vaccines, Bundibugyo does not yet have a licensed vaccine or treatment. Researchers at Oxford University are developing the novel

job targeting the rare strain. The World Health Organization says clinical trials could begin in just two to three months if animal tests go well. This breakthrough uses the same technology the Oxford team created during the COVID-19 pandemic. The vaccine employs a harmless chimpanzee cold virus modified to carry Bundibugyo genetic information, teach-

ing the immune system to recognise and fight real Ebola without causing infection. Animal trials are already underway, though scientists caution there's no guarantee of success until human testing begins. The Serum Institute of India stands ready to mass-produce the vaccine once Oxford provides the medical-grade materials needed.

How The Vaccine Works

The ChAdOx1 technology is versatile. During the pandemic, scientists loaded it with COVID virus genetic blueprints. Now, they've swapped in Bundibugyo Ebola genetic information. The modified cold virus delivers this genetic code to human cells, which then produce harmless Ebola proteins. This trains the immune system to spot and destroy actual Ebola virus if someone gets infected later. This approach is faster than traditional vaccine development because the basic platform already exists and has proven to be safe. Scientists don't need to start from scratch, they simply reprogram the delivery system for a different disease.

What Happens Next

The next stage involves testing, safety checks, and possible emergency use planning. Scientists must confirm that the vaccine creates strong protection and does not cause serious side effects. Even with fast progress, careful evaluation remains essential. The work under way in the UK reflects a broader lesson from recent health emergencies: preparation matters. A vaccine ready within months

would not only help control the current outbreak but could also improve global readiness for future Ebola threats.

Why This Ebola Strain Is Different

Ebola is not a single virus. Scientists have identified several species, and vaccines that are already available mainly target the Zaire strain. The Bundibugyo version has caused fewer outbreaks in the past, so it received less attention. Because of this, the world entered the latest outbreak without a ready-made vaccine. Experts say this gap in preparation is now driving urgent action. Researchers are examining different vaccine designs, including viral-vector meth-

ods and approaches based on technology used during earlier epidemic responses. The aim is to create protection that specifically targets the Bundibugyo strain while remaining safe for human use.

Why This Matters Now

The Bundibugyo strain is particularly dangerous because no approved vaccine exists for it. Current Ebola vaccines only protect against other strains like Zaire. With outbreaks occurring and the strain killing roughly 33% of infected people, rapid vaccine development could save countless lives. Another experimental Bundibugyo vaccine is in development but won't be ready for trials

for six to nine months, making Oxford's faster timeline crucial. If successful, this vaccine could become a vital tool in stopping future Ebola outbreaks before they spread widely. The speed of this development shows how pandemic-era vaccine science can be rapidly redirected to fight other deadly diseases, offering hope for quicker responses to emerging health threats.

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Frozen Broth vs Fruit Ice Cubes in Heatwaves

The occurrence of heatwaves has become more frequent, which is causing people to implement any cool-down method possible to ensure they don't overheat. A heatwave alert demands smarter hydration strategies that can cool down the body effectively. The trending cool-

ing hacks that are most commonly used are fruit ice cubes and frozen broth. Both of them can cool the body, but the way they do so differs a lot. Maintaining hydration is crucial during a heatwave as it causes active fluid loss through sweating. Furthermore, electrolyte imbalance can

happen, and it can result in heat-induced fatigue, dehydration, heat exhaustion, and even heat stroke. In order to make sure that heatwave cooling methods are implemented and you are able to cool yourselves effectively, understanding both cooling methods is important.

What Are Fruit Ice Cubes?

Frozen ice cubes are prepared with fruit juices, coconut water, and infused water. These cooling methods have benefits such as being high in water content, vitamin C, and antioxidants, as they contain fruits. Fruit ice cubes are refreshing and easy to consume as well as support light hydration at the same time. Cooling foods in summer can be consumed in moderation to be able to help people remain cool during a heatwave. Research mentioned in the Journal of Nursing mentions that fruit ice cubes can help with dehydration in a heatwave. Here is exactly how: Fruit ice cubes can be made with cut fruits and water or coconut water as the base liquid. The ratio of both of them should be balanced. The science behind them is as follows: When the water in fruit undergoes crystallisation, forming ice while preserving flavour and nutrients, it is able to hydrate the gut effectively. The preservation of fruits in form can improve their flavour, vitamins, and phytochemicals. This is why fruit ice cubes retain their nutritional value even after freezing.

What Is Frozen Broth?

Frozen broth can be prepared using vegetable broth or animal-based bone broth to of-

fer summer hydration. Frozen broth is considered superior to fruit ice cubes, as it contains sodium and minerals (electrolytes), which can replenish electrolytes lost through sweating during extreme heat. It also helps maintain energy levels and fluid balance in the body. Frozen broth behaves like an oral rehydration liquid that is rich in nutrients, especially when prepared from fresh vegetables or bones. Hydration in the body depends on water intake and electrolytes (especially sodium) in the body. Sodium controls fluid balance and the movement of water across cell membranes. This is why bone broth is essential to replenish liquids effectively in a heatwave.

Which Cool-Down Method Is Better?

When it comes to assessing which cooling-down method is better during a heatwave, you need to consider what purpose it can serve. For mild dehydration or a quick refresh, you can use fruit ice cubes. And for intense heatwaves or sweating, you need to consume frozen broth, as it provides better electrolyte balance. Both fruit ice cubes and frozen broth can provide balanced hydration, as they both serve specialised nutritional and hydration goals.

Common Mistakes During Heatwaves

In a heatwave, you need to avoid making common mistakes that can worsen your

body's condition to deal with heat stress. Here are the common mistakes that you should avoid during a heatwave: Drinking only cold water, as it is known not to replenish thirst or help with hydration. Ignoring electrolyte loss, as your body needs an optimal level of it to function properly. Overdependence on sugary beverages can deplete your body of hydration. Skipping fluids until thirsty can slowly dehydrate body into dehydration. Cooling Tips To Follow There are various smart cooling tips that you need to follow to make sure you are hydrated. Here is how: You need to alternate between infused water and electrolyte drinks to make sure your hydration is optimal.





SQUASH

Four Indians in finals of Asian Junior Individual Squash in China



NEW DELHI: Aryaveer Dewan (boys' U-19), Shiven Agarwal (boys' U-17), Anika Dubey (girls' U-17), and Amarya Bajaj (boys' U-13) advanced to the finals in their respective categories at the 33rd Asian Junior Individual Squash Championships in Panzhihua, China, on Saturday. Aryaveer, seeded 3/4, defeated Malaysian top seed Nickhleswar Moganandharam in four games in the semifinals and will meet either Md Alnasafan (KSA) or Jonghyeok Lee (Kor) for the crown. Aryaveer had beaten the Malaysian for the U-17 title last year. Meanwhile, Shiven, seeded 5/8, beat fellow Indian Squash Academy trainee Lokesh Subramani in a close four-game semifinal and will take on Pakistan's 9/16 seed Nauman Khan for the U-17 title. Anika, seeded 3/4 and bronze medalist in this age group last year, will battle.

CRICKET

Great to see Rahul become vice-captain again, says Bell



KOLKATA: Delhi Capitals assistant coach Ian Bell hailed KL Rahul's influence on and off the field, adding that he was delighted to see him become the vice-captain of the Indian Test team again and that his efforts to bring a real shift in his T20 strike-rate have paid off. Rahul is DC's leading run-getter with 533 runs in 13 games at an average of 44.42 and a strike-rate of 171.93. Recently, Rahul replaced Rishabh Pant as India's vice-captain in Tests for the one-off game against Afghanistan, to be played in New Chandigarh on June 6. "Firstly, it's great to see him become vice-captain again for India. I think the hard work he's put in through this. I disagree with that comment. I think you look at his strike rates this year, he's put in a real shift. You're absolutely right in saying that he's a massively important player for us and for India as well."

Iyer's unbeaten 101 helps PBKS keep playoffs hopes alive, beat LSG by seven wickets

LUCKNOW

Captain Shreyas Iyer struck his maiden IPL century to guide Punjab Kings to a seven-wicket win over Lucknow Super Giants and break their six-game losing streak to keep their playoff hopes alive in the Indian Premier League (IPL) 2027 at the BRSABV Ekana Cricket Stadium in Lucknow on Saturday.

In response to LSG's 196/6, Punjab hunted down the target in 18 overs, with Iyer unbeaten on 101 off 51 balls, studded with 11 fours and five sixes coming at a strike-rate of 198.04. Apart from wowing the crowd with his sublime timing, strong pick-up of deliveries and bottom-handed shots, Iyer also shared a crucial 140-run stand with Prabhsimran Singh, who hit 69 off 39 balls.

The win has lifted PBKS to fourth on the points table, and their fate now hinges on the Rajasthan Royals' clash with the Mumbai Indians. If RR win, Punjab are out; if MI prevail, Kolkata Knight Riders could still overtake PBKS on net run rate with a big win over the now eliminated Delhi Capitals. If all works well in their favour, PBKS will face Sunrisers Hyderabad in the Eliminator clash in New Chandigarh on Wednesday.

The chase began dramatically as Priyansh Arya fell first ball to Mohammed Shami, caught on the pull for a golden duck. Cooper Connolly counter-attacked with four boundaries in the second over, before being castled by Mohammed Shami and leaving PBKS at 22/2 in 2.2 overs.

Iyer joined Prabhsimran and the pair steadied the innings. Iyer struck successive fours off Mohsin Khan and Shami, while Prabhsimran found his rhythm with inventive strokes and used the bowlers' pace to his advantage. The partnership blossomed after Power-play as Prabhsimran dropped on 20 by Pant off Arjun Tendulkar, and got his fifty in 28 balls.

Iyer, meanwhile, cut and drove with authority to get his fifty in 33 balls. The boundaries flowed freely before Arjun trapped Prabhsimran lbw for 69. But Iyer pressed on, smashing three sixes in



one Shami over to all but seal the contest. Fittingly, Iyer launched a slower ball from Mohsin over cow corner to complete his maiden IPL hundred and clinch an important victory for PBKS.

For Iyer, the century was a moment of relief and joy - helmet off, arms aloft, as he was embraced by teammates over ending a six-game losing streak and PBKS playoffs hopes still very much alive. Even as PBKS rejoiced in the glow of a much-needed victory in a must-win clash, LSG's tenth defeat of the season also confirmed that they will finish at the bottom of the IPL 2026 points table.

Previously, riding on Josh Inglis's fluent 72 off 44 balls and Abdul Samad's unbeaten 37 off 20 deliveries, LSG posted 196/6, though it looked like they finished well short of a par score. Inglis didn't see much of the strike in the first few overs, as he lost partners from the other end.

But he slowly came into his own to add 49 runs for the third wicket and shared a 65-run partnership with Rishabh Pant. Inglis came into his own during the middle overs to hit nine fours and two sixes in all in his knock, coming at a strike-rate of 163.64.

At 147/4 in 15 overs, LSG were primed for a big finish, but losing Inglis was huge for them, though Samad did show some fight with a late cameo. For PBKS, Yuzvendra Chahal and Marco Jansen were

the standout bowlers with two scalps each. The innings began briskly for LSG, though they suffered early setbacks. Arshin Kulkarni and Nicholas Pooran fell cheaply, leaving the hosts two down inside the Power-play. Inglis did not see much of the strike initially, but once it had settled, he counter-attacked with authority. Badoni joined Inglis and the pair steadied the innings before the former was stumped off Chahal for 43. Inglis then found another partner in Pant, and together they pushed the score past 100. With Inglis striking cleanly through the middle overs, LSG looked assured for a big total, though they lost Pant for 26.

But Inglis' dismissal checked their momentum, leaving Samad to shoulder the responsibility in the death overs after Mukul Choudhary fell cheaply. Samad rose to the occasion with crisp strokes through point and mid-wicket to take LSG past the 190-mark, which was inadequate to stop Iyer and PBKS from getting a clinical win.

Brief scores:

Lucknow Super Giants 196/6 in 20 overs (Josh Inglis 72, Ayush Badoni 43; Yuzvendra Chahal 2-25, Marco Jansen 2-33) lost to Punjab Kings 200/3 in 18 overs (Shreyas Iyer 101 not out, Prabhsimran Singh 69; Mohammed Shami 2-45, Arjun Tendulkar 1-36) by seven wickets

TG20 Governing Council Announces Founding Franchise Owners

Telangana's first major franchise cricket league set to redefine state cricket

HYDERABAD

In a landmark moment for Telangana cricket, the Hyderabad Cricket Association (HCA) unveiled the founding franchise owners for the inaugural edition of TG20, Telangana's first-ever

franchise-based T20 cricket league. The announcement was made during the "TG20 Origins - Shape the Future" event held at the ITC Kakatiya in Hyderabad in the presence of industrialists, corporate leaders, HCA office-bearers, cricket administrators, partners and members of the media. The inaugural edition of TG20 will feature eight teams representing the spirit, passion and cricketing culture of Telangana.

S. No.	Franchise Owner	Bid Amount	Region
1	M/s Ushodaya Enterprises Pvt Ltd	₹7,50,01,000	Hyderabad
2	M/s Booruga Infra / Pranava	₹7,20,00,000	Ranga Reddy
3	M/s Bain Global Resources Private Limited	₹6,55,00,000	Warangal
4	M/s Bhurunda Infra Private Limited	₹6,33,33,369	Medak
5	M/s Kishore Infrastructures Pvt Ltd	₹5,06,00,000	Nalgonda
6	M/s EIPL Group & Tibarumal	₹4,57,00,000	Karimnagar
7	M/s Veerabhadra Steels	₹4,50,00,000	Mahabubnagar
8	M/s Anvita Group	₹4,44,44,444	Khammam

Conceived as a transformational cricketing platform for Telangana, TG20 aims to create structured opportunities for emerging players, strengthen grassroots cricket and provide young cricketers with exposure comparable to India's leading franchise leagues. The league is also expected to generate employment opportunities within the sporting ecosystem in the region.

The tournament will feature talented Telangana cricketers alongside established domestic players, supported by experienced coaches and professional operations. The organisers are also in talks with JioStar for live broadcasts on Star Sports Telugu and streaming on JioHotstar.

To enhance operational standards, Marriott Hotels will host the entire TG20 contingent, while TCM Sports Management Pvt Ltd has been appointed as the exclusive event management agency. For-

mer Tamil Nadu Premier League CEO Prasanna Kannan has been appointed to oversee league execution.

Speaking on the occasion, HCA Secretary M. Jeevan Reddy said TG20 would serve as the foundation of a long-term cricketing ecosystem aimed at nurturing talent, creating opportunities and elevating the standard of cricket across Telangana.

TG20 Governing Council Chairman V. Agam Rao said the league was envisioned as a platform combining sporting excellence, professional management, entertainment and commercial growth. He added that the strong response from investors and stakeholders reflected the immense potential of Telangana cricket.

Further announcements regarding team identities, player drafts, tournament schedules and commercial partnerships are expected in the coming weeks ahead of the inaugural season.

Born into cricket, calm under pressure, 17-year-old Kerala girl steps into umpire's coat

THRISSUR

When 17-year-old Namrata Vinoth walks into the Athreya Cricket Ground in Kerala's Thrissur on Sunday morning, it will not just be another local cricket match.

For the teenager with cricket running deep through her veins, it will mark the beginning of a brand new journey, as a cricket umpire.

Namrata will officiate in her 'debut' match between the Trichur District Cricket Association EC Committee/Selectors and the Palakkad District Association EC Committee/Selectors, after clearing the written examination in umpiring.

For most teenagers, such a moment could be nerve-racking. But Namrata appears remarkably un-



flashed. "What's the big deal?" she asks with a laugh.

"I know being tense only complicates things. I prefer to stay cool and calm so I can perform better. My mother's feelings are understandable." Her mother, however, admits she is far from calm.

"Yes, I'm a bit tense because I know what happens in a cricket match," says Niketha with a smile. "Perhaps Namrata is too young to ful-

ly realise what a real match situation can be like. One thing that makes me happy is that she isn't nervous." Niketha knows the pressures of cricket better than most. A former Kerala women's cricketer, she later rose to become Chairperson of the Kerala Women's Selection Committee and also led the South Zone selection panel.

The cricketing pedigree in the family does not end there. Namrata's aunt, Vilasini Nair, her father's sister, also played for Kerala and now serves as a Southern Railway coach-cum-player, besides being a member of the Tamil Nadu Cricket Association selection committee. Yet, despite the formidable cricketing lineage surrounding her, Namrata carries none of the weight of expectation.

Gymnastics: India's Pranati Nayak clinches silver at FIG World Challenge Cup

BHUBANESWAR

Three-time Asian Championship medalist and Odisha gymnast Pranati Nayak secured the silver medal in the Vault event at the FIG World Challenge Cup 2026 held in Tashkent, Uzbekistan.

Delivering an impressive performance against a strong international field, Pranati scored 13.025 in the Vault final to earn a podium finish and add another milestone to Indian gymnastics. Her achievement stands as a testament to her relentless hard work, discipline, and commitment to excellence, while also reflecting Odisha's rising presence in the sport at the global level, the Odisha Gymnastics Association informed in a release on Saturday.

The 31-year-old Pranati, who won bronze medals in vault in the 2019, 2022, and 2025 editions of the Asian Championships, is only the third Indian woman gymnast to win an international medal after Dipa Karmakar and Aruna Reddy. Congratulating Pranati on

her success, chief coach Ashok Mishra said, "Pranati's achievement is a proud and inspiring moment for Indian gymnastics."

Her dedication and consistency continue to set an example for young athletes across the country. We are delighted to see her shine on the international stage and are confident she will achieve even greater success ahead." Expressing his happiness on the achievement, Ashok Sahoo, Honourary Secretary of the Odisha Gymnastics Association, said, "Pranati Nayak's silver medal at the FIG World Challenge Cup 2026 is a historic and proud moment for Odisha as well as the entire country."

Her achievement reflects the growing standard of gymnastics in Odisha and the immense potential of our athletes to excel on the world stage. On behalf of the Odisha Gymnastics Association, I congratulate Pranati for her outstanding performance and wish her continued success in future international competitions.



Vinesh Phogat gets Delhi HC relief to participate in Asian Games trials

NEW DELHI

The Delhi High Court has permitted wrestler Vinesh Phogat to participate in the Asian Games 2026 selection trials, holding that motherhood cannot be treated as a "disability" or a ground for exclusion from professional opportunities.

A Division Bench of Chief Justice Devendra Kumar Upadhyaya and Justice Tejas Karia, while questioning the exclusionary nature of the eligibility criteria framed by the Wrestling Federation of India (WFI), directed the federation to allow Phogat to participate in the trials scheduled for May 30 and 31 and ordered that the process be video-recorded.

"Motherhood must be viewed as a natural and deeply significant aspect of life that deserves accommodation and institutional sensitivity. Therefore, the law must ensure that motherhood does not become a ground for exclusion or marginalisation of female athletes such as the Appellant," the Delhi High Court said.

Allowing Phogat's appeal against the earlier interim order passed by a single judge, the CJ Upadhyaya-led Bench said the three-time Olympian had made out a prima facie case



against the WFI's Asian Games selection policy and the circular restricting participation in the trials to medal winners of select domestic events conducted in 2025 and 2026.

It observed that the policy framework failed to account for Phogat's maternity-related sabbatical and post-partum recovery period, which coincided with the qualifying tournaments prescribed under the eligibility criteria.

"In the present case, the Appellant's exclusion from the Selection Trials is directly attributable to the sabbatical and temporary retire-

ment from her sporting activities," the CJ Upadhyaya-led Bench held.

The order also strongly disapproved of the language used in the WFI's show-cause notice issued to Phogat earlier this month, particularly its characterisation of her disqualification from the Paris Olympics 2024 final after failing the weigh-in as a "national embarrassment".

Calling the remarks "deplorable", the Delhi High Court said the observations appeared "pre-mediated" and "vindictive", especially when the Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS)

had already recorded that there was "no wrongdoing" on Phogat's part.

"Such observations are retrograde and show the mala fide intent of Respondent No.1 (WFI) by being vindictive against the Appellant," the CJ Upadhyaya-led Bench said.

Observing that motherhood and childbirth posed extraordinary physical challenges for female athletes, it stressed that institutional sporting frameworks could not remain oblivious to those realities.

"A legal and regulatory framework that either expressly or impliedly disadvantages a woman on account of pregnancy or post-partum recovery would clearly violate the principles of non-discrimination enshrined in Articles 14 and 21 of the Constitution," the Delhi High Court said. It also took note of past WFI practices, including earlier guidelines permitting "iconic players" to participate in selection trials despite not satisfying standard eligibility conditions. The order said that the revised policy marked a "significant deviation" from earlier practice and prima facie appeared arbitrary by limiting participation only to medal winners from specified competitions held during 2025 and 2026.

Federation Cup athletics: Gurvindervir, Vishal TK set new records; Tejaswin crosses 8000 points in decathlon



RANCHI

An incredible performance by two male sprinters—Gurvindervir Singh and Vishal TK—set the track ablaze with record-breaking performance to establish new benchmarks while Tejaswin Shankar became the first Indian decathlete to cross 8000 points in the Senior Nationals Federation Cup athletics at the Birsa Munda Stadium in Ranchi on Saturday.

On a blockbuster day, Gurvindervir Singh, 25, was the first to enter the record books. The Punjab sprinter representing Reliance at

the National Senior Athletics Federation Competition, clocked 10.09 seconds to reclaim his men's 100m crown. The newly-crowned champion had clocked 10.17 seconds in the semis on Friday. "This record is to prove that I'm not finished and still have power in my legs," says Gurvindervir Singh in post-race interaction.

The men's 100m champion also achieved the Glasgow Commonwealth Games qualification time of 10.16 seconds. He also bettered the meet record of 10.18 seconds set by Animesh Kujur last year. On Gurvindervir Singh's outstanding

performance, his coach, James Hillier, says he expects his athlete to further improve in the coming months. "He is learning to execute the plans in the races, and his performance graph is getting better," says James Hillier.

But it wasn't Animesh Kujur's day. He finished second with a time of 10.20 seconds. Animesh Kujur had, in fact, clocked 10.15 seconds in the second semis on Friday.

A couple of minutes after Gurvindervir Singh's record-breaking performance, focus shifted to the men's quarter-mile race. Vishal TK became the first Indian athlete to break 45 seconds for the 400m on Indian soil. His gold-winning time of 44.98 seconds was better than his national record of 45.12 seconds clocked last year in Chennai. "Athletics fans will certainly keep a track of me when I compete at the global level," says Vishal TK of conquering new territory on Saturday. In his preparation to break the 45-second barrier, Vishal TK says he had visualised the race. "I was confident of breaking 45 seconds today," says the Tamil Nadu sprinter.



PEDDI IS A TALE OF DREAMS, ASPIRATIONS OF EVERY INDIAN

Mega Powerstar Ram Charan is winning hearts across the nation as he gears up for the grand release of his ambitious project, Peddi. At the recent Peddi Ki Aawaz event in Bhopal, the superstar delivered a deeply emotional speech that instantly struck a chord with the massive crowd. The event has seen more than one lakh crowd attending it showcasing the actor's massive craze in North India, too. Admitting with a smile that his Hindi

might be weak but his love for the audience is incredibly strong, Ram Charan shared how special it was to kick off the film's promotions in Madhya Pradesh. He described Peddi as much more than just a sports film; he called it an inspiring tale of self-discovery that carries the struggles, emotions, and dreams of the entire India.

Showcasing his immense pride in the film, Ram Charan confidently declared that Peddi would forever remain the number one movie in his career's library. He warmly thanked his co-star Janhvi Kapoor, his director, and music maestro A.R. Rahman for their incredible contributions. Even when asked about the injuries he sustained during filming, the actor humbly called them beautiful "gifts" and memories to take home.

Promising to return to Bhopal for a success tour, his heartfelt words have left fans eagerly counting down the days until the release. Directed by the visionary Buchi Babu Sana and produced by Venkata Satish Kilaru, the highly anticipated sports drama is officially scheduled to hit theaters worldwide on June 4, 2026.

Ram's real life grace and goodness reflects in Peddi - Janhvi

Mega Powerstar Ram Charan is all set to mesmerize audiences in his upcoming highly anticipated film, Peddi. The excitement surrounding the project reached new heights during the recent Peddi Ki Aawaz event in Bhopal, where Bollywood sensation Janhvi Kapoor shared her heartfelt thoughts. Addressing the enthusiastic crowd, Janhvi described the film as a deeply meaningful story about identity and human existence that will strongly resonate with the youth. She expressed her immense joy at working alongside Ram Charan, noting that the honesty and grace he lives with in real life beautifully reflect in his on-screen performances. Janhvi also expressed her deep gratitude towards the core team. She affectionately called Buchi Babu Sana the cutest director who guided her with immense love and confidence, while thanking producer Venkata Satish Kilaru for taking wonderful care of her on set.



SANDEEP REDDY VANGA TO DIRECT CHIRU AFTER SPIRIT?

For a long time, director Sandeep Reddy Vanga, popular for films like Arjun Reddy and Animal, has openly expressed that he's a hardcore Megastar Chiranjeevi fan. He has even pasted some exclusive posters of Chiranjeevi at his office too. And recently, adored by that love, Chiranjeevi even attended the opening ceremony of Vanga's next film "Spirit", featuring Prabhas in the lead.



Guess what, today when a news channel asked Vanga if there are any of his favourite heroes that he's looking forward to working with, the director stated that he wants to work with Chiranjeevi. Even fans are assuming that Sandeep Reddy, being a fan of Chiranjeevi, should craft a proper Mega movie in which Ram Charan will also play a part. They are expecting him to direct Chiranjeevi-Charan film, though the two have earlier appeared together in Acharya, but the film ended in disappointment.

Some reports indicate that after wrapping "Spirit", Sandeep Reddy might not for "Animal Park" immediately, but might do another standalone film. Earlier, it was expected that he would team up with either Allu Arjun, whom he had already met along with T-Series Bhushan Kumar. Later, it has come out that he might team up with Vijay Deverakonda. But latest buzz is that he might do a Chiranjeevi-Charan movie.

Nikhil oversees massive VFX work

Nikhil Siddhartha's ambitious period action drama "Swayambhu" has faced multiple release postponements, leading to speculation about the project's status. Initially planned for release in 2025, the film was later shifted to February, then April 10, before being postponed indefinitely. The delay also sparked rumors that the makers were struggling to secure a favorable OTT deal. However, Nikhil Siddhartha has now clarified that the film is still deep in post-production, with extensive VFX work currently underway.

Directed by Bharat Krishnamachari, "Swayambhu" revolves around a legendary warrior connected to India's Sengol lore. The film stars Nikhil alongside Samyuktha Menon and Nabha Natesh. Although shooting was completed months ago, the makers are reportedly focusing heavily on delivering high-quality visual effects. Nikhil recently shared a video of himself visiting Chennai-based PhantomFX studio along with cinematographer K.K. Senthil Kumar to supervise the ongoing VFX work.

"700 VFX shots, 750 CG artists working nonstop, targeting the highest quality output," Nikhil stated while updating fans about the film's progress. He also assured audiences that the release date would be finalized only after the team is fully satisfied with the final output.

"I won't marry secretly"



Actress and BJP MP Kangana Ranaut has reacted to recent rumours claiming that she secretly got married. The speculation began after photos of Kangana wearing a mangal-sutra and green bangles went viral on social media, leading many to believe she had tied the knot.

Putting an end to the buzz, Kangana clarified that the look was part of a film shoot and not related to her personal life. "I am filming in and around the city every single day. Someone clicked this random picture with character make-up and now I am getting so many phone calls. But what is the big deal about the married woman look?" she wrote in her clarification. The actress further assured fans that she would never hide such a major life event. "Actors play all kinds of roles. I won't marry secretly, I promise," Kangana added. The rumours gained extra attention in recent weeks amid ongoing speculation about her alleged relationship with a young political leader. However, Kangana did not address those reports directly.

"A serious violation of privacy"



Kantara actress Rukmini Vasanth slammed her alleged AI-generated images, calling their circulation a "violation of privacy" act. In a statement on Saturday, the actress clarified that the images were fabricated and warned of legal action. Rukmini Vasanth penned a note on her Instagram handle to clarify that her alleged AI-generated images are circulating online, which are "entirely fake and fabricated." "My team and I have come across certain AI-generated images being circulated online claiming to be me. I want to state clearly that these images are entirely fake and fabricated. The creation and circulation of such manipulated content is deeply irresponsible and a serious violation of privacy."

The actress requested everyone to "refrain from sharing or engaging" with such content. She wrote, "We are taking this matter seriously and initiating the necessary legal and cybercrime action against those involved in creating and spreading these images. Requesting everyone to refrain from sharing or engaging with such content."

On the work front, actor Rukmini Vasanth is set to play a key role in Yash's upcoming film Toxic. Directed by Geetu Mohandas, the film is written by Yash and Geetu Mohandas. The film features a star-studded cast including Nayanthara, Huma Qureshi, Rukmini Vasanth, and Tara Sutaria alongside Yash. The makers of the movie recently announced that the release date of the movie has been postponed and it will not arrive in theatres on June 4, 2026. The actress will also be seen in Prashanth Neel's film Dragon which also stars Jr NTR in the lead role. It is slated to release in the theatres next year.