

# KING

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## AP CM Naidu's two-day Singapore visit focuses on investment and infrastructure

**(king Reporter)** Amaravati: Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu will embark on a two-day visit to Singapore to attract investments and review key collaborations on Amaravati and other projects. As per the official schedule, the CM will depart from Bengaluru for the city-state at 11.35 am on June 14. "Naidu will visit Singapore from June 15 to 16 to attract investments and review collaborations related to the development of Amaravati and other key infrastructure projects," said a press release on Saturday. On June 15, the CM will meet the High Commissioner of India to Singapore, Shilpak Ambule, at 10.30 am Singapore time. He will subsequently participate in a roundtable with startup venture capitalists and attend a luncheon meeting with Anaclaudia Rossbach, Executive Director of UN-Habitat. The CM will hold discussions with Singapore Senior Minister of State Low Yen Ling. Later, he will meet Karan Bajwa, President of Google Cloud Asia-Pacific; Lim Siang Guan, Advisor to the Executive Committee of GIC; Robert Yap, Executive Chairman of YCH Group; and Prof Tan Eng Chye, President of the National University of Singapore. During the visit, Naidu is scheduled to meet Singapore Prime Minister Lawrence Wong and discuss various areas of cooperation. He will meet Singapore Foreign Minister Vivian Balakrishnan and interact with members of the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) Andhra Pradesh delegation. Meetings are scheduled with Home Affairs Minister K Shanmugam and Min-



ister for Manpower Tan See Leng. On June 16, Naidu will inaugurate the CBN@361 programme organised by the Kakatiya Cultural Association. He will participate in the APAC Semiconductor Roundtable and attend the Surbana Jurong Amaravati Planning Meeting. In addition, he will hold discussions with a team led by Singapore Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Trade and Industry Gan Kim Yong. Naidu will address the Leadership Plenary at the World Cities Summit and subsequently visit the World Cities Summit Exhibition, where he will tour the Singapore Pavilion, Innovators Alley, and Google Technologies exhibits. He is also scheduled to participate in a meeting with Seatrion and later attend the CII Partnership Summit 2026 Business Roadshow, which forms a key component of Andhra Pradesh's investment outreach efforts. The visit is aimed at strengthening Andhra Pradesh's engagement with Singapore, attracting global investments, and accelerating the development of Amaravati and other strategic projects in the state. Naidu is scheduled to return to India at 10 pm on June 16, it added.

## TTD announces schedule for release of September quota Tirumala darshan tokens



**(king Reporter)** Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams (TTD) has announced the release schedule for quotas regarding various darshans, Arjitha Sevas (paid rituals), Special Entry Darshan tickets, and accommodation for the month of September. TTD has advised devotees planning their visit to Lord Venkateswara's temple to book their tickets online on the designated dates. According to the details released by TTD, the online quota for Arjitha Sevas—specifically Suprabhatam, Tomala, Archana, and Ashtadala Pada Padmaradhana for September will be released on June 18 at 10:00 AM. Devotees wishing to participate in the electronic dip for these services can register until 10:00 AM on June 20. Tickets will be allotted to selected devotees upon completion of payment between June 20 and 12:00 PM on June 22. Tickets for Kalyanotsavam, Oonjal Seva, Arjitha Brahmotsavam, and Sahasra Deepalankara Seva

will be released on June 22 at 10:00 AM. The quota for virtual services and their associated darshan slots will be made available at 3:00 PM on the same day. Additionally, the quota for Angapradakshina tokens will be released on June 23 at 10:00 AM, followed by the release of the SRIVANI Trust darshan ticket quota at 11:00 AM. A special quota of free darshan tokens for the elderly, differently-abled, and devotees suffering from chronic illnesses will be released at 3 PM on the same day. While the quota of Rs. 300 Special Entry Darshan tickets for September will be released on June 24 at 10 AM, the quota for accommodation in Tirumala and Tirupati will be made available online at 3 PM on the same day. Officials advised devotees to use only the official TTD website (<https://ttdevasthanams.ap.gov.in>) for booking darshan tickets and warned against trusting fake websites or middlemen.

## Private bus catches fire near Tada in Tirupathi, no casualties

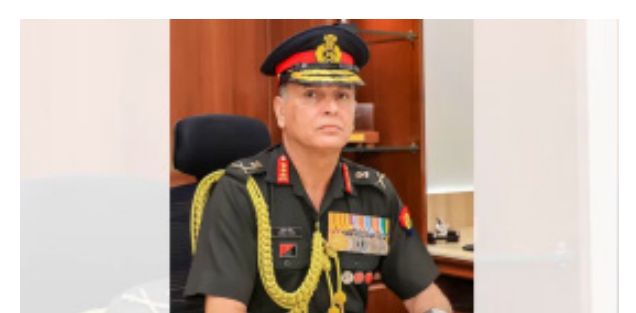
**(king Reporter)** A private bus caught fire on the national highway near Tada in Tirupati district. Workers were traveling to Sullurpeta after finishing their shifts at Sri City. As the bus approached Tada, flames suddenly erupted. Alert workers immediately disembarked, averting any loss of life. Within moments, the fire spread across the entire bus. Fire personnel arrived at the scene upon receiving the information and extinguished the flames, but the vehicle was already completely



gutted. The cause of the accident is yet to be ascertained and the inquiry on the incident is underway.

## Lt Gen Dhiraj Seth to lead Indian Army from June 30

New Delhi: Lieutenant General Dhiraj Seth has been appointed as the next Chief of the Army Staff (COAS), the government said in a statement on Saturday. Lt Gen Dhiraj Seth, presently serving as the Vice Chief of the Army Staff, will assume charge as the next Army chief on June 30, 2026. The present Chief of the Army Staff, General Upendra Dwivedi, will retire from service on the same day. Lt Gen Dhiraj Seth, an alumnus of National Defence Academy (NDA), Khadakwasla, was commissioned into the Armoured Corps in December 1986. In a career spanning over four decades, he has had a distinguished military career with extensive experience across operational, strategic, capability development and institutional domains, contributing significantly to the Indian Army's combat effectiveness and long-term transformation. He has commanded in diverse operational environments ranging from an Armoured Regiment in the Desert Sector, an Armoured Brigade in the Western Theatre, and a Counter-Insurgency Force in Jammu & Kashmir. As a Lieutenant General, he commanded the Sudarshan Chakra Corps, one of the Indian Army's premier strike formations. He also served as General Officer Commanding, Delhi zone, overseeing national and interna-



tional military engagements and ceremonial responsibilities. The decorated officer also earned a rare distinction of commanding two operational Army Commands and providing strategic oversight across critical theatres for over a period of 2.6 years. Over the years, he held several assignments that influenced operational planning, force management and capability development. Lt Gen Dhiraj Seth is widely recognised for his contributions to force modernisation, shaping its modernisation trajectory, capability roadmap and long-term force structuring initiatives. He is an accomplished military professional, having secured top positions in courses of instruction. Lt Gen Dhiraj Seth graduated from the Higher Command Course and the National Defence College, and also went to attend the prestigious Command & Staff Course in Paris, reflecting his broad strategic outlook and understanding of contemporary military affairs.

## Deposit mobilisation campaign launched

**(king Reporter)** Guntur: REPCO Bank has launched a special deposit campaign in Guntur, offering attractive interest rates to customers. The additional general manager G Jayachandran lit the lamp at a meeting held at its Brodipet Branch in Guntur city on Friday. He said that the bank is conducting the campaign from June 10 to July 31. He stated that the bank is offering special interest rates on fixed deposits, with senior citizens eligible for 8.25% interest, women customers for 7.85% per cent, and general customers for 7.75% per annum. The bank chief manager D Dastagiri, officials, and customers were present.





## Climate-resilient agriculture must become a national priority

El Niño, rainfall deficit and the imperative for climate-resilient agriculture in India National News Coverage The recent resurgence of El Niño has once again brought the issue of climate variability and agricultural vulnerability into sharp focus. El Niño, a climatic phenomenon associated with the abnormal warming of sea surface temperatures in the equatorial Pacific Ocean, has historically influenced weather patterns across the globe. The central parts of the country and North-East of the Peninsula experienced above-normal temperature. For India, one of its most significant consequences is the likelihood of below-normal monsoon rainfall, which can adversely affect agriculture, water resources, livelihoods, and the broader economy. India's agriculture is substantially dependent on the southwest monsoon. Nearly half of the country's cultivated area continues to rely on rainfall rather than assured irrigation. Consequently, any disruption in monsoon patterns has direct implications for food production and rural livelihoods. Meteorological assessments have often shown a correlation between El Niño years and weaker monsoons, though the intensity and impact may vary from one event to another. The possibility of rainfall deficits during El Niño conditions raises concerns about the production of major crops such as rice, sugarcane, cotton, and other water-intensive crops. Reduced rainfall not only affects sowing operations but also impacts crop growth, productivity, and harvest outcomes. Farmers may face increased irrigation costs, groundwater depletion, and heightened risks of crop failure. Such challenges can adversely affect farm incomes and increase rural distress. The implications extend beyond agriculture. Water scarcity affects drinking water availability, livestock health, hydropower generation, industrial operations, and urban water supply systems. Reservoir levels may decline, groundwater recharge may be reduced, and ecological systems dependent on seasonal rainfall may experience stress. In a country where agriculture supports millions of livelihoods and contributes significantly to food security, the consequences of prolonged rainfall deficits can be far-reaching. The present situation calls for a shift from reactive responses to proactive adaptation strategies. Climate-resilient agriculture must become a national priority. One of the most practical approaches is the promotion of low water-consuming crops such as millets, pulses, oilseeds, and drought-resistant crop varieties. These crops generally require less water, exhibit greater tolerance to moisture stress, and contribute to nutritional security. Their wider adoption can reduce dependence on water-intensive cultivation and enhance resilience against climate-induced uncertainties. However, crop diversification alone is not sufficient. Water conservation and resource management must receive equal attention. India possesses a rich heritage of traditional water harvesting systems, including tanks, ponds, community wells, and watershed management practices. For generations, rural communities maintained these systems through collective effort, ensuring water availability even during difficult years.

## Mushrooming fish ponds in Singur FTL lands pollutes Manjeera water



Sangareddy: River Manjeera water is known for its taste and softness over the years. It is a major source of drinking water for Hyderabad, erstwhile Medak and erstwhile Nizamabad districts for decades. However, the activities along the Singur shores left the people in a shock as it raised several questions over the purity of drinking water being supplied from Singur. Encroachers had dug multiple fishponds along the Singur Multipurpose project on the reservoir's shores, illegally occupying the FTL lands. Moreover, the encroachers, who were raising the fish, were feeding the fish chicken waste, spoiled eggs and other harmful foods to fish which were also getting into the reservoir. The same water is being supplied to the State capital and Medak and districts through Manjeera pipelines and Mission Bagiratha.

Further exploiting the water resources, these persons were pumping water from the Singur project into these ponds. Apart from that, they were also using the free electricity connecting the pumps from the

local lines without obtaining any permissions. The Transco, Irrigation, Revenue, Police and other concerned department officials are least bothered even as encroachers dug multiple ponds in Andole, Vatpally, Manoor, Raikode and Nyalkal mandals, which were located around Singur project. All these mandals fall under Andole assembly constituency, which is being represented by Damodara Rajanarasimha. The persons engaged in pisciculture reportedly collect chicken waste from Hyderabad, other nearby towns in Telangana and Bidar in neighbouring Karnataka, to feed the fish.

Former Andole MLA Chanti Kranthi Kiran accused the encroachers of digging the ponds with the support of Health Minister and Andole MLA Damodara Rajanarai smha. He further said that the officials were also supporting the encroachers as the activity was going unabated. Kranthi Kiran demanded the State government to order a probe into the entire episode and take stern action against the culprits besides demolishing the lakes.

## B.Tech student commits suicide after losing Rs 30k to cyber fraudsters in Siddipet

Siddipet: The man V Ruthik Roshan (20) consumed pesticide on Thursday late night. The family members found him unconscious state after 2 am on Friday when they rushed him to a hospital. He died while undergoing treatment hours later. The Bejjanki police registered a case and the probe was on.



## Adapt to changing warfare, Rajnath tells newly commissioned IAF officers

Hyderabad: Observing that today's warfare underwent major changes, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh urged the newly commissioned IAF officers to adopt, adapt and amend, if required, the new war systems and strategies. Stating that earlier there were two vectors – soldiers and equipment, Rajnath Singh said in today's war situation the enemy is not visible as radars, satellites, drones and robotics among other systems are being deployed. "Today, a scenario of controlling adversaries traffic and the CCTVs systems has also emerged," he said. The Defence Minister reviewed the Combined Graduation Parade (CGP) of 217 Course held at Air Force Academy (AFA) Dundigal here.

The CGP marked the commissioning of the first batch of women cadets from the National Defence Academy (NDA), Pune, who passed out on May 30, 2025 and joined AFA for branch specific training. Rajnath Singh, who was the reviewing officer for the parade, told the newly commissioned officers to be always aware and prepare for any challenges and recalibrate their response depending on the situation. As much hard and smart work, the Defence Minister urged the officers to gain brilliance. Smart work, he said, only smart nations are making their place in the technology sector. "Earlier, powerful nations used to have a decisive edge in every situation. But now, even small nations are achieving decisive edge with new lethal weapons and tactics," he said, adding that every war across the world should be a learning school.

Stating that IAF has been a source of inspiration for crores of people in the country, he urged the newly commissioned officers to carry forward the legacy of IAF officer Shubhanshu Shukla who was part of the International Space Station team. The event, marked by military precision, commemorated the suc-



cessful completion of the pre-commissioning training of flight cadets across various branches of the IAF. During the ceremony, the Defence Minister conferred the 'President's Commission' to the graduating trainees. The ceremony included presentation of 'Wings' and 'Brevets' upon successful completion of training to the flight cadets of the IAF, officers and trainees of the Indian Navy, Indian Coast Guard and Socialist Republic of Vietnam. The Defence Minister presented 'President's Plaque' as well as the 'Sword of Honour' to Ashish Kumar Yadav, flying officer from flying branch, for standing first in the order of merit. He also presented the 'President's Plaque' to Divyanshi Singh and Ekta Gupta for standing first in the overall order of merit in ground duty and navigation branches respectively. Earlier, an air display by the Akash Ganga and Air Warrior Drill Team (AWDT) marked the beginning of the event. Interestingly, this time too, IAF Chief Air Marshal, AP Singh led the fly-past formation. The fly past showcased four types of trainer aircraft viz. Pilatus PC-7 MklII, Hawk, Kiran and Chetak aircraft. Aerial displays by SU-30 MKI, Sarang helicopter display team and Suryakiran Aerobatic Team (SKAT) were major attractions of the ceremony.

## Father and daughter die of electrocution while clearing rain debris in Alwal

Hyderabad: A father and daughter died due to electrocution at Telecom colony in Alwal on Saturday morning. According to the police, the man Sandeep (44) and his daughter Rithika (16) stayed at Telecom colony in Alwal. On Saturday, Sandeep's family was clearing branches of trees fallen on the road outside their house due to heavy rains last night when the duo got electrocuted and collapsed. Both of them died on the spot. The wife of Sandeep suffered burns in the incident. On information the police reached the spot and shifted the bodies for postmortem to Gandhi Hospital mortuary. The police registered a case. The police suspect electricity cables snapped and had fallen on the road and the duo came in contact with it and suffered electrocution. Further details awaited.

## Family waits for 10 days for dead body after migrant worker dies in Dubai

Medak: The family members of a Gulf migrant worker, who died in Dubai, have been waiting for his body for 10 days. The deceased, Chinthakindi Saikiran (35) of Vadiyaram in Chegunta mandal, left for Dubai in May last year. However, he died of a heart attack on May 2, 2026. Since then, the family members have been trying to bring the body back. They have already filed a request with the State government's "Pravasi Prajavani" in

Hyderabad. His wife, Nagalakshmi, said that they wanted to have a last glimpse of her husband. She said that they also wanted to



lay him to rest here. "Saikiran always desired to return to his homeland while he was alive," she recalled her conversation with her husband. Since Saikiran's family was in deep financial trouble, he left for Dubai with the hope of clearing the debts by earning a respectable salary in the Gulf country. However, his death left the family in deep shock. Nagalakshmi appealed to the State government to make all efforts to bring the body back. The couple is survived by two children.

## AI in Healthcare 2.0 conference inaugurated at Yashoda Hospitals in Hyderabad

Hyderabad: The two-day international conference, "AI in Healthcare 2.0," recognised as India's largest healthcare summit dedicated to Artificial Intelligence, was inaugurated at Yashoda Hospitals in Hitec City on Saturday. Held under the theme "Powering Precision & Personalising Care," the conference has brought together more than 2,000 doc-

tors, healthcare professionals, researchers, policymakers and AI experts from across the world to deliberate on the growing role of artificial intelligence in transforming healthcare delivery. The event was inaugurated by IT and Industries Minister D Sridhar Babu, in the presence of Dr G S Rao, Managing Director of Yashoda Hospitals, and Dr Chinnababu Sunkavalli,

Organising Chairperson of the conference and Clinical Director at Yashoda Hospitals, among other distinguished guests. Addressing the delegates, Sridhar Babu said artificial intelligence was emerging as a key driver of innovation across sectors and was set to significantly transform healthcare through improved diagnostics, treatment planning and patient care. The conference will feature discussions on emerging technologies, AI-driven healthcare solutions and future opportunities in the



medical sector, with participation from experts representing leading institutions and technology organisations from India and abroad. The event will continue on Sunday with a series of technical sessions, panel discussions and innovation showcases focused on advancing AI-enabled healthcare.



## IAF AN-32 aircraft catches fire after landing at Jorhat airbase in Assam

Guwahati: An Indian Air Force (IAF) AN-32 transport aircraft reportedly caught fire after landing at Assam's Jorhat on Saturday, triggering emergency response measures at the airbase, officials said. Initial reports indicated that the incident occurred immediately after the aircraft touched down, with flames and thick smoke seen billowing from the aircraft.



## CP lends a ear to grievances of police personnel

Warangal Police Commissioner Sun Preet Singh conducted a grievance meeting to address departmental and service-related issues for personnel in Zones 3 and 4, highlighting the department's commitment to employee welfare and operational efficiency. Hanumakonda: In-charge DIG and Warangal Police Commissioner Sun Preet Singh stated that special priority is being given to addressing the departmental and service-related issues of police officers and personnel. He said the department is committed to resolving matters related to promotions, transfers, disciplinary proceedings, and other service concerns in a timely manner. A grievance meeting was conducted on Friday at the Warangal Range Office for police officers and personnel serving under Zones 3 and 4. During the programme, the Commissioner reviewed representations submitted by police personnel regarding various departmental issues.

Applications related to promotions, transfers, disciplinary matters, and other service-related concerns were examined in detail. The Commissioner directed the concerned officials to take necessary steps for the prompt resolution of genuine grievances and ensure that personnel receive appropriate support regarding their service matters. He emphasized that the Commissioner attaches great importance to the welfare and service security of police personnel and noted that addressing their concerns effectively would contribute to improved efficiency and performance in the discharge of their duties.

## DRDO successfully tests multi-layered missile defence system and naval anti-ship missile

New Delhi: The Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) has successfully demonstrated a range of advanced strategic capabilities, including a multi-layered Ballistic Missile Defence (BMD) system and a new anti-ship missile, marking a significant milestone in India's indigenous defence programme and strategic capabilities. According to a Ministry of Defence press release, the DRDO successfully carried out tests showcasing the nation's next-generation defence technologies designed to counter evolving security threats. The demonstrations were carried out through three consecutive flight-tests conducted on June 10 and 11. The ministry said a "Multi-layered Ballistic Missile Defence (BMD) capability was successfully demonstrated," with interceptor missiles accurately engaging and neutralising their designated targets during the trials. "The interceptors successfully engaged their respective targets," the release stated, adding that the systems have been "designed and developed with latest technologies to address the emerging missile threats." The



successful demonstration is seen as a major boost to India's strategic deterrence capabilities. The ministry noted that the tests have elevated India's standing among a select group of countries possessing sophisticated missile defence systems. "These tests have put the country in the elite group of nations having BMD capability to engage up to Inter-continental Ballistic Missiles," the press release said. In another significant achievement, DRDO successfully con-

ducted the maiden flight-test of the Naval Anti-Ship Missile-Medium Range (NASM-MR). The missile is expected to enhance the operational capabilities of the Indian armed forces by providing a modern and effective maritime strike option. The flight tests were witnessed by senior officials from DRDO and the armed forces, reflecting the close coordination between scientists and military personnel in advancing indigenous defence technologies. Defence Minister Rajnath Singh congratulated DRDO and associated teams on the successful demonstrations, according to the ministry. Secretary, Department of Defence Research and Development and DRDO Chairman Rajesh Kumar Singh closely monitored the trials. He applauded the combined efforts of DRDO scientists, engineers and industry partners whose collaboration contributed to the successful outcomes. The latest tests underscore India's continued focus on self-reliance in defence manufacturing and the development of advanced systems capable of addressing future battlefield and strategic challenges.

## Telangana minister Komatireddy Venkat Reddy inaugurates State Citrus Seminar 2026

Telangana Minister Komatireddy Venkat Reddy inaugurated the 'State Citrus Seminar-2026' in Nalgonda, emphasizing the importance of scientific knowledge and government support for the thousands of sweet lime farmers in the region. Telangana Minister Komatireddy Venkat Reddy stated that his government is striving hard for the welfare of farmers. He remarked that a village prospers only when the farmer prospers, and the state prospers only when the village prospers. On Saturday, the Minister, along with Farmers' Commission Chairman Kodanda Reddy, inaugurated the 'State Citrus Seminar-2026' in Nalgonda. He spoke to the media on this occasion. Minister Komatireddy noted that the mention of Nalgonda district immediately brings to mind sweet lime (Battai) orchards. He mentioned that sweet lime cultivation has



served as the livelihood for thousands of farmers over the past four decades. He highlighted his own background as coming from a farming family and shared that he has personal experience in cultivating sweet lime. He observed that the absence of a dedicated platform for sweet lime farmers until last year had been a significant shortcoming. Minister Komatireddy Venkat Reddy emphasized that true transformation in the agricultural sector occurs only when scientific knowledge from books reaches the farmers' fields.

## Yashoda Hospitals introduces hypersight technology for precision cancer care

Oncology specialist Dr. Prasad from Yashoda Hospitals, Secunderabad, introduced India's first HyperSight radiation technology in Karimnagar, emphasizing its role in precise, effective cancer treatment and the importance of early diagnosis. India News Updates Karimnagar: Mental fortitude, along with advanced medical treatment, plays a crucial role in overcoming cancer, senior oncology specialist from Yashoda Hospitals, Secunderabad, said while addressing a media conference in Karimnagar on Friday. Dr Prasad said Yashoda Hospitals has introduced the country's first advanced hypersight technology in its radiation oncology department, making highly precise and effective cancer treatment possible. He stated that the cutting-edge technology accurately identifies can-

cer-affected areas and delivers radiation with greater precision, thereby significantly reducing the impact on surrounding healthy tissues and minimizing side effects. Highlighting the importance of early diagnosis, Dr Prasad said cancers detected in their initial stages have a higher possibility of successful treatment and complete recovery. He said the hospital is conducting awareness programmes to educate people about early detection, preventive measures and the latest treatment options available. Dr Prasad further noted that several patients have already benefited from treatment using the HyperSight technology and are progressing towards recovery.



## Cong leaders run 'soil and morum' mafia, alleges Peddi Sudarshan Reddy

Senior BRS leader Peddi Sudarshan Reddy has accused Narsampet MLA Donthi Madhava Reddy of patronizing an illegal "soil mafia," demanding transparency on excavation permissions following recent attacks on revenue officials. Warangal: Senior BRS leader Peddi Sudarshan Reddy on Friday strongly condemned alleged attacks on revenue officials by Congress leaders, accusing them of running a "soil and moram mafia" in the constituency under political patronage. Political Analysis Reports Speaking to media persons in Narsampet, Sudarshan Reddy alleged that illegal soil excavation activities are flourishing "under the direct watch of MLA Donthi Madhava Reddy." He claimed that Congress leaders, in collusion with certain officials from the irrigation and revenue departments, are securing unlawful permissions and carrying out large-scale soil extraction. He demanded that the MLA disclose details of permissions granted for soil excavation, including the number of locations, volume of soil permitted, and the quantity actually transported. "Public resources are being handed over to a handful of Congress leaders. The people deserve transparency," he said. The BRS leader further alleged that officials who insist on following rules are being targeted and attacked. "Such incidents reflect a breakdown of law and order in Narsampet. When even officials lack protection under the Congress regime, one can imagine the plight of ordinary citizens," he remarked.

## Harish Rao alleges multi-crore scams in Singareni, demands CBI probe



Bhupalpally: BRS deputy leader T Harish Rao levelled serious allegations of corruption and political interference against the Congress government in the functioning of Singareni Collieries Company Limited (SCCL), stating that the public sector coal miner was being pushed into financial distress through irregularities in contracts, power projects and procurement practices. Harish Rao along with BRS leaders attempted to enter the OC-2 mine in Bhupalpally on Friday. He demanded that officials show the coal stocks allegedly existing only on paper. However, the police prevented them from entering the mining area, leading to tension, before the BRS leaders returned to the party office. Addressing a Singareni workers' meeting at the BRS office in Bhupalpally, Harish Rao presented a detailed PowerPoint presentation outlining multiple scams in the coal major. He charged the Congress government with pushing a successful mining company into a debt trap, with corruption spreading across contracts, procurement and project execution. He accused the government of neglecting workers' welfare and warned that continued mismanagement could eventually pave the way for privatisation. Among the allegations, he highlighted a site visit certificate scam, stating that a newly introduced tender condition benefited select contractors and resulted in hundreds of crores of rupees in additional costs. He alleged that several overburden removal contracts that earlier attracted below-estimate bids were now being awarded at higher rates, causing losses to SCCL.

Harish Rao also alleged irregularities

in solar power projects, pointing out that contracts for 67 MW and 107 MW plants were awarded at inflated costs despite the absence of power purchase agreements (PPAs). He questioned why projects worth hundreds of crores remained non-operational years after completion. The BRS leader raised concerns over a proposed thermal power expansion at Jaipur in Mancherla district, stating that tenders were floated without statutory approvals and that over Rs 1,000 crore had already been spent on the project. Accusing the government of concealing coal stock figures, Harish Rao said nearly 40 lakh tonnes of coal were unaccounted for and demanded a physical verification of inventories.

He also listed out irregularities in explosives procurement, alleging substantial price variations that resulted in significant losses to the company. He said coal production declined from about 70 million tonnes in 2023 to 58 million tonnes in 2025-26, while outstanding dues owed to Singareni had risen sharply. He stated changes in diesel procurement practices were causing additional financial burden on the company. On workers' issues, Harish Rao accused the Congress government of failing to fulfil promises relating to compassionate appointments and welfare measures. He said Deputy Chief Minister Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka's announcement on pending appointments on Friday, was the result of sustained pressure from workers and the BRS. He said the party would raise the issue during the upcoming Assembly session and continue its campaign to protect Singareni from corruption and privatisation.

## BRS demands CBI probe into coal stocks disappear in Singareni



Peddapalli: Senior BRS leader and former Minister Koppula Eashwar demanded a CBI enquiry into the alleged disappearance of coal stocks and scams taking place in Singareni Collieries Company Limited (SCCL). Eashwar, along with former MLA Putta Madhukar and Telangana Boggu Gani Karmika Sangham (TBGKS) president Miryala Raji Reddy, examined coal stocks at the Opencast-5 coal mine in the Ramagundam-I area on Friday. Speaking on the occasion, Eashwar said that the future of the company had become questionable due to frequent scams allegedly taking place after the Congress government came to power. A conspiracy had been hatched to destroy the company, he alleged. According to government statistics, 40 lakh metric tonnes of coal stocks were available across the company. In OCP-5, six lakh metric

tonnes were stored. At present, 3.60 lakh metric tonnes were available. However, he claimed that not more than 50,000 metric tonnes were available. Instead of coal, soil, pebbles and stones were found. Not only in OCP-5, a similar situation prevailed at other stock points as well, he said. How would the government and SCCL management account for the coal stocks that were not available, he questioned. It showed the government's negligence in protecting public property, he said. Irregularities were taking place in Singareni under the leadership of Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy and Deputy Chief Minister Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka, he alleged.

The BRS leader, therefore, demanded a CBI enquiry into the alleged disappearance of coal stocks as well as the scams taking place in the company.

## No more half pants for upper primary Telangana govt school students

Hyderabad: Embarrassment over wearing half pants to schools will be a thing of the past for upper primary government students as the Telangana School Education department has overhauled the uniform. In a significant change, the department has prescribed pants and shirts for Class VI and VII students from the academic year 2026-27. So far, these students had half pants and shirts as part of the uniform. Uniform colour has also been changed for the forthcoming academic year. The light blue and navy blue uniform colours have replaced the existing maroon, and red and ash coloured uniform. The shirt for boys and top for girls will now be light blue, while the bottom for boys and girls, as well as the waistcoat for girls, will be navy blue in colour. As there were complaints of uniforms being unappealing and dull after the tweaks in the last academic year, the department reverted to the corporate school-like uniform design that had been introduced in the academic year 2023-24. The new design will again feature navy blue colour straps on the shirt shoulders, front pocket and sleeves. Further, waistcoat coloured (navy blue) straps have been prescribed on the sleeves of Punjabi dress and shirts as part of girls' uniform. These features were removed from the uniform during the academic year 2025-26. According to department's estimates, a total of 17,71,744 students in Classes I to XII in all Government, local bodies, TGREIS, Model Schools, KGBVs, Urban Residential Schools, TW Primary and Aided



Schools will be provided two pairs of school uniforms for the academic year 2026-27. Meanwhile, even as the schools are set to reopen for the academic year 2026-27 on June 15, they have not received cloth for stitching the uniforms. Self-help women groups that have been entrusted with the stitching work have already taken students' body measurements and are awaiting the cloth. The officials attributed the delay in cloth supply to schools to the centralised procurement.

Unlike the earlier practice of ordering uniform cloth from the Telangana Handloom Weavers Cooperative Society Limited, the School Education department, as per the government's directions, joined the centralised procurement process along with social, tribal and BC welfare residential educational institutions societies. The tenders were recently allotted to successful bidders, who were given 45 days to supply cloth to schools. Telangana State Updates

## Liquor industry bodies flag concern over Telangana govt's early payment discount mechanism



Hyderabad: Three leading industry bodies representing the alcoholic beverage sector have urged the Telangana government to clear pending dues of over Rs 3,700 crore before implementing a new payment mechanism that allows deductions for early payment discounts. The Brewers Association of India (BAI), the International Spirits and Wines Association of India (ISWAI) and the Confederation of Indian Alcoholic Beverage Companies (CIABC) said they had written to the State government expressing concern over the decision to make payments for supplies to the Telangana State Beverages Corporation Limited (TGBCL) after 15 days while deducting a cash discount of 2 to 2.75 per cent. According to the associations, the new mechanism came into effect from June 1, 2026, and has been applied to payments for alcoholic beverages supplied during May. They contended that while the cash discount provision exists in tender conditions, it is intended to be

exercised at the request of suppliers and not by the buyer, which is the Government. The associations stated that undisputed dues amounting to Rs 3,725.73 crore for supplies made between the first week of December 2025 and the first week of April 2026 remain unpaid. They argued that making payments against recent supplies while older dues remain outstanding is inconsistent with established commercial practices and could attract scrutiny from auditors of the liquor supplying companies. In their joint representation, the industry bodies expressed concern that monthly payouts could be directed towards newer dues to avail the cash discount, while older receivables remain unsettled. They said such a practice could increase financial risks for companies and potentially result in receivables turning into bad debts over time. The associations urged the government to release payments in chronological order and clear outstanding dues before implementing the early payment discount mechanism.

## Nivetha Pethuraj celebrates 10 years in cinema on sets of Chiranjeevi's Mega158

Chennai: Actress Nivetha Pethuraj has now shared a video clip of a cake cutting ceremony organised by the unit of Megastar Chiranjeevi's #Mega158 to celebrate the occasion of her completing 10 years in the film industry. Nivetha Pethuraj, who made her debut with director Nelson Venkatesan's 'Oru Naal Koothu', completed 10 years in the film industry recently. The unit of director Bobby Kolli's upcoming action entertainer, tentatively being referred to as #Mega158 and featuring Chiranjeevi in the lead, organised a cake-cutting ceremony on the sets to mark the occasion. Now, Nivetha Pethuraj has shared the video clip of the cake cutting event on her Instagram page, which shows the actress feeding cake to her fellow team members including actress Anaswara Rajan. It may be recalled that the unit had only recently wrapped up its schedule in Pollachi in Tamil Nadu. Taking to his X timeline to share an update on the film, director Bobby Kolli had said, "An electrifying schedule of #Mega158 has been successfully completed in Pollachi, some spectacular moments that are shaping up beautifully. More exciting updates on the way #ChiruBobby2 Produced by #VenkatKNarayana @KvnProductions Megastar @KChiruTweets #AnaswaraRajan @Nivetha\_Tweets @MusicThaman @vijaykartikdop @AntonyLRuben @artkolla @LohithNK01 @saranyapotla." For the unaware, this schedule had begun in Pollachi only last week. Megastar Chiranjeevi and the main cast members of the film participated in this schedule during which key scenes of the film were shot. For the unaware, actress Anaswara Rajan was recently welcomed on board the unit of the film by its makers. Taking to their X timeline, KVN Productions, the firm producing the film, had said, "A new wave of charm joins the MEGA storm. Welcoming the lovely #AnaswaraRajan to the world of #Mega158. #KVN\_TeluguDebut - #ChiruBobby2 Launched Grandly. A @dirbobby Film. Megastar @KChiruTweets #VenkatKNarayana @MusicThaman @vijaykartikdop @Antony



LRuben @artkolla @KvnProductions." The makers have already announced that ace music director Thaman will be scoring music for this film and that popular cinematographer Vijay Karthik Kannan, known for his impressive work in films like 'Jailer', 'Daaku Maharaj', and the upcoming 'Jailer 2', will be its cinematographer.

Art direction for the film is being handled by Kolla Avinash and editing is by Antony Ruben. The film has been in the news ever since the time it was first announced on Chiranjeevi's birthday last year. Only recently, Megastar Chiranjeevi had released a video that showed him sweating it out in the gym to get into shape for the role he plays in the eagerly awaited film. Taking to his X timeline to share the video, Chiranjeevi had said, "Every day is another opportunity to push beyond limits... Charged up and excited for another memorable journey with my dear @dirbobby for #Mega158. Opening Ceremony on May 21st." Megastar Chiranjeevi is joining forces once again with successful filmmaker Bobby Kolli for a high-voltage entertainer backed by the prestigious KVN Productions and produced by Venkat K Narayana. The footage Chiranjeevi shared showed him pushing boundaries with relentless intensity. It gave an indication of the transformative effort the star was investing to achieve a powerful new look for the role. The poster released by the makers to announce the project had an axe splitting a wall open, with traces of blood seen in the cracks on the wall. The poster had the tagline "The blade that set the bloody benchmark." This is the second time that director Bobby is working with Megastar Chiranjeevi. The two had earlier worked together on action entertainer 'Waltair Veerayya'.

## Ram Charan's Peddi crosses Rs 366 crore at global box office



New Delhi: Ram Charan-starrer "Peddi" has earned Rs 366 crore at the global box office. The sports action drama is directed by Buchi Sana and was released in theatres on June 4. It also features Shiva Rajkumar and Janhvi Kapoor, among others. Production banner Vriddhi Cinemas shared the box office collection on its official X handle on Tuesday. The film opened with Rs 135.36 crore and went on to earn Rs 236.7 crore in its first weekend. "#Peddi is SOUTH INDIA'S NO.1 GROSSER OF 2026. Collects a gross of over 366

CRORES WORLDWIDE in 9 days," read the caption. Set in rural Andhra Pradesh in the 1980s, "Peddi" follows the journey of a lower-caste villager who turns to wrestling to win recognition and dignity for his community. Actors Jagapathi Babu, Divyendu and Boman Irani also feature in pivotal roles. The film is produced by Venkata Satish Kilaru under Vriddhi Cinemas, co-produced by Ishan Saksena under IVY Entertainment, and presented by Mythri Movie Makers and Sukumar Writings. The music has been composed by AR Rahman.

## '29 The Film' director Rathna Kumar: My heart is screaming with joy and melting with love!



Chennai: Director Rathna Kumar, whose '29 The Film' is now being streamed on OTT after having emerged a superhit in theatres, has now penned a note of gratitude to the audiences for their overwhelming response to the film on the online platform. Taking to his social media timelines to post the note of gratitude, Rathna Kumar wrote, "Thank you all for the overwhelming response after the OTT release. My heart is screaming with joy and melting with love. For the past few days, I am receiving lot of messages saying thanks and sorry. Thanks for the feel the film has given them. And Sorry for missing it out in theaters." The director further went on to say, "I'm not just getting messages. I am receiving bundles of testimonials from all corners of the world in multiple languages. Had tears reading many. Replied for many. My Instagram and X feed is flooded with memes, essays, drawings, edits, reviews and AI generated Rathnavalluvar (laughing smiley). There is lots of love in it. I'm floored, drenching in love." Expressing his gratitude to every single person who had written to him, the director said, "Thanks to each and every one who virtually hugged

me with your kind words. Many said the film healed them in a certain way. To be honest, your love for the film healed me. Also I will take the criticism and do better with my upcoming projects. Without Viji there is no Sathya. Without Sathya there is no 29." He said, "Thank you my wonderful producers @kaarthekeyens & @lokesh.kanagaraj for making me do this magical marriage of emotions."

For the unaware, director Rathna Kumar's '29 The Film' featured Vidhu and Preethi Asrani in the lead. It was produced by G Squad, which is owned by director Lokesh Kanakaraj, and Stone Bench Productions, which is owned by Karthik Subbaraj. The film also featured actors Master Mahendran, Avinash, Shenaz Fathima and Premkumar among others. Mathankumar had co-directed this film, the music of which was composed by Sean Roldan. Cinematography for the film was by Madhesh Manickam and editing by R S Sathish Kumar while Shanmugaraja was in charge of the film's art direction. Costumes for the film were by Praveen Raja, while stunts in the film were choreographed by Don Ashok.

## Nora Fatehi headlines FIFA World Cup opening ceremony in Toronto as empty seats spark debate

Toronto: The maiden FIFA World Cup in Canada started on Friday with a star-studded second opening ceremony ahead of the Group B match between co-hosts Canada and Bosnia and Herzegovina in Toronto. Bollywood actor and dancer Nora Fatehi was the headline attraction, performing the official World Cup song 'Siir Siir'. Canada is hosting the FIFA World Cup for the first time in history, and begin their highly-anticipated campaign against Bosnia and Herzegovina, who made it to the tournament by beating European giants Italy. The other performers who featured in the opening ceremony included Vegeedream and Sanjoy, who took centre stage at the beautiful and majestic Toronto Stadium. The festivities in Toronto also featured performances from Jessie Reyez and Alessia Cara before the kick-off. Palestinian artist Elyanna also performed at the Opening Ceremony at BMO Field, Toronto. While some fans took to social media to criticise FIFA for another opening ceremony, which many fans found not exciting enough, a fair number of empty seats in the stadium in Toronto were also noted. Though the Aztecs Stadium in Mexico City was filled to the brim, the tournament's second fixture, South Korea versus Czechia at Estadio Akron in Guadalajara, witnessed noticeable swaths of unoccupied seats. According to reports, a day before the tourna-



ment began, roughly 180,000 tickets remained posted across FIFA's official resale platforms. Approximately 15,000 group-stage tickets were still obtainable directly through FIFA's website. However, FIFA denied that the stadium in Guadalajara was empty. "Official attendance figures reflect the number of tickets scanned, and spectators present within the stadium footprint, rather than visual assessments of seating occupancy at any given moment during the match. FIFA works closely with stadium authorities and ticketing teams to ensure all published figures are based on verified operational data," FIFA informed in a post by FIFA Media on X, formerly Twitter. "Please note that, during last night's match in Guadalajara, several ticketed fans could be seen standing in concourses rather than staying in their assigned seats throughout the match," the post said.

## Ajeetesh Sandhu leads Indian challenge at halfway stage of International Series Morocco

Hyderabad: Ajeetesh Sandhu with a bogey free 3-under 70 became the top Indian at the halfway stage of the US\$2 million International Series Morocco presented by Visit Morocco. Sandhu, who shot 1-under 72 in the first round is now 4-under and Tied-25th, as four-time Am Green IGPL winner, Gaganjeet Bhullar (74) slipped down to T-47 despite a run of four straight birdies on the front nine. Another AM Green IGPL winner, Karandeep Kochhar (72-72) at T-47 was the only other Indian to make the cut. Seven of the 10 Indians who started missed the cut and they included Shaurya Bhatta charya, SSP Chawrasia and Anirban Lahiri missing the mark by one shot. Rashid Khan, Aryan Roopa Anand and Udayan Mane were the others to make an early exit. Meanwhile, two-time Masters champion Bubba Watson joined Thailand's Pavit Tangkamolprasert on top of the leaderboard.

The 47-year-old Watson played great golf to overcome the Royal Golf Dar Es Salam's Red Course. He carded a seven-under par 66, the lowest round of the day and caught up with Pavit, who closed with a three-under par 70 to tie at 11-under 135 total. Watson hit 15 of the 18 fairways and made eight birdies against a solitary bogey.

Sandhu birdied the fifth, 11th and the 12th and did not drop any shots, while Bhullar starting from the tenth had three bogeys against one birdie on the stretch. He then had a double bogey on the Par-3 second and was 3-over at that stage. He fought back with four birdies in four holes from the fifth but dropped a shot on the ninth, his closing hole for a 74. Leaders, Watson and Pavit, were one ahead of Korea's Younghan Song (69) who was 10-under. Australia's Travis

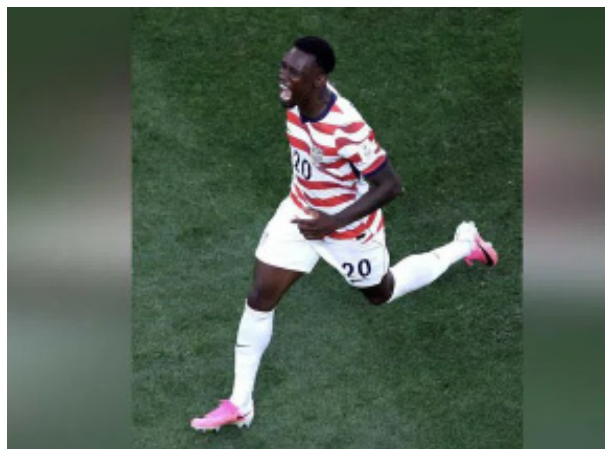


Smyth (70), International Series Japan champion and the current Asian Tour Order of Merit leader, moved to a tie for fourth place in the clubhouse at nine-under par alongside defending champion Scott Vincent of Zimbabwe (67) and the in-form Taichi Kho of Hong Kong (69).

The Thai duo of Jazz Janewattanond (67), champion of the inaugural International Series Morocco, and Suteepat Prateptienchai (69) were tied at eight-under. Watson's last win was on the PGA Tour at the Travelers Championship in June 2018. His ball-striking was good and he putted superbly needing just 26 putts. Pavit did not have the best start as two bogeys in the first eight holes left him one-over par, but just like the opening round, when he made four birdies in his last four holes, he managed to pick up strokes on the 17th and 18th holes for his three-under-par 70. Mehdi El Fakori was the only Moroccan player to make the cut with rounds of 74 and 70.

## Balogun's brace powers USA to commanding 4-1 win over Paraguay

California: Folarin Balogun struck twice as the United States launched their FIFA World Cup 2026 campaign in emphatic fashion, cruising to a 4-1 victory over Paraguay in their Group D clash at SoFi Stadium in California on Saturday. Playing a World Cup match at home for the first time since 1994, the co-hosts took control from the start and rarely let Paraguay get into the game. An early own goal from Damian Bobadilla set the tone. Then, Balogun's two goals in the first half put Mauricio Pochettino's team firmly in charge. Paraguay managed to score through Mauricio in the second half, but Gio Reyna's fantastic goal in stoppage time ensured the Americans kicked off their tournament with a solid win and three important points. The United States had the perfect start just seven minutes in. Paraguay midfielder Bobadilla accidentally turned Weston McKennie's dangerous pass into his own net while trying to clear the ball. This early goal allowed the hosts to dominate possession and put pressure on the South American team. Paraguay found it hard to contain the movement and creativity of the American attack, with Christian Pulisic involved in most of the threatening plays. Balogun thought he had scored again before the half-hour mark, but his goal was ruled offside. He didn't have to wait long to find the net. In the 31st minute, Pulisic threaded a well-placed pass through the Paraguay defense, and Balogun calmly finished it first time to make it 2-0. Balogun then delivered the goal of the match in first-half stoppage time. After receiving a pass from Malik Tillman on the right side of the area, Balogun skill-



fully cut inside two defenders and curled a beautiful shot into the top corner, giving the United States a commanding 3-0 lead at halftime. Pulisic was substituted at halftime by Pochettino. While the Americans created fewer chances after the break, they stayed in control. Paraguay showed more urgency in the second half and cut the deficit in the 74th minute. Julio Enciso reacted quickly to a loose ball and set up Mauricio, who beat goalkeeper Matt Freese with a low shot, giving his team a glimmer of hope. However, any comeback hopes were dashed quickly. Substitute Ricardo Pepi nearly restored the three-goal lead moments later but was stopped by goalkeeper Orlando Gil. Reyna eventually sealed the win deep into stoppage time, finishing off a quick counterattack with an impressive outside-of-the-boot shot that flew past Gil and into the net. This victory temporarily puts the United States at the top of Group D, ahead of Türkiye's match against Australia later on Saturday. The hosts will next face Australia in Seattle on June 19, while Paraguay will try to bounce back against Türkiye on the same day.

## Rain delays toss in India-Afghanistan ODI opener at Dharamshala



Dharamshala: The toss for the opening ODI between India and Afghanistan has been delayed due to persistent rain at the HPCA Stadium, the BCCI confirmed in an update on X. The buildup to the match has been dominated by rain, with the picturesque town witnessing rain over the past two days and again on the eve of the match. As per weather forecast website Accuweather, there is more rain in store till 4:30pm, with conditions expected to improve later in the evening. However, the eventual start timing of the match will depend on the drainage capacity of the venue once rain goes away. The three-match series holds vital importance in India's road to the 2027 Men's ODI World Cup, to be played in South Africa, Zimbabwe and Namibia. Shubman Gill-led India are without Virat Kohli and Hardik Pandya, who have been ruled out due to hamstring and leg injuries respectively. Former skipper and veteran opener

Rohit Sharma, however, cleared his fitness test at the BCCI Centre of Excellence (CoE) in Bengaluru and is set to open alongside Gill. India bowling coach Morne Morkel had said in the pre-match press conference that the team management is prepared to experiment for the number three position in this series in Kohli's absence, with KL Rahul, Yashasvi Jaiswal and Ishan Kishan all in contention. The conditions in Dharamshala have always been expected to aid fast bowlers with the new ball, this making the toss a crucial factor. With rain around and a possibility of a truncated game, it makes toss even more decisive considering the moisture pitch will have. Three of the five ODIs played in Dharamshala during the 2023 Men's ODI World Cup were won by teams batting first. India have a 3-0 record in ODI meetings against Afghanistan, while one game – in 2018 Asia Cup – ended in a tie.

## Women's T20 WC 2026: When and where to watch BAN vs NED, know all details



Birmingham: Bangladesh will face tournament debutants Netherlands in the fifth match of the ICC Women's T20 World Cup at Edgbaston on Sunday. The seasoned Asian team hopes to start their campaign with a win. This Group 1 match offers an exciting showdown between a well-experienced Bangladesh team and the Netherlands, making their first appearance at a Women's T20 World Cup. While Bangladesh frequently compete on the ICC stage, the Dutch women aim to make a strong debut with a significant performance. Bangladesh enters the game with a stable squad centred around a powerful spin attack. Rabeya Khan has been consistently taking wickets and is expected to be crucial, while Sobhana Mostary and Sharmin Akter will provide reliable batting support. For the Netherlands, focus will be on Sterre Kalis and Babette de Leede, two batters who can anchor the innings and accelerate as needed. Isabel van der Woning will lead the bowling efforts as the Dutch team seeks to challenge a more experienced opponent. History favours Bangladesh, who have won both previous matches against the Netherlands. Their experience in high-stakes ICC tournaments also gives them an edge. Nonetheless, the Dutch

team has shown promising performance in recent games and will see this match as a chance to test themselves against a top team on cricket's biggest platform. A strong start could give their campaign a vital lift. With Bangladesh aiming to confirm their status as favourites and the Netherlands preparing for a historic World Cup debut, an exciting contest awaits at Edgbaston.

**When:** Sunday, June 14, 3:00 PM IST

**Where:** Edgbaston, Birmingham

Where to watch: The BAN vs NED match will be broadcast on Star Sports channels, with JioHotstar live-streaming the game.

**Squads:**

Bangladesh: Nigar Sultana Joty (c), Nahida Akter (vc), Sharmin Akter Supta, Sobhana Mostary, Shorna Akter, Ritu Moni, Rabeya Khan, Fahima Khatun, Fariha Islam Trisna, Marufa Akter, Shanjida Akther Maghla, Sultana Khatun, Dilara Akter, Juairiya Ferdous, Taj Nehar Netherlands: Babette de Leede (c), Caroline de Lange, Frédérique Overdijk, Hannah Landheer, Heather Siegers, Iris Zwilling, Isabel van der Woning, Lara Leemhuis, Myrthe van den Raad, Phebe Molkenboer, Robine Rijke, Rosalie Lawrence, Sanya Khurana, Silver Siegers, Sterre Kalis

## INDIA bloc meet: Rahul Gandhi says next election 'already won' but fears fairness

New Delhi: Congress leader Rahul Gandhi told INDIA bloc leaders earlier this week that going by the anger among the people, the next general election is "already won", but the main problem is that there won't be a free and fair election to win. At the meeting of the INDIA bloc on Monday, he also gave a clarion call to the leaders to stay united, saying it is easy to beat the BJP "if we stand together and resist". Gandhi also dismissed the notion that the opposition parties are not coordinated and do not act together. "These are all ideas the BJP is putting out. This is not true — I am 100 per cent sure, and I can vouch right now for the DMK. When it comes to defending the idea of India, every single person will be in this room," Gandhi said. The DMK had boycotted Monday's INDIA bloc meeting over the Congress breaking alliance with it in Tamil Nadu and joining hands with the TVK. Gandhi also responded to the criticism of the Congress by its allies, including the Left parties, by referring to the "blue-necked one (Shiva) who drinks all the poison", and said whatever criticism they have of him or his party will be accepted with a smile on the face. He said

the Congress is fundamentally differently organised than all other parties in India because it began as a resistance movement when modern India did not exist. "Unlike all other political parties, it was not built using the infrastructure and protection of the Indian state. The Congress party is a resistance movement protecting the idea that all Indians are equal," he asserted.

The leader of opposition in the Lok Sabha said the Congress is fundamentally opposed to the vision of the RSS. "We will die — we will die in the Congress party — before we stand with or compromise with the BJP or the RSS. You will have to cut off our heads to make it happen. I know lakhs and lakhs of Congress workers in this country who will say: cut off our heads, we will not bow before the RSS," he said. Gandhi on Friday shared on his social media accounts his over nine-minute speech made at the meeting where the INDIA bloc constituents stressed on unity against the BJP. On Monday, the INDIA bloc members unanimously decided to demand Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan's immediate resignation over the NEET-CBSE



row and write to the chief justice of India on the SIR exercise and "vote loot".

In his remarks at the meeting, Gandhi said, "It is not my place to answer any of the things that were said today about the Congress party. It is my place to — like in the Shaiva tradition — swallow everything. The idea of the blue-necked one who drinks all the poison. Whatever more you want to say, whatever criticism you have of me or the Congress party, we will accept it, and we will accept it happily, with a smile on our face." "We will try to make you happy because our role is fundamentally different from yours. I do not say this with arrogance. Our role, as many of you have stated, is to unite all of you together with love and affection," he said. Gandhi said there is a confusion in the opposition group, with the likes of the SP, the TMC, the RJD believing that the political instruments they have used so far will still work. These only worked when the Indian state provided a fair field for them to operate in, he said, adding that field does not exist anymore. He alleged that the BJP controls the institutions of the state — the legal system, the bureaucracy, the intelligence agencies and

even the Election Commission. "I have many friends in the TMC. They were convinced that they were sweeping the (West Bengal) election. I kept telling them: you are in dreamland. I have seen what happens, 'I have seen it in Gujarat, I have seen it in Madhya Pradesh, I have seen it in Chhattisgarh, I have seen it in Haryana and Maharashtra. And yet many of you are still not convinced," he said.

"Mamata ji is not 100 per cent sure, but she is about 90 per cent sure that her election was stolen from her. Uddhav ji is 40 per cent sure that his election was stolen. My brother Tejashwi ji is 40 per cent sure. Listen — 100 per cent the elections are being stolen. Please remove doubt from your minds," Gandhi said. He asserted that the Congress is the party of resistance. Gandhi stressed that he has no interest in fighting with allies. "Please understand: we won the last election in 2024. We did not lose the 2024 election. You ask why Nitish ji left — it was not because of me, not because of the Congress," he said. Gandhi claimed that in the near future, even those few instruments that used to work will stop working, because the BJP and RSS are tightening their grip on the Indian state. "If political parties can't function, what functions? Resistance functions. Resistance works. Wherever we resist, it works. I have seen it with my own eyes. I have walked 4,000 kilometres across this country — resistance works," Gandhi said.

## Delhi Court seeks police reply on fresh bail pleas of Umar Khalid, Sharjeel Imam

New Delhi: A court on Saturday sought a response from the Delhi Police on fresh bail pleas filed by Sharjeel Imam and Umar Khalid in the larger conspiracy case linked to the 2020 riots. The court issued notice on the bail applications and directed the Delhi Police to file its reply. The matter has been listed for further hearing on July 4. The two accused have moved regular bail pleas in the case registered under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA) and other penal provisions. In his plea, Imam contended that despite the passage of more than six months since the Supreme Court rejected his bail application in January, there has been no meaningful progress in the trial. The application stated that arguments on the question of framing of charges are yet to conclude and that Imam continues to remain behind bars for nearly six years in the case. Khalid has also sought regular bail before the trial court. Both applications were taken up together, following which the court sought the stand of the Delhi Police.

Earlier this year, the Supreme Court dismissed the bail pleas of Khalid and Imam, holding that the prosecution material disclosed prima facie grounds attracting the statutory embargo on the grant of bail under Section 43D(5) of the UAPA. At the same time, the apex court granted bail to five other accused in the case — Gulfisha Fatima, Meeran Haider, Shifa Ur Rehman, Mohd Saleem Khan and Shadab Ahmed. More recently, the Supreme Court granted six months' interim bail to Tasleem Ahmed and Khalid Saifi while referring to a larger Bench the question of whether prolonged incarceration and delay in trial can justify the grant of bail despite the restrictions contained in Section 43D(5) of the UAPA. Observing that different Benches of the apex court had expressed divergent views on the interpretation of the three-judge Bench ruling in Union of India vs K.A. Najeeb, a Bench of Justices Aravind Kumar and Prasanna B. Varale directed the registry to place the matter before the Chief Justice of India (CJI) for constituting an appropriate Bench. The order came after



Additional Solicitor General S.V. Raju, appearing for the Delhi Police, argued that there appeared to be a divergence in the manner in which coordinate Benches of the Supreme Court were applying the K.A. Najeeb judgment while dealing with bail pleas under stringent statutes such as the UAPA and the NIA Act.

The Justice Aravind Kumar-led Bench also took note of the subsequent judgment in Syed Iftikhar Andrabi vs National Investigation Agency (NIA), where another coordinate Bench expressed reservations over certain aspects of the ruling that had denied bail to Khalid and Imam while granting relief to five other accused in the Delhi riots larger conspiracy case. Without commenting on the merits of the prosecution's case, the apex court granted interim bail to Ahmed and Saifi for six months, observing that they had undergone substantial incarceration and that the trial was not likely to conclude in the immediate future.

### Gym trainer arrested in Hyderabad for allegedly harassing woman pilot at Sanathnagar gym

Hyderabad: The Sanathnagar police arrested a Gym trainer for allegedly harassing a woman pilot at his gymnasium in the city. According to the police, the man Santosh Goud, works as a manager at a Gym located at Sanathnagar.

A few weeks ago, a woman pilot joined the Gym. In her complaint, the woman alleged that Santosh was sexually harassing her on pretext of training. On a complaint, the police registered a case against Santosh and arrested him. He was produced before the court and remanded.

## Telangana records highest inflation among states at 6.15 per cent in May

New Delhi: Inflation in Telangana continues to be the highest among all states since January 2026 and now is at 6.15 per cent in May, which may be due to higher taxes on fuel, rise in rural wages and reliance on imported fresh produce, according to an SBI Research report. State-level consumer inflation statistics highlight a broad regional disparity across the country. Out of the 36 states/UTs, there are 12-14 states/UTs where inflation is higher than all India level. Inflation in many of the major states, like, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, MP and Rajasthan etc., continues to be higher than all India level of inflation, the report mentioned. Among the major states, Andhra Pradesh, Assam, and Odisha have registered more than 2 per cent increase in inflation during January-May 2026, while All-India level inflation increased only by 1.19 per cent.

"However, the distribution of inflation among states/UTs highlights that majority of the state's inflation fall between 2-4 per cent during January-May 2026," said the report. India's Consumer Price Index

(CPI) inflation rose to 3.93 per cent in May, up from 3.48 per cent in April. The impact of an increase in petrol/diesel prices and slight LPG shortage is clearly visible in May data. Transport inflation increased by 176 bps to 1.8 per cent in May as compared to April. Similarly, inflation in Restaurants and accommodation services (which largely depend on LPG) increased by 154 bps to 5.7 per cent in May as compared to 4.2 per cent in April. The moderate rise in gold and silver prices led to almost 80 bps increase in inflation rate in the personal care division. At the item level, silver jewellery contributed 56 bps to headline inflation, followed by gold with a contribution of 30 bps, unchanged from the previous month. Global commodity prices, as reflected in the World Bank Pink Sheet, also showed stronger inflation in silver relative to gold. The contribution of petrol increased to 14 bps, while LPG shortages contributed to higher prices of cooked meat and cooked snacks, said the report.

## India's monthly SIP book grows nearly ten times in a decade: Report

New Delhi: India's systematic investment plan (SIP) story remains compelling as the monthly SIP book has grown nearly tenfold over the last decade, a report said on Saturday. The SIP book has grown from Rs 3,189 crore in May 2016 to Rs 30,954 crore in May 2026, surviving multiple disruptions including demonetisation, Covid-19, the Russia-Ukraine war, and global tariff headwinds, the report from ValueMetrics said. However, outstanding systematic investment plan accounts reached 1,047 lakh even as net new SIP additions recovered to just 2.5 lakh in May. In addition, total outstanding SIP accounts grew over 15 per cent year-on-year from 906 lakh in May 2025. New SIP registrations in the month stood at 54.2 lakh against discontinuations and tenure completions of 51.7 lakh, signalling rising churn within the SIP base.

A near-zero net addition of -0.6 lakh was recorded in both March and April 2026,

and the mutual fund industry's assets under management stood at Rs 81.6 lakh crore by end of the month. Moreover, active equity mutual funds recorded gross inflows of Rs 57,604 crore in May, while net inflows from active pure equity and hybrid funds combined stood at Rs 33,468 crore. Hybrid funds excluding arbitrage funds attracted Rs 4,862 crore in net inflows. While gross SIP registrations remain healthy at 5.2 per cent of outstanding accounts, discontinuations at 5.0 per cent have nearly caught up.

Meanwhile, gold ETFs saw net outflows of Rs 725 crore in May, reversing the strong inflow trend seen earlier in the year, while active equity net flows stood at Rs 22,908 crore. SIP contributions stood at Rs 30,954 crore which reflects sustained retail investor participation despite market volatility, with SIP assets at Rs 17.12 lakh crore.

## Below normal monsoon, will progress slowly across nation: IMD

New Delhi: The India Meteorological Department (IMD) on Saturday stated that the country will receive below normal rainfall this year, and though the monsoon has so far covered most of the Southern Peninsula, north east and parts of east India, it will progress slowly in other regions. Addressing the media, IMD scientist Pradeep Sharma mentioned that the El Nino phenomenon has now become active. "We expect El Nino will be active throughout the monsoon season," he said. "According to our long-range forecast of the southwest monsoon, we are expecting below normal, about 98 per cent of normal rainfall in the whole country," he added. Another IMD scientist, Naresh Kumar, noted that for the last two days, due to the effect of a western disturbance, there has been rainfall and thunderstorm activity in north-west India. "We had issued an orange alert for this. Today, the western disturbance is over north Haryana and the adjoining area. Due to its influence, we are expecting rainfall and thunderstorm activity to continue today in Punjab, Haryana, Delhi-NCR, and even in the Himalayan region. The wind speed may be between 40 to 50 kilometres per hour," he told IANS. "Before this, we had issued an orange alert; today, there is a yellow alert." He mentioned that an orange alert has also been issued for Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh.



"In Delhi-NCR, we are expecting light rainfall along with strong winds, which is why we have issued a yellow alert. Also, because of this, temperatures in north India have fallen by six to eight degrees," he said. However, Naresh Kumar said that temperatures will increase by four to six degrees in the coming days, but will be normal or below normal. "The monsoon has covered most of South Peninsular India. You could say it has covered up to Maharashtra; its progress has slowed a bit further," the IMD scientist stated. Further, he said that the monsoon has also covered the north-east and some parts of eastern India. According to IMD, the monsoon will also cover more parts of east India, like Bihar, Orissa, parts of Chhattisgarh and Jharkhand in the coming two to three days and will progress slowly after that.

## Another person dies in Vizag Steel Plant accident, death toll rises to 10

Another person has died following the recent accident at the Visakhapatnam Steel Plant, bringing the total death toll from the tragedy to 10. Eight people died and six others were critically injured when molten steel leaked at the plant on the 8th of this month. Among the injured, Gokivada Suribabu—a contract worker from the Sitana garam area of Pedagantyada, Visakhapatnam—passed away on Saturday while undergoing treatment at the local Seven Hills Hospital. It is already known that another injured worker, Paidiraju, also lost his life on Wednesday while undergoing treatment at the same hospital.



## Welfare measures at women's central prison reviewed

Rajamahendravaram: Member of the State Commission for Protection of Child Rights Undavalli Gandhi Babu visited the Special Women's Central Prison in Rajamahendravaram on Friday and reviewed the welfare and rehabilitation



programmes being implemented for inmates and their children. ICDS Project Director T Sridevi accompanied him during the visit. Gandhi Babu inspected various facilities within the prison, including the general kitchen, hospital, bakery unit, inmates' barracks, children's crèche and the RO water plant. He later interacted with women inmates and enquired about the vocational training programmes and livelihood opportunities being provided to them. After examining the daily food menu, Gandhi Babu commended the quality and hygiene standards maintained in the preparation and distribution of meals. "The food being served is nutritious, hygienic and properly managed," he remarked. He further said that horticulture and vegetable cultivation activities being undertaken in the semi-open prison were helping inmates acquire practical skills and fostering self-reliance. Special Women's Central Prison Superintendent CH Vasantha Kumari, Supervisory Officer Chetti Vasantha, Women and Child Welfare Department official T Sridevi and Child Welfare Officer Pradeep were among those present during the visit.

## Tarun representing India at world rowing championship

Vijayawada: Dr Tarun Kakani, member of Khelo India (Rowing), South Zone, and president of the Andhra Pradesh Rowing Association, has been nominated by the Rowing Federation of India as a member of the Rowing Commission to represent the Indian rowing team at the World Rowing Championship being held in Plovdiv, Bulgaria, from June 12 to 14. During the championship, Dr Tarun Kakani met with World Rowing Championship chairman Ivan Popov and President Katya Karuspov, along with Chiranjit Phukan. Representatives of rowing federations and athletes from several countries were invited to participate in the upcoming Asian Rowing Championship scheduled to be held in India. The interactions provided a valuable platform for promoting India's growing presence in the global rowing community and fostering stronger



ties with international rowing bodies. Speaking on the occasion, Dr Tarun Kakani said that attending the World Rowing Championship was a highly enriching experience. He said that the event offered valuable insights into the technical, organisational and operational aspects involved in conducting world-class rowing championships.

## Parties' support sought for SIR exercise



Ongole: Prakasam district collector P Raja Babu urged political parties to cooperate in the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) process being conducted under the Election Commission of India's guidelines to prepare a transparent voter list. Political Analysis Reports He held a special meeting at Prakasam Bhavan with representatives of political parties, Electoral Registration Officers (EROs), and Assistant Electoral Registration Officers (AEROs) on Friday. The meeting was held ahead of the house-to-house enumeration drive by Booth Level Officers (BLOs) scheduled from June 15th to July 14th. Speaking on the occasion, Raja

Babu said the goal of the SIR process is to ensure that all eligible voters are included in the electoral rolls. He added that the voter list would be cross-referenced with the 2002 voter list to ensure it was error-free. He asked party representatives to ensure that Booth Level Agents (BLAs) remain available to assist BLOs during field-level enumeration. Weekly review meetings will be held to track progress, assess ground conditions, and resolve doubts. DRO Madhuri, RDOs Vijaya Jyothi Kumari and Chandrasekhar Naidu, municipal commissioners, tahsildars, and representatives of TDP, BJP, and Congress attended.

## People urged to cooperate sought

Guntur: Guntur Municipal Corporation commissioner and Guntur East Electoral Registration Officer K Mayur Ashok has appealed to all citizens to extend their cooperation for the successful conduct of the Special Intensive Revision programme being undertaken by the ECI. He conducted a meeting for BLOs and BLAs of Guntur East and Guntur West Assembly constituencies at Sri Venkateswara Vignana Mandiram here on Friday. Speaking on the occasion, he explained the SIR process through a PowerPoint presentation and created awareness about the programme. He said that BLOs should visit households from June 15 onwards and urged citizens to keep all required documents and details ready. He informed that the BLO mapping process is currently underway. Two enumeration forms will be given to every voter, one of which must be filled in by the voter and submitted to the BLO. The second copy, duly signed by the BLO, will be returned to the voter as an acknowledgement. Also Read - Parties' support sought for SIR exercise Advertisement Discover more political National News Coverage Newspaper Archives Access He advised citizens to keep their Elector Photo Identity Card along with two passport-size



photographs ready. He further stated that the mapping process would become easier if voters could give details of the electoral rolls and polling stations where they or their family members were enrolled in 2002, as well as EPIC cards of their parents, grandparents or other eligible family members. Women who have shifted to other locations after marriage and those who have recently enrolled as voters were advised to collect and keep ready their parents' voter details in advance. He said that public cooperation is necessary for preparing a transparent and accurate electoral roll. He urged citizens to assist BLOs in the SIR exercise and requested BLAs to create awareness among the public at the grassroots level. He informed that special voter mapping camps would be conducted at every polling station from Saturday until Sunday afternoon.