

Govt ready for NEET discussion in Parliament, accuses Rahul of changing demands

New Delhi: The government on Tuesday said it is ready to discuss all issues relating to the NEET exam and the movement associated with it in Parliament, after Leader of Opposition in Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi sat on a dharna outside Prime Minister Narendra Modi's residence.

In a strongly worded statement, Minister of State in PMO Jitendra Singh, who along with Union Home Secretary Govind Mohan met Gandhi and urged him to end his sit-in, alleged that the LoP "backtracked" from his earlier demand for a debate and said it does not befit a leader of his stature.

Singh said Rahul Gandhi did not agree to his request and instead demanded that Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan must also resign.

The minister also said that the Congress "has not given any notice to date for a formal discussion on this serious matter (NEET issue) as per rules". "For a senior leader like Shri Rahul Gandhi and the Leader of the Opposition (LoP) to go back on his word is unfortunate and contrary to every norm of democracy," the minister said.

"The government is ready to discuss in Parliament all issues related to NEET and the associated movement... Shri Rahul Gandhi's behaviour does not align with the principles of democracy," Singh said.

The MoS PMO and the Union Home Secretary met Gandhi soon after he, Congress chief Mallikarjun Kharge and several other senior leaders sat on a dharna outside Prime Minister Modi's residence and demanded his resignation over the police action against students protesting on the NEET paper leak issue.

Soon after Singh's state-



ment, police on Tuesday evening forcibly removed and detained Gandhi and other leaders. In the statement and video message, the minister said some time ago it came to light that Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge and other senior leaders such as Rahul Gandhi, Priyanka Gandhi and others, suddenly sat on protest near Akbar Road with their supporters.

"In view of the dignity of this senior delegation, the government sent me personally, along with the Union Home Secretary Govind Mohan, to the spot to hold talks with these senior leaders. "A request was made to Shri Rahul Gandhi to end his sit-in, as this site is not meant for protests, and holding a sit-in here is causing considerable inconvenience to the general public," he said.

The MoS PMO said Gandhi put forward the demand that if the government agrees to discuss in Parliament all issues related to NEET and the associated movement, he would immediately end his sit-in.

Within a few moments, after taking permission from the government's top leadership, Rahul was assured that his demand has been accepted, and the government is ready to discuss in Parliament all issues related to NEET and the associated movement.

"When this information was conveyed to Shri Rahul Gandhi, he said that he would

not agree to this alone but also sought assurance for the resignation of the Union Education Minister (Dharmendra Pradhan)," he said.

Singh said Gandhi then said that he now has two demands: discussion in Parliament and the resignation of the Union Education Minister. When the Congress leader was reminded that earlier he had only demanded discussion, he said that now my demands have changed.

"When an attempt was made to humbly explain to him that for a senior leader like him to backtrack from his word so quickly does not befit him, he said that it is his prerogative. "When the Home Secretary tried to explain that this site is not suitable for a sit-in, his response was that it is also his prerogative to sit wherever he wants," the MoS said.

Singh said for a senior leader like Rahul Gandhi and the Leader of the Opposition to go back on his word is "unfortunate and contrary to every norm of democracy". "The government is ready to discuss in Parliament all issues related to NEET and the associated movement.

In contrast, the Congress Party has not given any notice to date for a formal discussion on this serious matter as per rules. Shri Rahul Gandhi's behaviour does not align with the principles of democracy," he said.

PM Modi says strict action taken in NEET paper leak, urges Centre-state cooperation

New Delhi: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday asserted that strong action was taken against those involved in the NEET paper leaks so that no one plays with the future of the youth, and said states should join hands with the Centre to tackle the menace in national interest.

Modi made the remarks at a meeting of the NDA MPs here, a day after thousands of students led by the Cockroach Janta Party (CJP) took part in the 'Sansad Chalo' march against irregularities in the NEET exam and to demand Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan's resignation.

Briefing journalists after the NDA Parliamentary Party meeting, which was named 'Mangal Milan' since it is held mostly on Tuesdays, Union Parliamentary Affairs Minister Kiren Rijiju said the prime minister told the MPs that the government acted immediately after reports of the paper leak surfaced, and 13 people were arrested and sent to jail.

"At the same time, the prime minister said, to ensure that students' future was not affected, the NEET re-examination was given priority, conducted successfully, and the results were declared without delay," Rijiju said after the hour-long meeting.

He said the prime minister also said that strict steps have been taken to prevent such paper leaks in the future. Modi told the NDA MPs that those found involved in the paper leak racket have been arrested and jailed.

The prime minister also told the ruling alliance's MPs that those guilty in paper leaks should be given the strictest possible punishment, with the support of the country's top lawyers, so that



those involved in such a grave offence face exemplary action and such incidents do not recur.

"The prime minister said strong action has been taken to ensure that no one plays with the future of youth. The prime minister also said that to ensure that no future paper leaks take place, all state governments and the Centre must join hands irrespective of party. This is not a matter of party politics but matter of national interests," Rijiju said.

Modi also stressed the need to punish the guilty and collaboratively establish a foolproof system. The parlia-

mentary affairs minister said the prime minister gave guidance to everyone present at the meeting.

He said at the outset the newly elected Rajya Sabha members, including BJP president Nitin Nabin, who was elected to the Upper House recently, was congratulated and wished success in Parliament.

Rijiju said the meeting was very productive as the prime minister spoke on several important issues.

The prime minister spoke about the achievements the country has made over the

past few months and also briefed the NDA MPs on the free trade agreements (FTA) signed with several countries.

On the FTAs, Rijiju said, Modi assured the NDA members that the interests of farmers would be prioritised and emphasised that no harm would come to them.

The prime minister stressed that the welfare of farmers remains paramount in any FTA signed with any country and the government is ensuring that these agreements serve the best interests of both the farmers and the nation, he said.

Rijiju said the NDA would play a constructive role during the ongoing Monsoon Session. "We are united in our resolve to ensure the passage of all important bills brought forward for the nation's benefit. We also appeal to the opposition parties that while they may hold differing views, they should come forward to work together for the country, its future, and the youth," he said.

Rahul, Priyanka, Akhilesh detained during protest outside PM Modi's residence

New Delhi: Delhi Police on Tuesday forcibly removed and detained Congress leaders Rahul Gandhi and Priyanka Gandhi Vadra as well as SP chief Akhilesh Yadav from the protest site outside Prime Minister Narendra Modi's residence.

Rahul Gandhi along with other Congress leaders, including the chief ministers of Karnataka and Kerala, started a sit-in protest around 3.30 pm against the police action on protesting students the day earlier. As police swooped down on the site, the leader of opposition in the Lok Sabha



could be seen lying on the ground and resisting as security personnel tried to pick him up. He was hurt in the process.

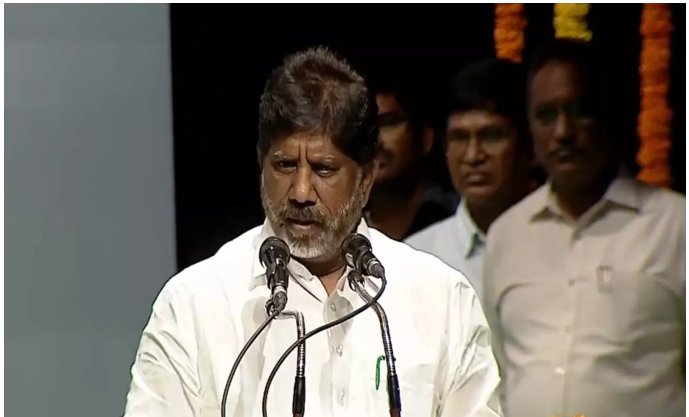
An aide said he suffered an injury below the eye. There were dramatic scenes with Priyanka Gandhi hanging on the door of the police bus even after it started moving.

The Congress has been demanding the resignation of Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan and a discussion on the NEET issue in Parliament. They are also asking for justice to the protesting students

Govt Preparing Comprehensive Plan To Deal With El Niño: Bhatti Vikramarka

Hyderabad: Telangana Deputy Chief Minister Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka on Tuesday said the state government is formulating a concrete action plan to ensure that global weather patterns such as El Niño do not adversely impact the people. Speaking at a seminar titled "From Pacific Ocean Warming to Telangana Preparedness" organised here by the state planning department, he said the government's objective is not just taking administrative decisions to deal with such eventualities, but also to create awareness among people. If the severity of the issue is understood in advance, every family and village can prepare their own plans effectively, he said.

He said scientific studies are being conducted by the state government to



understand how temperature variations occurring in the equatorial Pacific Ocean impact the villages in Telangana. Based on the analysis, effective action plans are being developed. The plans are being prepared in advance to ensure that there is no shortage of drinking water, irrigation water, and also to meet the food and water needs of livestock, birds, and wildlife, he said.

He emphasised that the

main objective of the seminar is to create awareness at individual, family, village, mandal, and district levels so that everyone is prepared to deal with the adverse impact of El Niño. To protect farmers from financial losses during drought-like conditions, the government is promoting cultivation of alternative crops, based on expert recommendations, that require less water, Vikramarka

said. He also appreciated television channels for responsibly broadcasting such information and reaching every household in rural areas. He observed that due to rising temperatures, the use of fans, air conditioners, lights, borewells, and lift irrigation motors has increased significantly, both during the day and night, in the current monsoon season.

Typically, electricity demand is lower during the monsoon season but due to the impact of El Niño, the current demand in Telangana has reached peak summer levels similar to April, he said. The deputy chief minister added that the government is implementing efficient energy management strategies to handle the increased demand caused by El Niño.

KT Rama Rao invited to Sri Akkanna Madanna Bonalu celebrations



Hyderabad: Sri Akkanna Madanna Mahankali Mandiram Haribowli Temple Committee representatives here on Tuesday met BRS working president and former minister KT Rama Rao and invited him to the upcoming Bonalu festival celebrations at Sri Akkanna Madanna Mahankali Temple on August 9.

The committee representatives extended an invitation card for the upcoming 78th annual Aashada Maasa Bonalu celebrations and requested Rama Rao to participate in the event.

Temple committee president D Prabhakar, secretary K Dattatreya, treasurer A Satish, organising secretary SP Kranthi Kumar, vice-presidents Jagmohan Kapoor and M Vinod Kumar, members Saikiran Pawar, Ravinder Chary and L Arun Kumar, among others, were present on the occasion.

CM to Invite PM for Bhogapuram Airport Inauguration



VIJAYAWADA: Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu will leave for New Delhi on Wednesday to invite Prime Minister Narendra Modi for the inauguration of the Alluri Sitarama Raju International Airport at Bhogapuram in Vizianagaram district, scheduled for August 1.

The CM is also expected to meet Home Minister Amit Shah and ministers Piyush Goyal, Manohar Lal Khattar and C.R. Patil to discuss issues concerning Andhra Pradesh.

Naidu will depart Amaravati at 7.30 am, reach New Delhi by 10 am, stay overnight after completing his engagements. He would return to the state Secretariat Thursday morning.

Ahead of the visit, Naidu held a teleconference with senior officials, district collectors and public representatives, directing them to organise the airport inauguration as a historic event with active public participation from across North Andhra.

Describing the Bhogapuram international airport as a "growth engine" for north Andhra, he said the project would provide global connectivity and transform the region into a major logistics hub. He said the airport, along with the passenger terminal, Aviation University, skill development centre, aviation hub and Edu City, would usher in a new era of economic growth.

Naidu said the airport would be a game changer for AP, attracting investments in AI data centres, logistics, tourism and industries while unlocking the potential of rare earth minerals in north Andhra. He added that the project would significantly strengthen the Visakhapatnam economic region and generate large-scale employment opportunities.

The CM directed officials to ensure that the spirit of the inauguration reached every household in the six north Andhra districts over the next nine days. He asked district administrations to showcase Araku coffee, the region's culture and traditional art forms during the celebrations and create awareness about the airport's economic benefits.

As a mark of gratitude, Naidu announced that farmers and landowners who had parted with land for the airport project would be honoured with a one-time complimentary air journey.

AP CM Discusses Food Cluster, Horticulture Exports With UAE Minister



VIJAYAWADA: Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu on Tuesday said the UAE had translated its investment commitments made at the World Economic Forum summit in Davos into action within six months, helping Andhra Pradesh to be a major hub for food processing, exports and global trade.

Naidu also highlighted the state's strong logistics network comprising ports, railways and highways and said another international airport would become operational in Andhra Pradesh from August 1. Inviting UAE investors to seize opportunities at 'quantum speed', he urged them to consider Amaravati as their second home.

The Chief Minister was speaking after the state economic development board signed a pact (MoU) with the UAE Food Cluster at the secretariat in the presence of UAE economy and tourism minister Abdulla Bin Touq Al Marri.

The agreement aims to promote investments, exports and trade in AP's food processing sector while establishing an integrated value chain for horticultural produce.

As the first investment under the partnership, Dubai-based Floor Masters International announced a Rs 100 crore investment to establish a food processing unit in Gangadhara, Nellore, in Chittoor district. The company, which exports its

products to nearly 25 countries, will manufacture world-class food products in AP for international markets.

The MoU envisages the setting up of a UAE food cluster in the state to facilitate investments in food processing, value addition and exports of horticultural products such as mango, banana and cocoa. This is also expected to strengthen foreign trade and attract more UAE-based companies to invest in AP.

Highlighting the state's strengths, Naidu said AP is a national leader in horticulture, aquaculture and information technology, with agriculture and horticulture contributing nearly 30 per cent of the Gross State Domestic Product.

The government, he said, is transforming Rayalaseema into a horticulture hub with public and private investments of Rs 1 lakh crore and will establish the Indian School of Agriculture in partnership with Reliance.

The CM said Andhra Pradesh has over 200 horticulture clusters producing export-oriented crops, including chilli, oil palm, cocoa, coffee and aquaculture products. He attributed the state's agricultural success to assured irrigation from the Krishna and Godavari river systems and said AP's Speed of Doing Business policy has made it an attractive destination for investors.

Under this, approvals are issued within 21 days of filing the application.

Addressing the gathering, Abdulla Bin Touq Al Marri said AP offers enormous opportunities because of its rich agricultural base and visionary leadership. He said the UAE plans to establish a food corridor with AP by developing food processing, cold-chain and allied infrastructure to boost bilateral trade.

The UAE minister said exports of dairy products, poultry, seafood, pulses and horticultural produce from Andhra Pradesh to global markets would be expanded. He also promised to strengthen shipping connectivity between Krishnapatnam and Kakinada ports and the UAE to facilitate faster trade and logistics.

The signing ceremony was attended by UAE food cluster chairman Saleh, UAE assistant secretary Maria Al Qasim, special projects director Anousha Al Marzooqi, UAE embassy representative Ahmed Al Jneibi, industries minister T.G. Bharat and Chief Secretary Sai Prasad.

Lokesh Distributes 3,000 Land Titles, Reiterates Commitment to Develop Mangalagiri



VIJAYAWADA: Education minister Nara Lokesh on Tuesday said the government was committed to transforming Mangalagiri into a model constituency and fulfilling the promises made to the people.

He distributed permanent land title deeds to around 3,000 beneficiaries from Mangalagiri and Tadepalli mandals at a public meeting held under the Mana Illu – Mana Lokesh programme at the CK Convention Centre.

The minister said the distribution of title deeds fulfilled a key election promise of granting permanent ownership rights to eligible poor families. Recalling his defeat in the 2019 assembly election, Lokesh said he had assured residents that the issue of land regularisation would be resolved if he came to power.

He said the state government has granted permanent ownership rights to land worth nearly Rs 1,000 crore, ending decades of uncertainty for beneficiaries. The title deeds would enable them to obtain bank loans by using their properties as collateral while providing legal ownership, he added.

Thanking the people for electing him with one of the highest victory margins in the 2024 Assembly elections, Lokesh said the government was implementing welfare and development programmes simultaneously. He cited infrastructure projects in Mangalagiri, including underground drainage, 24x7 drinking water supply, parks and crematorium development, besides state-wide welfare schemes such as enhanced social pensions, Thalliki Vandanam, Stree Shakti and Anna Canteens.

The minister said the government was working to implement its election commitments despite financial constraints while attracting investments and reviving stalled projects to strengthen the state's finances.

Lokesh said the Telugu Desam, Jana Sena and BJP had adopted a transparent process in identifying beneficiaries and appealed to the people to continue supporting the alliance government.

Pattabhi Gives Anantapur GGH Ultimatum To Rectify Biomedical Waste Lapses

Anantapur: Swachh Andhra Corporation chairman K. Pattabhi Ram has directed Government General Hospital (GGH), Anantapur, to rectify deficiencies in sanitation and management of the entity's biomedical waste within a week. Otherwise, he warned that stringent action will be taken against the agency responsible for waste disposal.

The chairman inspected on Tuesday the Anantapur Municipal Corporation (AMC) dumping yard, where the biomedical waste had been lying with garbage lifted by the Anantapur municipality. Later, Pattabhi Ram held a review meeting at the GGH conference hall with hospital officials, representatives of the AP Pollution Control Board, AMC authorities and the biomedical waste management agency.

During the meeting, officials of the Pollution Control Board submitted a report highlighting deficiencies, including improper segregation of biomedical waste, non-compliance with the prescribed four-colour bin system, inadequate storage facilities for organic and dry waste, poor surveillance, and the absence of biohazard signage.

Expressing concern, the chairman warned that the agency entrusted with biomedical waste disposal would be blacklisted if it failed to rectify the shortcomings within a week. He summoned the agency's managing director to appear before him next Thursday with an explanation. Pattabhi Ram directed the hospital management and the agency to strictly adhere to central and state government guidelines on biomedical waste handling and disposal. He instructed the agency to deploy a larger vehicle and maintain a fixed daily schedule for collecting the biomedical waste from the Government General Hospital.

He asked hospital authorities to ensure segregation of waste at source, implement the prescribed colour-coding system, and use separate trolleys for transporting biomedical waste. Pattabhi Ram said he would review compliance after one week and take strict action if deficiencies are not rectified by then.



AP Home Minister Says Future-Ready Policing Will Hinge on 3P Model

Vijayawada: Andhra Pradesh Home Minister Vangalapudi Anitha on Tuesday underlined that policing in the state must evolve faster than the changing nature of crime. She stressed on the need for technology-driven, transparent, and people-centric policing to tackle emerging threats, such as cybercrime, organised crime, and misuse of social media.

Launching the three-day Future-Ready AP Police Retreat in Vijayawada along with Director General of Police Harish Kumar Gupta, the minister called for transforming Andhra Pradesh police into a proactive, technology-driven force. She said the department should shift its focus from merely responding to crime to preventing it through the Prediction-Precaution-Prevention (3P) model.

Senior IPS officers and officials from the Fire Services, Prosecution, Prisons, Special Protection Force, and Forensic Science Laboratory are participating in the retreat.

Anitha emphasised that policing must keep pace with emerging challenges through innovative strategies



and adopting modern technologies to curb drug trafficking, rowdyism, and crimes against women and children.

Addressing the gathering, DGP Harish Kumar said the police force must prepare now for the nature of crime expected by 2047. He observed that if a policing system is designed from scratch today, it would differ significantly from the existing structure of police stations and traditional administrative models.

The DGP stressed the need to strengthen artificial intelligence, digital forensics, and other advanced technologies to investigate emerging crimes effectively. He said building a robust digital security ecosystem would form the foundation of future policing and public safety.

The opening day of the retreat focused on six major themes, including cybercrime and technology-enabled offences, safety of women and children, drone threats, protection of critical

infrastructure, counter-terrorism, road and transport safety, urban mobility, human resource reforms, training, future skill development, digital police architecture, technology modernisation and disaster management.

Among those who addressed the retreat are Jaimandeep Singh, senior consultant at the Centre for Cyber Security, Trust and Reliability, IIT Madras; Dr Putrevu Venkata Sai Charan, assistant professor at IIT Tirupati; Prabeet Kumar Sikdar of the International Road Federation; and Prof. Vijayabhaskar, Dean (Academics), IIM Visakhapatnam. They shared insights into global policing trends, technological advancements and future security challenges.

The three-day exercise will conclude with a comprehensive action plan and recommendations on future policing. Officials said the retreat's report, to be submitted to Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu on July 23, would serve as a roadmap for technological and institutional reforms in policing in Andhra Pradesh.

AP To Execute 36 Irrigation Projects At Cost Of Rs 35,555 Crore

Vijayawada: The Andhra Pradesh government would complete 36 major irrigation projects at an estimated cost of Rs 35,555 crore by the end of 2028.

Water resources minister Nimmala Ramanaidu told the media here on Tuesday that the government has prepared an action plan to complete the execution of 36 major projects on a priority basis. He noted that in the last two years, the government had allotted `24,611 crore to the water resources department in the Budget, Out of this, `12,484 crore was meant for the projects in Rayalaseema region. The minister released a two-years' progress report of the water resources department and said Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu made substantial Budget allocations to the department.

He said that 11 irrigation projects on a priority basis would be completed in the north Andhra region in the next two years. "We had also completed the Handri-



Neeva project in two phases by allotting `3,870 crore in 100 days to transform the Rayalaseema region."

Referring to the expenditure incurred for taking up several irrigation projects, the minister said that the TD government had spent `66,000 crore in 2014-19 in which `12,000 crore was spent for the Rayalaseema projects.

He noted that the previous YSRC government had spent `32,059 crore in 2019-24 while the alliance government had spent `24,611 crore in 2024-25. Out of this, an amount of `12,484 crore was spent in Rayalaseema alone.

The minister gave a presentation with regard to the progress of execution of several projects including the Polavaram, Veligonda, Handri-Neeva Sujala Sravanthi, several north Andhra projects, the Chinthalapudi and the 1,026 lift irrigation schemes in the state.

Steps to prevent drinking water problems in villages: District Collector Bhavesh Mishra



Nirmal District Staff Reporter : Every farmer should come forward to construct a farm pond

District Collector Bhavesh Mishra directed officials to take all necessary measures to ensure that people in remote villages do not face drinking water shortages.

During his visit to Ambugam village in Kuntala Mandal on Tuesday, the Collector reviewed the availability of drinking water, electricity, telecom services, and other basic infrastructure. He interacted with villagers to understand their concerns and instructed all concerned departments to work in coordination to resolve local issues promptly.

Considering the drinking water scarcity in the village, the Collector said that a new borewell would be sanctioned immediately once the Gram Panchayat

passes a resolution and submits the required proposal. He inspected the proposed borewell location and the transformer, directing officials to expedite the necessary arrangements.

Emphasizing the importance of groundwater conservation, the Collector stated that farm ponds are highly beneficial and urged every farmer to construct one in their agricultural fields. He inspected a farm pond developed by a local farmer and appreciated both those who had already constructed farm ponds and those coming forward to do so. He also instructed officials to create awareness among farmers so that more farm ponds are established in the village.

The Collector further assured that steps would be taken to improve telecom connectivity in the village. He called upon every villager to actively participate in the conservation of groundwater resources.

The visit was attended by Additional Collector (Local Bodies) B. Venkateswarlu, DPO Srinivas, DRDO Vijayalakshmi, RWS Executive Engineer Sandeep, Tahsildar Kamal Singh, MPDO Vanaja, Sarpanch Shivaji, and other officials and staff.

Five-Day Free Cancer Screening Drive Begins for Nizamabad Police Personnel :



Nizamabad July 21, 2026 : In a significant initiative to promote the health and well-being of police personnel, Nizamabad Police Commissioner P. Sai Chaitanya, inaugurated a five-day Free Cancer Screening Drive at the Police Commissionerate on Tuesday.

The programme, jointly organized by Bridge Gap Hospital, Indur Cancer Hospital, Meghana Dental Hospital, and Legit Diagnostics, is aimed at providing comprehensive cancer screening and preventive healthcare services to police personnel and their family members aged above 50 years.

Launching the camp, the Police Commissioner said that police personnel dedicate their lives to safeguarding society and therefore must give equal importance to their own health. He noted that the stressful nature of police service, coupled with irregular working hours and unhealthy lifestyle patterns, increases the risk of various health complications, making routine medical check-ups indispensable.

He emphasized that cancer is one of the diseases that can be effectively treated if detected in its early stages. Regular screening, timely diagnosis, and awareness can save lives, he said, while urging all eligible police personnel to undergo the free health examinations.

The Commissioner also appealed to the police force to adopt healthier habits by avoiding tobacco, smoking, gutka, and excessive alcohol consumption. He encouraged them to maintain a balanced diet, engage in regular physical activity, manage stress, and seek medical advice without delay whenever health concerns arise.

The health camp features a series of diagnostic tests, including oral cancer screening, chest X-ray, Random Blood Sugar (RBS) test, Prostate-Specific Antigen (PSA) test, and other preventive examinations. The Commissioner appreciated the participating hospitals and medical professionals for their commitment to supporting the welfare of the police department through this initiative.

The inaugural programme was attended by ACP Prakash Yadav, Police Medical Officer Dr. Sarala, Dr. Amar Deepika, Medical Director of Indur Cancer Hospital, Oncologist Dr. Panasa Aravind, Surgical Oncologist Dr. Karthik, RMO Dr. Ravindranath Sari, Associate Professor Dr. Aditya Teja of Meghana Dental College, Reserve Inspector (Admin) Dharani Kumar, Reserve Inspector (Welfare) Satish, Rural Circle Inspector Srinivas, along with doctors, medical staff, and police personnel.

Special action to effectively deal with the rain deficit

All departments should work in coordination to deal with the impact of El Nino
Ministers Ponguleti Srinivas Reddy, Ponnam Prabhakar



Hanamkonda Freedom : The government has taken special action to effectively deal with the rain deficit as there is a possibility of less than normal rainfall in the state due to the impact of El Nino, said Ponguleti Srinivas Reddy, Minister for Revenue, Housing and Information and Public Relations and Minister in-charge of the joint Warangal district.

On Tuesday, a comprehensive review meeting was held at the Hanamkonda Collectorate Conference Hall along with Minister Ponguleti Srinivas Reddy and State Transport and BC Welfare Minister Ponnam Prabhakar on the impact of El Nino, rain deficit and implementation of contingency plans.

The meeting was attended by State Finance Commission Chairman Siricilla Rajaiah, Telangana Legislative Assembly Deputy Speaker Ramachandrunayak, MLC Baswaraju Saraiah, MLAs Revuri Prakash Reddy, Nayini Rajender Reddy, Gandra Satyanarayana Rao, Donthi Madhava Reddy, Kadiyam Srihari, K.R. Nagaraju, Dr. Murali Naik, District Library Chairman Meesala Prakash, Joint Warangal District Special Officer, State College Education Commissioner Devasena, Joint Warangal District Collectors and senior officials of the concerned departments.

Speaking on this occasion, Minister Ponguleti Srinivas Reddy directed the officials to work in coordination to effectively deal with the impact of the rain deficit in the wake of El Nino conditions and to implement contingency plans effectively at the field level.

He said that special officers have been appointed for each joint district to continuously monitor the rain deficit conditions, and senior IAS officer Devasena has been appointed for the joint Warangal district. He said



that the special officers will prepare reports on agriculture, drinking water availability, groundwater and rain deficit conditions and submit them to the state government. He revealed that a comprehensive report will be sent to the central government and necessary assistance will be sought.

The minister ordered that in the current situation, agricultural officers should create awareness among farmers at the field level about crops that can be cultivated with less water as an alternative to paddy and cotton. He also said that farmers should be given suggestions on measures to prevent the monkey menace.

He ordered that steps should be taken to ensure that the Devadula project motors work at full capacity every day and that repairs should be completed within 24 hours if any defect arises. He said that drinking water supply through Devadula should be given top priority and that the government would provide the necessary funds. He suggested that the officials of Devadula and Irrigation Departments should work in coordination and that the Mulugu District Collector should supervise this coordination.

Don't worry, the government is on your side

Minister Ponguleti clarified that there is no need for people and farmers to worry, and that the government will continuously monitor the situation and take all necessary measures.

Farmers should be prepared to cultivate alternative crops to rice

Minister Ponnam Prabhakar Keeping in mind the current rain-deficit conditions, State Transport and BC Welfare Minister Ponnam Prabhakar has instructed officials to prepare farmers for alternative crops that can be cultivated with less water instead of rice.

He said that the cultivation of alternative crops that provide income, such as lemon grass, should be encouraged.

MLA Payam Venkateswarlu Assures Support to Podu Farmers, Urges Them Not to Lose Hope

Condemns Attack on Tribal People, Warns of Strict Action Against Those Responsible



Bhadrachalam Hospital for better medical treatment.

Later, the MLA visited tribal residents of Manubothulagudem, who were allegedly attacked by Forest Department officials. He strongly condemned the incident, describing the assault on tribal women with boots and sticks as inhuman and unacceptable. He particularly criticized the alleged actions of Forest Officer Sampath, who reportedly dragged a tribal woman by her hair, pushed her to the ground, and stomped on her.

The MLA stated that the government had immediately suspended Officer Sampath and issued memos to the Forest Range Officer (FRO) and three other officials. He warned that strict action would be



taken against any officials who behave illegally or inhumanely towards tribal people in the future.

Payam Venkateswarlu assured the affected farmers that he would hold discussions with officials to find a permanent solution to the Podu land issue and ensure justice for them. He advised the victims to remain courageous and not to live in fear.

The programme was attended by Mandal Congress President Oruganti Ramesh Babu, local leaders, Deputy Sarpanches, Ward Members, former public representatives, and party workers.

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Teachers' Issues Should Be Resolved Immediately: STU

Nagarkurnool : The State Teachers' Union (STU) has urged the Telangana government to resolve the long-pending issues of teachers without further delay.

Speaking during the STU membership enrollment programme held at government schools in various villages of Bijnapally mandal, STU Nagarkurnool District General Secretary S. Madhusudhan Reddy and State Vice President K. Ramesh demanded the immediate release of six pending Dearness Allowance installments and the announcement of the Pay Revision Commission.

The leaders also urged the government to fulfil the Chief Minister's assurance by scrapping the Contributory Pension Scheme and implementing the Old Pension Scheme. They sought the immediate clearance of pending General Provident Fund, medical reimbursement, and surrender leave bills.

They further demanded that all vacant teaching posts across Telangana be filled to strengthen the public education system.

STU District Finance Secretary Hanumanth Reddy, Bijnapally Mandal President Shekhar, General Secretary Venkataswamy, Hussain, and other union leaders participated in the programme.



ticipated in the programme.



Wednesday 22, July, 2026

INDIA'S FIRST HYDROGEN-POWERED TRAIN SIGNALS JOURNEY TOWARDS CLEAN ENERGY

India's first indigenously built hydrogen-powered train, developed under the 'Make in India' initiative, is an important milestone in the country's ambition to decarbonise transport under the National Green Hydrogen Mission. While it is a laudable innovation that puts India among a select group of nations that have developed the hydrogen fuel-cell technology, a wider rollout will hinge on solving the cost, supply, and infrastructure challenges. The 89-kilometre-long Jind-Sonipat route in Haryana was recently flagged off by Prime Minister Narendra Modi. The 10-coach train comprises two hydrogen-powered driving cars and eight passenger coaches with a total capacity of around 2,600 passengers, and has a design speed of 110 kmph. The Railways has developed the hydrogen fuel-cell train with the aim of deploying it initially on heritage and non-electrified routes before scaling up. Although hydrogen trains are unlikely to replace electric trains on India's heavily electrified mainlines, they offer a promising solution for routes where electrification is difficult or uneconomical. The launch has set in motion a transition towards cleaner, low-emission transport. It also signals India's intent to be among the global leaders in sustainable mobility. Powered by hydrogen fuel cells that emit only water vapour, the train offers an environmentally friendly alternative to diesel locomotives. With indigenous technology and a locally developed hydrogen ecosystem at Jind, the project demonstrates growing domestic capabilities in advanced engineering. It also complements the National Green Hydrogen Mission, which seeks to reduce India's dependence on imported fossil fuels while supporting the country's long-term net-zero ambitions.

India's broader green hydrogen production target is 5 million tonnes a year by 2030, backed by over \$2 billion in incentives. Therefore, scaling up reliable green hydrogen supply nationwide is still a work in progress. High costs, limited infrastructure, storage challenges, and widespread electrification of the railway network mean that hydrogen trains are likely to complement—rather than replace—electric trains. Their long-term success will depend on affordable green hydrogen, technological maturity, and targeted deployment on routes where they offer clear economic and environmental advantages. India's heavy reliance on imported crude oil, natural gas, and industrial feedstocks makes energy security a national priority, particularly during periods of geopolitical instability. Producing hydrogen domestically using renewable energy can help reduce exposure to volatile global energy markets and strengthen economic resilience. However, the euphoria surrounding the hydrogen train must be tempered with realism. Green hydrogen costs almost twice as much as the conventional grey variety. With over 95% of India's broad-gauge railway network already electrified, hydrogen-powered trains are unlikely to replace electric trains across the country. Instead, they may find their greatest value on non-electrified routes where conventional electrification is economically or technically difficult. The hydrogen train should therefore be viewed as a strategic demonstration. Its success will depend on India's ability to lower production costs, expand renewable energy capacity, and create a commercially viable hydrogen ecosystem

Revanth Reddy Condemns Rahul, Priyanka's Detention After PM Residence Protest

Hyderabad: Telangana Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy on Tuesday condemned the detention of Rahul Gandhi, Priyanka Gandhi Vadra and other Congress leaders after they staged a dharna outside Prime Minister Narendra Modi's residence here, alleging that it amounted to an assault on the democratic right to protest. The entire Congress family and the country stand firmly with the nation's youth, who are demanding accountability from the Central government, he said.

"You can throw us in jail, you can try to suppress us, but you cannot suppress the anger of millions of young Indians fighting for justice and accountability," he said in a post on X. Reddy had expressed solidarity with Rahul Gandhi before he and other opposition leaders were forcibly removed by the police. "The Hope of India, Shri @RahulGandhi, is protesting for the future of India, seeking the resignation of Prime Minister Modi and Home Minister Amit Shah," Reddy said in an earlier post on X.

He said AICC president Mallikarjun Kharge and Priyanka Gandhi Vadra were extending their full support to the youth protesting across the country. In a dramatic turn of events, Rahul Gandhi, Priyanka Gandhi Vadra and Samajwadi Party chief



Akhilesh Yadav were forcibly removed by the police after staging a dharna outside Prime Minister Narendra Modi's residence here, demanding his resignation. The surprise sit-in in the high-security zone prompted the government to send Minister of State in the Prime Minister's Office Jitendra Singh and Union Home Secretary Govind Mohan to persuade the opposition leaders to vacate the area. Singh held a brief discussion with Rahul, but the talks remained inconclusive, following which he and the home secretary left the protest site. Soon after, the police forcibly removed and detained Rahul and the other opposition leaders. "Democracy in India is happening right now," Rahul told reporters as police tried to remove him from the site.

Ola, Uber, Rapido Drivers to Observe Strike in Telangana on July 22

Hyderabad: App-based cab drivers, auto-rickshaw drivers, delivery personnel and goods transport drivers across Telangana will participate in a statewide flash strike on July 22. The decision to hold the strike was announced at a meeting of various workers' unions held at the CITU office in Musheerabad.

Telangana Gig and Platform Workers' Union founding president Sheikh Salauddin apologised to the public for the inconvenience the strike may cause. He further stated that the decision to hold the strike was taken after several long-pending issues remained unresolved.

Thousands of workers associated with Ola, Uber, Rapido, Swiggy, Zomato, Blinkit, Zepto and other app-based service platforms are expected to take part in the strike, demanding a minimum base fare and fair per-kilometre and per-minute charges.

The workers are also demand-



ing the implementation of welfare schemes, stricter regulation of aggregator companies, immediate enforcement of the Gig and Platform Workers Rules, the establishment of a Welfare Board, and implementation of the Motor Vehicle Aggregator Guidelines-2025.

Telangana Gig and Platform Workers' Union founding president Sheikh Salauddin also warned that if the state government and aggregator companies fail to respond to their demands, the workers will launch an indefinite strike from August 8.

Union leaders said the movement is not just about better wages but also about securing labour rights, social security and a dignified livelihood for gig and platform workers.

Harish Rao accuses Congress of failing Devadula irrigation promises

Hyderabad: BRS deputy floor leader and former Irrigation Minister T Harish Rao went all guns blazing against the Congress government for misleading farmers by promising irrigation water through the Devadula Lift Irrigation Scheme, encouraging cultivation and then refusing to supply water. Demanding that all 10 pumps be operated without delay and all 22 balancing reservoirs be filled, he urged the government to honour its assurances and provide irrigation to the ayacut.

He demanded that the government either ensure immediate irrigation or compensate farmers for crop losses while providing input subsidy. He warned that the BRS would launch joint protests with farmers from the erstwhile Warangal, Nalgonda and Karimnagar districts if the government failed to act.

Speaking to mediapersons at Telangana Bhavan on Tuesday, Harish Rao said that on July 12, the BRS questioned the government over the delay in operating the Devadula pumps. A day later, Deputy Chief Minister Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka, along with Ministers N Uttam Kumar Reddy and Ponguleti Srinivasa Reddy, visited the project and announced that all 10 pumps would be operated, 38 tmcft of water would be lifted and 22 reservoirs would be filled. Trusting these assurances, farmers transplanted paddy, he said.

"Now the government has backed out of its promise. Water is neither being lifted nor supplied, forcing farmers onto the streets," he said, referring to protests across Shayampet, Bhimadevarapalli, Elkathurthi and other parts of the erstwhile Warangal district.

Harish Rao questioned why the government was not operating all the pumps of the Devadula project despite sufficient water availability in the Godavari River and adequate storage at the Sammakka Barrage. While the Ministers promised to operate all 10 pumps, only five were operational as of Monday, he said.

He accused the government of creating an artificial drought through administrative failure rather than climatic conditions. "This is not an El Nino drought; it is a Congress-made drought," he said, stating that although



105 TMCft of Godavari water flowed downstream through the Devadula system, the government lifted only about 1.9 TMCft despite having the capacity to lift nearly 12 TMCft during the period.

The former Irrigation Minister said the BRS government completed the Sammakka Barrage and all three phases of the Devadula scheme to irrigate 3.17 lakh acres. Despite having the infrastructure, pumps and water, the present government had failed to utilise the system, he alleged.

He also pointed to conflicting statements, with the Ministers assuring irrigation for over three lakh acres and the Warangal Collector reportedly advising farmers not to take up transplantation due to inadequate water availability. "Whom should farmers believe?" he asked.

Harish Rao stated that the sluices under the Ramappa reservoir had been closed even after farmers commenced cultivation, and irrigation was denied despite abundant flows in the Godavari River. He also questioned the delay in operating the scheme since June 1 and blamed the government for failing to release pending payments and ensure uninterrupted power supply to the lift pumps.

Recalling that crop losses worth Rs 700-800 crore were reported under the scheme last year due to delayed pumping, he warned that a similar situation could recur if corrective measures were not taken immediately.

Police Seal Borders as Farmers Approach Delhi Protesting US Trade Deal



Shambhu: Around a thousand Punjab farmers on their way to Delhi to take part in the Kisan Mahapanchayat to protest against the proposed India-US trade deal were stopped at the Shambhu border on Tuesday as Haryana Police erected barricades and placed cement blocks at the entry point to the neighbouring state. Later in the day, Haryana Agriculture Minister Shyam Singh Rana and Ambala Deputy Commissioner Ajay Singh Tomer met the Punjab farmers, received a memorandum from them and promised to fulfil their demands.

The farmers said they will chart their next course of action soon. A day-long Kisan Mahapanchayat is being organised at Kisan Ghat in Delhi under the banner of 'Desh Bachao Morcha' on Tuesday, to protest against the proposed India-US trade deal. Farmer leaders had earlier said that participants from several places, including from Punjab, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh, would take part in the Mahapanchayat.

As part of the plan, around a thousand farmers from Punjab, carrying flags of their respective organisations, arrived at the Shambhu border on Tuesday to proceed towards Delhi in buses. The farmers' convoy had spent Monday night at the sarai (pilgrims' inn) of Gurdwara Sri Fatehgarh Sahib and departed in the morning. From the gurdwara, they reached Madhopur near Sirhind on GT Road, and then proceeded towards Shambhu, where they were stopped from proceeding further.

Heavy police deployment was made at the entry point to Haryana, with chained barricades and cement blocks erected on the bridge over Ghaggar river and water cannon vehicles on standby. Authorities in the adjacent Ambala had clamped prohibitory orders in the district. Ambala Superintendent of Police Ajit Singh Shekhawat and other police officials were camping at the spot to monitor the situation. Security was also tightened along key national highway stretches, while farmer leaders said scores of farmers were stopped at the Khanauri border, Shahabad in Kurukshetra and Karnal as well.

In Kurukshetra, farmers claimed that they were stopped near Jyotisar. Lashing out at the Nayab Singh Saini government, Punjab farmer leader Sarwan Singh Pandher said they wanted to proceed peacefully to Delhi, but they were stopped at the Haryana border. He said farmers want the proposed India-US trade agreement to be scrapped. Speaking to reporters, Pandher questioned why they were stopped from participating in the protest and alleged that this exposed the "true face" of the Haryana chief minister, who frequently visits Punjab to seek votes and makes tall promises to people there. He also slammed Punjab BJP chief Kewal Singh Dhillion for keeping silent. "What danger do they have from us? Earlier they used to blame us for taking tractor trolleys along. But this time, we are only going for a four-hour-long programme," he said. He reiterated that the farmers do not intend to be involved in any confrontation with the Haryana Police as they wanted to go to Delhi peacefully. Pandher further demanded the release of Bharatiya Kisan Union (Charuni) chief Gurnam Singh Charuni, who was detained by police in Kurukshetra on Monday while on his way to the Mahapanchayat. The outfit's spokesperson, Prince Waraich, claimed that the Haryana Police had been detaining a large number of the outfit's workers to prevent their participation in the protest. Bharatiya Kisan Union (Shaheed Bhagat Singh) leader Tejveer Singh alleged that Haryana Police has sealed the Shambhu border point without any prior notice. The Punjab farmer leaders later demanded a meeting with Haryana Agriculture Minister Shyam Singh Rana, who, along with the Ambala deputy commissioner, met them. Sharing details of the meeting, Sarwan Singh Pandher said the Haryana minister assured them that detained farmers, including Gurnam Singh Charuni, will be released after discussion with the chief minister. They have also been assured that a meeting will be arranged with Union Agriculture Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan within eight to ten days, Pandher said. Meanwhile, sealing of the border point led to several commuters facing inconvenience. In view of the farmers' protest, Haryana Police issued a traffic advisory, asking commuters to take the Ambala Cantonment-Chandigarh-Lalru-Dera Bassi-Zirakpur route to go to Punjab. Those going to Delhi from Punjab can take the Rajpura-Lalru-Dera Bassi-Zirakpur-Ambala Cantonment route, it said. Farmers have been strongly opposing the India-US trade deal, claiming that it would adversely impact the country's farming sector. They claimed that the proposed trade deal would allow cheaper agricultural imports into India, affecting domestic farm incomes and the country's agricultural economy. This would adversely affect farmers, agricultural labourers, livestock rearers, small traders and micro industries, they said. The farmers said that the proposed agreement would not be limited to a few commodities but several, including agriculture, dairy, industry, digital trade, e-commerce, government procurement, intellectual property rights, and the services sector.

Revanth Reddy’s Promise on Dharmareddy Canal Fulfilled; Water Released



Nalgonda: Chief Minister Anumula Revanth Reddy’s assurance for restoration of the Dharmareddy canal was fulfilled with the release of water to it for irrigation on Tuesday.

During his Musi river rejuvenation sankalpa padayatra from Sangem to Bhimalingam in Yadadri Bhongir district on November 8, 2024, the CM had promised to complete the restoration of Dharmareddy canal. Its work was pending for decades.

The project would provide irrigation facility to

the farmers of Valigonda and Ramannapet mandals.

As a part of his promise, the state government sanctioned Rs 129 crore for restoration of the Dharmareddy canal and completed its works with considerable speed.

The canal starts from Musi at Sangem and end at the irrigation tank of Pedda Kaparthy in Chityal mandal, passing through 66km.

On Tuesday, government whip and Nakrekal MLA Vemula Veeresham released water to

Dharmareddy canal at zero point in Valigonda.

He noted that getting irrigation water through the Dharmareddy canal was a decades-old dream of the people of Bhongir and Nakrekal assembly constituencies.

“As per the promise from CM Revant Reddy, the works of restoration of the canal were completed and water has been released to it. The Congress government has fulfilled the promise it made to the people of these assembly constituencies,” he stated.

Congress turning Indiramma Housing Scheme into fraud: BRS leader Krishank

Hyderabad: BRS spokesperson Manne Krishank slammed the Congress government for allegedly cheating people by promising free houses to the poor under the Indiramma Housing Scheme before the Assembly elections and now forcing beneficiaries to spend lakhs of rupees.

He alleged that apart from collecting Rs 10,000 for applications, the government was asking beneficiaries to contribute Rs 6 lakh for LIG (low-income group) housing in Hyderabad.

He demanded that the government immediately fulfil its promise to construct 6,000 Indiramma houses in the Secunderabad Cantonment Assembly constituency, made during the by-election campaign.

In a statement, Krishank questioned the government’s intent, ask-



ing whether the scheme was meant to provide welfare or run a real estate business. He said making poor families pay lakhs of rupees after promising free houses amounted to a betrayal of public trust. He also alleged that the Telangana Congress was ruining the legacy of former Prime Minister Indira Gandhi, after whom the scheme was named.

Pointing out that the government had already presented its third State Budget, he questioned when the promised houses would actually be completed, with only one regular State Budget and one Vote-on-Account Budget remaining before the next Assembly elections.

Stating that public anger was growing over the Congress government’s failure to fulfil its election promises, Krishank said the party would have no moral right to seek votes in the upcoming Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation elections if it failed to complete and hand over even a single Indiramma house before then.

Uttam Says Harish Lying, Govt Putting Devadula to Full Use



Hyderabad: Irrigation Minister N. Uttam Kumar Reddy on Monday announced that pumping of water using the Devadula lift irrigation scheme (DLIS) was being stepped up, with nine of the project’s 10- pumps set to start working from Tuesday night. The government was fully implementing the assurances made during the recent group of ministers’ review of the scheme, he said.

During an informal chat with reporters at the Secretariat, Uttam Kumar Reddy, responding to criticism by BRS leader T. Harish Rao, said “as promised during our recent review of the Devadula project, nine pumping units will be operating at full capacity from tonight (Tuesday). They will function round the clock to maximise lifting from the Godavari and fill the 22 reservoirs serving nine districts.”

He said the government’s immediate priority was “to secure water supplies for people

rather than indulge in political exchanges. Every operational decision is being guided by technical requirements and the need to protect farmers and ensure drinking water security.”

Uttam Kumar Reddy said, “if Harish Rao wants to debate irrigation, he must first explain the decisions taken when he served as irrigation minister. Instead of spreading misinformation about Devadula, he should answer why the original foundation design at Medigadda was changed during the BRS regime and who authorised those decisions.”

He said the Congress government was committed to completing the Devadula project, and work was going on in a mission mode. Pending land acquisition, statutory clearances and construction works were being expedited so that the project could be completed by December 2027.

“Once fully completed, Devadula will irrigate nearly 5.6 lakh acres and strengthen drinking water security across northern Telangana,” Uttam Kumar Reddy added.

PM Modi Announces Ex Gratia After Sikkim Tunnel Collapse

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday spoke to Sikkim Chief Minister Prem Singh Tamang and took stock of the situation arising out of a tunnel collapse in Namchi district. The PM announced an ex gratia of Rs 2 lakh for the families of those killed and Rs 50,000 for the injured. Eight workers were killed after the tunnel that was under construction collapsed following a landslide on July 20, Tamang announced earlier on Tuesday.

“Anguished by the loss of lives due to the collapse of an under-construction tunnel in Namchi, Sikkim. I extend my deepest condolences to the bereaved families. I pray that those injured recover at the earliest,” Modi said in a post on X. The prime minister said an ex gratia of Rs 2 lakh will be given to the next of kin of each deceased and Rs 50,000 will be given to those injured in the incident from the Prime



Minister’s National Relief Fund.

Tamang said following the tragic incident at the NHPC Teesta Stage VI Hydroelectric Project tunnel at Samardung, the PM spoke with him to enquire about the situation and the ongoing rescue operations. “His words of concern and compassion for the affected workers and their families, along with his assurance of every possible assistance from the Government of India, have provided immense strength and reassurance to the people of Sikkim during this difficult hour,”

the CM said in a post on X.

He said National Disaster Response Force, State Disaster Response Force, Sikkim State Disaster Management Authority, district administration, local police, medical teams from Rangpo PHC and the local community are working tirelessly and in close coordination to support the rescue efforts and provide all possible assistance to those affected. “On behalf of the people of Sikkim, I express my heartfelt gratitude to the Hon’ble Prime Minister for his unwavering support, thoughtful concern, and steadfast solidarity with our State in this moment of grief. We deeply value his continued guidance and the Government of India’s commitment to standing with Sikkim in every possible way,” Tamang said.

Rupee Value Is Market-determined, Says FM

New Delhi: Union finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Tuesday said the rupee’s value against the US dollar is market-determined and there is no target or specific band for the domestic currency.

“The government closely tracks the trends in key economic parameters, including exchange rate movements, along with their implications for economic growth and fiscal stability. These issues are discussed at various fora at various levels of the government,” she replied in a written reply in the Rajya Sabha.

However, the government claimed that various measures have been taken by the central bank to boost forex inflows, which in turn may ease the pressure on rupee. “These include amendment to the external commercial borrowings (ECBs) framework in February 2026 through expansion of eligible borrower and recognised lender base, rationalisation of borrowing limits and restrictions on average maturity period,” it said.

On Tuesday, the rupee pared initial losses and settled 12 paise higher at 96.24 (provisional). Traders attribute the recovery to RBI’s intervention. However, the finance minister said that the value of the rupee is market-determined, with no target or specific level or band,



and RBI regularly monitors the foreign exchange market and intervenes in situations of excess volatility. “Further, the RBI monitors key developments across the globe which may have an impact on the USD-INR exchange rate,” she said.

As far as measures are concerned, on June 5, RBI announced a slew of measures to boost inflow of foreign capital including raising limits for investment by Non-Resident Indians (NRIs) and Overseas Citizens of India (OCIs) in equity instruments traded on the stock market without SEBI registration. Further, the same facility was extended to all individual Persons Resident Outside India (PROIs) at par with NRIs and OCIs.

In addition, a facility of concessional forex

swap has been announced to incentivise the ECB by Public Sector Undertakings and overseas foreign currency borrowings with a minimum maturity of three years raised by AD banks, wherein the concessional rate of the swap was fixed at 1.5 per cent per annum compounded semi-annually.

The swap facility has already come into effect and will remain open till January 15, 2027. Also, the time period for realisation of exports has been restored to nine months from the 15-month period stipulated earlier. “The depreciation of the rupee has been influenced by several factors, including reduced support from the capital account amidst rising crude oil prices in the wake of the conflict in the Middle East,” she said.

However, a depreciating domestic currency is likely to enhance export competitiveness, which in turn impacts the economy positively. On the other hand, the minister said, depreciation may raise the prices of imported goods.

Imports are generally determined by global supply-demand conditions, geopolitical developments, domestic demand, and factors such as global value chain integration necessitating imports of intermediate goods for production and exports, and international prices of imported goods.

Delhi Police File FIR Against Protestors; CJP Alleges Brutality

New Delhi: Even as the Delhi Police filed FIRs against CJP protesters for indulging in stone pelting during Monday’s protest, activist Abhijeet Dipke on Tuesday alleged police brutality against protesting students, claiming that police personnel lathi-charged protesters and assaulted women during the demonstration, while questioning the government over the detention of the protesters.

Speaking to ANI about the protest, Dipke said, “Today, the Police staged lathi charge in the morning. They have filled their hearts with blood.”

Asked about reports of his detention, Dipke said, “Police were attacking Geetanjali ma’am. Later, they tried to charge me with a lathi. A male police officer pulled Geetanjali ma’am’s hair. I was not there. But they tried their best.”

On the police arrangements at the protest site, Dipke said, “Are they putting up another barricade? Are they talking to the DCP? Ask him.”

“The issue is not about the strength of the protest. The issue is whether the government has a heart or not. And this is not the only protest where they have shown such brutality. All the protests in this country have shown such brutality. They are breaking the heads of 12-year-old children. They are killing more than 20 children. They are killing more children to save them. The government should be ashamed,” he said.

“This is not the government. This is brutality. Stop calling it the government. The government is chosen by the people and works for the people. This is not the government. This is brutality,” Dipke added.

On the government’s stand regarding the protest, Dipke said, “Sonam sir has already given the answer to this. His investigation is still going on. Why did the government take such a step? Why did the government take such a step? They have been illegally detained in the hospital. They are still fasting. What is the point of keeping them in the



hospital? If they are not being treated, what is the point of keeping them in the hospital? The government has illegally detained them.”

Later, Dipke spoke to police officers at the protest site and questioned them over the alleged restriction on entry points. “You have beaten the heads of 12-year-old girls. You have kicked them on the chest. The police beat them up. The male police officers beat them up,” he told the Police officials.

Meanwhile, CJP National Spokesperson Ashutosh Ranka, speaking about the previous day’s meeting with Union Minister JP Nadda, alleged that the meeting was a “waste of time” and claimed that there was no response to their

concerns. Asked about the meeting, Ranka said, “It was a waste of time. I made him sit for 5 hours. There was no response. There is no shame. In hindsight, we realized that we were called there to waste time.”

Ranka further alleged that some members were kept under house arrest and claimed that their phones were taken away. “For 2 hours, we were kept in a house arrest. They called him here and conspired to make me alone. They conspired to make me alone. There is a narrative that Sourav and Ashutosh are not on the ground. They were kept in a house arrest at J.P. Nadda’s house. Their mobile phones were stolen. They did not even have their mobile

phones,” he alleged.

Meanwhile, the Delhi Police has registered an FIR against unidentified persons in connection with the vandalism of vehicles and stone-pelting in Connaught Place and Parliament Street during the protest, police sources said on Tuesday.

The officials have registered FIRs at the Parliament Street and Connaught Place police stations under various sections of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), including rioting in connection with incidents involving violence, vandalism, damage to public property, obstruction of government employees in the discharge of their duties, and the snatching of police gear such as jackets and helmets during the protest at Jantar Mantar, the sources said.

According to police, miscreants allegedly vandalised police vehicles and pelted stones at a police team near Regal Cinema in the Outer Circle of Connaught Place. Further investigation into the incident is underway.

Oil Palm Cultivation is the Strong Foundation for Farmers' Economic Stability

Increase in Tribal Family Income Will Ensure a Brighter Future for Their Children
Oil Palm Factory to be Established if Cultivation Expands by Another 10,000 Acres
Crop Diversification is the Best Alternative to Overcome El Niño
Every Farmer Should Construct a Farm Pond under MGNREGS
Providing Godavari Water to Every Constituency in the Undivided Khammam District is My Lifetime Goal
– Agriculture, Cooperation & Handlooms Minister Tummala Nageswara Rao

Mulakalapalli, July 21: Telangana Agriculture, Cooperation and Handlooms Minister Tummala Nageswara Rao, accompanied by District Collector Ankith, attended the Oil Palm Farmers' Meet held at Mulakalapalli on Tuesday. Addressing the gathering, the Minister spoke about the expansion of oil palm cultivation, crop diversification to tackle El Niño conditions, tribal development, water conservation, and the effective utilization of Godavari waters.

The Minister said the State Government is giving the highest priority to the overall development of tribal areas by providing essential infrastructure such as roads, safe drinking water, electricity, healthcare, and education. He stated that Gurukulams and Eklavya Model Residential Schools have been established to provide quality education, enabling tribal children to become collectors and senior government officers in the future.

Expressing concern over the decline in forest cover, he said environmental imbalance is increasing and wild animals are frequently entering villages. He urged people to plant indigenous tree species such as banyan, bamboo, and tamarind to protect forests and preserve ecological balance.

Referring to the impact of Super El Niño, the Minister said the district has already recorded a 35% rainfall deficit, while groundwater levels are also declining. With forecasts indicating 20–30% below-normal rainfall during July, August, and September, he advised farmers not to depend on borewells for paddy cultivation and instead cultivate low-water-consuming alternative crops.

He encouraged farmers to expand the cultivation of pulses such as green gram, black gram, red gram, and cowpea. Cotton farmers were advised to cultivate red gram as an intercrop after every four to six rows of cotton to improve soil fertility and earn additional income.

The Minister said 8,000 acres are currently under oil palm cultivation in Mulakalapalli Mandal. If the cultivated area increases by another 10,000 acres, the Government will immediately lay the foundation stone for a palm oil processing factory. He also assured that steps would be taken to provide solar power facilities to resolve electricity issues in podu cultivation areas.

He further advised farmers to grow drumstick and pulse crops as intercrops in oil palm plantations, stating that drumstick leaves have a strong demand in the international market. Oil palm cultivation, he said, provides



long-term and stable income, making it a strong foundation for farmers' financial security.

The Minister said the Government is committed to providing safe drinking water to every tribal family and emphasized that improving tribal household incomes is essential for securing a brighter future for their children. He also urged tribal students to make full use of educational opportunities available in Gurukulams and Eklavya schools.

Highlighting the importance of water conservation, he advised every farmer to construct a farm pond under the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS) to harvest rainwater, improve groundwater recharge, and ensure sustainable agriculture.

The Minister said the Government is making every effort to supply Godavari waters to all regions of the district through the Sitarama Lift Irrigation Project. Once the Yathalakunta Tunnel works are completed, tanks across the region will be filled. He appealed to farmers to cooperate in the construction of distributary canals so that Godavari water can reach every agricultural field. He reiterated that providing Godavari water to all constituencies in the undivided Khammam district remains his life-long mission.

Collector Ankith
District Collector Ankith stated that Bhadradi Kothagudem ranks first in Telangana in oil palm cultivation. He noted that rainfall has significantly declined compared to last year and said the district administration has prepared a comprehensive action plan involving the Agriculture, Horticulture, Irrigation, Electricity, Animal Husbandry, and Mission Bhagiratha departments to address the challenges posed by Super El Niño.

The Collector said 90,000 acres are currently under oil palm cultivation in the district, with a target of bringing an additional 15,000 acres under cultivation this year. He added that farmers are being encouraged to cultivate low-water-intensive crops such as maize, chilli, oil palm, vegetables, and pulses instead of paddy.

He explained that although oil palm begins yielding from the fourth year, it provides farmers with a stable source of income for nearly 30 years. He also said that district, mandal, and village-level action plans have been prepared to effectively tackle the impact of El Niño.

Later, under the Atmanirbhar Mission Pulses Programme, the Minister and the District Collector distributed red gram and black gram seeds to farmers at a 50% subsidy. Farmers were advised to contact their nearest Agriculture Officer or Agricultural Extension Officer to avail themselves of the scheme.

The programme was attended by public representatives, officials from various departments, Agriculture and Horticulture Department officials, representatives of the Oil Palm Company, and a large number of farmers

Plastic-Free Amrabad Initiative: Steel Water Bottles Distributed to Tribal Students

Nagarkurnool : In support of the "Plastic-Free Amrabad" initiative being implemented in the Amrabad Tiger Reserve, 140 stainless steel water bottles were distributed to students of the Appapur Tribal Welfare School in Lingala mandal under the leadership of Hyderabad Tiger Conservation Society (HyTiCoS) volunteer Kiran.

The Amrabad Tiger Reserve has been implementing the "Plastic-Free Amrabad" campaign since 2024 with the objective of reducing plastic usage and promoting environmental conservation. As part of the initiative, reusable steel water bottles were provided to students to encourage environmentally responsible habits from a young age and reduce the use of single-use plastic bottles.

During the programme, students were educated about the harmful effects of plastic on wildlife, forests, and the environment. Speakers emphasized that fostering eco-friendly habits from childhood is essential for ensuring future generations actively participate in nature conservation. Students were encouraged to replace plastic bottles with reusable steel bottles in their daily lives.

The programme was attended by HyTiCoS Nallamala Landscape Coordinator Babu Reddy, Akhil Goud, Immanuel, Prem Kumar, Forest Department Beat Officers Madhava Reddy and Suresh, along with school teachers.



Priority Should Be Given to Cleanliness in Municipalities: District Collector Bhavesh Mishra

Nirmal District Staff Reporter : District Collector Bhavesh Mishra has directed officials to give top priority to sanitation in all municipalities across the district.

On Tuesday evening, the Collector chaired a review meeting on municipal administration at the Collectorate conference hall. Speaking on the occasion, he instructed officials to ensure that sanitation works are carried out continuously and effectively in every municipality. He stressed the need to prevent inconvenience to the public during the rainy season.

The Collector also directed officials to implement solid waste management



strictly in accordance with the Supreme Court guidelines and to enforce the ban on single-use plastic effectively. He further instructed that all infrastructure development works be completed at the earliest.

The meeting was attended by Additional Collector (Local Bodies) B. Venkateswarlu, Municipal Commissioners Ravi Babu, Sundar Singh, Yadaiah, along with other officials and staff.

Steps to prevent drinking water problems in villages: District Collector Bhavesh Mishra

Nirmal District Staff Reporter : Every farmer should come forward to construct a farm pond

District Collector Bhavesh Mishra directed officials to take all necessary measures to ensure that people in remote villages do not face drinking water shortages.

During his visit to Abugam village in Kuntala Mandal on Tuesday, the Collector reviewed the availability of drinking water, electricity, telecom services, and other basic infrastructure. He interacted with villagers to understand their concerns and instructed all concerned departments to work in coordination to resolve local issues promptly.

Considering the drinking water scarcity in the village, the Collector said that a new borewell would be sanctioned immediately once the Gram Panchayat passes a resolution and submits the required proposal. He inspected the proposed borewell location and the transformer, directing officials to expedite the necessary arrangements.

Emphasizing the importance of groundwater conservation, the Collector stated that farm ponds are highly beneficial and urged every farmer to construct one in their agricultural fields. He inspected a farm pond developed by a local farmer and appreciated both those who had already constructed farm ponds and those coming forward to do so. He also instructed officials to create awareness among farmers so that



more farm ponds are established in the village. The Collector further assured that steps would be taken to improve telecom connectivity in the village. He called upon every villager to actively participate in the conservation of groundwater resources.

The visit was attended by Additional Collector (Local Bodies) B. Venkateswarlu, DPO Srinivas, DRDO Vijayalakshmi, RWS Executive Engineer Sandeep, Tahsildar Kamal Singh, MPDO Vanaja, Sarpanch Shivaji, and other officials and staff.

Speed Up Voter Data Digitisation Process: Sangareddy Collector Prateek Jain

SANGAREDDY, July 21 2026: Sangareddy District Collector Prateek Jain has directed election officials to expedite the digitisation of Enumeration Forms under the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of the electoral rolls and complete the process within the stipulated deadline.

The instructions were issued after a video conference conducted by Telangana Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) Sudarshan Reddy with District Collectors across the state to review the progress of the SIR programme.

During the review, the Chief Electoral Officer stated that the Election Commission of India aims to prepare a transparent and error-free electoral roll while ensuring that every eligible citizen is able to exercise the right to vote. He instructed officials to complete all activities under the Special Intensive Revision within the prescribed schedule.

Participating in the video conference from the Collectorate, District Collector Prateek Jain informed the CEO that Sangareddy district has achieved 70 percent digitisation of Enumeration Forms so far. Constituency-wise progress includes Narayankhed – 85%, Andole – 80%, Zaheerabad – 75%, Sangareddy – 71%, and Patancheru – 52%.

The Collector said special measures are being taken to accelerate the digitisation process in Patancheru Assembly constituency.



After the video conference, Prateek Jain reviewed the progress with Electoral Registration Officers (EROs) and Assistant Electoral Registration Officers (AEROs). He directed them to speed up digitisation across all constituencies, with particular focus on Patancheru by involving ward officials and other volunteers.

He also instructed officials to carry out rationalisation of polling stations in accordance with Election Commission guidelines and to conduct field verification of migrated voters, deceased persons, and duplicate entries to ensure a transparent, accurate, and error-free electoral roll.

Additional Collectors Sangeetha and Pandu, EROs, AEROs, and officials from the Election Department participated in the review meeting.

Mallikarjun Kharge's Birthday Celebrated Grandly Congress Leaders Cut Cake and Distribute Sweets at Party Office

Manuguru: The birthday of AICC President and Rajya Sabha Member Mallikarjun Kharge was celebrated with great enthusiasm at the Congress Party office in Manuguru on Monday. The celebrations were organized under the leadership of Manuguru Mandal Congress President Peerinaki Naveen and Town Congress President Kuram Ravi Mudiraj.

On the occasion, Congress leaders cut a birthday cake, exchanged greetings, and distributed sweets among party leaders, workers, and supporters. They praised Mallikarjun Kharge's leadership and his commitment to strengthening the Congress Party and safeguarding democratic values.

The event was attended by District Congress General Secretary Polamuri Raju, District Executive Members Sarampalli Ramireddy, Banothu Laxman, Bonagiri Shiva Saidulu, INTUC State Committee Member Sama Srinivasa Reddy, Samathi Singaram Sarpanch Kalaboyina Madhava Rao, Deputy Sarpanch Gandla Suresh, Ward Member Kolapinni Manasa, Shivalayam Committee Chairman Kuchipudi Babu, Manuguru Mandal Youth Congress President Aithanaboyina Satish, Ganesh Reddy, Mahila Congress President Kurapati Soujanya, Minority Cell President M.D. Rahim Pasha, SC Cell Town President Poduturi Ravi, Former Pagideru Sarpanch Biksham, senior Congress leaders Burgula Narasayya, Komaram Rammurthy, Sambasiva Rao, Abdullah, Bhagam Ravi, Khaja, Nanaji, Vemula Swarupa Devi, along with Mahila Congress leaders, affiliated organization representatives, party workers, supporters, and several others.



CJP Meets Nadda, Minister Seeks Time on Key Demands

A two-member delegation of the Cockroach Janta Party (CJP) on Monday met Union Health Minister JP Nadda, who initiated the dialogue on behalf of the government as protesters led by the outfit stormed into central Delhi and tried to march to Parliament. The CJP said Nadda has assured them that he would hold internal talks and has requested some time to align with the government leadership on the CJP's demands, including the resignation of Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan over alleged examination irregularities.

Official sources confirmed that the CJP representatives met Nadda, who initiated the government outreach towards the protesters. They said talks within the government on the CJP protest were underway and there is a possibility of the government issuing a formal statement.

CJP chief spokesperson Saurav Das said he, along with CJP's national spokesperson Ashutosh Ranka, met the health minister at his residence for about 10 minutes.

"After waiting for more than 2 hours, @AshutoshRanka and I just met J.P. Nadda ji at his residence for 10 minutes. While we submitted a written letter with our demands, he has assured us that he will meanwhile speak internally. We are in that process. There is news of mass detention etc," Das said in a post on 'X'.

This comes as thousands of protesters gathered near Parliament Street here and tried to march towards Parliament to demand accountability over alleged examination irregularities and the resignation of Education Minister Pradhan, braving baton-charge by security personnel. Ranka said Nadda has requested



some time to align with their leadership on the CJP's "following demands: Immediate release of Sonam Wangchuk, Dharmendra Pradhan's resignation, 1Cr compensation for all NEET aspirants who committed suicide".

Ranka said it was only late Sunday night that the Deputy Commissioner of Police, New Delhi, reached out for opening a communication channel with the government.

He said there were more serious discussions only from 6 am on Monday, and only at around 11:45 am, there was "an alignment on meeting Nadda ji".

"We finally met Nadda ji 10 mins ago and he is checking with the leadership internally wrt our demands. @DelhiPolice should immediately stop using brute force on peaceful protestors," Ranka wrote on 'X' at 2:48 PM

Protesters participating in the Cockroach Janta Party's Parliament march on Monday refused to disperse despite heavy police barricading, lathicharge and use of tear gas, and raised slogans demanding the resignation of Pradhan.

The march, which witnessed participation of students and people from across Delhi, was stopped near Parliament Street, where police had put up multiple layers of barricades.

Many protesters said they had anticipated resistance but were determined to continue their demonstration.

Opposition Raises Student Protests, Ram Temple Theft in Rajya Sabha

New Delhi: Rajya Sabha proceedings were adjourned till 2 pm on Monday amid uproar by Opposition members over the Cockroach Janta Party-led protest at Jantar Mantar in the national capital.

On the opening day of the Monsoon session of Parliament, the Upper House witnessed four adjournments during the morning proceedings, marked for Zero Hour and Question Hour.

The House was first adjourned soon after the laying of papers, followed by oath-taking by newly-elected members and obituary references.

The proceedings were adjourned for the second time at noon till 12.30 pm. The House was adjourned further till 12.50 pm and then again till 2 pm.

When the House met at 12.50 pm, Opposition members continued raising slogans in favour of protesting students and the subsequent police action against them. They were also raising slogans related to donation theft at Ram Mandir in Ayodhya, Uttar Pradesh.

As sloganeering continued, Rajya Sabha Chairman C P Radhakrishnan adjourned the House till 2 pm.



Earlier, after the papers were laid in the Upper House, Leader of Opposition Mallikarjun Kharge rose to speak on the NEET-UG 2026 paper leak issue, saying it concerned the future of lakhs of students.

"Thousands of students have reached Jantar Mantar (where the protest is on), and they were lathi-charged," he said.

"The government is trying to beat them down and suppress the issue," Kharge said, as Opposition members stood on their feet, shouting "shame, shame".

Amid the uproar, the Chairman adjourned the House till noon.

When the House met at noon, the Opposition members were on their feet raising slogans.

DMK members also sought to raise Tamil Nadu's water-sharing issue with Karnataka and tried to enter the well of the House. However, the Chairman stopped them.

As protests by Opposition members continued, the Chairman adjourned the House till 12.30 pm.

The House witnessed similar scenes when it met at 12.30 pm, leading to adjournment again till 12.50 pm.

CM Revanth to Visit Kodangal on July 21, 22

Hyderabad: Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy will begin a two-day tour of his Kodangal Assembly constituency in Vikarabad district on Tuesday. He is slated to inspect the progress of the education hub and development works at Hakimpet village in Dudyal Mandal.

After staying overnight in Kodangal, he will review the development works undertaken in the constituency on Wednesday. Revanth Reddy will also review the ongoing progress of the special intensive revision of the electoral roll by holding meetings with local booth level assistants (BLAs) of the party.

During his earlier visit in May, Revanth Reddy



who laid had foundation stones for various projects asserted that Kodangal would emerge as a hub of education and industries. He said a number of educational institutions including medical, engineering, nursing, and polytechnic colleges, an Advanced Technology Centre (ATC, erstwhile ITI), and a

Sainik School were being established in Kodangal. The development of this educational hub would be completed within one and a half years, he had promised.

The Vikarabad district administration officials conducted field inspections regarding security arrangements, traffic control, and other key

aspects. Vikarabad collector Deepak Tiwari and SP Sneha Mehra jointly inspected the helipad area, the route the CM will travel, the meeting venue, and other related locations. They instructed officials to undertake stringent security measures to prevent untoward incidents.

They also discussed the stage set-up, public entry points, emergency routes, and other facilities at the meeting venue with the officials. Officials stressed that police, revenue, and other department officials must work in coordination to ensure the success of the CM's visit. Instructions were issued to continuously monitor ground-level conditions and take necessary actions.

Indiramma Housing Scheme Fulfils Kolam Adivasis' Dream

Kolam adivasis, a particularly vulnerable tribal group, are happy as their long standing dream of having a permanent house has been fulfilled.

Adivasis used to face problems in their traditional houses. They expressed their happiness before the students of the sociology department of Satavahana University, Karimnagar.

As part of the curriculum for the course on Participatory Learning Appraisal (PLA), a team of 11 students accompanied by four faculty members visited Kolam Kotari village falls in Kerameri mandal of Kumuram Bheem Asifabad district.

During the visit, students studied various aspects including living con-



ditions, lifestyle, financial conditions and others of Kolams.

Out of 50 families, 22 got permanent houses under the Indiramma housing scheme. Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy handed over houses to adivasis while participating in a house warming ceremony held in the village on June 1, 2026.

Sharing the visit details with Deccan Chronicle, student Ashvini Om Prakash said that Kolam adivasis felt happy for having the permanent house since they would not have such huge money to construct houses.

Since adivasis prepare houses with either mud or thatched roof, snakes used to enter

their houses. Moreover, rain water too entered such houses, he informed.

Another student, M. Chennakeshavulu, said Kolams wanted the government to sanction houses to the remaining families. The Indiramma housing scheme became a boon for Kolams since their lands and houses were acquired for the Singareni's Kairiguda opencast coal mine. Kolam families lived in Chopidi, Chanduguda, Thayaguda and Govarguda.

Head of the department, Prof. Surepalli Sujatha, who led the students, said that Komal adivasis felt having permanent houses as a pride symbol

Protests, Disruption Mar Opening Day Of Monsoon Session in Both Houses

New Delhi: Lok Sabha witnessed frequent adjournments on day one of the Monsoon Session on Monday as the opposition raised slogans and displayed placards demanding action against those guilty in the NEET paper 'leak' and alleged donation theft at the Ram temple.

As soon as the House met at 11 am, opposition members started raising slogans forcing Speaker Om Birla to adjourned the proceeding till 12 noon as the Question Hour was



being taken up.

Birla objected to two members raising slogans when obituary references were read out on the demise of six former MPs, saying it was not a

good precedent.

When the House met again at 12 noon, noisy protest continued and the House was adjourned till 12:30 pm.

Before the proceeding

were adjourned Law Minister Arjun Ram Meghwal introduced a bill to replace an ordinance which increased the number of Supreme Court judges from 34 to 38, including the Chief Justice of India.

Similar scenes were witness at 12:30 pm when repeated pleas by the Chair to take up Zero Hour failed to get a positive response from opposition members.

Dilip Saikia, who was in the Chair, adjourned the proceeding till 1 pm.

BJP Flays Congress Over CURE Law, Indiramma Housing



Telangana BJP president N. Ramchander Rao on Monday accused the Congress government of imposing a fresh financial burden on Hyderabad's poor and middle class through the proposed CURE law and the Indiramma housing scheme. Addressing a press conference at the BJP state office, he alleged the new urban governance through the CURE law and the collection of applications and deposits for housing amounted to "tax loot" and exploitation of ordinary citizens. Rao said the proposed Core Urban Region (In-

tegrated Governance) Bill, or CURE, would sharply raise property tax by shifting from the annual rental value system to a capital-value-based model linked to registration values. He argued that annual tax hikes of up to 5 per cent based on registration values, along with separate charges for water and sewerage, would place an additional burden on residents across Hyderabad's urban core. He also questioned the lack of clarity on the role of corporators, ward members and other elected representatives under the draft law, saying the government had brought in the bill without adequate consultation with resident welfare associations

and the public. Rao said the BJP would strongly oppose the bill in the Assembly if these provisions were not reviewed.

On the Indiramma housing scheme, Rao alleged the Congress government was misleading the poor by presenting the programme as a welfare initiative while collecting money through application fees. He said the notification covered only 7,680 flats in 24 constituencies despite lakhs of eligible applicants, and claimed the process could collect nearly ?1,000 crore from the poor.

Samantha Ruth Prabhu recalls telling Karan Johar he set unrealistic expectations about marriage



Mumbai: Southern beauty Samantha Ruth Prabhu called filmmaker Karan Johar the reason for unhappy marriages during her debut appearance on the popular chat show, 'Koffee with Karan,' in the 7th season of the show.

As Samantha shared the 'Koffee with Karan' couch with Akshay Kumar, she pointed out that Karan was, on some level, the reason for not-so-happy marriages across the country.

"You are, on some level, the reason for unhappy marriages", the 'Yashoda' actress said.

Samantha went on to explain that Karan has set unrealistic expectations regarding the concept of marriage with his movies.

"Because you have marketed this idea of marriage and wedding lehengas and wedding songs and, you know, from our youth, and you have, like, portrayed life to be 'K3G' when in fact, the reality is 'KGF'," the 'Kushi' actress went on to explain.

On the personal front, Samantha is all set to embrace motherhood as she will be welcoming her first child with her filmmaker husband, Raj Nidimoru soon.

Samantha recently confirmed her pregnancy with her filmmaker husband.

As she addressed the media during the success meet of her latest release 'Maa Inti Bangaaram', Samantha stated that she will be taking a maternity break.Marriage

"After Maa Inti Bangaaram, I will have to take a small break, given my condition. I'll have to take maternity leave. After that, I'll be back with another film for my fans," Samantha shared.

For those who do not know, Samantha got married to filmmaker Raj Nidimoru, one-half of the popular director duo Raj & DK, in December last year.

According to the reports, Samantha first met Raj as they were shooting the Amazon Prime Video series, "The Family Man 2", in which she played a powerful role.

This is Samantha's second marriage. She was earlier married to actor Naga Chaitanya. After dating for some time, the duo decided to tie the knot in October 2017. However, they announced their separation in October 2021.

Bollywood Hero Joins Balakrishna's NBK111 Shoot in Hyderabad

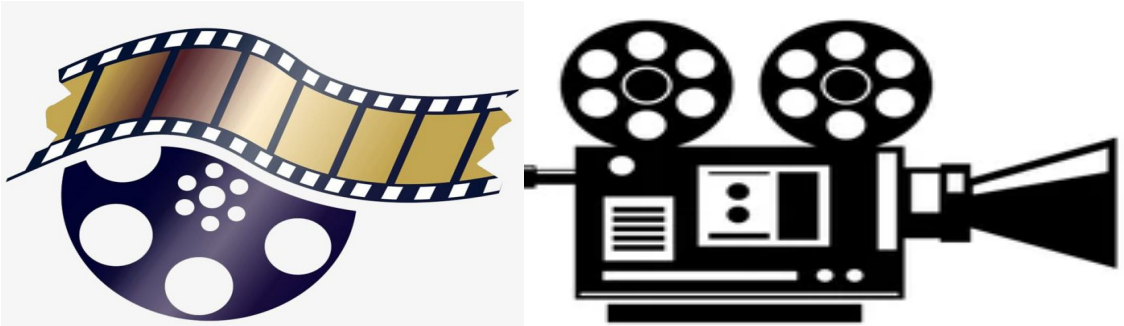
Nandamuri Balakrishna is busy working on his upcoming movie NBK111. The film is being directed by Gopichand Malineni and is one of the most awaited Telugu movies. The shooting is moving at a fast pace. After completing a major schedule in Mumbai, the film team has now shifted the shoot to Hyderabad.

The latest update has made fans even more excited. Bollywood star Sanjay Dutt has officially joined the cast of NBK111. He will be seen in an important role in the movie. Sanjay Dutt has already reached Hyderabad and is taking part in the current shooting schedule. The makers are filming several key scenes featuring him. Reports suggest that he will complete his shooting portions in the next few days.

This is another interesting collaboration between Telugu and Bollywood actors. Sanjay Dutt has been appearing in several South Indian films in recent years. His powerful screen presence has impressed audiences, and fans are eager to see him share screen space with Balakrishna.

Actress Kajal Aggarwal is playing the female lead in the film. She will be seen opposite Balakrishna. The movie also has music composed by S. Thaman, who is known for delivering energetic and popular soundtracks. The film is being produced by Venkata Satish Kilaru on a grand scale.

Initially, the makers planned to release NBK111 during the Dasara festival season. However, the latest reports say that the release has now been pushed to December 2026. An official announcement about the new release date is expected soon.



RAVI TEJA BEGINS DUBBING FOR 'IRUMUDI', SET FOR AUG 21 RELEASE

Actor Ravi Teja has begun dubbing for director Shiva Nirvana's upcoming film Irumudi, produced by Mythri Movie Makers. With only three days of shooting left, post-production is underway to meet the August 21 release date.

Hyderabad: The makers of director Shiva Nirvana's upcoming film, 'Irumudi', featuring actor Ravi Teja in the lead, have now announced that actor Ravi Teja has commenced dubbing for the film.

Having wrapped up his portion of the shoot, Ravi Teja has begun dubbing for the film. The makers have unveiled a dubbing studio video featuring the actor delivering the powerful dialogue, "I've only one daughter, and her name is Manamma," in a deeply emotional voice, hinting at the film's strong father-daughter bond. The video also features Baby Nakshathra and director Shiva Nirvana.

Sources claim the shoot is in its final leg, with only three days of filming left. Meanwhile, post-production, they claim, is progressing simultaneously, ensuring the film remains on schedule for its grand theatrical release on August 21.

Music director GV Prakash Kumar, who has composed a soulful and diverse soundtrack, has also commenced the re-recording work.

The film has triggered huge interest in fans and film buffs ever since the makers released a glimpse video last month. The glimpse video that was released showed Ravi Teja lovingly taking care of his daughter in the film. The child, it is evident, is in a very happy space with her father. However, the glimpse video hints at something tragic happening. Ravi Teja is then seen turning violent. He turns an alcoholic. When his daughter urges him to quit alcohol, he becomes an Ayyappa devotee and wears the sacred mala to take back control of his life and kick the dreaded habit.

The film, which happens to be Ravi Teja's 77th film and was therefore being tentatively referred to as #RT77 until it was titled 'Irumudi', is being produced by leading production house Mythri Movie Makers.

The title 'Irumudi' carries deep spiritual significance, as it symbolizes a devotee's sacred offering and surrender to Lord Ayyappa.

Ravi Teja, at the time of the film's first look being launched, had said, "Some stories choose you at the right moment in life. Feeling blessed to be part of one such story again, letting belief lead the way. Excited to begin this new journey called #Irumudi with @ShivaNirvana & @MythriOfficial Swamiye



Saranam Ayyappa."

Sources say director Shiva Nirvana has crafted a powerful script that fuses devotional depth, emotional weight, and mass appeal in equal measure. They further disclose that at the film's core will lie a strong father-daughter bond, that will offer Ravi Teja a character arc unlike anything that he's portrayed before. Besides playing a first-of-its-kind role, Ravi Teja, they say, has also undergone a transformation.

Sources also claim that the film promises well-defined roles for every character, adding richness to the narrative. Priya Bhavani Shankar plays the female lead, with Baby Nakshathra portraying Ravi Teja's daughter in the film. The cast also includes Sai Kumar, Ajay Ghosh, Ramesh Indira, and Swasika in key roles.

Backed by producers Naveen Yerneni and Y Ravi Shankar, 'Irumudi' boasts a solid technical crew, with GV Prakash Kumar scoring the music, Vishnu Sarma handling cinematography, Sahi Suresh leading production design, and Prawin Pudi on the editing table. Shiva Nirvana has penned the story, screenplay, and dialogues, with Naresh Babu P serving as script coordinator.

Nine National Awards Put Tollywood on Top

HYDERABAD: Tollywood emerged as one of the biggest winners, bagging nine honours at the 72nd National Film Awards on Saturday. The awards were spread across blockbuster entertainers, content-driven films, and technical categories.

'Committee Kurrollu', directed by Yadhu Vamsee, was adjudged the Best Telugu Film. The film also won the Best Make-up Artist Award for P. Ravi Kumar. Prabhas-starrer 'Kalki 2898 AD' won two honours - Best Popular Film Providing Wholesome Entertainment and Best Production Design Award for Nitin Zihani Choudhary.

'35 Chinna Katha Kaadu' won the Best Children's Film Award and fetched Arun Dev Pothula the Best Child Artist honour.

'Pushpa 2: The Rule' won awards for Best Original Screenplay for Sukumar and Best Costume Design for Deepali Noor and Sheetal Sharma. Director Venky Atluri's 'Lucky Baskhar' earned the Best Dialogue Writer Award, completing an impressive tally for Telugu cinema.

Director Yadhu Vamsee was elated after 'Committee Kurrollu' was named the Best Telugu Feature Film.

"We are on cloud nine. This recognition has boosted our confidence and inspired us to continue telling rooted stories," he said.

Thanking producer Niharika Konidela, he added, "We are grateful to Niharika garu for believing in our story. The entire cast and crew worked tirelessly to bring this emotional tale of friendship, village life and relationships to the screen. This honour belongs to all of them."

Producer Ravi Shankar Yellamanchili of Mythri Movie Makers expressed his delight over 'Pushpa 2: The Rule's' impressive haul.

"We are extremely happy to receive these prestigious awards for 'Pushpa 2: The Rule'. The Pushpa franchise has been unique because it has achieved phenomenal commercial success while also earning critical acclaim through the National Film Awards, which is a rare combination," he said.

He credited actor Allu Arjun and director Sukumar for the film's remarkable journey.

"Allu Arjun had already won the National Award for 'Pushpa: The Rise', and his performance in the franchise has been exceptional. Sukumar deserves immense credit because his innovative screenplay and gripping narrative revolving around red sanders smuggling captivated audiences across the world. These awards are a proud recognition of the team's



hard work," he added.

National Award-winning producer Raj Kandukuri said the recognition reflected the growing diversity of Telugu cinema.

"I am genuinely happy for all the winners. Winning a National Award is always a special honour for every actor, filmmaker and technician," he said.

"What makes this year's achievement even more satisfying is that awards have gone to both big commercial entertainers and content-driven films. While 'Pushpa 2: The Rule' and 'Kalki 2898 AD' have once again showcased the scale and technical excellence of Telugu cinema, films like 'Committee Kurrollu', '35 Chinna Katha Kaadu' and 'Lucky Baskhar' prove that meaningful storytelling is also receiving national recognition."

He said the awards would encourage a new generation of filmmakers to experiment with fresh ideas. These honours bring immense prestige and inspire young filmmakers to think differently. Telugu cinema has been shining brightly on the national stage over the past few years, and I am confident we will achieve even greater success in the years ahead," he concluded.