

Chamakura Malla Reddy Attends Indus Day 2026 at Indus International School



“NARRA SRINIVAS REDDY (NSR), Medchal - Malkajgiri Staff Reporter, February 21, (INDIAN CHRONICLE):“Chamakura Malla Reddy, former Minister and MLA of Medchal Assembly Constituency, attended the Indus Day 2026 (Annual Day) celebrations held at Indus International School in Mokila. Addressing the gathering, he interacted with students and offered guidance on



academic excellence, discipline, and the importance of holistic development. He encouraged students to pursue their goals with dedication and make meaningful contributions to society. During the event, he also visited the student-organized Art Gallery and appreciated the creativity, innovation, and talent displayed by the participants. The Annual Day celebrations featured a series of cultural performances and exhibitions, reflecting the diverse skills and achievements of the students.

Former MLA Mainampally Hanumantha Rao started Nawab's Kitchen Biryani Centre

“K Sadanand “Malkajgiri, February 21, The newly established Nawab Kitchen Biryani Center in Vinayak Nagar was inaugurated on Saturday by former MLA of Malkajgiri Mainampally Hanumantha Rao as the chief guest. “Speaking on this occasion, he said that in the hotel business, cleanliness and cleanliness should be maintained and quality food with different flavors should be provided, only then the business will develop. “This“ Organizers Srikanth, Ramesh, Srinivas, Raju, leaders of B block Venkatesh Yadav, Gunda Niranjan, Pittala Srinivas, Syed Yusuf Boy, Mabu, Pittala Nagaraju, Yadagiri, Santosh Ramdas Mudiraj, Sriram Yadav, PV Satya Narayana, Vainala Praveen, Pandurangachari, Gyara Praveen, “Prasad Yadav, Ragam Raju Yadav, Asha and others participated

Amulya wins Hyderabad Open golf championship

Hyderabad: Amulya emerged as Hyderabad Open golf Champion (Gross Winner), receiving a cheque of Rs 90,000 and a custom-made crystal trophy.

The winners' prize, engraved with Hyderabad monuments Buddha statue and Charminar, also included a GolfTripz voucher for three nights and three rounds of golf at Phuket, Thailand, an iPhone 17, a Godrej Safe, and a Green Jacket.



S w e t h a Gullapalli secured the Gross first runner-up position with a cash prize of Rs 50,000, a trophy, a GolfTripz voucher for three nights and three rounds of golf at Phuket, Thailand, and a Vivo phone.

Abhishek Mitra won the Gross second runner-up position and a cheque of Rs

30,000 besides a gift voucher.

Telangana Governor Mr Jishnu Dev Varma, who gave away the prizes, appreciated the TGolf Foundation for conducting the Hyderabad Open. He said it would elevate the city as a premier golf destination while advancing the vision of Rising Telangana 2047 and strengthening golf tourism in the state.

The championship saw 320 golfers — including 60 from outside Hyderabad — compete in the Stroke Play qualifiers, with the top 100 advancing to the final on February 21, showcasing exceptional skill and sporting spirit on the 18-hole championship course.



Rachakonda Security Council Renamed as Malkajgiri Security Council



“NARRA SRINIVAS REDDY (NSR), Medchal - Malkajgiri Staff Reporter, February 21, (INDIAN CHRONICLE):“The Special General Body Meeting (SGBM) of the Rachakonda Security Council (RKSC) was held at the Office of the Commissioner of Police, Malkajgiri Commissionerate, Neredmet, under the chairmanship of Avinash Mohanty, IPS, Commissioner of Police and Honorary Chairman. After detailed deliberations, the General Body unanimously approved a resolution to rename the Society as Malkajgiri Security Council (MKSC), subject to approval by the Registrar of Societies. The General Body also approved consequential amendments to the by-laws, including revision of the operational jurisdiction. It was resolved that the Society will continue as the same legal entity and that all assets, memberships, ongoing initiatives, and collaborations will continue without interruption under the new name. Presenting a roadmap for the Council’s future activities, the Chairman

outlined a structured and goal-driven plan with measurable quarterly targets and coordinated functioning of all forums in close liaison with designated police nodal officers. The Deputy Commissioner of Police, Malkajgiri, was designated as Convener for the Safety and Security Forum. The Traffic Forum will coordinate with the DCP Traffic, the Cyber Security Forum with the DCP Cyber Crimes, and the Women Safety Forum with the SHE Teams. Key initiatives announced include strengthening traffic volunteer programs and introducing sponsored Traffic Marshals to assist in traffic regulation, conducting industrial security training and orientation programs, and organizing cybersecurity awareness sessions for IT and non-IT enterprises focusing on digital hygiene and fraud prevention. The Council will also promote CSR partnerships to support Bharosa Centres and women safety initiatives, revive the Margadarshak programme within member establishments, establish a tech-

nical team for maintenance of CCTV surveillance systems, and encourage CSR-supported patrol vehicles, including electric patrol vehicles. The Chairman appreciated the active participation of industry partners and volunteers and emphasized the importance of sustained police–citizen partnership to enhance public safety, traffic awareness, cyber security, and overall community welfare. The office bearers elected for the 2026–2028 term of the Malkajgiri Security Council are P. Sudhakar as Vice Chairman, Dr. Raghuvveer, CEO of Rhett Health Care, as General Secretary, and Y. Madhu Babu, Senior General Manager of the NSL Group of Companies, as Treasurer. The Joint Secretaries rep-

resenting various forums are Kotti Srinivas, Managing Director of Srinivasa Tours and Travels, for the Road Safety and Traffic Forum; Yellapu Vasudev Rao, Director, CDC, SNIST, for the Safety and Security Forum; Y. Archana, Director, Lancesoft, for the Women Safety Forum; and Shiva Prasad Karadi of Infosys Ltd. for the Cyber Security Forum. During the meeting, M. Savithri, Chief Coordinator, was approved and formally took charge as Associate Director of the Malkajgiri Security Council. The meeting concluded with a vote of thanks to the Chair and a reaffirmation of the Council’s commitment to collaborative community policing and public service.

Police Place Etela Rajender Under House Arrest

“NARRA SRINIVAS REDDY (NSR), Medchal - Malkajgiri Staff Reporter, February 21, (INDIAN CHRONICLE):“Police officials, including the ACP and a large contingent of personnel, reached the residence of BJP leader Etela Rajender



and placed him under house arrest. Rajender was preparing to leave for Kamareddy to visit and express solidarity with Kamareddy MLA Venkata Ramana Reddy following an alleged attack on the MLA’s residence. However, the police prevented him from proceeding and confined him to his house. Condemning the government’s approach and the conduct of the police, Rajender accused the Congress party of undermining democratic values through what he described as goondaism. He stated that the party would be given a fitting response for its actions.

Today's youth should show sports spirit

Khammam MP Raghuram Reddy

“Arvapalli Nagesh, Khammam Staff Reporter, February 21 (Indian Chronicle)“Member of Parliament of Khammam, Ramsahayam Raghuram Reddy,



called upon the youth of today, especially students, to show more interest in sports and show sportsmanship regardless of winning. On Saturday, CM Cup-26 Archery and Badminton finals were started at SR and BGNR College grounds, and earlier Friends Cup-26 Badminton Tournament was started at Sardar Patel Indoor Stadium. “On this occasion, they played badminton for a while and shot arrows in the archery to cheer up the players. After that, MP Raghuram Reddy said that the best sportspersons should practice mummara in the chosen sport and they will have a golden future. Chief Minister Revanth Reddy has taken many measures to encourage the sports sector and said that a synthetic court is going to be prepared in Khammam. “MP Raghuram Reddy recalled that in the past he was an enthusiastic participant in athletics, cricket and badminton. He explained that physical and mental enjoyment can be obtained through sports and the government will always support the development of the sports sector. On this occasion, the organizers honored MP Raghuram Reddy. “DYSO Sunil Reddy, ACP Venkatarao, Ravi Maruth, Sarangapani, Kamartapu Murali, Koppula Chandrasekhar, Siripurapu Sudarshan, Ummineni Krishna, Murali, Samba murthy, many coaches, PETs, PDs, and others were participated.

Congress is an obstacle to treasonous forces

“Arvapalli Nagesh, “Khammam Staff Reporter, February 21 (Indian Chronicle)“Khammam District Bharatiya Janata Party President Nellore Koteswara Rao has severely criticized the way the Congress is engaging in degenerate politics while tarnishing the reputation of the country. He vehemently flagged

that Rahul Gandhi is working with the sole aim of defaming India on international platforms while hindering the country's progress. “On Saturday, he took part in the effigy burning of Rahul Gandhi near the guest house of the Roads and Buildings Department in Khammam city, where he took part in the burning of the effigy of Congress leaders. He complained that the Congress leaders were behaving in a delusional manner as they could not bear to see the development of the country. “Nelluri Koteswara Rao criticized the Congress leaders who looted the country for decades and now they are losing their temper due to lack of power. He accused Congress of joining hands with seditious forces to block India's development as a strong power in front of the world. He said that the poor performance in front of the foreign delegates participating in the international conferences is a proof of the culture of the Congress leaders. He strongly warned that if the country's sovereignty is undermined by such acts of bankruptcy, the people of the country will show their wisdom in the future. “He said that Rahul Gandhi has stooped to the level of questioning the very existence of the country for selfish political purposes. He expressed concern that the Congress leaders are remaining traitors to the country by making a fuss about the internal affairs of the country on world platforms. He demanded that Rahul Gandhi should immediately issue a public apology to the people of the entire country for behaving in a way that made Indians bow down to foreigners. He concluded that if he wants to spend the political life of Doddi, there is no point in sitting idly by. Hundreds of saffron workers from Khammam city took part in this massive agitation at a local guest house and raised loud slogans against the policies of the Congress. “Nelluri Koteswara Rao has made it clear that the struggle against the party will be intensified by exposing the conspiracies of the Congress in the coming days. Leaders Allika Anjaiah, Nakarikanti Veerabhadram, RVS Yadav, Anita, Konatham Lakshminarayana, Jwala Narasimha Rao, Sairam, Rudra Gani Madhav Subbarao, Nageswarao and others participated in this program.



Petition letter to Telangana Medical Minister Damodar Rajanarsimha



“Arvapalli Nagesh, “Khammam Staff Reporter, February 21 (Indian Chronicle)“Sanitation, Patient Care, Security and Supervisor Medical & Health Workers Association SPS State Committee members met Telangana Medical Minister Dr. Together with Damodar Rajanarsimha, they handed over a petition on the issues they were facing. He explained that there are 17,000 workers in the government hospitals in 33 districts of Telangana state who are working under third party (bed side contact) system... Sanitation, patient care, security, supervisors are working in the upper part and are working with meager salaries and

their families are facing many difficulties. ““Union state president and general secretary Kurri Saidaiah and Chinna Boska Naresh asked to cancel the third party (bed side contract) system and support the workers and their families. Telangana Government has taken a very ambitious decision to outsource & contact base employees through Integrated Finance Management Information System and plans to pay wages to their account by the government itself. ““Also Sanitation, Patient Care, Security Guard, Supervisor working in Telangana Government Hospital are facing many difficulties while continuously providing services to the poor people without causing any problems to the government. We also provided services in the government hospital during the corona epidemic that shook the whole world. On that day many “leaders praised that your services were very valuable, but there was no one who cared about us. He informed that many of our workers have families of workers who have been affected by the disease while continuously performing their duties in the midst of thousands of patients. Please cancel this third party (bedside contact) tender process and get minimum wage of 26,000/- to our workers through Government Integrated Finance Management Information System.He asked to give Rs. Since last 15-20 years we have been working as Sanitation, Patient Care, Security, Supervisor through Integrated Health Finance Management System in Government Hospital. Therefore, in the upcoming assembly meetings, please cancel the IHFMS policy and pay all our workers through IFMIS, said that more than 17,000 sanitation, patient care, security and supervisor workers working in 33 district government hospitals will be requested. The leaders of the community said that after hearing this matter, Health Minister Damodar Rajanarsimha took your problem to the attention of the elders and the government and said that they will try their best to do something good for you. ““State Assistant Secretary Ubbani Rama, K. Anand, State Committee Treasurer Pattipati Srinivas, SPS State Committee Vice President Matangi Anil Kumar, State Committee Assistant Secretary Gorre Nagaraju, M.V. Ramana, G. Kumari and other members participated.

Great Tribute to Puvvada Uday

“Arvapalli Nagesh, Khammam Staff Reporter, February 21 (Indian Chronicle)“Bhagam Hemantha Rao, a member of the CPI National Samithi, said that



Puvvada Uday kumar's services as youth student leaders and former floor leader of Khammam Municipal CPI are memorable. He said that Uday Kumar was a communist intellectual who studied abroad and chose the path of struggle to solve the problems of the poor. ““On the occasion of the 20th death anniversary of late CPI leader Puvvada Udaykumar, local residents paid floral tributes to Uday's memorial stupa at Kranti Ghat in Mamata on Saturday. Senior leaders of Communist Party Puvvada Nageswara Rao Uday Kumar's mother Vijaya lakshmi, secretary of Mamata Educational Society, Uday kumar's wife Puvvada Jayashree and others paid their respects. Speaking on this occasion.““Hemantha Rao said that Udaykumar worked till his last breath to bring change in the lives of poor people. He said that his struggle in Khamma especially for the living places of the poor gave impetus to many struggles. Hemantha Rao said that even though the government seized it in the subsequent developments, he worked hard to get housing for thousands of people and now Puvvada Uday Nagar has been formed as part of his efforts and the poor people got housing there.

““Puvvada Uday kumar's Ambition is eternal and the right tribute we can give him is to work hard to achieve his ambition.““YSR Nagar Puvvada Udaykumar's birthday was celebrated grandly. Under the auspices of the Khanapuram Haveli department, Udaykumar paid tributes to the statue by garlanding it. ““On this occasion, CPI district executive committee member Enugu Gandhi said that Udaykumar was an inspiration to many with his struggles and that he will continue to achieve his ambition. He made it clear that public problems will be solved only through struggles. Leaders garlanded the idol of Udaykumar in Puvvada Uday Nagar of Raghunatha palem mandal. ““CPI district assistant secretary Jammula Jitender Reddy, CPI district executive committee members Tati Venkateswara Rao, Mekala Srinivasa Rao, AIYF district secretary Nanabala Rama krishna, CPI office secretary K. Srinivas, -Satyanarayana Reddy, Saida, Upender, Amudala Venkateswarlu, Nageswara Rao, Yusuf and others participated.“[



Kattekola is felicitated at the World Poets Congress

“Arvapalli Nagesh, Khammam Staff Reporter, February 21 (Indian Chronicle)“On



the occasion of International Mother Language Day, the World Telugu Poets Congress was organized on Saturday at Tummalappalli Kshetraiah Kalakshetra in Vijayawada, AP state. Former Vice President Muppavarapu Venkaiah Naidu was present as the Chief Guest in these meetings organized by the first President of AP State Folk Academy, Kalaratna Potluri Harikrishna and gave his message. “On this occasion, many literary scholars explained the importance of Telugu language and suggested that poets should publish poetry in such a way as to set the direction for the society. Later poets and poets were honored. Kattekola Chinna Narasiah was felicitated with a shawl and a memento and certificate of appreciation. Potluri Harikrishna Many literati have congratulated Narasiah.

Fire Accident Prevention Needs Immediate Attention : Dr. Kota Neelima

“Indian Chronicle, Secunderabad, February 21:“With the rise in summer temperatures, the chances of fire accidents have increased, and everyone must remain alert to prevent such incidents, said PCC Vice President and Sanathnagar Constituency Congress Party In-charge Dr. Kota Neelima. In the wake of a recent fire accident in a building at Maitrivanam, Ameerpet, she conducted an awareness meeting with local coaching center owners, hotel operators, tenants, HY-DRA, fire and safety officials, and representatives of various associations, explaining the nature of the incident and the actions taken by authorities.



Addressing the gathering, Dr. Kota Neelima stated that fire accidents are increasing due to non-compliance with safety regulations and negligence towards preventive measures. Electrical faults, lack of safety audits, and human errors were cited as major causes. She emphasized that permission from the Fire Services Department is mandatory for high-rise buildings and called for proper installation of hydrants, fire exits, sprinklers, and alarm systems in large building complexes. She also stressed the importance of placing fire-fighting equipment on every floor and conducting regular fire safety drills. “She advised that during a fire incident, people should remain calm, activate the fire alarm, and use staircases instead of lifts. In cases of heavy smoke or flames, individuals should cover their faces with a cloth and crawl to safety. Electrical repairs must be carried out only by qualified electricians, as loose wiring poses serious risks. The meeting was attended by the Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation Deputy Commissioner Sujatha, S.R. Nagar Police Station House Officer Srinivas Reddy, HYDRA official Mohan Rao, Traffic Inspector Mahesh, leaders of various associations, and local Congress Party members.

Early screening is the only way to prevent thalassemia

“--President of IMA Dr. Rehana Begum“Arvapalli Nagesh, “Khammam Bureau , February 21 (Indian Chronicle)“Indian Medical Association (IMA) District President Dr. Rehana Begam said that it is possible to prevent thalassemia disease only by taking early tests. A huge awareness rally was organized in Khammam on Saturday under the auspices of Sankalp Charitable Service Organization. “The rally started from Pavilion Ground in Khammam city and proceeded to Old Bus Stand and Government Hospital. Representatives of Indian Medical Association, representatives of Indian Association of Pediatrics, doctors, students of Pulipati



College of Nursing and Pulipati School of Nursing participated in this rally. “On this occasion, Dr. Rehana Begum said, Thalassemia is a genetic disease, which can be detected when it is in the carrier stage. He expressed concern that when children are infected with this disease, problems like severe anemia and jaundice will arise and there is a risk of shortening their life span due to blood transfusion. It can be detected by Hb electrophoresis (Hb A-2) test. It is stated that a thalassemia-free society can be built especially by getting pregnant women tested early.“Eminent doctors Dr. Gongura Venkateswarlu said Thalassemia sufferers should be seen as 'clinically challenged' people rather than sick people. He expressed hope that the disease can be completely cured in the future through the existing AI, robotic technology and advanced gene editing. He described the parents who are behind the victims as 'silent heroes'. He asked them to stand by the future of these children by donating blood. “Indian Association of Pediatrics Secretary Dr. Sai Bhargav said, Thalassemia, Sickle cell patients need frequent blood transfusions and youth are asked to donate blood voluntarily. It is suggested that if those who are going to get married undergo carrier tests in advance, they can prevent this disease from being transmitted to the next generation. Later, he took a pledge for a thalassemia-free society with the students at the government hospital. The students want to create awareness among people about the prevention of thalassemia. In this program presided over by founder P. Anitha, IMA secretary Dr. Koteswara Rao, Dr. D. Narayanamurthy, Dr. Lakshmidhepa, Dr. Naresh, dignitaries Mamta, Anuradha, organization representatives P. Pavani, Udayabhaskar, Ravichander, Vamsi Kiriti, blood donors Vamsi, Naveen, children, parents, Pulipati College of Nursing, Students of Pulipati School of Nursing participated.

The world's first pig-to-human kidney transplant holds out hope for millions. Is this the future?

Richard Slayman, a 62-year-old man, received the world's first pig-to-human kidney transplant on March 16 in the United States. The kidney was from a genetically modified pig who was carrying 69 genomic edits. From what we read, the patient is doing well as of now. Previously, surgeons transplanted two gene-edited pig hearts and several gene-edited pig kidneys into brain-dead human patients so as to evaluate and hone the procedure. Earlier this year, a gene-edited pig liver was transplanted in China — this raised huge expectations that xenotransplantation may finally have come of age.

Sportspersons should perform at their Best District Collector Anudeep Durishetti



“District Collector formally inaugurated CM Cup 2025-26 Ball Badminton State Meet held at Sardar Patel Stadium” Arvapalli Nagesh, “Khammam Staff Reporter, February -21 (Indian Chronicle)” District Collector Anudeep Durishetti said that the athletes who came to participate in the state meet should show

their best. “District Collector Anudeep Durishetti inaugurated the CM Cup 2025-26 Ball Badminton State Meet held at the local Sardar Patel Stadium on Saturday. “On this occasion District Collector Anudeep Durishetti said He is very happy that the Ball Badminton State Meet is being held in Khammam district. The collector said that the athletes who have shown the best performances in the districts in relation to the sports of ball badminton and archery are participating in the state level meet at Khammam today. “The Collector congratulated the sportspersons who had performed well in the district level competitions and reached the state level competitions. The collector said that we should participate in the state meet with the spirit of sportsmanship, that the victory is not in our hands, we should try as long as we have it in our hands. “City Mayor Pudukollu Neeraja, who participated in the program, said that the government is conducting CM competitions to bring out the talent among sportspersons. The mayor said that Khammam should be known for his amazing talent. “Later, Collector Anudeep Durishetti presented medals and certificates to the winners of the state level archery competitions. Hoisted the sports flag and introduced the players in the opening matches and played ball badminton with them for a while. “District Sports Development Officer T. Sunil Reddy, Ball Badminton Association State Secretary Ramana, Olympic Association District President Putta Sankaraiah, Ball Badminton Association District President V. Suresh, Secretary B. Srinivas, Physical Education University College Principal Ravi, Priyadarshini Degree, PG College Chairman K. Naveen, Blooming Minds Director Ashok Reddy, Olympic Association District Secretary Christopher, SGF Secretary Rama Rao, Joint Secretary Adarsh, Chinni, Sportspersons Bhukya Uma, Upender, Bhukya Gopi, Sasikala, Baiya Naveen, “Concerned officers and others participated.

Cremon Montessori Life School Enthralls Audience with Hindi Puppet Show “Bheem Aur Bakasur”

Hyderabad



Cremon Montessori Life School hosted a vibrant and engaging Hindi puppet show titled “Bheem Aur Bakasur” on February 21, 2026, at the Auditorium of G. Pulla Reddy High School, Mehdiapatnam, Hyderabad. The event witnessed enthusiastic participation from students, parents, and invited guests.

The puppet show was presented by the school’s talented pupils under the banner of the Sphoorthi Theatre. Students Janani, Vaishno, Abhiram, Kaushik, Chinmayi, Pardha, Dhruv, Sowdamini, and Pradhyu were part of this delightful performance, showcasing their creativity, confidence, and teamwork. Notably, the Cremon Montessori School students will be representing Telangana at Vikramotsav 2026, scheduled to be held in Ujjain, Madhya Pradesh, where they will stage the inspiring “Bheem Aur Bakasur” puppet show at the national platform.

“Bheem Aur Bakasur”, inspired by an episode from the Indian epic Mahabharata, narrates the story of courage, righteousness, and the triumph of good over evil. Through expressive puppetry, voice modulation, and engaging narration in Hindi, the young performers brought the legendary tale to life, captivating the audience with their energy and stage presence.

Puppet shows have been an integral part of traditional storytelling across cultures for centuries. In India, various forms of puppetry such as string puppets (Kathputli), shadow puppets, and rod pup-

pets have been used not only for entertainment but also as powerful educational tools. They help children develop imagination, communication skills, emotional expression, and an appreciation for literature and performing arts. By incorporating puppet theatre into its activities, the school continues to blend creativity with experiential learning.

Speaking on the occasion, Challa Subash Reddy, Co-ordinator and Spokesperson for Cremon Montessori Life School, Mehdiapatnam, said, “We are immensely proud of our students for taking up traditional puppetry and presenting it with such dedication and cultural sensitivity. Representing Telangana at Vikramotsav 2026 in Ujjain is a remarkable achievement for our children. This platform will allow them to showcase their talent at the national level and celebrate India’s rich heritage.”

Katchatheevu | What is the controversy all about?

The story so far: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on March 31 raised again the controversial matter of Katchatheevu, a few weeks ahead of the Lok Sabha poll in Tamil Nadu. Citing a report in a daily and posting it on "X" (formerly Twitter), he said: "Eye-opening and startling! New facts reveal how Congress callously gave away Katchatheevu..." Subsequently, the State BJP and the AIADMK sharpened their attacks on the DMK and the Congress while the responses were swift too. Even though almost 50 years have lapsed since the signing of the original agreement in 1974, the matter comes back to the fore as political parties use it for attacking their adversaries. On March 16, Tamil Nadu Chief Minister and DMK chief M.K. Stalin contended that Katchatheevu was ceded to Sri Lanka despite strong protests by the DMK. He asked the Prime Minister what steps were taken by the latter to retrieve the islet. About one-and-a-half months ago, Katchatheevu was in limelight as, in late February, fishermen associations in Ramanathapuram district boycotted the annual two-day festival, as a mark of protest against the Sri Lankan Government's continuing arrests of Indian fishermen on charges of poaching.

When did Katchatheevu become a part of Sri Lanka?

During June 26-28, 1974, the then Prime Ministers of India and Sri Lanka, Indira Gandhi and Sirima R.D. Bandaranaike, signed an agreement to demarcate the boundary between the two countries in the historic waters from Palk Strait to Adam's Bridge. A joint statement issued on June 28, 1974, stated that a boundary had been defined "in conformity with the historical evidence, legal international principles and precedents." It also pointed out that "this boundary falls one mile off the west coast of the uninhabited Katchatheevu. The pact brought to a close the talks held between the two sides since October 1921. Initially, the negotiations were held between the governments of the then Madras and Ceylon.

How important has been Katchatheevu to the fisherfolk?

Fisherfolk of the two countries have been traditionally using the islet for fishing. Though this feature was acknowledged in the 1974 agreement, the supplemental pact in March 1976 made it clear that fishing vessels and fishermen of the two countries "shall not engage" in fishing in the historic waters, territorial sea and exclusive zone or exclusive economic zone of either of the countries "without the express permission of Sri Lanka or India."

What triggered the negotiations between India and Sri Lanka?

Sri Lanka claimed sovereignty over Katchatheevu on the ground that the Portuguese who had occupied the island during 1505-1658 CE had exercised jurisdiction over the islet. India's contention was that the erstwhile Raja of Ramnad [Ramanathapuram] had possession of it as part of his zamin. According to a news item published by The Hindu on March 6,



1968 which was based on the interview of the erstwhile Raja Ramanatha Sethupathi, Katchatheevu was under the jurisdiction of the zamin "from time immemorial" and it was the "last post" of the Ramnad Estate. He added that the zamin had been collecting taxes till 1947 when it was taken over by the State government following the Zamindari Abolition Act. However, replying to the debate on the matter in Lok Sabha in July 1974, the then External Affairs Minister Swaran Singh asserted that the decision had been taken after "exhaustive research of historical and other records" on the islet.

How was the 1974 agreement received?

The present demand for the Katchatheevu retrieval traces its origin to the opposition that the pact generated in 1974. During the debates in both Houses of Parliament in July 1974, most of the Opposition including the DMK, AIADMK, Jan Sangh, Swatantra and the Socialist Party, staged walk outs in the two Houses. Former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee, who was the Jan Sangh's leader, had contended that the decision to transfer the islet had been taken "behind the back" of the people and Parliament. He was supported by Madhu Limaye, veteran Socialist leader. The then Chief Minister M.Karunanidhi, even in 1973 when the talk of the islet transfer had been doing rounds, had urged Indira Gandhi that the popular feeling was in favour of retaining Katchatheevu which "belonged to India and not to Tamil Nadu alone," according to a report published by The Hindu on October 17, 1973. Three months later, he wrote a letter reiterating the stand, a copy of which was released a day after the 1974 agreement was signed. M. G. Ramachandran, founder of the

AIADMK, which was a fledgling party then, had criticised Karunanidhi for "his failure to guide the Centre properly" on the issue and sought his resignation.

When did the issue get a fresh lease of life?

After remaining low nearly for over 15 years, the Katchatheevu issue got revived in August 1991 with the then Chief Minister Jayalalitha demanding retrieval during her Independence Day address. She later modified her demand to one of getting back the islet through "a lease in perpetuity." The Tamil Nadu Assembly had witnessed a number of debates on the matter. In the last 15 years, both Jayalalitha and Karunanidhi had approached the Supreme Court on the matter.

What has been the stand of the Union government on the issue?

In August 2013, the Union government told the Supreme Court that the question of retrieval of Katchatheevu from Sri Lanka did not arise as no territory belonging to India was ceded to Sri Lanka. It contended that the islet was a matter of dispute between British India and Ceylon (now Sri Lanka) and there was no agreed boundary, a matter of which was settled through 1974 and 1976 agreements. In December 2022, the Union government, while referring to the two agreements, pointed out in its reply in the Rajya Sabha that Katchatheevu "lies on the Sri Lankan side of the India-Sri Lanka International Maritime Boundary Line." It added that the matter was sub-judice in the Supreme Court.

Free film making courses in seven Indian languages at Ramoji Film City

Hyderabad: Ramoji Academy of Movies (RAM) the digital film academy of Ramoji Group based at Ramoji Film City on Monday announced online filmmaking courses in seven Indian languages i.e. Hindi, Marathi, Telugu, Malayalam, Tamil, Kannada, and Bangla, besides English. The filmmaking courses include Story and Screenplay, Direction, Action, Film Production, Film Editing and Digital Filmmaking.

The comprehensive courses provide specialized syllabi in the native languages, and they are free of cost, making it easier for enthusiastic individuals pursuing a ca-

reer in filmmaking to learn. These courses eliminate any limitations related to time and location, thereby expanding the accessibility of high-quality filmmaking programs.

To register for these RAM courses, there is no upper age limit or minimum qualification criteria. The minimum age requirement is 15 years and proficiency in the chosen language of study is mandatory. The student must have a valid phone number and email address to receive the necessary communication. RAM provides a seamless and secure online environment enabled by Safe Exam Browser (SEB).

The Indian Army connects Arunachal Pradesh

Denwa Meyor, 40, and Kunchok Dolma Meyor, 29, are residents of Kibithoo, one of the easternmost villages in Anjaw district of Arunachal Pradesh. Inhabited by people of the Meyor tribe, it is located about 7-8 km from the Line of Actual Control (LAC), the contested line that separates India and China. Their husbands work as porters with the Indian Army, like many men here. Denwa has two children, a 13-year-old daughter and a four-year-old son. Her daughter is in a hostel in Hayuliang, about 135 km away, as Kibithoo's school runs only until Class 8 and English-medium education is limited in the area. Kunchok has a two-and-half-year-old son. He plays in the sun, oblivious of his mother's worry about his education. "We want better education [closer home], and in English," says Denwa. The State-run hostel costs ₹60,000-₹70,000 a year and making the monthly trip to see her daughter is expensive. Over the past year, the village of about 130 residents has witnessed its Primary Health Centre and residences of the schoolteachers being upgraded, and concrete tracks being laid under the Central government's Vibrant Villages Programme (VVP). Nijum Manyu, 32, a contractual government teacher from Tezu, 245 km away, who got his first posting in Kibithoo three years ago, says there are four teachers, and the school is being renovated, with a new badminton court as well. The Army's demarcation

For administrative purposes, the Army classifies Arunachal as Kameng, derived from the name of the river that flows through the State. Tawang district is part of the Kameng area, while the remaining part of the State is considered separate and was earlier referred to as the Rest of Arunachal Pradesh (RALP). Of the 3,488-km-long LAC, 1,346 km falls in the eastern sector, comprising Sikkim and Arunachal. While the Tawang and Kameng areas are under the Army's IV Corps, headquartered at Tezpur, RALP is under the III Corps, which is based at Dimapur. Kameng and Tawang have seen development in the last 10-15 years, with the remaining areas only now catching up with the kind of infrastructure that China possesses. The VVP was approved as a Centrally-sponsored scheme on February 15, 2023, with an outlay of ₹4,800 crore for the financial years 2022-23 to 2025-26 for the development of 2,967 villages in 46 blocks across 19 districts in the border States of Arunachal Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh, Sikkim, Uttarakhand, and the Union Territory of Ladakh. The objective of the VVP is comprehensive development of these villages to improve the quality of life of people, thereby reversing outmigration, according to the Ministry of Home Affairs. The VVP is an effort to counter China's model villages — called Xiaokang (moderately prosperous) and located very close to the LAC opposite Uttarakhand, Sikkim, and Arunachal Pradesh — which have raised apprehensions in the security establishment.

In the first phase of the VVP, 662 villages have been identified on priority, of



which 455 are in Arunachal, with 245 earmarked in the III Corps area. Out of these, 23 villages have been identified by the Army in Tezu for priority development, officials on the ground say. Union Home Minister Amit Shah formally launched the VVP in Kibithoo on April 10, 2023. He also inaugurated nine micro hydel projects of the State government and 14 infrastructure projects for the Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP). "Captured the beautiful landscapes during my visit to Kibithoo, India's first village. Arunachal Pradesh is blessed with immense natural beauty. I urge all to visit Arunachal Pradesh, especially Kibithoo, to be inspired by its history and stunned by nature's marvels," the Union Minister said in a post on social media platform X (formerly Twitter), after his visit, along with a video of the mountainous landscape. Along with Kibithoo, the adjacent villages of Kaho and Meshai, all in the Anjaw district, have together been allotted ₹9.72 crore for infrastructure development, revenue generation, and human resource development. Work is approximately 85% complete, an official says. Civil-military coordination just a few metres from where Denwa and Kunchok live, is Kibithu Bakery, staffed with four young women, in the 20 to 27 age group, who draw a monthly salary of ₹7,500. It was established in 2022 by the Army with the help of the Pune-based Aseem Foundation through funds under Operation Sadbhavna, a social welfare scheme spanning the areas of environment, education, and skilling. The bakery sells nankhatai (a type of shortbread), coconut and butter cookies, and cake. With tourists trickling in, the Army has lined up a renovation plan that will see new decor, lighting, and seat-

ing, estimated to cost between ₹30 lakh and ₹35 lakh. Once there is decent mobile connectivity, expected in the next few months, UPI payments will also be made available, improving ease of payments, officials say. Civil-military coordination is a prerequisite for the programme in border areas, says Lt. Col. R.S. Manhas, from a unit of the Punjab Regiment deployed in the area. "Our works through Operation Sadbhavna function as a feeder to the VVP," he says. The Army has allocated ₹15 crore under Operation Sadbhavna for developmental projects and outreach activities in the forward areas in III Corps area for 2022-23. The topography of Arunachal is like a wheel, the flat plateau as the hub with mountains and valleys jutting outwards like spokes. It means for travel between valleys, a visitor must come back to the plains. Work on the 2,400-km trans-Arunachal highway, which goes along the length of the border, is about 92% complete and the rest is expected to be completed this year, another official says. The new, almost 1,800-km-long frontier highway, on which work has commenced, will fill a critical void facilitating inter-valley movement. It will start from Bomdila in Arunachal's west, pass through Nafra, Huri and Monigong villages, and end in Vijaynagar, near the Indo-Myanmar border. The roads cut through eastern Arunachal's thick forests. Another 3,000 km of road infrastructure is also under planning and construction in the State. A number of operational tracks are being built by the Army to ensure last-mile connectivity in the forward areas, and in addition, a large number of projects have been sanctioned under the Prime Minister Gati Shakti project for infrastructure development.

A total of 34 new bridges have been constructed between 2020 and 2023, and three are under construction, all of which are Class 70 or higher, which means they have a capacity to carry 70 tonnes of load or higher. "All seven valleys have been connected with Chinook-specific helipads to ensure aerial connectivity," a source says, meaning they can be used by CH-47F(I) Chinook heavy-lift helicopters of the Air Force, which have emerged as a game changer on the LAC. Since the 2020 standoff with China in eastern Ladakh, the Army has carried out a major reorientation of troops from the western borders to the northern and eastern borders, and a change in the Order of Battle (ORBAT), the structural changes involved in maintaining troops and machines. As a part of this, several battalions that were committed to counter-insurgency roles in the Northeast were moved to the LAC. The Army's artillery guns — M777 Ultra Light Howitzers and 105mm Indian Field Guns — are deployed close to the LAC. The M777s, with a range of over 30 km, weigh just four tonnes and can be airlifted underslung on Chinooks, giving significant manoeuvrability in terms of long-range firepower between the valleys. Over the last few years, a range of new-generation equipment ranging from SIG-716 rifles, Negev light machine guns, Sako TRG-42 sniper rifles, tactical drones, sensors, and other weapons and equipment have been inducted here. A new memorial dedicated to the Battle of Walong of 1962 stands tall. In November 1962, the Indian Army halted the advancing People's Liberation Army soldiers for 27 days, forcing them to commit their reserve division from Tawang sector to Walong. Vastly outnumbered,