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Centre-State coordination key to boost overseas jobs for youth: Minister Vivek Venkatswamy

Hyderabad, Feb 25: Telangana Labour, Employment and Mines Minister Dr G Vivek Venkatswamy on Wednesday stressed the need for close coordination between the Central and State governments in areas such as skill training, course selection, passport services and immigration procedures to create better overseas employment opportunities for youth.

Interacting with senior officials of the Ministry of External Affairs at the Secretariat, the Minister said structured foreign language training, along with domain-specific skills, was essential to enhance global employability.

He underlined the importance of building a



strong ecosystem of mentors and career guides to prepare candidates for international placements and said expanding language training facilities alongside professional courses would significantly improve overseas job prospects. The MEA delegation comprised Secretary (CPV & OIA) Sripriya Ranganathan, Joint Sec-

retary (OE) and Protector General of Emigrants Surinder Bhagat, and Regional Passport Officer, Hyderabad, Ajith John Joshua. Officials reviewed ongoing programmes of both the Centre and the State aimed at facilitating overseas placements.

Sripriya appreciated Telangana's initiatives in promoting foreign em-

ployment and said coordinated efforts were being made to provide structured training to aspirants. She highlighted the need for cultural orientation of youth going abroad and emphasised forging institutional partnerships by linking corporate training institutions with overseas employers.

She also called for joint

efforts to curb illegal immigration through awareness and monitoring at the grassroots level, noting that state-issued certifications could be ratified by central agencies through coordinated mechanisms.

LETf Special Secretary Dana Kishore briefed the delegation on initiatives of the Telangana Overseas Manpower Company

(TOMCOM), including upgrading Industrial Training Institutes into Advanced Technology Centres to produce industry-ready professionals.

Issues related to passport issuance and increasing awareness on safe and legal immigration procedures were also discussed, according to an official statement.

Strengthen animal husbandry to boost Telangana's economy: Minister Srihari

Hyderabad, Feb 25: Telangana Minister for Animal Husbandry, Dairy Development, Fisheries, Youth Services and Sports, Vakiti Srihari, today said the Animal Husbandry Department should be strengthened to enhance Telangana's economic resources and ensure sustainable development.



Telangana.

Emphasising the need for a healthy Telangana, the Minister said priority should be given to the production of clean milk and nutritious poultry, meat and fish. He called for better coordination among senior officials and instructed that all aspects of the dairy sector, including production, infrastructure and logistics, be comprehensively reflected in the budget. He also proposed the appointment of an IAS-level officer to strengthen coordination in the dairy sector and boost milk production.

The Minister further directed that adequate importance be given to improving infrastructure in veterinary institutions, ensuring employee welfare, timely vaccination and uninterrupted supply of medicines for livestock, with proper budgetary support, according to an official statement.

Vakiti Srihari underlined that the focus should not merely be on budget allocations but on effective utilisation of funds. He directed officials to prepare detailed proposals to secure higher allocations and design schemes that promote economic growth and self-reliance. He also suggested adopting best practices from states such as Haryana, Tamil Nadu and Gujarat while framing policies for

Tungaturthi Ravi Thanks Deputy Commissioner A. Shailaja for Swift Action on Road Repairs

NARRA SRINIVAS REDDY (NSR), Medchal - Malkajgiri Staff Reporter, February 25, (Indian chronicle): Serious inconvenience caused by damaged and pothole-ridden roads in the 9th Division (Medipally) and 10th Division (Peerzadiguda) under Boduppall Circle of the Malkajgiri Municipal Corporation has finally received prompt attention from civic authorities. The main roads in both divisions had deteriorated significantly, leading to difficulties for motorists and local residents, with increased risk of accidents. Raising the issue, Tungaturthi Ravi, Congress Party President of Peerzadiguda Municipal Corporation, submitted a representation to Deputy Commissioner A. Shailaja, urging immediate intervention. He highlighted the dangerous condition of



the roads and requested that patchwork repairs be taken up without delay to prevent mishaps and ease public inconvenience. Responding positively to the representation, Deputy Commissioner Shailaja directed the Engineering Department to initiate repair works on a war footing. Patchwork repairs commenced shortly after the submission of the peti-

tion. Tungaturthi Ravi expressed gratitude to Deputy Commissioner A. Shailaja and the municipal staff for their quick response and timely action in addressing the issue. During the inspection of the ongoing patchwork works, Tungaturthi Ravi was accompanied by Pranay, Mohammed Mazer, Nagaraju, Katapaka Santosh, Sai, and others.

Singireddy Padma Reddy Donates 1.16 Lakh for Sri Venkateswara Temple Construction

NARRA SRINIVAS REDDY (NSR), Medchal - Malkajgiri Staff Reporter, February 25, (Indian chronicle): Former Boduppall Corporator Singireddy Padma Reddy donated 1,16,000 towards the construction of the Sri Venkateswara Swamy Temple in P&T Colony, located under the Boduppall Circle of Medchal-Malkajgiri Municipal Corporation. The donation amount was formally handed over to the temple committee members. The temple, being constructed in a spacious premises, is envisioned as a significant spiritual center for residents of Boduppall and Peerzadiguda, providing devotees an opportunity to offer prayers and seek the blessings of Lord Venkateswara. Speaking on the occasion, Singireddy Padma Reddy expressed hope that the blessings of Sri Venkateswara



Swamy would be upon the people of Telangana and bring peace and prosperity to all. Temple committee members conveyed their gratitude to Singireddy Padma Reddy

for the generous contribution and for supporting the temple construction initiative. Committee members and local residents participated in the program.

Kapra Press Club Elects New Committee - Merugu Chandramohan Elected President, Muthyam Mukesh Goud as General Secretary

NARRA SRINIVAS REDDY (NSR), Medchal - Malkajgiri Staff Reporter, February 25, (Indian chronicle): The Kapra Press Club has unanimously elected its new executive committee on Wednesday at the Press Club premises located in TSIIC Colony. The newly elected committee includes Empalli Padma Reddy and Belide Ashok as Advisors. Merugu Chandramohan was elected as President, while Dilip Kumar, Yavapuram Ravi, Dommati Kiran Kumar, and Garlapati Srinivas Rao were chosen as Vice Presidents. Muthyam Mukesh Goud was elected as General Secretary. D. Srinivas and K. Venkat were elected as Joint Secretaries. O. Narasimha and Keerthi Srinivas were appointed as Organizing Secretaries. Ramachandra Murthy was elected as Treasurer. The Executive Committee Members include Gangi Krishna, Govindu Kuntla Anjaneyulu, Budampalli Niranth Goud,



and Todupunuru Balakrishna. Speaking on the occasion, President Merugu Chandramohan, General Secretary Muthyam Mukesh Goud, and Treasurer Ramachandra Murthy stated that they would work towards the welfare and professional development of journalists associated with the Kapra Press Club. They thanked the members for electing them and announced that new memberships would be issued soon. Senior journalists including Pallu Pawan, Narra Srinivas Reddy, Vijay, Venkatapuram Ravi, Riyaz, Chittari, and photojour-

nalist Mohammed Ghouse were present at the event. Congratulations Pour In for the New Committee. Several political and community leaders extended their congratulations to the newly elected Kapra Press Club committee. The President Merugu Chandramohan, General Secretary Muthyam Mukesh Goud, Treasurer Ramachandra Murthy, and other committee members were felicitated on the occasion. Former corporators of AS Rao Nagar Division Singireddy Shirisha Somashekar Reddy, Pajjuri Pavanireddy, and Kotta Rama Rao conveyed their

wishes. BRS State leader Singireddy Somashekar Reddy, Congress senior leaders Bojja Raghava Reddy and Kotta Anji Reddy, Congress Party AS Rao Nagar Division President Keshetti Prasad, Telangana Telugu Desam Party former State Secretary Neerukonda Satish Babu, BJP Cherlapally Division President Challa Prabhakar, senior leader Kanukula Rajinikanth Reddy, BRS AS Rao Nagar Division President Kasam Mahipal Reddy, General Secretary Peddapuram Kumaraswamy, and leader S.A. Rahim also extended their congratulations.

IIIT Basara Engineering Student Dies by Suicide



Indian Chronicle (Taj Khan), February 25: Another Tragedy Strikes Basara IIIT Campus A tragic incident has once again occurred at the Rajiv Gandhi University of Knowledge Technologies (IIIT Basara) in Nirmal district. R. Vasantha, a first-year engineering student, died by suicide on campus. According to officials, she took the extreme step inside the girls' hostel. The deceased student was identified as a native of Wanaparthy district. Upon learning about

the incident, the institute staff informed her family members. The body was later shifted to the Area Hospital in Bhainsa for further procedures.

The exact reasons behind Vasantha's suicide are yet to be determined. Police have launched an investigation to ascertain whether she took the decision due to personal reasons or was under any form of pressure.

The recurrence of student suicides at IIIT Basara has raised serious concerns.

Additional Collector calls for strict enforcement of workplace harassment law



Khaja Sikander Mohiuddin Staff Reporter, Indian Chronicle Karimnagar, Feb 25 : Additional Collector (Local Bodies) Ashwini Tanaji Wakade on Wednesday directed officials to respond promptly to complaints lodged by women and ensure that appropriate action is taken without delay.

Addressing an awareness programme on the Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013 at the Collectorate conference hall in Karimnagar, she emphasised the need for strict implementation of the Act to safeguard the dignity and safety of women at workplaces. The programme was organised by the Women and Child Welfare Department through the Women Empowerment Centre. Local Committee member Raja Reddy explained the salient features of the Act and highlighted

its importance in ensuring a safe working environment for women. He also outlined preventive measures to curb sexual harassment and detailed the procedure for filing complaints.

Ms. Wakade stated that MP-DOs should function as nodal officers at the mandal level, while Municipal Commissioners should serve as nodal officers within municipal limits. She underscored the need to constitute Internal Complaints Committees (ICCs) in all offices and institutions and to address grievances in a time-bound manner. Stressing that it is the responsibility of officials to provide a secure and peaceful atmosphere for women employees, she called for coordinated efforts to strengthen redressal mechanisms. Nodal officers sought clarifications on various provisions of the Act during the interactive session.

Candlelight Rally Held in Kushaiguda Demanding Justice for Infant's Murder



NARRA SRINIVAS REDDY (NSR), Medchal - Malkajgiri Staff Reporter, February 25, (Indian chronicle): A peace candlelight rally was organized in Kushaiguda under the leadership of the BC, SC, ST Joint Action Committee condemning the brutal killing of a two-month-old infant belonging to the Rajaka community in Kummera village of Nagar Kurnool district. The protestors demanded the immediate arrest of those responsible and strict legal action against all individuals involved in the attack. According to the speakers, the infant was al-

legedly trampled to death during a violent assault, an act they described as inhuman and deeply disturbing. The rally commenced from the Venkateswara Swamy Temple in Kushaiguda and proceeded via the Kushaiguda Bus Stop to the vegetable market area, concluding at the statues of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar and Jyotirao Phule. Participants carried candles and raised slogans seeking justice for the victim's family. Addressing the gathering, leaders of the BC, SC, ST Joint Action Committee, Kushaiguda, stated that insulting and attacking

individuals in the name of caste is unacceptable, and the killing of an innocent infant during such violence is a stain on humanity. They urged the government to ensure swift arrests and stringent punishment for the accused. The leaders also warned that their protest would continue until justice is delivered to the victim's family and full protection is provided to them. Several local leaders and activists from the BC, SC, ST communities participated in the rally and expressed solidarity with the bereaved family.

Tension in Boduppall as Women Confront Officials Over Alleged Encroachments on Government Land

NARRA SRINIVAS REDDY (NSR), Medchal - Malkajgiri Staff Reporter, February 25, (Indian chronicle): Tension prevailed in the Boduppall Circle of the Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (GHMC) after revenue officials attempted to halt alleged illegal constructions on government land in Ambedkar Nagar Phase-III. According to official sources, authorities received information that unauthorized structures were being erected overnight on government property. Acting swiftly, revenue staff reached the spot and initiated steps to stop the ongoing construction. However, a group of women present at the site reportedly obstructed the officials and staged a protest against the action, leading to a tense situation for some time. As officials began proceedings to remove the alleged



encroachments, resistance from the women intensified, further escalating the atmosphere. Officials maintained that safeguarding government land is their responsibility and made it clear that encroachments would not be tolerated under any circumstances. We will not yield to any pressure. Action will be taken strictly in accordance with the law, an

official stated. Local residents have also demanded protection of government property and called for stringent measures against encroachments. Authorities indicated that police assistance may be sought, if necessary, to ensure that the situation remains under control and that legal procedures are carried out without obstruction.

CPM Leader Demands Arrest of Accused in Infant Murder Case



NARRA SRINIVAS REDDY (NSR), Medchal - Malkajgiri Staff Reporter, February 25, (Indian chronicle): CPI(M) Mandal Secretary N. Sabitha has demanded the immediate arrest of those responsible for the alleged murder of an infant during a village fair at Kummera in Nagarkurnool district. She called for the registration of a murder case against all those involved and strict punishment under the law. Speaking at a protest organized by the CPI(M) Mandal Committee at Rajiv Gruhakalpa, Annojiguda, under Pocharam Municipality limits on Wednesday, Sabitha criticized the police for failing to arrest the accused even a week after the

incident. She alleged that influential landlords attacked members of Rajaka and Dalit families during the Kummera fair and that an infant was killed in the assault. She demanded that a case be registered under murder charges against the named accused, including Tukaram Reddy, Srinivas Reddy, Madhureddy, Sreekanth Reddy, Satish Reddy, and the temple organizers allegedly involved in the attack. She also sought the arrest of the Kummera Sarpanch. Sabitha alleged that despite the seriousness of the incident, officials and public representatives have not responded adequately. She further claimed that instead of acting on the com-

plaint lodged by the victim's family, police registered cases against members of the Dalit family based on a counter-complaint from the accused. Alleging political interference, she stated that attempts were being made to dilute the case as the accused were reportedly linked to the ruling party. She warned that CPI(M) would intensify its agitation if the accused were not arrested immediately and justice was not delivered to the victim's family. CPI(M) Mandal Committee members K. Alivelu, Challa, K. Anusya, P. Sunitha Devi, G. Arasuya, Pushpa Kumari, Kondamma, and Renuka participated in the protest.

Congress Leaders Inspect Basic Facilities at Vaikunthadham in Chilkanagar Division

KISHORE VADDEPALLI, Uppal, February 25 (Indian Chronicle): Under the directions of Uppal Constituency Congress in-charge Mandumula Parameshwar Reddy, Chilkanagar Division Congress leaders inspected basic facilities at Vaikunthadham located within the 7th Division limits on Wednesday.



The inspection was carried out under the leadership of Division President Mulakalapalli Rajesh Mudiraj and Division In-charge Akiti Agam Reddy. During the visit, the leaders observed the condition of infrastructure and interacted with local residents. Speaking on the occasion, they

criticized the negligence of previous administrations, stating that the lack of minimum facilities at Vaikunthadham has caused severe inconvenience to the public. They pointed out that overgrown weeds and the absence of essential amenities such as water supply

have created hardships for people attending cremation services. The leaders stated that Uppal Constituency Congress in-charge Mandumula Parameshwar Reddy is taking special initiative to resolve these issues and assured that steps will be taken in the coming days

to provide improved infrastructure and basic facilities at the site. Senior Congress leaders and local residents including Bazaar Jagan Goud, Kompalli Balaraj, Nallavelli Mahender, Gandikota Ganesh, Dandagula Shankar, Mamu, Amar, Kurelli Yadagiri, Kondra Ramulu,

Ram Charla Balam, Palnati Kishayya, Podishetty Krishna, Bhaskar Reddy, Palnati David, Marapaka Sailu, B.M. Kiran, Palnati Ramesh, Pagadam Ramnarasayya, Sandhya, Gandikota Bharat, Mahender, Kiran, and residents of Sona Basti participated in the programme.

Collector Pamela Satpathy Inspects Centres, Calls for Zero Tolerance on Malpractice

Khaja Sikander Mohiuddin Staff Reporter, Indian Chronicle Karimnagar, Feb 25 : District Collector Pamela Satpathy on Wednesday said that the Intermediate examinations in the district were being conducted in a transparent and foolproof manner.



With the first-year Intermediate examinations commencing on Wednesday, the Collector inspected examination centres at the Government Junior College (Arts & Commerce) in the district headquarters and at Narayana Junior College in Mukarampura. She reviewed the facilities provided to students, including CCTV surveillance systems, seating arrangements and basic amenities. Satpathy verified attendance records, hall ticket checks and security arrangements at the centres. She directed offi-

cial to ensure a calm and conducive atmosphere for students to write the examinations without any inconvenience. Emphasising zero tolerance towards malpractice, she instructed authorities to take stringent measures to prevent any irregularities. She also called for robust security arrangements for the safe transportation of answer scripts to designated centres. The Collector directed officials from

various departments to work in coordination until the conclusion of the examinations to ensure their smooth conduct. A total of 15,389 first-year Intermediate students, including those from vocational streams, are scheduled to appear for the examinations in the district. On the first day, 14,989 students wrote the examination, while 400 were absent. No cases of malpractice were reported.

BRS Demands Withdrawal of 'False Case' Against MLA Kova Lakshmi



Indian Chronicle (Taj Khan), February 25: Senior BRS leader Marsakola Saraswathi has demanded the immediate withdrawal of the alleged false case registered against Asifabad MLA Kova Lakshmi. Speaking at a meeting held on Tuesday at Telangana Bhavan in the district headquarters, along with Municipal Chairman Member Akash and other party leaders, she alleged that despite a clear public mandate in the Kothapalli Municipal Chairman election, leaders of the ruling party had undermined democracy by preventing the conduct of elections. She further criticised the registration of cases against Balka Suman, BRS Mancherial district president, and MLA

Kova Lakshmi, stating that such actions were an attempt to weaken the democratic system. Warning of agitation, she said that if the case filed against the tribal MLA was not withdrawn immediately, the party would launch protests against the government. Vice-Chairman Ahmed, councillors Chiluvuru Venkanna and Kursunge Balakrishna, Salam, BRS Mandal President Ravinder, Akhila Gandla Telikula Welfare Association President Hivre Sandeep, and several other leaders including Haimad, Sai Shruvan, Tukaram, Balam, Bhimesh, Hivre Praveen, Santosh, Malles, Ashanna, Ravinder and Ponnala Narayana were present at the meeting.

Former MLA N.V.S.S. Prabhakar Consoles Chalapathi Raju's Family

KISHORE VADDEPALLI, Uppal, February 25 (Indian Chronicle): Former MLA Dr. N.V.S.S. Prabhakar expressed deep shock over the untimely demise of Sammeta Lakshmi Devi, wife of S. Chalapathi Raju, who had been serving as a full-time worker in various capacities at the Bharatiya Janata Party state office.



On Wednesday morning, he visited their residence in Srinivasapuram, Ramanthapur, and paid floral tributes to the mortal

remains of Lakshmi Devi. He prayed for her soul to attain salvation and conveyed his heartfelt condolences to the bereaved family members. Senior BJP leaders Bandaru Ven-

kata Rao, Vallapu Jagan Yadav, and Gaddam Sai Kiran, along with other party leaders, also participated in the condolence visit and paid their respects to Lakshmi Devi.

BJP Leaders Offer Condolences to Ramakrishna's Family in Uppal Constituency

Nacharam, Indian Chronicle, February 25: Uppal Constituency, at Kailasagiri in HB Colony Division, the father of Ramakrishna passed away. BJP Division President Ram Pradeep Munuganti expressed his condolences and paid tribute to the deceased. He consoled the bereaved family and assured them of his support. Janga Balaraju, Ramdas, Sampson, Ashok, Karuna, and Paramesh participated in the program.



Outsourcing Health Workers Demand Immediate Redressal of Issues

Indian Chronicle (Taj Khan), February 25: Union Warns of Statewide Agitation Over Pending Wages Leaders of the Telangana Medical, Health Outsourcing and Contract Employees Trade Union have urged the state government to immediately resolve the issues faced by outsourcing employees working in the medical and health depart-



ments across the state. State President Durgam Srinivas and State General Secretary Bonkanti Subhash made the demand while addressing a meeting held at the district head-

quarters on Tuesday. They expressed concern that minimum wages are not being properly implemented for outsourcing employees and that salaries have been pending for several months,

making it difficult for them to support their families. Despite playing a crucial role in the functioning of the health system, the employees are not being provided due recognition and rights,

they said, terming the situation unjust. The union leaders called upon the government to respond promptly, hold comprehensive discussions on the issues of outsourcing employees, and take fair decisions. Failing which, they warned that they would be compelled to launch statewide agitation programmes.

Ayurvedic Village, Cold-Pressed Oil Unit Inaugurated at Cherlapalli PAC

NARRA SRINIVAS REDDY (NSR), Medchal - Malkajgiri Staff Reporter, February 25, (Indian chronicle): An Ayurvedic Village and a Cold-Pressed Oil Unit were inaugurated at the Prisoners' Agricultural Colony (PAC), Cherlapalli, with the objective of promoting inmate welfare, rehabilitation, and skill development. The facilities were formally launched by Soumya Mishra. The Ayurvedic Village has been revived after a gap of six years.

This is the second such initiative under the Telangana Prisons Department, following the successful operation of a similar unit at Chanchalguda Central Prison. In a first for prison industries in the state, a Cold-Pressed Oil Unit has also been established at the PAC. The initiative aims to create employment opportunities for inmates and



equip them with practical skills that can support self-employment after their release. Speaking on the occasion, officials stated that the Ayurvedic Village is envisioned as a model project to provide quality healthcare at affordable cost. Authentic Ayurvedic treatments and wellness therapies will be offered at nominal charges.

The initiative is also expected to strengthen the connection between the prison system and society. Inmates will receive structured training in Ayurvedic therapies and wellness services under the supervision of qualified professionals. Upon completion of the training, they will obtain certified skills, enhancing their employability after release.

Experienced Ayurvedic doctors and trained therapists are currently providing services at the centre. The Cold-Pressed Oil Unit manufactures oils using traditional methods without chemicals. Since the process avoids high temperatures, essential nutrients, antioxidants, and fatty acids are retained. With growing health awareness,

demand for cold-pressed oils has been increasing in the market. Inmates will be trained in oil extraction, processing, packaging, hygiene management, and quality control. The initiative is expected to open avenues in agro-based industries and self-employment sectors. These projects reflect the government's focus on prison reforms, health-care access, skill development, self-reliance, and meaningful rehabilitation. Among those present were DIG (Hyderabad Range) D. Srinivas, DIG (Warangal Range) M. Sampath, Assistant Director of Industries S.M. Khalid Akhtar, PAC Cherlapalli Superintendent D. Bharat, CP Cherlapalli Superintendent G. Pramod, Ayurvedic doctors Y.B. Ramesh and M. Gautham, DS Jails D. Kalidas and K. Sriman Reddy, along with other officials and staff.

Congress Leaders, Cadre Join BRS in Presence of Medchal MLA Mallareddy



NARRA SRINIVAS REDDY (NSR), Medchal - Malkajgiri Staff Reporter, February 25, (Indian chronicle): Several Congress leaders and party workers joined the Bharat Rashtra Samithi (BRS) at the camp office of Medchal MLA Mallareddy in Boyinapally on Tuesday. The induction was led by Mallareddy, who welcomed the new members by offering them the BRS party scarf. Those who joined the BRS include District Youth Congress Secretary Dara Rajashekar, who had contested as an Independent candidate from Ward 13 of Muraharipalli in Aliabad Municipality. Along with him, Dandu Chandrashekar, Dara Babu, Dara Ashok, Dara Vijay, Dara Yadagiri,

Malyala Venkatesh Chary, Malyala Gopal Chary, Malyala Ramu Chary, Madhula Raju Reddy, Akshith Reddy, Ravinder Reddy, Ram Reddy, Satyam, K. Gani, Bharat, Dileep, S. Pranay, Venkatesh, Balu Rai, V. Sai and around 50 other supporters joined the party. Speaking on the occasion, Mallareddy welcomed the leaders and activists into the BRS and expressed confidence that their inclusion would further strengthen the party in the constituency. The event was attended by Councillor Yusuf Baba, former DCMs Vice Chairman Madhukar Reddy, AMC Vice Chairman Srikant Reddy, party leaders Sanjeev Reddy, Srikant Reddy and others.

Radhika Gupta Urges Timely Completion of Special Revision Drive



KISHORE VADDEPALLI, Uppal, February 25 (Indian Chronicle): Malkajgiri Municipal Corporation Uppal Zonal Commissioner Radhika Gupta, IAS, conducted a review meeting on Wednesday at the Uppal Zonal Office regarding the Special Revision Programme for the 047-Uppal Assembly Constituency.

AEROs and BLO Supervisors attended the meeting. The Commissioner directed officials to accelerate the voter list special revision works and

increase the number of individuals being mapped through BLOs. She emphasized that officials must work in coordination to ensure the special revision programme is completed within the stipulated timeline. Uppal Mandal Tahsiladar Pool Singh Chauhan, Uppal Circle Deputy Commissioner G. Raju, Kapra Circle Deputy Commissioner K. Srihari, Nacharam Deputy Commissioner S. Nithyanand, and other officials participated in the meeting.

Leaders Visit Bereaved Family, Demand Immediate Arrests in Kumhari Village Infant Death Case

NARRA SRINIVAS REDDY (NSR), Medchal - Malkajgiri Staff Reporter, February 25, (Indian chronicle): In connection with the tragic death of a two-month-old infant during the Mallanna Jatara in Kumhari village of Nagar Kurnool district, Peddapuram Kumar Swamy visited the bereaved



family and expressed solidarity with them. The in-

fant allegedly lost its life due to an attack linked to

caste arrogance during the festival. Condemning the incident, Kumar Swamy stated that such inhuman acts in the name of caste are unacceptable in a civilized society. He assured the family that he would stand by them and continue to fight until justice is delivered. He demanded

that the police immediately arrest those responsible for the infant's death and take strict legal action against them. He further stated that justice must be ensured for the victim's family and warned that protests would be intensified if the authorities fail to act swiftly.

Deputy Commissioner A. Shailaja Attends Wedding Reception at SVR Convention Hall

NARRA SRINIVAS REDDY (NSR), Medchal - Malkajgiri Staff Reporter, February 25, (Indian chronicle): Deputy Commissioner of Boduppal Circle, Malkajgiri Municipal Corporation, A. Shailaja attended the wedding ceremony of Sheshank Goud and Vasavi at SVR Convention Hall in Kandlakoya. Sheshank Goud is the brother of Sushanth Goud, former President of the Medchal-Malkajgiri District Youth Congress. The ceremony was attended by several political and community leaders. Among those present were Tungaturthi Ravi, President of the Congress Party, Peerzadiguda Municipal Corporation



and Chairman of RV Foundation, and Karre Rajesh, President of the Ghatkesar Mandal Party. Family members including Kotta Chandar Goud and Kotta Venkatesh Goud, along with relatives and well-wishers,

also attended the event and extended their greetings to the newlyweds. The occasion was marked by warm wishes and celebrations in the presence of friends, supporters, and community members.

Historic High Court Verdict a Major Relief for Telangana Activists: Dommati Kiran Kumar Rao

NARRA SRINIVAS REDDY (NSR), Medchal - Malkajgiri Staff Reporter, February 25, (Indian chronicle): Describing the recent verdict of the Telangana High Court as historic, Dommati Kiran Kumar Rao, State Media Convener of the Telangana Activists Forum, expressed satisfaction over the court's positive response toward activists who fought for the formation of Telangana State. He recalled that several activists had approached the High Court seeking implementation of assurances made to them, including allotment of house sites and sanction of pensions. The petitioners urged the government to fulfill promises made to those who risked their lives during the Telangana statehood movement. Kiran Kumar Rao stated that the court's directive emphasizing the welfare of movement activists and the need to extend the benefits due to them at the earliest



would provide significant relief to eligible beneficiaries. He said the judgment would help ensure that activists who applied under the government's Abhaya Hastham scheme receive benefits at the grassroots level. He appreciated the efforts of advocate Karunakar Reddy, who argued strongly on behalf of the petitioners during the hearing. Kiran Kumar Rao said the responsibility now lies with the Congress government to immediately extend assistance to all eligible activists. He expressed hope that under the leadership of Chief Minister Re-

vanth Reddy, the process of granting house sites and pensions would be completed without delay. He welcomed the intervention of the judiciary and said the government's willingness to implement the court's directions was a positive step. He also remarked that the injustice faced by activists during the previous government would not be forgotten by Telangana society. He added that since coming to power, the Congress government has been extending support to movement activists. Kiran Kumar Rao conveyed his gratitude to the Telangana High Court, Chief Minister Revanth Reddy, Ministers Ponnamm Prabhakar and Dudilla Sridhar Babu, TPCC President Bomma Mahesh Kumar Goud, JAC Chairman M. Kodandaram, and Telangana Forum State President Dr. Cheema Srinivas Rao for their support toward the cause of movement activists.

Demand for Strict Punishment for Infant Murder Accused

Gurram Raghavender, Secretary, Greater Hyderabad BC Welfare Association

KISHORE VADDEPALLI, Uppal, February 25 (Indian Chronicle): Gurram Raghavender, Secretary of the Greater Hyderabad BC Welfare Association, demanded strict punishment for those responsible for the murder of an infant at a village fair in Kummera village of Nagarkurnool district. He urged authorities to immediately arrest all the accused. Speaking to the media on Wednesday, he questioned why the culprits had not been arrested even after a week. He demanded immediate action against those responsible for the killing of



the child during the fair and called for justice for the victim's family. He alleged that during the Kummera fair, the attackers not only assaulted members of Rajaka and Dalit families but also murdered the infant. He demanded

that murder charges be filed against the alleged perpetrators and temple organizers, including Tukaram Reddy, Srinivasa Reddy, Madhu Reddy, Srikant Reddy, and Satish Reddy. Raghavender expressed concern that even after a week, officials and public representatives had failed to respond to the incident. He further demanded the immediate arrest of the Kummera village sarpanch and criticized the police for allegedly filing cases against the Dalit family based on complaints from the accused while ignoring the victims' complaint.

Congress Government Supportive Towards Telangana Activists: Garika Sudhakar

NARRA SRINIVAS REDDY (NSR), Medchal - Malkajgiri Staff Reporter, February 25, (Indian chronicle): Garika Sudhakar, Telangana Movement Activist and State Leader of the Congress Party, stated that the Telangana State Congress Government remains committed to fulfilling its manifesto promises made to the Telangana movement activists. He said that as promised in the party manifesto, the government is working on providing 250 square yards of land and a pension to eligible activists. For the



past six months, Chief Minister Revanth Reddy, Minister Ponnamm Prabhakar, and MLC Kodandaram have been holding discussions to finalize the guidelines for implementation. Sudhakar expressed satisfaction over

the High Court's observations regarding the issue and stated that the government is also positively inclined toward delivering justice to genuine movement activists. He added that a committee will soon be constituted to identify genuine activists and ensure that the benefits reach the rightful beneficiaries. He reiterated that the Congress government is committed to safeguarding the interests of Telangana movement activists and will take appropriate steps in the near future.

Former Corporator Bannala Geetha Praveen Inspects CC Road Works in Chilkanagar Division

KISHORE VADDEPALLI, Uppal, February 25 (Indian Chronicle): Former Corporator of Chilkanagar Division and GHMC Standing Committee Member Bannala Geetha Praveen Mudiraj inspected the ongoing CC road construction works on Wednesday in Kalyanpuri and Indiranagar Colony streets of the division.



Speaking on the occasion, Geetha Praveen stated that the CC road works sanctioned across the division are being completed in phases. She assured that the remaining pending works will also be completed with the support of MLA Bandari Lakshma Reddy. She instructed the contractor to strictly follow quality standards during construc-

tion and to complete the works at the earliest without causing inconvenience to residents. She also urged GHMC Engineering Department officials to ensure continuous supervision during the road construction process. Work Inspector Kedar, BRS state leader Bannala Praveen Mudiraj, senior leader Kokunda Jagan,

Colony President Muddam Srinivas Yadav, Vice President Balakrishna Goud, General Secretary Mallikarjun, colony members Rafi, Ramu, Sanjeev, Lalesh Goud, Bhanu, Srikanth, Mahesh, Chinna, Shyam, Balu, and residents Anita, Sukritha, Shobha, Lakshmi, Rajesh, and others participated in the programme.

Medchal-Malkajgiri Collector Inspects Intermediate Examination Centres



NARRA SRINIVAS REDDY (NSR), Medchal - Malkajgiri Staff Reporter, February 25, (Indian chronicle): Medchal-Malkajgiri District Collector Manu Chaudhary inspected the conduct of the Intermediate Public Examinations that commenced on Wednesday in Medchal-Malkajgiri district. The Collector visited Sai Teja Junior and Degree College at Thumkunta in Shamirpet Mandal and Excellencia Junior College at Upparpally to review the arrangements and supervision of the examinations. During the inspection, the Collector

directed officials and examination staff to remain vigilant and ensure the smooth and fair conduct of examinations until completion. The Collector personally visited examination halls and observed students writing their papers. The District Intermediate Officer was asked to confirm whether essential facilities such as drinking water, lighting, fans, and medical support were available for students. Details regarding the total number of candidates registered, the number of students present, and absentees were also reviewed. The

functioning of CCTV cameras at the examination centres was inspected. The Collector examined live footage from the CCTV control room to monitor all examination halls. College management was questioned about the time of opening of question paper packets and whether any students were permitted to enter the examination centre beyond five minutes after the scheduled commencement time. District Intermediate Officer Kishan, Shamirpet Mandal Tahsiladar Sucharita, and other officials accompanied the Collector during the inspection.

Telangana Gazetted Officers Association Demands Pay Scale, Revocation of Suspension for 632 TCCOs

Typist Com..Computer Operators should be considered as permanent employees and pay scale should be implemented:-Telangana Gazetted Officers Association State Associate President, Mandadi Upender Reddy, Gazetted Officers Association District President Jagan Mohan Prasad

The memo issued suspending the services of 632 should be immediately revoked and (632) people should continue as usual:- Telangana Gazetted Officers Association State Associate President, Mandadi Upender Reddy, Gazetted Officers Association District President Jagan Mohan Prasad (Mandava Srisailam..Ya-



dadri Bhuvanagiri District Bureau... Indian Chronicle... February 25):- Typist Com., who is performing duties in the offices of CLA (HOD), District Administrative Officer,

Mandal Revenue Officer, and Tahsildar in the Revenue Department. Continuing as per the duty of Computer Operators (TCCOs), Typist Com. The State Associate President

of Telangana Gazetted Officers Association, Mandadi Upender Reddy, Joint Action Committee Chairman, Yadadri Bhuvanagiri District, and the District President of Gazetted Of-

ficers Association, C. Jagan Mohan Prasad, submitted a petition to the Typist-Cum Computer Operators (TCCOs) of Yadadri Bhuvanagiri District for the provision of "Pay Scale" to the TCCOs. Speaking on this matter, Mandadi Upender Reddy said that the memo issued suspending the services of 632 Typist-Cum Computer Operators working in various districts of the state should be immediately suspended and (632) people should continue as usual, and that the role of Typist-Cum Computer Operators is crucial in the Prajavani portal, issuance of ration cards, Kalyana Lakshmi scheme, and the government's Pravasi

Pette A scheme, which is a revenue scheme, and for that, Typist-Cum Computer Operators should be given. He urged the government to provide permanent job security (pay scale), resolve their legal issues, and support those from poor families so that their families with small children do not fall on the streets, and provide employment to take care of their elderly parents, and to shed light on their poor lives. District President of the Gazetted Officers' Association C. Jagan Mohan Prasad and TNGOs, District Treasurer Kanchanapalli Srikanth, Tresa leader R. Ganesh Prasad and other leaders participated in this program.

19-Year-Old Degree Student Missing in Jawaharnagar

NARRA SRINIVAS REDDY (NSR), Medchal - Malkajgiri Staff Reporter, February 25, (Indian chronicle):A 19-year-old degree student was reported missing from BJR Nagar under Jawaharnagar limits on Monday morning. According to police, Addula Nagaraju (46), a mason and resident of H. No. 22-83/4, BJR Nagar, lodged a complaint stating that his elder daughter, Addula Srivalli, a first-year Degree student of Omega College, Radhika, left home at about 7:30 a.m. on February 24 and did not return. The family searched at all known places and contacted friends and relatives, but her whereabouts remain unknown. The complainant expressed



suspicion over Hussain Basha, who was allegedly in regular phone contact with the missing girl. Based on the complaint, police registered a case and took up investigation. Srivalli is about 5 feet tall, wheatish complexion, and speaks Telugu and English. Further investigation is in progress.

Yadadri Bhuvanagiri District Local Bodies Additional Collector Bhaskar Rao inspected the pattern of intermediate examinations



(Mandava Srisailam..Yadadri Bhuvanagiri District Bureau... Indian Chronicle... February 25):- Yadadri Bhuvanagiri District Local Bodies Additional Collector Bhaskar Rao inspected the pattern of intermediate examinations on Wednesday. Local Bodies Additional Collector Bhaskar Rao visited the Intermediate First Year Examination being conducted at Aleru Social Welfare Residential College and Government Junior College Aleru and made a surprise inspection.

On this occasion, the Local Bodies Additional Collector inspected the conduct of the examinations. He said that the students should

write the examination in a peaceful atmosphere without panic. He asked the concerned officer to find out how many students appeared for the examination. He inspected the CCTV cameras, drinking water facilities and the performance of the medical staff at the examination centers. The concerned officials were instructed to conduct the exams smoothly without any room for mistakes and to immediately transport the answer sheets to the designated areas under police protection after the exam is completed. The concerned officials and others participated in this program.

Motors & Electrical Sanitary Shops Association felicitates Municipal Chairman Tangallapalli Srivani Ravikumar



(Mandava Srisailam..Yadadri Bhuvanagiri District Bureau... Indian Chronicle... February 25):- Buvanagiri Town Motors & Electrical Sanitary Shops Association members felicitated Municipal Chairman Tangal-

lapalli Srivani Ravikumar and Vice Chairman today. Motors Association President Amarlingam Jakkiah Om Prakash, Texamo Motors Ramakrishna, Muthyam Reddy, Are Jangir and others participated in this program.

Bhuvanagiri MLAs invite Kumbham Anil Kumar Reddy



(Mandava Srisailam..Yadadri Bhuvanagiri District Bureau... Indian Chronicle... February 25):- On the occasion of Thangallapalli Srivani assuming the post of Honorary Chairperson at

11.45 am on the 26th of this month, Honorary Bhuvanagiri MLAs Kumbham Anil Kumar Reddy and MLA's daughter Kumbham Kirti Reddy met and cordially invited them.

Government Whip MLA Beerla Aylaiah participated in the Sevalal Jayanti celebrations



(Mandava Srisailam..Yadadri Bhuvanagiri District Bureau... Indian Chronicle... February 25):- Sant Sevalal Maharaj Jayanti celebrations were organized on behalf of the Telangana State Government in Mallapur village of Yadadrigutta mandal of Yadadri Bhuvanagiri district. Telangana Government Whip and Aleru MLA Beerla Aylaiah and National ST Commission Member

Hussain Nayak participated as the chief guests of this program. First, a bog bandar program was organized on the occasion of the Jayanti celebrations and later a meeting was held. Aleru Market Committee Chairman Chaitanya Mahender Reddy, Additional Collector Bhaskar Rao, RDO Krishna Reddy, DRDO Nagi Reddy participated in this program. On this occasion,

Beerla Aylaiah said that the teachings of Sant Sevalal Maharaj are a guide for the society. He said that Sant Sevalal Maharaj is the idol of the Banjaras. He said that he was a great man who preserved the culture and traditions of the tribes and led the tribals towards non-violence. He taught the values of service, truth and equality and worked for the unity of the Banjaras.

Mother Dairy Management Group meets Chief Minister Revanth Reddy Government will provide necessary support to Mother Dairy:- Revanth Reddy



(Mandava Srisailam..Yadadri Bhuvanagiri District Bureau... Indian Chronicle... February 25):- Mother Dairy Management Group met Telangana State Chief Minister Revanth Reddy on Tuesday. In this meeting, Telangana State Government Whip Aleru MLA Sri Beerla Aylaiah, Bhuvanagiri MP Chamala Kiran Kumar Reddy, Bhuvanagiri MLA

Kumbham Anil Kumar Reddy, Tungaturthi MLA Am-dile Samel, Nakirekal MLA Veeresham, Miryalaguda MLA Bathula Laxma Reddy, Devara Konda MLA Balu Nayak, Nagarjuna Sagar MLA Jaivir Reddy, Mother Dairy Chairman Madhusudhan Reddy, Vijaya Dairy Gutta Amit Reddy, participated in this meeting. On this occasion, Normal explained the current status of Mother Dairy to the

Chief Minister. On this occasion, discussions were held on the management of the company, linkage with farmers, milk procurement system, product expansion, marketing strategies and future development plans. Responding to this, Chief Minister Revanth Reddy assured that the government would provide necessary support for the development of Mother Dairy.

CM Revanth Reddy participated in the meeting of DCC Presidents of the joint states.. Sanghatana Srujan Abhiyan"



(Mandava Srisailam..Yadadri Bhuvanagiri District Bureau... Indian Chronicle... February 25):- Deputy CM Bhatti Vikramarka, TPCC Presidents MLC Mahesh Kumar Goud, Kanche Ilayah, former Andhra Pradesh Minister Raghuvveera Reddy, Telangana State Government Whip Aleru MLA Beerla Ilayah participated in the third day of the ten-day training camp of District Congress Committee (DCC) Presidents of Andhra Pradesh

and Telangana States at Andantagiri Hills in Vikarabad district. This training camp, which is being organized as part of the "Sanghatana Srujan Abhiyan" program, is moving forward with the aim of strengthening the party's organization and developing leadership capabilities. Under the auspices of Sanghatana Srujan Program Chairman Sachin Rao, Organizing Secretary Challa Vamsi Chander Reddy, MLA Rammohan The camp is continuing effec-

tively under the leadership of Reddy. In this ten-day training camp, detailed training is being provided by experts on key topics such as leadership skills, public problem-solving strategies, election strategy, social media & media management, and action plans. The organizers revealed that the main objective of this camp is to further strengthen the party at the district level and take Congress ideologies to the village level.

The poor house demolition without showing a substitute BJP District President Nelluri Koteswara Rao

Arvapalli Nagesh, Khammam Staff Reporter, February 25 (Indian Chronicle) The Government of the Government of Government, which claims that the poor is the welfare of the poor is the rhythm of Khammam in Khammam's city Khammam district president Nelloori Koteswara Rao said. Bhudan Diversion, Bardon Developers, who seemed in Khammam Ambedkar building, the Bharateeya Janata Party State Treasurer Devaki Vasudeva Rao

Their liturgical leaders who saw their implications and the victims were asked. He was severely condemned to get the poons. In this difficult, the Indian Janata Party would be full of them, and no one was buried to the hill for his victims. On this occasion they said that the nesting poem to the last 14 years of the land of the Bhide-



on colony for the past 14 years, the ruthless thing to ruthlessly rulse the night without showing them any alternative to them. Without the actress, this inhuman action has expressed the roads, which fell in the road with the infants and elderly. He questioned how to make the minimum humanity without having to settle down the same place as fourteen, daily collapse.

The government to be held for the poor is that the government has been ranked, the livestock. The lack of soy au-

thorities to provide minimum rehabilitation for the name of the houses with the name of the occupants. He demanded that the minimum facilities of the homeless families were instantly accommodated, including the minimum facilities such as drugs, and he has been allocating the housing homes for the original relatives. Without any political intervention in allocation allocations, the government has suggested that it is transparent to be transparent to happen to happen in the actual package.

Teeki Rajashekar Appointed as ICSA Convener of Telangana Activists HMT Unit

Nacharam, Indian Chronicle, February 25:Teeki Rajashekar, a resident of Nacharam, has been appointed as the Convener of the HMT ICSA (Telangana Activists Joint Action Committee). The appointment was announced during a meeting of Telangana activists held at the Bahujan Sahitya Academy office in Nacharam.

The meeting was conducted under the leadership of Teeki Rajashekar and was attended by ICSA Founding President Nalla Radhakrishna as the chief guest. Addressing the gathering, Nalla Radhakrishna emphasized the need to strengthen the organization by establishing SC, ST, BC, and Minority ICSA committees in all divisions. He called upon activists to work unitedly to safeguard the interests and aspirations of Telangana movement participants.



He further announced that the organization is preparing to contest in all divisions in the upcoming Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (GHMC) elections. He also demanded

that the Indian National Congress fulfill the promises made to Telangana movement activists in its previous election manifesto. Speaking on the occasion, newly ap-

pointed Convener Teeki Rajashekar expressed his commitment to work towards achieving the ideals of Professor K. Jayashankar, who played a key role in the Telangana movement. He assured that he would dedicate himself to strengthening the organization at the grassroots level and addressing the concerns of activists. Rajashekar also thanked Nalla Radhakrishna and other leaders including Pramod Kumar and Vijay Kumar for entrusting him with the responsibility. Several prominent members such as Prem Kumar, Pramod Mahajan, Pastor Macha Arogyam, MD Razak, Jyothi Reddy, Dev Kumar, Boodida Ganesh, Komagalla Venkatesh, Doppa Srinivas, Pastor Bhaskar, and others participated in the meeting.

TGO Hyderabad district unit thanks CM for cashless treatment scheme



Hyderabad, February 25, 2026: The Hyderabad district branch of the Telangana Gazetted Officers (TGO) Association has expressed its gratitude to Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy for implementing the cashless medical treatment scheme for government employees and pensioners.

In a statement issued on Wednesday, district branch president M.B. Krishna Yadav and secretary M.A. Khader described the decision as "historic", stating that it fulfils a long-pending demand of employees across all categories.

They said the implementation of the Employees

Health Scheme (EHS) providing cashless treatment, along with an accident corpus fund of 1.20 crore, would ensure comprehensive medical security to employees and pensioners. Under the scheme, beneficiaries would be eligible for cashless treatment for as many as 1,998 identified diseases. The leaders noted that nearly seven lakh government employees and pensioners, along with their family members — totalling around 17 lakh people — would benefit from the initiative, receiving assured cashless healthcare coverage. They observed that the health and insur-

ance measures announced by the government would remain significant milestones in the State's administrative history. The association also conveyed its thanks to Cabinet Ministers and Hyderabad In-charge Minister Ponnambalaji. Special appreciation was extended to TGO State president Eluri Srinivas and State general secretary B. Shyam for their efforts in securing the benefits. District associate president Ashanna, treasurer Venkataramana, vice-president Dr. Krottha Vidya Sagar, joint secretaries Sriram and Saraswathi, among others, were present.

Excise Department Raids on Liquor Shops – Case Registered Against Belt Shop

"Indian chronicle" Jade Srinivas. February, 25. In Komuram Bheem Asifabad district, Excise Department officials conducted extensive inspections of liquor shops to curb illegal liquor sales and ensure compliance with regulations.

During inspections in Sirpur (T), Koutala, and Bejjur mandals, officials found that licensed liquor shops were operating according to government norms. No instances of overpricing, adulterated liquor, or trader syndicates were detected, authorities confirmed.

However, during raids on illegal belt shops, a case was registered against Seedam



Reena, a resident of Mogadadgud village, for allegedly storing and selling liquor illegally. Legal action has been initiated in this regard.

Speaking on the occasion, Excise CI V. Ravi stated that

strict action would continue against illegal liquor and country-made liquor (natu sara) sales. He also urged the public to report any information related to unlawful liquor activities.

My Efforts Yield Results: Special Congratulations to Activists of All 33 Districts

NARRA SRINIVAS REDDY (NSR), Medchal - Malkajgiri Staff Reporter, February 25, (Indian chronicle): Telangana State Activists have received positive developments following sustained efforts and representations made to the concerned authorities. Expressing happiness over the outcome, Damaraju Veerachari, State Executive Member of the Telangana Activists Forum, stated that the long-pend-



ing concerns of movement activists have finally received due attention. He extended special congratulations to activists across all 33 districts of Telangana

for their unity, patience, and relentless struggle. He emphasized that collective efforts and consistent follow-up played a crucial role in achieving this progress. Veerachari reiterated that the Telangana Activists Forum will continue to stand by the activists and work towards safeguarding their rights and welfare in the future. Damaraju Veerachari, State Executive Member, Telangana Activists Forum, Telangana State.

Applications Invited for Class VI Admissions in Telangana State Model Schools

NARRA SRINIVAS REDDY (NSR), Medchal - Malkajgiri Staff Reporter, February 25, (Indian chronicle): Online applications are invited for admission into Class VI for the academic year 2026-27 in Telangana State Model Schools. Students can apply through the official website <https://tgss.telangana.gov.in> from February 26, 2026 to March 4, 2026. The entrance examination will be conducted in March 2026. Students currently studying Class V during the academic year 2025-26 in Government or Government-recognized schools are eligible to apply. The entrance test will be conducted for 100 marks covering Telugu, English, Mathematics, General Science, Social Studies and Mental Ability.

Tight Vigil by SHE Teams - 264 Nabbed at Nampally Exhibition

Hyderabad correspondent (KS Reddy) February 25, Indian Chronicle: Under the supervision of DCP Lavanya, the SHE Teams intensified measures to ensure the safety of women and girls in the city. During the 85th Nampally Exhibition, held from January 1 to February 15, special surveillance was deployed to curb eve teasing and harassment.

Through decoy operations and continuous monitoring at the exhibition grounds, a total of 264 offenders were caught red-handed. Among them, 242 were adults and 22 were minors. As many as 188 offenders were counselled

in the presence of their family members and released with a warning. Cases were registered against 56 individuals for serious misconduct. Of them, 52 were fined, while four were sentenced to imprisonment. The remaining cases are under investigation. Apart from enforcement, the SHE Teams also focused on awareness initiatives, conducting 385 programmes, 2,046 observation drives, and 414 awareness campaigns through audio visual (AV) vehicles. Officials urged citizens not to remain silent in cases of harassment and to immediately contact Dial 100.

B V Raju Institute of Technology Hosts "Chalo! Japan 2026" to Promote Japanese Language and Culture

Narsapur, February 25, 2026: B V Raju Institute of Technology (BVRIT) successfully organized "Chalo! Japan 2026" on 25th February 2026. The event was conducted by the Centre for Foreign Languages (CoFL) and the Vishnu Japan Outreach Centre (VJOC) in association with The Japan Foundation, New Delhi.

The program aimed to promote Japanese language, culture, and global career opportunities among students. The Japan



Foundation team delivered an engaging session on Japanese language and conducted a live Japanese calligraphy demonstration,

highlighting the artistic elegance and cultural depth of Japan. Students actively participated in parallel activity sessions, including

Soran Bushi (traditional Japanese dance), Origami, and a Brush Pen Uchiwa workshop, gaining valuable hands-on exposure

to Japanese traditions and art forms. The event was graced by Principal Dr. Sanjay Dubey, Director Dr. Laxmi Prasad, Principal of Vishnu School Mrs. Naga Jyothi, Dr. Raju Aedla (Dean - R&D), and Manager Mr. Bapiraju, along with faculty members.

The program concluded on a successful note, strengthening cultural engagement and inspiring students to explore higher education and career opportunities in Japan.

Annual Intermediate Examinations Must Be Conducted Strictly District Collector K.Haritha

"Indian Chronicle" Jade Srinivas. February, 25: The District Collector of Komuram Bheem Asifabad district, K. Haritha, directed officials to conduct the ongoing Intermediate annual examinations in a strict and systematic manner. She made these remarks during a surprise inspection of the examination centres set up at the TGTTWRJC Girls' and Boys' Junior Colleges in the district headquarters.

Speaking on the occasion, the Collector emphasized that the examinations should be conducted smoothly and peacefully without any inconvenience to students. She instructed officials to ensure all necessary facilities are provided at the examination centres and



to maintain strict security of question papers. She directed authorities to closely monitor CCTV surveillance, verify students' hall tickets carefully, and accurately record attendance. Strict measures must be taken to prevent students from bringing mobile phones or any electronic devices into the examination centres. The

Collector also instructed officials to make adequate security arrangements at the centres, temporarily close nearby xerox centres, and create awareness among students to reach examination centres on time. The Intermediate Education Officer and other concerned officials participated in the inspection.

Road Safety Awareness Drive Conducted at ECIL X Road - Uppal Division ACP Y. Venkat Reddy

NARRA SRINIVAS REDDY (NSR), Medchal - Malkajgiri Staff Reporter, February 25, (Indian chronicle): As part of the second phase of the "Arrive Alive" Campaign-2026, Kushaiguda Police conducted an extensive road safety awareness programme at ECIL X Road. Uppal Division ACP Y. Venkat Reddy participated in the programme and addressed motorists on the importance of following traffic rules. He highlighted the dangers of drunk driving, its severe impact on families, legal consequences, and the risk of loss of life. He cautioned that a moment of negligence while driving under the influence of alcohol can lead to lifelong suffer-



ing. Kushaiguda Police Station SHO L. Bhaskar Reddy, along with Sub-Inspectors N. Sudhakar Reddy, N. Venkanna, Ch. Sailu, M. Vijay and other police personnel, took part in the awareness drive. Around 50 to 60 motorists and local residents attended the programme and received guidance on road safety measures. The second phase of the week-long campaign is being con-

ducted from February 22 to February 28 with the objective of significantly reducing road accidents and fatalities through public participation. Police officials stated that awareness rallies, special enforcement drives, and outreach programmes will continue at key junctions across the city. The campaign is being carried out with the message: "Travel Safe - Reach Safe."

Public Safety is Top Priority: District Collector Anudeep Durishetty

Arvapalli Nagesh Khammam Staff Reporter, February 25 (Indian Chronicle): Emphasizing that public safety is of utmost importance, Anudeep Durishetty, District Collector of Khammam, stated that footpaths in the city should be constructed with modern infrastructure standards to ensure convenience and safety for pedestrians. On Wednesday, the District Collector, along with Municipal Corporation Commissioner Abhishek Agastya, inspected the progress of ongoing development works in the city. They examined the footpath construction works and tile designs in the 2nd Division area of Ballepalli. The Collector directed officials to strictly adhere to quality standards in the construction of footpaths. He instructed that footpaths should be designed

to provide maximum comfort and safety, ensuring that children, elderly persons, and persons with disabilities can walk without any inconvenience. Speaking on the occasion, the Collector said that steps have been initiated to construct footpaths in key areas of the city. He emphasized that pedestrian-friendly infrastructure plays a crucial role in ensuring road safety and promoting public health. He further stated that the design and construction of footpaths must consider the difficulties faced by students, elderly citizens, and differently-abled persons. There should be no compromise on quality, and the works must be executed responsibly. The Collector noted that, for the first time in the city, innovative tile designs are being used for footpath construction.

These tiles are not only aesthetically appealing but are also suitable for varying weather conditions such as rain and heat, ensuring durability. He directed officials to properly design slopes and edges to facilitate easy movement for the elderly and persons with disabilities. Adequate lighting poles should be installed to avoid inconvenience during nighttime. He also suggested maintaining a uniform granite footpath design across the city. The Collector expressed confidence that improved footpath infrastructure would encourage people to walk more, thereby enhancing their physical health. He instructed officials to ensure close supervision and complete the development works without any negligence. Local Corporator Mal-

Make Effective Use of Comprehensive Land Survey Awareness Meetings: District Collector K.Haritha

"Indian chronicle" Jade Srinivas. February, 25: In Komuram Bheem Asifabad district, District Collector K. Haritha advised villagers to make effective use of the Comprehensive Land Survey awareness meetings being conducted as part of the government's initiative to resolve land-related issues efficiently. On Wednesday, she attended an awareness meeting held in Dhyanaapur village along with the Revenue Divisional Officer, Assistant Director of Survey and Land Records Vijay Kumar, and the Tahsildar.

Speaking on the occasion, the Collector stated that under Sections 1 and 6(1) of the Telangana Survey and Boundaries Act, 1923, Dhyanaapur village—where clear maps and boundary demarcations are unavailable—has been selected as a pilot project for conducting a comprehensive land survey.

Due to the absence of clearly defined village boundaries, officials from

the Revenue and Forest Departments are coordinating to conduct a detailed survey of agricultural lands using GPS technology to establish accurate boundaries. She explained that once the survey process is completed, land disputes will significantly reduce, and farmers will gain clear ownership rights over their lands. Accurate measurement and recording of land details will also simplify future maintenance of land records and provide long-term benefits to farmers.

The Collector further stated that if the pilot project is implemented successfully, it will serve as a model for other villages. She urged villagers to actively participate in the awareness meetings and directed officials to closely monitor the implementation process. Officials concerned and village residents participated in the program. — Issued by the District Public Relations Office, Komuram Bheem Asifabad.

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"BVRIT Engineering College launches Mechanical Baja Sae India 2026, 19th National Level Engineering Buggy Competition"



Narsapur, February 25, 2026: The 19th edition of Baja Sae India 2026, (BAJA SAEINDIA 2026) – a showcase of the talent of engineering students across the country – was inaugurated grandly at B V Raju Institute of Technology (BVRIT), Narsapur under the auspices of Mechanical Baja (mBAJA) Department. The event was graced by the Chief Guest, Vice Chancellor of JNTU Hyderabad, Prof. Dr. T Kishan Kumar Reddy. Speaking at the event,

In the inaugural ceremony of mBAJA SAE INDIA 2026 being hosted by B V Raju Institute of Technology Narsapur, the Chief Guest Prof. Kishan Kumar Reddy Vice Chancellor JNTU Hyderabad spoke about the relevance of such competitions in today's era of transition from internal combustion engines to electric vehicles, along with the uncertainties surrounding evolving EV technologies. He stressed the importance of students gaining practical and hands-on experience, especially in a rapidly

changing landscape influenced by AI and emerging technologies. He noted that events like BAJA significantly contribute to student exposure, confidence building, and development of skills that companies actively seek. He thanked the management of BVRIT for the invitation.

Balraj Subramaniam, Chairman, Organizing Committee, Baja Sae India, in his welcome address, explained how the competition has emerged as a national platform for experiential education. He said that it is building a strong industry-academic partnership and developing the capacity of students to meet the challenges of future mobility. The trailer and teaser of Baja Se India were screened at the beginning of the program. These videos provided a strong backdrop to the program, explaining how it is developing technical talent among students across the country.

Shri Aditya Vissam, Secretary, Shri Vishnu Educational Society, addressed

the students. He said, "We always give priority to technical education and innovative programs in our educational institution. It is our honor to organize Baja Se India for the third consecutive year. This competition will serve as a platform for young engineers to learn, showcase their creativity and showcase their talent."

Shravan Kumar, Territory Manager – Retail, Nizamabad, BPCL, representing the title sponsor, explained how important industry partnerships are for the development of students.

Arun Jaura, Chief Technology Officer, JK Tyre & Industries Ltd. Speaking, he revealed that his organization is committed to sustainability, safety, and innovation. He said that mBAJA will be a platform where students can apply the knowledge learned in the classroom to real-life challenges.

Lalitha Patra, Co-Convenor, Baja Se India, spoke about the measures that emphasize diversity and inclusion in the competition.

He said that it will not only develop technical skills but also leadership qualities and team collaboration.

Syed Ali, Convenor, Baja Se India 2026, said that through the HR Meet program, students are being directly connected with industries. He said that through this platform, companies are able to identify talented students and awareness of employment opportunities is increasing among students. He then expressed his gratitude.

Dr. Vemula Muralikrishna, Joint Convenor, Mechanical Baja Se India, said that the program is running very smoothly as per his guidelines. Students and faculty from various states across the country are participating in this program. BVRIT Engineering College Director Dr. Lakshmi Prasad, Principal Dr. Sanjay Dubey, Shri Manonit Singh, all the Heads of Departments, Deans and Faculty students are participating in the event.

The event was attended by the organizers, repre-

sentatives of the host institution, industry partners and technical experts who shared with the media about the scope of the competition, objectives and its impact on the students.

About Baja Say India Baja Say India, organized by Baja Say India, is a national level competition that provides experiential education to engineering students outside the classroom. Following the Mini BAJA SAE model started by SAE International in the US, Baja Say India has evolved into Baja Say India in India.

Students from universities across the country work in teams to design, build and test an all-terrain vehicle and prove their mettle through static, dynamic and four-hour endurance tests. The competition, which started with just 27 teams in 2007, has now expanded to over 200 teams across multiple disciplines. It is currently organized in mBAJA (Internal Combustion), eBAJA (Electric), hBAJA (Hydrogen/CNG), and aBAJA (Autonomous) disciplines.

Indian National Congress Defends Poor, Hits Back on Bhoodan Row



Arvapalli Nagesh Khammam Staff Reporter, February 25 (Indian Chronicle): At a media conference held at the District Congress Party office in Khammam, Rayala Nageswara Rao, Chairman of the State Warehousing Corporation, strongly criticized the opposition parties over their campaign regarding the Velugumatla Bhoodan lands.

He stated that if genuinely poor families are residing there, the government will ensure justice for them. Questioning the leaders of Bharat Rashtira Samithi (BRS), he asked whether Minister Tummala Nageswara Rao had ever encroached upon land at any point in his political career.

He clarified that the Bhoodan lands are being utilized strictly for government purposes and are not being handed over to any private companies. He pointed out that during the previous BRS government, attempts were made to evict encroachers from Bhoodan lands, but the court ruled that revenue officials did

not have the authority to carry out such evictions at that time.

Now, he said, the CCLA authorities have cleared the land in accordance with court orders. He explained that about ten individuals who had constructed houses on the land had approached the court earlier and were granted a stay order, while others did not receive such relief. The authorities left the ten houses protected by the court's stay untouched and evicted the remaining encroachers.

Rayala Nageswara Rao alleged that some middlemen had collected money from people and encouraged them to put up huts on the land. He emphasized that the Bhoodan land issue did not arise recently but dates back to the previous BRS government. He questioned whether it was not true that even a minister in the earlier government had attempted to clear the encroachments.

He accused BRS leaders of politicizing the issue without understanding the facts and attempting to malign

Minister Tummala Nageswara Rao. He said there was no need to pay attention to such allegations, adding that the current process is merely a continuation of actions initiated during the previous BRS regime.

He further stated that not even 40 people from the Khammam constituency were involved in the matter and assured that genuine poor families would be identified and provided justice. Responding to claims by BRS leaders that K. T. Rama Rao (KTR) would visit the area, he remarked that if KTR comes based on misinformation, it would only cause embarrassment. The meeting was attended by Khammam Mayor Punakollu Neeraja, former DCC President Puvvalla Durgaprasad, Deputy Mayor Fatima Zohra, Khammam Agricultural Market Committee Chairman Hanumantha Rao, OBC Cell District President Puchchalakayala Veerabhadram, District Mahila Congress President Dobbala Soujanya, Balangandhar Tilak, and other leaders.

Rural development and welfare of farmers is the mission of Modi government

Arvapalli Nagesh, Khammam Staff Reporter, February 25 (Indian Chronicle) Bharatiya Janata Party Kisan Morcha State President Basavapuram Lakshminarayana said that the central government's mission is the welfare of farmers and the poor. He was the chief guest and addressed the media conference organized at Minerva Grand in Khammam city on Wednesday.

Speaking on the occasion, he clarified that under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the central government has brought innovative reforms to bring light to the lives of agricultural laborers in the villages under the aim of 'Viksit Bharat 2047'. In the wake of previous governments' misappropriation of employment guarantee schemes, a new law has been introduced to increase transparency. He explained that besides increasing the employ-

Kisan Morcha state president Basavapuram Lakshminarayana



ment guaranteed working days from 100 to 125 days through this law, allotment of 60 days for agricultural work will be of great benefit to the farmers.

He warned the state government that farmers are facing serious problems due to lack of minimum understanding of the app system introduced for fertilizer distribution in the state, and to avoid playing with the lives of farmers in the name of apps and correct

the technical errors. The state government is diverting the funds provided by the central government. He said that the Center has simultaneously introduced a huge budget of Rs.1,51,282 crores for the Employment Guarantee Scheme, out of which the Center is directly bearing about 95 thousand crores ie 60 percent.

On the other hand, if the Modi government is standing by providing fertilizers with a huge subsidy of

Rs.1,25,000 crores annually without putting a financial burden on the farmers, the Congress government has miserably failed to provide the urea to the farmers in a transparent manner.

Incompetence of rulers, He demanded that due to the negligence of the authorities, all the subsidized urea is being ruled by the black market and it is the responsibility of the state authorities to strictly implement the online distribution

system so that corruption does not occur anywhere.

Later, Bharatiya Janata Party State Treasurer Devvaki Vasudeva Rao said that Chief Minister Revanth Reddy's behavior was on fire for the Congress government's failure. They lamented that the Revanth Sarkar has miserably failed to implement Rythu Bhārōsa as promised to the rice donors. He warned that the people would soon give due wisdom to the Congress

leaders who had turned their back on their word.

Khammam District BJP President Nelluri Koteswara Rao said that he strongly condemned the government's inhumane attitude towards the poor Bhudan land victims in Khammam city. Decades ago, the donors generously gave the Bhudan Yajna Board for houses for the Katika poor, and it is outrageous that the people living in huts are being attacked indiscriminately. State Secretary, Khammam District Incharge Prabhari Badham Mahipal Reddy, Kisan Morcha State Secretary Chilukuri Ramesh, leaders Okka Lanka Subrahmanyam, Gantyalu Vidyasagar, Mandadapu Subbarao, Gutta Venkateswara Rao, Naidu Raghavrao, Veeravilli Rajesh Gupta, Allika Anjaiah, Vijay Raju, Narukula Venkateswarlu and others participated.

Telangana Working Journalists Federation Chief Mamidi Somaiya Seeks More Accreditation for Desk Journalists

- Rally from Gun Park to Media Academy
- Desk journalists sit in front of the academy



(Mandava Srisailem..Hyderabad..Indian Chronicle Bureau..February,25):- Several journalist associations have demanded that the accreditation cards of desk journalists be increased and that accreditation cards be given to all eligible desk journalists. A rally of journalists was held from Gun Park in Hyderabad to Media Academy on Nampally Chapal Road on Wednesday under the auspices of the Desk Journalists' Association. Later, the journalists sat in front of the Media Academy and staged a dharna. Leaders of Telangana Working Journalists Federation (TWJF) and TUWJ-143 unions participated in the program and expressed their support. Speaking on the occasion, TWJF founding president and state convener Mamidi Somaiya criticized the state government for its failure in media accreditation and for not being able to issue new accreditation cards to journalists for two years. He expressed his concern that injustice was being done to journalists who fought for a separate Telangana state in their home state. He said that journalists do not have houses and land in their home state and that they have to take to the streets to protest for the rights of journalists. If the previous government issued 23,000 accreditation cards... this government has gone a step ahead and announced that it will issue 44,000 cards,

and will try to drastically reduce the number of cards by imposing many strict rules. He said that desk journalists used to get five accreditation cards per district in the past, and now the rule that only four cards will be given to the edition center is outrageous. He said that although desk journalists work in the edition centers, each district will have different desks, and each district will have one in-charge and four sub-editors. Similarly, Mangodi Somaiya demanded that the accreditation cards for desk journalists working in electronic media be reduced from 12 to 8, and that they should also be given 15 cards. TUWJ-143 Treasurer Yoganand said that there should be no discrimination in granting accreditations and that there has been a confusion regarding the accreditation of journalists. He warned that accreditation cards should be given to journalists as in the past, otherwise they will be involved in a state-wide agitation along with a siege of the Secretariat. TWJF State Co-Convenor Taniruru Srinivas, Hyderabad District Convenor V. Ravikumar, Co-Convenor Brahmam, Desk Journalists Association President Upender, General Secretary Rajaram, leaders Venkataramana, S. Venkatesh, women journalist P. Padma and others participated in this program. Later, a petition was submitted to Media Academy Secretary Venkateswara Rao.

Grand Celebrations of 287th Jayanti of Sant Shri Sevalal Maharaj Held in Khammam

Arvapalli Nagesh Khammam Staff Reporter, February 25 (Indian Chronicle): The 287th birth anniversary (Jayanti) of Sant Shri Sevalal Maharaj was celebrated with great devotion and enthusiasm at Banjara Bhavan in Khammam city. The "Bhog Bhandara" program was organized on this occasion, with the participation of community elders, employees, teachers, students, and youth. The event was presided over by Adivasi Girijana State Coordinator Bhukya Bikshapathi Rathod. The Deputy Director of the Tribal Welfare Department, Vijayalakshmi, attended the program as the chief guest and addressed the gathering. Speaking on the occasion, she praised Sant Sevalal Ma-



haraj as a (great leader) who awakened and inspired the tribal community through his teachings. She highlighted that his message encouraged the development of livestock, eradication of superstitions, respect for women, and the practice of settled agriculture. Through his reformative efforts, he brought recognition and dignity to the tribal soci-

ety. Several prominent leaders and community representatives participated in the event, including Sevalal Sena leader Kishan Nayak, Aikya Vedika State President Raj Kumar Yadav, Telangana State Tribal Teacher Federation President Veeru Nayak, Maloth Ramu Nayak, TSTTF District President Mangya Nayak, Bukya Shobhan Nayak and others.

HYC members burn effigy of senior BJP leader Sunil Deodhar

Shillong, Feb 25: Members of the Hynñiewtrep Youth' Council (HYC), a prominent pressure group in Meghalaya, on Wednesday burnt the effigy of former BJP national secretary Sunil Deodhar in protest against his unsavoury remarks against the Christian community.

Deodhar, a former RSS leader, has expressed regret over his remarks at an indigenous faith conference at Pynter village in East Khasi Hills district, stating he holds immense respect for Jesus Christ and the Christian community and never intended to hurt sentiments. "It was never

my intention to hurt the sentiments of any Christian brother or sister. If any of my words have been perceived as disrespectful or have caused pain, I sincerely regret the same," Deodhar stated in a letter to BJP Meghalaya general secretary Wankitbok Pohshna after he sought an explanation over his remarks. However, the HYC asked Deodhar to immediately tender an unconditional public apology besides withdrawing his statement.

"Meghalaya is not a laboratory for communal experiments... Any attempt to divide our people on

religious lines will be met with full force of the HYC and the community as a whole," HYC President Roy Kupar Synrem said.

Synrem said, Deodhar's statement amounts to "calculated political propaganda aimed at polarising communities" and interfering in internal social and cultural affairs of the indigenous people of the State. "We have seen the videos. This is nothing but a calculated move to mislead our people and create a rift using religion as a weapon," the HYC President said, referring to Deodhar's speech at their indigenous faith conference.

“Your Safety is Our Goal”: Police Commissioner Sunil Dutt

Arvapalli Nagesh Khammam Staff Reporter, February 25 (Indian Chronicle): Khammam: Stating that public safety is the top priority of the police department, Police Commissioner Sunil Dutt emphasized that road accidents can be prevented if citizens strictly follow safety norms. He was speaking at a road safety awareness program organized for auto drivers at the Police Kalyana Mandapam in the local Police Headquarters under the Khammam Police Commissionerate. The program was conducted as part of the second phase of the State government and Police Department’s “Arrive Alive” road safety awareness campaign, which is being held for a week across the commissionerate limits.

Addressing the gathering, the Commissioner said that lack of awareness about traffic rules is one of the major reasons for the increasing number of road accidents. He stressed that by adhering to prescribed speed limits, people can protect not only their own lives but also the lives of others. He pointed out that negligence, over-speeding, drunk driving, failure to use helmets and seat belts, and dangerous overtaking are



major causes of accidents. He also warned that using mobile phones while driving is highly dangerous. Emphasizing the slogan “Safe Journey – Happy Destination,” he called upon everyone to work together to promote road safety. The Commissioner noted that statistics in the district show that the majority of accidents occur due to human negligence. As part of the ‘Arrive Alive’ campaign, special awareness programs are being conducted in villages, towns, mandal headquarters, national highways, and accident-prone areas. He further stated that awareness initiatives are being carried out in schools, colleges, bus stands, hospitals, industries, market areas, temples, and function halls by directly interacting with the public. Road safety is not the responsibility of the police alone, he said, adding that accidents can be reduced only when society as a whole comes forward. Clarifying the objective of the campaign, he said that ‘Arrive Alive’ should become a people’s movement rather than just an awareness program. Real change is possible only when every individual follows traffic rules and encourages others to do the same, he added.

Traffic ACP Srinivasulu, Inspector Satyanarayana, Appalanaidu, and several Sub-Inspectors participated in the program.

Odisha to implement PM-RAHAT scheme to provide immediate care to road accident victims

Bhubaneswar, Feb 25: The Odisha Government on Wednesday decided to roll out the Central Scheme Pradhan Mantri Road Accident Victims Hospitalisation and Assured Treatment (PM-RAHAT) to reduce fatalities from road accidents and ensure immediate medical care for victims. The decision was taken at a high-level meeting, chaired by state Chief Secretary Anu Garg, and attended by senior officials of transport, health and police departments, besides district officials.

Under the new scheme, any person hospitalised within 24 hours of a road accident will receive free treatment for up to seven days or a maximum of Rs 1.5 lakh, funded entirely from the Motor Vehicle Accident Fund. The initiative is linked to the 112 emergency service to ensure rapid response at accident sites, with SMS alerts sent to hospitals and timely reimbursements for medical expenses.

The meeting detailed institutional arrangements,

monitoring, and grievance redressal mechanisms.

A coordinated technology platform will ensure transparency and efficiency. Police will enter accident details into the e-DAR portal within 24 hours, after which hospitals will initiate claims via the Transaction Management System (TMS).

At the national level, the scheme will be overseen by the National Road Safety Council, while state-level supervision will be under the Chief Minister, Transport Minister, and Chief Secretary. District Road Safety Committees, led by District Collectors, will monitor local implementation. Hospitals participating in the Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana and other emergency-capable hospitals will provide services under the guidance of the Health and Transport Departments.

Complaints regarding the scheme can be submitted to district-level grievance cells, with final decisions taken by the District Collector.

The Chief Secretary high-

lighted that approximately 16 people die daily in road accidents, emphasising the government’s priority to reduce this number.

PM-RAHAT’s immediate hospitalisation and treatment provisions are expected to significantly lower fatalities, she stated.

Officials were advised to ensure preparedness at the district level and conduct awareness campaigns to make the public aware of the scheme.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi approved the launch of the PM RAHAT scheme on February 14, prioritising life-saving intervention, financial certainty for hospitals, and a structured emergency response system for accident victims. India records a significant number of road accident fatalities every year, many of which are preventable with timely medical intervention. Studies indicate that nearly 50% of road accident deaths can be averted if victims are admitted to the hospital within the first hour.

Meghalaya CM upholds Job Reservation Policy

Shillong, Feb 25: Meghalaya Chief Minister Conrad Sangma on Wednesday cautioned that any attempt to change the existing state job reservation policy of 1972 would invite judicial scrutiny, adversely impacting the implementation of the long-held reservation policy of the hill state.

Replying to a Zero-Hour Notice and Short Duration Discussion on the report of the Expert Committee on Reservation Policy, Sangma said that the panel noted that the overwhelming majority of stakeholders favoured retaining the existing structure and warned that any substantial modification could expose the policy to judicial review. “It is correct that the present system is in conflict with the

judgement of the Supreme Court, but at the same time it is protected by the same judgement, but this can be challenged before the court of law,” the Chief Minister said, acknowledging the legal tightrope the state continues to walk. Referring to the landmark ruling in the Indra Sawhney vrs union of India case, he stated that the present policy “is not in consonance with a judgement of the Supreme Court, especially in the case of Indra Sawhney where it caps the quantum of reservation to 50 per cent when it is given on the basis of caste and community.” However, he emphasised that while the policy may appear to exceed the judicially evolved 50 per cent ceiling, it enjoys a degree of protection

owing to its historical continuity of over five decades, thereby carrying a “lesser possibility of judicial review” than any newly crafted framework.

The Chief Minister said the expert committee had specifically cautioned stakeholders against pressing for changes to the 1972 policy, observing that such demands could adversely impact the current arrangement. The government had appointed retired justice Mool Chand Garg, former judge of the High Court of Madhya Pradesh, to head the expert panel in 2023. A search committee led by the Chief Secretary recommended the constitution of the Expert Committee on State Reservation Policy, which was formally notified on September 12, 2023.

Inter Examinations Begin Peacefully on First Day: District Collector Anudeep Durishetty

Arvapalli Nagesh Khammam Staff Report February 25 (Indian Chronicle): 17,667 Students Appear for Inter First Year Second Language Paper-I Students Advised to Write Exams Without Stress

District Collector Anudeep Durishetty stated that the first day of the Intermediate examinations in the district was conducted peacefully. The District Collector inspected the Intermediate examination centre set up at the Government Junior College, Gandhi Chowk. During the inspection, he reviewed the conduct of the examination, centre management, security of question papers, and the hall ticket verification process.

Speaking on the occasion, the District Collector said that stringent arrangements had been made to



ensure the smooth conduct of the Intermediate examinations without causing any inconvenience to students. Considering the prevailing heat conditions, he instructed officials to ensure the supply of cool drinking water for students. He also directed that every student entering the examination centre should be thoroughly checked before being allowed inside.

He emphasized that proper lighting, drinking water facilities, and toilet maintenance must be ensured in all examination halls. Mobile phones and other electronic devices were strictly prohibited inside the examination centres, he said, adding that CCTV surveillance should function effectively. He further instructed flying squad teams to conduct continuous inspections.



The District Collector reassured students to write the examinations calmly without any pressure. He directed examination staff to perform their duties sincerely and responsibly, and instructed officials to address any complaints immediately. On the first day, for the Inter First Year Second Language Paper-I examination, a total of 18,258 students (General and Vo-

catational combined) were expected to appear. Of these, 17,667 students attended the examination, while 591 students were absent. No cases of malpractice were reported, and the examination was conducted peacefully, the Collector informed.

During the inspection, District Intermediate Education Officer Ravibabu, along with other concerned officials, was present.

Condemn the Demolition of Poor People’s Houses in Velugumatla under Khammam Collector Office Jurisdiction CPI (ML) New Democracy

Arvapalli Nagesh Khammam Staff Report February 25, (Indian Chronicle): About nine years ago, poor families constructed houses in the Velugumatla area of Khammam town. The land on which these houses were built measures 31 acres and 7 guntas. Around 600 families built their homes on this land, and more than 2,000 people have been living there. Legally, the government sanctioned electricity and drinking water connections to these houses. Therefore, they have legal and lawful rights. Despite this, the Congress government led by Chief Minister Revanth Reddy illegally deployed more than 2,000 police personnel in Velugumatla in the early hours of 24-02-2026. The people were subjected to intimidation. Using highly advanced machinery, the houses they had built and even their cooking stoves were demolished. Those who questioned this injustice were arrested, creating an atmosphere of fear. Political party leaders who went to support the affected families were also arrested and detained in police stations.



- **The Collector and Joint Collector-level officials must conduct a survey in Velugumatla along with the displaced families. Compensation must be paid for the demolished houses.**
- **Every displaced family must be provided housing by constructing Indiramma houses on government land.**
- **Necessary measures must be taken to provide all basic amenities to the displaced families.**

CPI (ML) New Democracy state leader Comrade Avunoori Madhu, Division Secretary Comrade Kola Lakshminarayana, City Secretary Comrade Pamula Mohan Rao, district leaders of party and mass organizations Y. Prakash, Shaik Subhan, Y. Janaki, PYL District President Umashankar, PDSU President Mastan,

and others were arrested, detained in police stations, and false cases were filed against them. We strongly condemn the attitude of the Revanth Reddy government. In peaceful Khammam district, the three ministers are creating numerous problems. For their selfish interests, they are displacing people. We strongly con-

demn this approach. Even now, we demand that the displaced people of Velugumatla be supported. CPI (ML) New Democracy demands that the following issues be resolved. If these issues are not addressed, we will continue struggles in support of the affected families. The state government led by Chief Minister

Revanth Reddy has been warned accordingly. Jana Reddy, Madhava Rao, Vijay, Upender, Srikanth, Vishwanth, and others participated in this program. On this issue, CPI (ML) New Democracy will continue phased protest programs along with all political parties and displaced families until the problem is resolved.

Disengagement of connector contact resulted in navigation satellite getting stuck in GTO: ISRO

Chennai, Feb 25: The Indian space agency today said “the disengagement of at least one contacts”, in each of the main and redundant paths - of the connector, resulted in the failure of India’s strategic navigation satellite NVS-02. According to the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO), the Apex Committee constituted to review the failure concluded: “The committee concluded that the most likely cause for the observation is the disengagement of at least one contacts (in each of the main and redundant paths) of the connector.”

The Apex Committee after thorough analysis of the simulation data concluded that the prime reason for NVS-02 not being able to be raised to its intended orbit is due to the drive signal not reaching the pyro valve of the oxidizer line of the engine. However, ISRO is silent on how the contacts in the main and the redundant paths got disengaged. On January 29, 2025, the NVS-



02 navigation satellite was successfully inserted into Geosynchronous Transfer Orbit (GTO) but later became inoperable when a pyro valve failed to open, blocking oxidiser flow.

The satellite was carried by Indian rocket Geosynchronous Satellite Launch Vehicle (GSLV-F15).

The 2,250 kg NVS-02 remained stuck at GTO with the failure of the pyro valve

to pump in oxidiser for the fuel to burn, making it impossible to raise it to the intended Geostationary Orbit.

Even at that time it was said that a faulty electrical connector could be the possible cause. The satellite’s orbit will be raised by firing the liquid apogee motors (LAM).

It was said to be the first-of-its-kind failure for ISRO, which has orbited several earth observation and

communication satellites, retired senior officials of the space agency had said. Interestingly, it was the 100th rocket that flew from the Sriharikota spaceport. For four days after the launch ISRO remained silent on the satellite orbit raising status.

And only the fifth day evening ISRO in a statement said: “Subsequent to the launch, the solar panels on board the satellite were

successfully deployed and power generation is nominal. Communication with the ground station has been established. But the orbit raising operations towards positioning the satellite to the designated orbital slot could not be carried out as the valves for admitting the oxidizer to fire the thrusters for orbit raising did not open.” ISRO said the committee that studied the NVS-02 failure has provided a set of recommendations aimed at enhancing the redundancy and reliability of pyro system operations for future missions. “In line with these recommendations, all the corrective actions were successfully implemented in CMS-03 spacecraft launched on November 2, 2025 by LVM-3 M5, and the pyro systems performed satisfactorily placing the satellite in the intended orbit. Further, these set of recommendations will be followed for all future missions, as applicable,” ISRO said.

Aravallis, like old parents, can't be abandoned

Now that the warring factions have returned to their tents at the sounding of the retreat by the honourable Supreme Court's (SC) order of December 29, it is time to dispassionately dissect the battle of the Aravallis.

Has the design of vested interests of turning a mountain into a molehill been defeated or have the saviours of the Aravallis succeeded in making a mountain of a molehill? Will the SC holding its own November 20 order in abeyance stop the alleged destructive mining that has been the bane of these mountains or are the crusaders fighting a lost cause?

Before we dig deep (pun unintended), let it be acknowledged that the goddess of Justice, hitherto blindfolded, has demonstrated that it can both 'see' and 'hear' when it is under vehement, largely justified, attack. The SC found itself in the eye of the storm as people believed it turned a blind eye to environment protection, and cleared the way for the Thar desert sands to travel to the national capital, which is unable to carry the burden of its own smog and mortifying air quality.

It may not serve much purpose to ask if the SC reviewed its earlier order in a fit of contrition or it played to the galleries, or if its unprecedented and uncharacteristic concern for public outcry is an apology without remorse? Cynics might argue that the honourable judges want to be seen running with the hare, having failed to hunt with the hounds.

Even if its suo motu review is seen by many as a judicious move to defuse political tension, the material question is whether it can pave the way for a sensible resolution to a knotty problem. The euphoria of temporary triumph shouldn't cloud the larger concern for legal consistency and judicial fairness.

The Aravallis are geologically categorised as 'residual' mountains, their diminishing caused by millions of years of differential erosion due to the constant flow of water and untrammelled blows of winds.

They are among the oldest mountains in the world, giving India the distinction of being home to the oldest and the youngest, the Himalayas, called the 'fold' mountains. The folds are the result of the upward thrust of colliding tectonic plates, while the residual character is due to their gradual losing of height and denudation. Both are distinct geographical features illustrating natural phenomena that can become catastrophic by anthropogenic activities. The Aravallis have seen withering in the face of natural forces. Man, as a vital instrument of Nature, need not hasten that process.

There is an old saying, "If the mountain will not come to Mahomet, then Mahomet must go to the mountain." In modern times, he has been going to the mountain too often, not to worship it, but to bring back with him its riches, the minerals, severely wounding its ecology in the process and upsetting its natural rhythm. The Aravalli hills and range, spread over Gujarat, Rajasthan, Haryana and Delhi, contain important metallic/industrial minerals such as copper, zinc, lead, silver, tungsten, rock phosphate, gypsum, mica, asbestos and bauxite, and building materials like marble, granite, sandstone and limestone. While there is a complete ban on mining in Delhi and a minuscule portion is mined in Haryana, the bulk of the extractive mining takes place in Rajasthan.

While the locals revere the mountains and depend on them for their livelihood, mining contractors and governments have found different, sometimes devious, ways of exploiting them through deficient policies and efficient technologies. In the bargain, they provide material so essentially needed for infrastructure development and economic growth.

Landforms are created by Nature; their taxonomy is manmade; so are the definitions and delineations. The issue of defining the forest and the Aravallis has lingered because of its inherent complexity. In this case, the SC perhaps grappled with the question of how a sustainable mining plan could be made without first identifying

Landforms are created by Nature; their taxonomy is manmade; so are the definitions and delineations.

The issue of defining the forest and the Aravallis has lingered because of its inherent complexity. In this case, the SC perhaps grappled with the question of how a sustainable mining plan could be made without first identifying the areas in which it could be permitted and was seemingly persuaded by pragmatism induced by a moral anaesthesia while passing its controversial order. The concerns outlined by the SC now, in its December 29 order, are valid. They echo those voiced by the protesters.

It is, however, bothersome why they were

the areas in which it could be permitted and was seemingly persuaded by pragmatism induced by a moral anaesthesia while passing its controversial order. The concerns outlined by the SC now, in its December 29 order, are valid. They echo those voiced by the protesters. It is, however, bothersome why they were not kept in view while announcing the November 20 order. How could the court accept a definition without understanding its impact on the ground, both in terms of the extent of actual area covered by the definition and the effect of the permitted activities on the environment?

It would now be critical to prepare models of possible scenarios before arriving at a workable definition for regulating activities in the mountainous range without violating its ecological integrity. If the recommendations on height, slope and distance made by the Forest Survey of India (FSI) in its 2010 report seem too restrictive, let the FSI itself suggest viable alternatives. If there are none, we must learn to live with those restrictions and pay the price of preserving our heritage.

Those with surplus capital, not knowing how to use it imaginatively, find it easy to use it for converting public resources into private goods. It is the duty of the government and regulators to ensure that such public resources are used judiciously for the creation of public goods that lead to public welfare.

The popular outrage at the continuing depredation of Nature got aggravated by the perceived fallibility of the very institutions responsible for protecting public interest and human rights. People expect constitutional institutions to go out of the way to protect them against the might of the vested interests that people can't fight. That is the message, and that possibly will obviate the need for them to 'explain' or defend their judgments through the media. The judges have a right to defend themselves but they have a more fundamental duty to appear fair and just.

The admitted ambiguities in the SC's earlier orders, or the acknowledgment of an error by 'competent' judges in the Unnao rape case, might project the highest judiciary in an introspective mood. However, that doesn't behove its exalted calling and belies popular expectation based on its past stellar record as a saviour of the environment. Those who work to protect the environment and nurture ecology need a divine sense of altruism because the earth or the trees are incapable of expressing gratitude in words that humans easily understand. They show their benevolence and bounty in ways that sustain life, not please egos.

AMITABH KANT

Multiple shocks over the past five years have brought increased global volatility and uncertainty. 2025 has been marked by geopolitical fragmentation, trade uncertainty, supply chain realignments, and a battle for technological supremacy. Amidst this unsettled global environment, India's macroeconomic stability stands out. Growth came in at 8.2% in the latest quarter, surpassing even the most optimistic estimates. Inflation is low, and the fiscal deficit manageable. In the backdrop of multiple external shocks, India's policy has consistently been to strengthen domestic economic resilience.

The bedrock for any stable economy is domestic demand. For the millions of India's households, tax policy plays an important role in stimulating consumption. India has seen both direct and indirect tax reforms this year. In February, the Budget put more money in people's hands by effectively making salaries up to Rs. 12 lakh tax-free. The complex Income-tax Act of 1961 has been simplified by the Income Tax Act, 2025. Then, in September, reforms to the Goods and Services Tax (GST) introduced a two-slab structure and simplified governance. Consumer sentiment has soared, with festive-period sales reaching Rs. 6 trillion. Importantly, these moves are not revenue losses. By spurring consumption and growth, tax collections stand to be higher in coming years,

India's Economy in 2025



reflecting their impact on price elasticity of demand. Domestic consumption constitutes 55-60% of our economy. As consumption increases, so does capacity utilisation. As production reaches capacity, it triggers a fresh wave of investment in the economy, which, in turn, generates its own multiplier effects.

Consumer demand will be only sustainable if supported by durable income growth, which reforms to labour laws will ensure. By consolidating 29 fragmented laws into four modern codes, India's labour framework is more transparent for businesses and more secure for workers. The focus is on fair wages, stronger industrial relations, social security, and workforce safety. These laws will ensure that our growing 640 million-strong workforce prospers and drives India's growth story forward.

As household incomes rise, they have a choice between higher consumption or savings, or both. As formal employment rises,

contributions to provident, pension, and insurance funds will increase. Importantly, globally, such funds are an essential source of capital in domestic capital markets, as they invest in debt and equity in companies, projects, or government bonds. Allowing 100% FDI in insurance will deepen India's capital markets, enhance competition and the quality of service. Raising FDI limits in insurance is both a financial sector reform and an enabler of social security.

Along with a stimulus to investment through demand, the investment climate has also eased considerably this year. The GST reforms were not just rate rationalisations; they have also significantly eased the registration and compliance process. There has been a 90% reduction in registration time from 30 to 3 days for small firms. The Securities Markets Code will strengthen governance of India's capital markets, enhance consumer protection, and reduce the

compliance burden. Independent regulators are also facilitating growth. The RBI, for instance, has consolidated 9,000+ circulars into less than 250. Similarly, the IRDAI has constituted a committee to suggest regulatory reforms in the insurance sector.

Environmental and building codes have also undergone reforms, moving to a risk-based system of compliance rather than a uniform one. For instance, moving away from a uniform 33% green cover will free up 1.2 lakh hectares of industrial land. Units located in industrial parks with comprehensive environmental clearances will no longer require separate clearances. A newly created 'white category' of industries, will reduce compliance costs for low-risk sectors, while freeing up pollution control board resources for higher-polluting, higher-risk sectors.

The Jan Vishwas reforms decriminalised over 200 minor offences and scrapped hundreds of out-

dated laws. Furthermore, many state governments have also come together to decriminalise over 1000 offences. States have also instituted reforms in land, environmental clearances, and construction, allowing faster project clearances. The next step of Jan Vishwas is now in the offing. These moves represent an important signal: that India is moving towards a trust-based economy, rather than a control-based one.

Despite the surrounding volatility and uncertainty, trade will remain crucial to our growth aspirations. In the Monsoon Session, the Parliament modernised India's maritime governance by replacing the Acts of 1908, 1925, and 1958. With these reforms, India's maritime governance framework aligns with global standards. Reducing documentary requirements and strengthening governance will lower logistics costs, enhancing India's competitiveness. Second, the removal of over 200 quality control orders (QCOs) has lifted a significant burden off MSMEs and exporters. At the same time, we have also opened new markets for our exporters through trade deals with the UK, New Zealand, and Oman, as well as the operationalisation of the agreement with the European Free Trade Association (EFTA).

Jobs and exports come from scaled firms. For too long, policy encouraged firms to stay small. Staying small meant that firms were unable to reap the benefits of economies of scale. Now, for the second time in five years, MSME

The case for consensus politics in 2026

R JAGANNATHAN

After more than a quarter century of confrontational politics, the deteriorating security and economic environment around India calls for more consensual politics. When external challenges to India pose serious threats, it is important to close ranks internally. More so when internal political, economic and social challenges are also multiplying. The BJP has had two terms of majority rule, and even this time, despite being reduced to 240 seats from 303 in the 2024 General Election, it has re-consolidated political power by winning many Assembly elections after June 2024. However, it has not moved significantly towards building consensus on crucial issues. 2026 is the ideal year in which to begin this process as most of the state Assembly elections due this year — Assam, Kerala, Tamil Nadu and West Bengal — will not have a significant impact on its predominance.

Internally, we face huge economic and political challenges. They include the coming Census and delimitation of parliamentary constituencies, the need to reduce communal antagonisms, legislating economic reforms (especially in agriculture) to speed up growth with jobs, ensuring a fairer distribution of tax and other resources between rich and poor states and dousing down regional, linguistic and other animosities.

The rise and rise of the BJP, first with the Vajpayee coalition, and since 2014, under Narendra



Modi, is making political consensus harder as parties seeking to regain relevance feel compelled to oppose everything the government does. The fact that Parliament seldom functions in a democratic manner, with the government repeatedly having to push through important legislation without much discussion, is indicative of fraying political tempers and increasing confrontations over everything. This cannot be good for the country against the backdrop of the challenges we face externally and internally, both economically and geopolitically.

In its third term, the BJP has occasionally tried to use a bit more of consensus — we have seen some contentious Bills (like Waqf Amendments, for example) being sent to joint parliamentary panels — but its decisive victories in Haryana, Maharashtra, Delhi and Bihar now give it less reason to build consensus on contentious issues. More so since the NDA's position in the Rajya Sabha is more favourable to the govern-

ment than before.

However, this would be short-sighted on the part of the BJP. It does not mean everything has to be done by consensus — the Budget and some economic policies, for example, can be exceptions — but in most other cases, the government should seek as wide a consensus as possible so that there is less internal heartburn. An internal consensus is not going to be easy when caste- and community-based polarisations are a reality, with the minorities broadly backing opposition parties and significant chunks of Hindus shifting towards the BJP after 2014. But this is precisely why the BJP has to look beyond mere electoral gains.

It has to begin discussions with major opposition parties on everything — from electoral and economic reforms to delimitation of constituencies and sharing of resources between the Centre, states and local bodies. The last is particularly important as our cities, which ought to be drivers of

growth and jobs, are poorly governed and disempowered. Air and water quality, garbage management and traffic congestion are only some of the problems cities are yet to find effective solutions to. This happens because state-level politicians use urban wealth to accumulate personal riches and build up electoral muscle, starving cities of resources for effective governance. These are not problems that can be solved only through finance commission devolutions, which, anyway, tend to be influenced by Union government priorities. So which areas need immediate consensus-building? First, we must lower the communal temperature without implicitly assuming that it is the majority community that must make all the compromises. Genuine communal amity cannot be built on one-sided concessions and this is why there is growing belligerence among some Hindu organisations to rake up more masjid-masjid issues. We need Hindus and Muslims, and later Hindus

and Christians, to work out compromises they can live with without having to worry about violence and polarisation. Issues like conversions, cow slaughter, mob lynchings, greater Muslim representation in Parliament and masjid-masjid conflicts need dialogue and give-and-take solutions. A history and reconciliation commission — which can put our conflicted past out of today's political discourse — has been suggested by many people. It is long overdue.

Second, we need to give states and the latter, in turn, must give local bodies, more financial and other powers. Citizens are most impacted by local decisions on garbage, potable water supplies and delivery of other civic services and not those taken in New Delhi or state capitals. This means a commission to rework the current legislative and fiscal arrangements is needed, with non-BJP parties holding a significant share of the power in this panel.

Third — and this needs immediate attention — there is the question of the delimitation of constituencies after the next (2027) Census. The Constitution mandates that Lok Sabha seat allocations must be done after the first Census post 2026 and democratic norms dictate that the most populous states must get relatively more representation. The South will argue that it will lose seats merely because it was more successful in reducing its total fertility rates (TFRs) than the North, but this is not the whole truth.

Shakti Fab and the Lobito Corridor: India's Strategic Role in the Global Chip War

Swasti Rao

The outgoing Joe Biden administration has been unusually active in recent weeks, making significant decisions with long-term implications. These include lifting certain restrictions on Ukraine and imposing stricter trade measures on China. The structural effects of these moves will become evident in 2025 and beyond. As recently as early December, the administration delivered its third major blow to China's semiconductor industry. This effort seeks to curtail China's ability to access and produce advanced chips that could support artificial intelligence for military purposes or pose risks to the United States' national security. For India, these developments are not merely a geopolitical spectacle but hold direct strategic relevance. Beyond observing this unfolding competition, New Delhi has an opportunity to assess its role in helping the US build resilience in semiconductor production and supply chains amid the intensifying "chip war."

The US has maintained dominance in the semiconductor industry since Silicon Valley pioneered the technology. Over time, however, East Asian nations such as Taiwan and Japan emerged as key manufacturing hubs, incentivised by government subsidies. As Chris Miller highlights in his book *Chip Wars: The Fight for the World's Most Critical Technology*, this evolution allowed the US to establish critical business and strategic alliances in a region vulnerable to Russian influence during the Cold War. In the current Cold War-style rivalry between the US and China, these alliances remain crucial in countering Beijing's ambitions for a unipolar Asia. China, while not a leader in manufacturing advanced semiconductors, holds a commanding position in the production and supply of critical rare earth minerals, accounting for 70 per cent of global output.



These minerals are essential for creating integrated circuits used in chips for civilian and military purposes. In response to US export restrictions, China has banned exports of key minerals such as gallium, germanium, and antimony, while tightening control over graphite, further complicating global supply chains. These minerals are essential components in making integrated circuits of chips, for both civilian and military applications.

Despite its dominance in rare earth mining, China's position is not unassailable. First, the US is the second-largest producer of rare earth minerals globally. Second, China relies on US technology to process these minerals into complex semiconductors with game-changing capabilities. However, the Biden administration's efforts aim to prevent China from independently developing technology to control other parts of the semiconductor supply

chain. While the Trump 1.0 administration adopted a hawkish stance on China, the Biden administration has taken robust measures to restrict Beijing's access to semiconductor technology. What plays in the US' favour is that China depends on foreign hardware and expertise to enhance its chip production capabilities. Indeed, this shows a fragile balance of dependencies. No conversation on chips can be complete without Taiwan. Taipei remains central to the global semiconductor industry, with its dominant chipmaker TSMC supplying a significant share of the world's semiconductors. The island's President has described this dominance as a "silicon shield," offering a degree of protection against China, which claims sovereignty over Taiwan. However, from the US perspective, Taiwan's role also creates vulnerability to supply chain disruptions, particularly as cross-strait tensions rise.

To mitigate this risk, the Biden administration passed the CHIPS and Science Act in 2022, pledging nearly \$53 billion to boost US semiconductor manufacturing. While this move raised concerns in Taiwan about reduced American commitment to its defence, TSMC quickly responded by investing \$40 billion in its first manufacturing plants outside the country, located in the US. The Biden administration's efforts to reduce dependence on China's rare earth capabilities and bolster supply chain resilience go beyond the CHIPS Act. Two notable initiatives highlight this broader strategy. First is the US-India semiconductor fabrication agreement. In September 2024, the US and India signed a groundbreaking fabrication agreement aimed at expanding and diversifying the global semiconductor ecosystem. Under this partnership, Bharat Semi, 3rdi-Tech, and the US Space Force joined

forces to transfer critical technologies to India as part of the India Semiconductor Mission. These technologies focus on manufacturing infrared, gallium nitride, and silicon carbide semiconductors, essential for both national security and commercial applications.

This collaboration led to the creation of "Shakti," India's first semiconductor fabrication plant and the first of its kind within the Quad. The multi-material fab is designed to support modern warfare capabilities—advanced sensing, communications, and high-voltage power electronics—while also addressing commercial sector needs. It signifies a major milestone in India's semiconductor ambitions and the US commitment to diversifying its chip supply chain. Second is the Lobito Corridor and Africa's re-engagement. The US has sought to re-engage with Africa through the Lobito Corridor, a key railroad project backed by the Group

of Seven's Partnership for Global Infrastructure and Investment (PGII), connecting Angola to the port of Lobito. This initiative, supported by the US and the European Union, aims to enhance Western access to critical minerals like cobalt while reducing reliance on Chinese supply chains. The project spans Angola, Zambia, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, encouraging Western companies, particularly miners, to increase their presence in these mineral-rich regions. For the record, the Lobito Corridor is the lesser-known connectivity initiative of the PGII. The widely known but currently stalled one is the IMEC Corridor linking India and Europe via the Middle East.

Both projects may face potential delays due to challenges in securing de-risked financing for critical investments. Despite this, the outlook for Lobito is positive, bolstered by Biden's recent visit to Africa to strengthen ties with key nations along the corridor.

US agencies have already provided funding for the first phase of Lobito's upgrade, while European nations committed additional support during the project's latter phase, launched in October 2023. American firms are also stepping up; for instance, KoBold Metals, which leverages AI for critical mineral exploration, recently signed an MOU with the Africa Finance Corporation (AFC). India, a signatory to IMEC, has an opportunity to deepen its engagement in Africa through investments in the Lobito Corridor. Africa has been a key focus under Prime Minister Narendra Modi, with instruments like lines of credit and triangular development partnerships with European countries—such as France and Italy—already in place. The corridor represents a promising avenue for India to bolster "friendshoring" investments and contribute to alternative supply chains for semiconductors, the cornerstone of the digital future.

Countering China's Air Power: India's A2/AD Strategy for a Multi-Domain Defence Future

Yusuf T. Unjhwala

China has stunned the world by unveiling two sixth-generation aircraft. Alongside its expanding fleet of fifth-generation J-20 stealth fighters—estimated to exceed 300 and potentially reach 800 by 2030—and the J-35, China's second fifth-generation stealth aircraft, the latest aircraft pose a significant challenge for India. Reportedly, Pakistan is set to acquire 40 J-35s, which could give it a technological edge over the Indian Air Force (IAF) and complicate India's efforts to prepare for a potential two-front conflict. India urgently needs to develop strategies that help it plug the numerical and technological gap—in effectiveness and cost. While developing fifth and sixth-generation aircraft remains essential, an Anti-Access/Area Denial (A2/AD) strategy offers a pragmatic countermeasure, and could prevent adversaries from controlling airspace.

The IAF currently operates fourth-generation platforms, including the Rafale, Su-30MKI, Mirage-2000, MiG-29, and Tejas Mk-1. However, squadron strength is down to 31 from the sanctioned 42, and will reduce further when MiG-21 and Jaguar fighters are decommissioned. There are delays in inducting Tejas Mk1A fighters due to supply chain reasons and the development of the MkII variant. While these fourth-generation aircraft are capable, they lack the stealth features of China's J-20 and J-35 and the newly unveiled sixth-generation fighters. India's indigenous fifth-generation Advanced Medium Combat Aircraft (AMCA)



is expected to take at least another decade to enter service. In the meantime, adopting A2/AD strategies can effectively level the playing field by integrating advanced radars, missile systems, electronic warfare, sensors, unmanned technologies, and space-based surveillance. By employing this strategy, India can address threats without requiring to match its adversary aircraft-for-aircraft.

Multi-layered air defence systems: India must enhance its air defence capabilities with multiple layers. In the short term, this involves deploying additional indigenous Akash missile batteries along with its existing S-400 systems, and expediting the development of the Medium-Range Surface-to-Air Missile (MR-SAM) and Barak 8 ER (extended range) programmes. India must accelerate the development of

its indigenous long-range air defence system under Project Kusha, touted to detect and neutralise stealth fighters, drones, and cruise missiles up to 350 km. In the mid-term, India should focus on developing Directed Energy Weapons (DEWs) to intercept aerial threats. Long-term efforts must concentrate on integrating AI-enabled command-and-control systems for automated threat detection and response.

Drone warfare and countermeasures: Drones have revolutionised modern warfare. India must rapidly enhance its drone capabilities, developing loitering munitions, swarm drones that can overwhelm enemy defences, and Unmanned Combat Aerial Vehicles (UCAVs) for precision strikes and loyal wingman. It is crucial to accelerate programmes like Ghatak stealth UCAV and involve India's pri-

ivate sector for large-scale production. Simultaneously, India must develop effective anti-drone systems, such as lasers and jammers. Electronic warfare and cyber defence: Future battles will be heavily fought in the electromagnetic spectrum. India should develop advanced jamming systems to disrupt enemy radar and communications, and advanced cyber warfare tools for neutralising adversary satellites and command and control systems. Upgrading fourth-generation fighters with advanced electronic warfare suites and sensors can give them a level of stealth capabilities by detecting, jamming, and deceiving enemy sensors. Integrating survivability-

enhancing technologies such as missile warning systems (MAWS), suppression of enemy air defences (SEAD), and expendable decoys is crucial.

Sensor fusion and networked warfare: India must develop systems that integrate data from land, sea, air, and space sensors to get a unified operational picture. Networked systems provide real-time information sharing and help in coordinating responses, enhancing survivability and lethality. By incorporating advanced radars, passive sensors, electronic warfare systems, and decoys in our existing fourth-generation fighters operating in a networked environment, we can achieve a level of stealth that allows them to operate effectively in highly contested environments.

Hypersonic and cruise missiles: Hypersonic missiles can penetrate advanced air defence systems. Fast-tracking programmes like Pralay, Shaurya, and BrahMos-II are critical to delivering high-speed precision strikes. Additionally, it is

essential to speed up the development of hypersonic cruise missiles and glide vehicles and extend the range of BrahMos to over 800 km for strikes deep inside enemy territory.

Space-based surveillance and countermeasures: Space assets will be crucial in future conflicts. India should expand its anti-satellite (ASAT) capabilities, as demonstrated in Mission Shakti, while focusing on non-kinetic approaches such as jamming and cyberattacks on enemy satellites. Strengthening satellite surveillance for real-time intelligence gathering will give India a significant information advantage. Furthermore, India should invest in technologies to disrupt adversary satellite navigation systems to hinder adversaries' ability to target Indian assets.

Infrastructure and resilience: Survivability is key to sustain-

ing operations during conflicts. To maintain operational flexibility, India must build fortified hangars and underground shelters for aircraft, prepare runways for rapid repairs, distributed operations, and deploy mobile launch platforms. Strategic partnerships: India must leverage its defence ties with the US, France, and Israel to acquire technologies it does not have. These partnerships can bridge gaps in A2/AD capabilities and accelerate technological advancements. China's rapid military modernisation is altering the regional power balance to the detriment of India's security. These developments are an inflection point for India to pivot toward a multi-domain defence strategy. While developing fifth and sixth-generation aircraft will take time, investing in A2/AD technologies will go a long way in countering the threats.

Record number of small boat migrants reach UK in 2025

LONDON, Feb 25: The second-highest annual number of migrants arrived on UK shores in small boats since records were started in 2018, the government was to confirm Thursday.

The tally comes as Brexit firebrand Nigel Farage's anti-immigration party Reform UK surges in popularity ahead of bellwether local elections in May.

With Labour Prime Minister Keir Starmer increasingly under pressure over the thorny issue, his interior minister Shabana Mahmood has proposed a drastic reduction in protections for refugees and the ending of automatic benefits for asylum seekers. Home Office data as of midday on Wednesday showed a total



of 41,472 migrants landed on England's southern coast in 2025 after making the perilous Channel crossing from northern France. The record of 45,774 arrivals was recorded in 2022 under the last Conservative government.

The Home Office is due to confirm the final figure for 2025 later Thursday. Former

Tory prime minister Rishi Sunak vowed to "stop the boats" when he was in power. Ousted by Starmer in July 2024, he later said he regretted the slogan because it was too "stark" and "binary" and lacked sufficient context "for exactly how challenging" the goal was.

Adopting his own "smash

the gangs" slogan, Starmer pledged to tackle the problem by dismantling the people smuggling networks running the crossings but has so far had no more success than his predecessor. Reform has led Starmer's Labour Party by double-digit margins in opinion polls for most of 2025.

Taiwan's president pledges to defend island's sovereignty after Chinese military drills

TAIPEI, Feb 25: Taiwanese President Lai Ching-te on Thursday vowed to defend the self-ruled island's sovereignty in the face of China's "expansionist ambitions," days after Beijing wrapped up live-fire military drills near its shores.

"In the face of China's rising expansionist ambitions, the international community is watching to see whether the Taiwanese people have the resolve to defend themselves," Lai said in his New Year's address.

"As president, my stance has always been clear: to firmly safeguard national sovereignty, strengthen national defense and the resilience of the whole so-



ciety, and comprehensively construct an effective deterrence and democratic defense mechanism," he added. Lai's comments came days after China wrapped up live-fire drills around Taiwan featuring rocket launches, aircraft and warships. Beijing had expressed

anger at a planned U.S. arms sales to Taiwan, as well as at Japan's new leader's comments that Tokyo could intervene in the event of a Chinese attack on Taiwan.

China sees Taiwan as its own territory and threatens to annex it by force if necessary. A former Japanese col-

ony, Taiwan has been governed independently from the mainland since 1949, when the Nationalist Party lost a civil war against the Chinese Communist Party and retreated to the island. Lai's speech was met angrily in Beijing, where a spokesperson for the State Council's Taiwan Affairs Office called the president "a saboteur of peace, a troublemaker and a warmonger," according to the official Xinhua news agency.

"No matter what Lai and the Democratic Progressive Party authorities say or do, they cannot change the fact that Taiwan is part of China," said spokesperson Chen Binhua.

UN Agencies Urge Israel to Lift Ban on International Aid Groups in Gaza & West Bank

United Nations, Feb 25: Multiple United Nations (UN) humanitarian agencies and international organisations jointly issued a statement, calling on Israel to revoke its ban on the operations of international aid organisations in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank.

The statement, issued on Wednesday (local time), said that international aid organisations play a central role in humanitarian operations in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank, providing nearly one billion US dollars in assistance annually.

It noted that in Gaza, with winter worsening families' suffering, high acute food insecurity continuing, and the need for life-saving aid remaining critical, banning



aid groups could undermine the fragile progress achieved during the ceasefire and have devastating consequences for vulnerable children, women, and men. The statement emphasised that humanitarian

access is neither optional nor subject to conditions or political considerations, and that it constitutes a legal obligation under international humanitarian law as well as a fundamental requirement for the protec-

tion of human rights, reports Xinhua news agency.

Signatories to the statement include Tom Fletcher, UN under-secretary-general for humanitarian affairs and emergency relief coordinator; Qu Dongyu, director-

general of the UN Food and Agriculture Organization; Amy E. Pope, director-general of the International Organization for Migration; Volker Turk, UN high commissioner for human rights; Alexander De Croo, administrator of the UN Development Programme; Catherine Russell, executive director of the UN Children's Fund; Sima Bahous, UN under-secretary-general and executive director of UN Women; and Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, director-general of the World Health Organization, among others.

Saudi Minister of Foreign Affairs Prince Faisal bin Farhan met with Vice President of Palestine and Vice Chairman of the Executive Committee of the Palestine Lib-

eration Organization (PLO) Hussein Al-Sheikh in Riyadh on Wednesday. During the meeting, they discussed developments in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank, including the dire humanitarian conditions facing Gaza residents, ongoing Israeli violations of the ceasefire, and Israeli escalation in the West Bank. They emphasized the importance of the unhindered delivery of humanitarian aid.

The two leaders also underlined the need for the release of Palestinian Authority funds, the protection of the Palestinian banking system, and commitment to implementing the comprehensive peace plan put forward by President of the United States Donald Trump.

Oman projects 300,000 new jobs under 11th Five-Year Development Plan



Muscat, Feb 25: Building on the success of its previous development plan, Oman is set to create 300,000 new job opportunities under the 11th Five-Year Development Plan (2026-2030). This comes after the 10th Five-Year Plan, which generated 175,000 jobs across various sectors.

The new plan aims to provide employment in both the public and private sectors, with an average of 60,000 jobs expected each year throughout its five-year implementation period. Officials say this initiative reflects the government's ongoing commitment to economic diversification and sustainable development, in line with Oman Vision 2040, while strengthening national employment opportunities for citizens.

The 2026 state budget aims to strengthen financial, economic and social stability while enhancing resilience against future challenges, with a strong focus on fiscal sustainability

and economic diversification. The budget is aligned with the financial framework of the Eleventh Five-Year Development Plan (2026-2030) and Oman Vision 2040.

Presenting the preliminary results of financial performance for 2025, the Undersecretary of Finance, Abdullah bin Salim Al Harthy, said public revenues rose by 5 per cent, while public expenditure increased by 4 per cent. As a result, the fiscal deficit declined by 23 per cent to RO 480 million.

He attributed this improvement to an average oil price in 2025 that was around \$10 higher than the budgeted level, in addition to increased development spending aimed at accelerating progress on ongoing development projects.

Total public spending in the Sultanate of Oman's General Budget for the 2026 fiscal year is estimated at OMR 11.977 billion, reflecting a 1.5 percent increase over the approved.

Foreign Minister meets heads of overseas diplomatic missions on Bahrain's UNSC membership



Manama, Feb 25: Dr. Abdullah bin Rashid Al Zayani, Minister of Foreign Affairs, held a meeting via video conference with the Kingdom of Bahrain's heads of diplomatic missions abroad, senior ministry officials, and the team responsible for United Nations Security Council affairs in New York and at the ministry. The meeting focused on preparations for Bahrain's non-permanent membership of the UN Security Council for 2026-2027.

Dr. Al Zayani said the Kingdom's membership represents a historic milestone for the country's diplomacy and reflects the approach of His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa, centred on promoting peace and regional and global stability. He highlighted Bahrain's ongoing diplomatic achievements, including the 2019 "Peace for Prosperity" workshop, signing the Abraham Accords, hosting the 33rd Arab Summit in 2024 and the resulting the Sakhir Declaration supporting the recognition of the State of Pal-

estine, leading the current Gulf Cooperation Council session, and the Kingdom's active role during its Security Council membership starting January, leading to Bahrain's chairmanship of the Arab League Council at the ministerial level in March 2026, followed by its Security Council presidency in April of the same year.

The Foreign Minister outlined the Kingdom's priorities on the Security Council, which include Arab issues especially the Palestinian cause situations in Sudan, Syria, Lebanon, Libya, and Yemen, international conflicts, cybersecurity, maritime security, and the role of women and youth in peace and security. He highlighted that Bahrain aims to propose practical initiatives that address the root causes of crises and support youth through education, health, and protection from extremism. He noted that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs' preparations for the membership included selecting and training diplomatic staff on relevant files, conducting joint simulations.

Scores killed in blast at Swiss ski resort during New Year celebrations

Crans-Montana (Switzerland), Feb 25: A powerful explosion tore through a crowded bar in the upscale Alpine resort town of Crans-Montana in Switzerland during New Year celebrations, killing multiple people and leaving several others injured, authorities confirmed on Thursday. The exact cause of the blast has not yet been determined, though the incident occurred at a time when Switzerland has been facing forest fires amid an unusually dry spell.

Swiss media reports have suggested that fireworks used during a concert may have triggered the explosion, but police officials have said the cause remains unknown and under investigation.

Local radio station Rhone-FM reported that the mis-



handling of pyrotechnics could be behind the tragedy, citing several people who allegedly confirmed this information. The broadcaster said the number of casualties could be extremely high.

RhoneFM estimated that there may be several dozen fatalities, while an anonymous source indicated that the number of victims could be around forty. The explosion occurred at the "Le Con-

stellation Bar," where a large number of people had gathered to celebrate the arrival of the New Year.

According to police, an explosion of unknown origin sparked a fire inside the establishment. Media spokesman Gaetan Lathion said the fire was reported at around 1:30 a.m. and was brought under control by the early hours of the morning.

Valais cantonal police said

in a press release that emergency operations were still ongoing and that the area around the bar had been completely sealed off.

Local media outlet Blick reported that authorities had also imposed a no-fly zone over Crans-Montana as rescue and investigation efforts continued. Police officials said that more than 100 people were inside the bar at the time of the explosion. Swiss broadcaster RTS reported that the blast occurred in the basement of the bar, which has a total capacity of around 400 people. Videos shared widely on social media platforms showed thick plumes of smoke rising from the bar in the immediate aftermath under control by the early hours of the morning and the ensuing fire.

We want end to war, but not end of Ukraine: Zelensky rejects 'weak' deal

Kyiv, Feb 25: In his New Year's Eve address, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky said that Ukraine wants the war to end but will not accept a weak peace agreement, stressing that any deal must not come at the cost of the country's future.

His remarks came shortly after Russian President Vladimir Putin reiterated his belief that Moscow would prevail in the ongoing conflict. Speaking just before midnight in a 21-minute televised address to the nation, Zelensky acknowledged that Ukrainians were exhausted after nearly four years of war, a period he noted was longer than the German occupation of many Ukrainian cities during World War II.

However, he made it clear that fatigue would not translate into capitulation. "What does Ukraine want? Peace?



Yes. At any cost? No," Zelensky said, adding, "We want an end to the war but not the end of Ukraine."

"Are we tired? Very," he said. "Does this mean we are ready to surrender? Anyone who thinks so is deeply mistaken." The Ukrainian leader warned that any agreement

without firm and credible guarantees would only prolong the conflict rather than resolve it. "Any signature placed on weak agreements only fuels the war," he said. "My signature will be placed on a strong agreement."

Zelensky said that ongoing diplomatic efforts were fo-

cus on securing a durable and meaningful settlement. "That is exactly what every meeting, every phone call, every decision is about now," he said. "To secure a strong peace -- not for a day, a week or two months, but peace for years." He added that weeks of US-led diplomacy, includ-

ing talks held last weekend with US President Donald Trump in Florida, had brought negotiations close to completion.

"A peace agreement is 90 per cent ready," Zelensky said. "That 10 per cent contains everything. It will determine the fate of peace, the fate of Ukraine and Europe."

However, he acknowledged that unresolved territorial issues remain the central obstacle to a final deal. According to Ukrainian media reports, Russia currently occupies around 19 per cent of Ukrainian territory, largely in the southern and eastern regions. Moscow has been demanding that Kyiv withdraw from parts of the eastern Donbas region that Russian forces have not fully captured. Ukraine, on the other hand, wants the front lines to be frozen at their cur-

rent positions. Zelensky rejected Russian demands for a complete Ukrainian withdrawal from Donbas, calling them "deception." "Does anyone still believe them? Unfortunately, yes," he said. "Because too often the truth is avoided and called diplomacy when in fact it is simply lies dressed up in business suits." Meanwhile, Russian President Vladimir Putin on Thursday told soldiers fighting on the front lines that Moscow remains confident of prevailing in Ukraine, even as the conflict stretches into yet another year with no clear end in sight. In a brief New Year address aired first in the Kamchatka peninsula, the easternmost Russian region to usher in 2026, Putin praised the troops engaged in the war as "heroes" and sought to project resolve after nearly four years.

Driving Good Governance and Global Leadership: Jitendra Singh

New Delhi, Feb 25: India's space budget almost tripled in the last 10 years -- from Rs 5,615 crore in 2013-14 to Rs 13,416 crore in 2025-26 -- the government said.

According to Union Minister Dr Jitendra Singh, India's space technology is no longer confined only to the launch of rockets, but is also playing a major role in revolutionising governance by supplementing transparency, grievance redressal and citizen participation.

"In the process, there is reduced scope of corrupt practices, more discipline in observing timelines and less of so called red-tapism," he said while addressing the 'Space-Tech for Good Governance' Conclave here. The number of space startups has grown from one to more than 300, positioning India as a key revenue generator in the global space market. India has launched 433 foreign satellites, with 396 of them launched since 2014, generating \$192 mil-



lion and 272 million euros in revenue. Emphasizing Prime Minister Narendra Modi's leadership, Dr Singh explained how space technology is playing a pivotal role in bringing ease of living for common citizens through good governance.

The space technology has now become integral to every Indian household, powering various governance services enabled by satellites from the Department of Space, said the minister. Dr Singh also pointed

out that space technology also plays a critical role in national defence, border surveillance, and geopolitical intelligence, contributing significantly to India's security. The minister underscored the growing significance of India's space sector as an attractive avenue -- not only for startups and livelihood generation but also for transforming the governance practices.

The minister also emphasised space technology's role in India's agricultural sector

— one of the major pillars of the economy — stating that it has become an invaluable force multiplier in improving decision-making, weather forecasting, communication, disaster preparedness, early warning systems, urban planning, and security.

Dr Singh noted that India's neighbouring countries increasingly depend on India's satellite systems, further strengthening India's position as a regional space leader.

"Gone are the days when

Indian Startups Raise \$355 Million in a Week, Marking 355% Surge

New Delhi, Feb 25: At least 30 startups secured more than \$355 million this week, which included three growth-stage and 20 early-stage deals. This is stupendous growth of at least 355 per cent from the previous week, when the domestic startup ecosystem witnessed \$105.87 million in fund-raising by 21 startups.

HR tech platform DarwinBox topped the chart with \$140 million in Series D round led by Partners Group and KKR. The round also saw participation from Gravity Holdings. Edtech platform Leap Finance secured \$100 million debt facility from London headquartered-HSBC Bank under its ASEAN Growth Fund. This follows Leap's \$65 million Series E equity round led by Apis Partners last month, taking its total fundraise to over \$400 million.

Insurtech startup InsuranceDekho secured \$70 million, which was co-led by private equity



fund Beams Fintech Fund, Japan's Mitsubishi UFJ Financial Group (MUFG) and insurer BNP Paribas Cardif, via its insurtech fund managed by European investment major Eurazeo. Meanwhile, 20 early-stage startups secured funding worth \$45.02 million, led by revenue AI platform MaxIQ and enterprise tech startup Beacon.li, among others. Bengaluru-based startups led with 12 deals followed

by Delhi-NCR, Mumbai and others. Domestic startups raised a total of nearly Rs 13,800 crore (\$1.65 billion) in February this year, a 19.5 per cent increase from nearly Rs 11,460 crore (\$1.38 billion) in January. The median valuation of these startups in February 2025 stood at Rs 61,216 crore (\$83.2 billion).

Over the course of the 2024-25 financial year, Indian startups collectively

raised Rs 21,062 crore (\$25.4 billion) across 2,200 funding rounds. Meanwhile, the Indian tech startup ecosystem now ranks second, after the US, in terms of all-time funding raised by companies with women founders, with a total of \$26 billion in this space to date.

India is home to over 7,000 active women-led startups, accounting for 7.5 per cent of all active startups in the country.

Labour Ministry Urges Gig Workers to Register on e-Shram for Health & Welfare Benefits

New Delhi, Feb 25: The Labour Ministry on Saturday urged the platform workers to self-register themselves on e-Shram portal, so that they may be considered for the benefits under the scheme at the earliest. The gig and platform economy is expanding, offering new jobs in sectors like ride-sharing, delivery, logistics, and professional services. NITI Aayog has projected that the gig economy in India will employ over 1 crore workers in 2024-25, subsequently reaching 2.35 crore by 2029-30.

Recognizing the contribution of the gig and platform workers to the nation's economy, Union Budget 2025-26 announcement has provisions for registration of online platform workers on e-Shram portal, issue of identity cards, and healthcare coverage under Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (AB-PMJAY). The AB-PMJAY health scheme provides a cover of Rs 5 lakh per fam-



ily per year for secondary and tertiary care hospitalisation across over 31,000 public and private empanelled hospitals in India. For early implementation of these Budget provisions, the Ministry of Labour and Employment is soon launching the scheme, and has asked platform workers to register on e-Shram Portal for formal recognition and access to AB-PMJAY benefits. "As a first step, Ministry requests the Platform Workers to self-register themselves on e-Shram portal, so that they may be considered for the

benefits under the scheme at the earliest," it added.

The platform aggregators are also requested to disseminate this information among the platform workers engaged with them and facilitate them to register on e-Shram portal. Meanwhile, over 30.58 crore unorganised workers have been registered on the e-Shram Portal for receiving benefits under various social welfare schemes of the government.

The e-Shram portal has registered over 1.23 crore workers in 2024, averaging 33,700 enrolments per day.

India Aims for Top 5 Shipbuilding Spot by 2047, Unveils Major Maritime Reforms

New Delhi, Feb 25: India is poised to be among the top 5 ship-building countries in the world by 2047, with additional shipbuilding capacity of 4 million gross registered tonnage (GRT), Minister of Ports, Shipping and Waterways, Sarbananda Sonowal, said. At the two-day 'Chintan Shivir 2025' in Srinagar, the minister directed the formulation of suitable policies and skill development initiatives, while encouraging collaboration with the state governments. He reviewed ongoing projects of the ministry worth Rs 2 lakh crore, and drew up a goal, after consultative deliberation with the experts of completing at least 150 projects by September this year.

The event focused on strengthening India's shipbuilding and repair capabilities, improving financial and digital solutions for maritime infrastructure and pushing for a greener, more sustainable shipping industry. Emphasis was laid on achieving targets set out



in Maritime Amrit Kaal Vision (MAKV) 2047. Among the major announcements made at the Chintan Shivir was establishing the Bharat Container Shipping Line under the Shipping Corporation of India (SCI).

"All major ports to tender for at least 1 Green Tug within the next 3 months. The Harbour Craft Green Transition Programme will be launched to accelerate the adoption of clean energy solutions across Indian ports," said the minister. A Coastal Green Shipping Corridor will be established, with the Kandla-Tuticorin corridor, being

the first to be developed in partnership with SCL, Deendayal Port Authority (DPA) and V.O. Chidambaram Port Authority (VoC-PA). Inland Waterways Authority of India (IWAI) will invest Rs 100 crore in 3 National Waterways in Jammu & Kashmir, boosting inland water transport and connectivity in the region. The Decade of Sagarmala Vision will be celebrated in March 2025. A Sagarmala Startup and Innovation Initiative (S2I2) will be launched, accompanied by the establishment of Maritime Innovation Hubs (MIHs).

India-EU FTA Talks Resume, Deal Targeted by Year-End

New Delhi, Feb 25: India and the European Union are scheduled to begin the next round of talks for a proposed free trade agreement (FTA) from Monday in Brussels with the aim of concluding the talks by the end of this year, a senior official said.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi and European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen had agreed to expedite the conclusion of the India-EU free trade agreement (FTA) by the end of the year at their meeting in Delhi last month.

"A free trade agreement between the EU and India would be the largest deal of this kind anywhere in the world. I am well aware it will not be easy. But I also know that timing and determination count and that this partnership comes at the right moment for both of us," Von der Leyen, said during her two-day visit to India.

Her statement came

in the backdrop of massive tariff hikes proposed against all countries by US President Donald Trump under his 'America First' policy which is threatening to disrupt global trade and heighten uncertainty in the global economy.

PM Modi and the European Commission President committed to task their respective negotiating teams to pursue negotiations for a balanced, ambitious, and mutually beneficial FTA. Officials were asked to work as trusted partners to enhance market access and remove trade barriers. They were also tasked to advance negotiations on an Agreement on Investment Protection and an Agreement on Geographical Indications.

Reaching a deal will be complex, however, with significant concessions wanted on both sides in areas ranging from cars and whisky to pharmaceuticals and textiles.

GST slabs near final review, rate cuts likely soon: FM Sitharaman

New Delhi, Feb 25: Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman has said that Goods and Services Tax (GST) rates will be reduced further as the process of rationalising tax slabs is nearing completion.

FM Sitharaman mentioned that the revenue neutral rate (RNR), which was 15.8 per cent when GST was introduced in July 2017, has now come down to 11.4 per cent in 2023 and will decrease further. Speaking at a media event in the national capital, FM Sitharaman said that the work on simplifying GST slabs is almost finished. The GST Council, which is led by the finance minister and includes state finance ministers, is expected to take a final decision soon.

"Now, at this stage, there is one more look that I would (take) the groups (GoM) have done excellent work, but I still have taken it upon myself to, once more, completely review each of



the groups' works, and then probably take it to take it to the Council to see if we can come to a final conclusion on this,' the Finance Minister stated. The GoM was set up in September 2021 to suggest changes in GST rates and slabs. This committee consists of finance ministers from six states and has been working on making the tax system more efficient. The rationalisation process includes reducing the number of tax slabs, streamlining rates,

and addressing key concerns raised by different industries. The Union Minister emphasised that a final review is underway before presenting the proposal at the next GST Council meeting. 'We'll take it to the next council (meeting). We are very close to coming to a final call on some of the very critical issues, reduction, rationalisation of rates, looking at the number of slabs and so on,' FM Sitharaman said. When asked about stock market vola-

tility, the finance minister attributed it to global uncertainties, including wars, disruptions in the Red Sea, and piracy threats. FM Sitharaman said that predicting absolute stability in the markets is difficult due to these unpredictable global factors. On the government's plans for public sector banks, the Union Minister added that the efforts are being made to increase public shareholding. The goal is to have more retail investors in public sector banks, which will enhance public participation in the banking sector. Regarding the India-US trade deal, the Finance Minister mentioned that both countries are working towards a mutually beneficial agreement. FM Sitharaman also highlighted that India is actively engaged in negotiations with the European Union and the United Kingdom, ensuring that national interests remain a priority.

Govt Extends Duty-Free Yellow Pea Imports, Imposes 10% Duty on Lentils to Stabilize Prices

New Delhi, Feb 25: The Government has extended the duty-free import of yellow peas by three months till the end of May and clamped a duty of 10 per cent duty on imports of lentils (masur) with immediate effect, according to an official notification.

The government has imposed a 10 per cent import duty on lentils (mosur) and extended the duty-free import of yellow peas by three months till May 31 this year to increase domestic availability of the pulses and keep prices in check.

The government has levied a 5 per cent basic customs duty and 5 per cent Agriculture Infrastructure and Development Cess (AIDC) on lentils with effect from Saturday. The government has been tuning its tariff policy on pulses to keep inflation in check in the case of shortfalls and at the same encouraging domestic production. The government



had allowed the duty-free import of yellow peas in December 2023 to control local prices as the domestic production of 'chana' was falling short. This relaxation was extended from time to time till the end of February.

India's yellow peas imports stood at 30 lakh tonnes out of 67 lakh tonnes of overall pulses imported during 2024. The Centre has also been procuring pulses at MSP from domestic farmers after approval for the continuation of the integrated Pradhan Mantri Anna-

to reduce the dependence on imports, the Government has allowed the procurement of Tur, Urad and Masur under PSS equivalent to 100 per cent of the production of the State for the procurement year 2024-25. The Government has also announced in Budget 2025 that procurement of Tur (Arhar), Urad and Masur up to 100 per cent of the production of the State will be continued for another four years through Central Nodal Agencies to achieve self-sufficiency in pulses in the country. Union Minister for Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare Shivraj Singh Chouhan recently said the Centre has approved the procurement of Tur (Arhar) in Andhra Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Gujarat, Haryana, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Telangana and Uttar Pradesh under Price Support Scheme for the Kharif 2024-25 Season for a total quantity.

T20 WC: Sri Lanka knocked out as NZ storm toward semis

Colombo, Feb 25: Sri Lanka became the first team to be knocked out of the Super 8 stage of the ICC Men's T20 World Cup 2026 after suffering a 61-run defeat against New Zealand at the R Premadasa Stadium on Wednesday. Apart from their successful chase against Australia, Sri Lanka have had a disappointing tournament campaign, while New Zealand have moved with one foot into the semifinal race. The victory was powered by a sensational all-round performance from Rachin Ravindra, who produced one of the most dominant individual displays of the tournament.

Ravindra first made an impact with the bat, striking crucial boundaries during New Zealand's recovery phase before turning the game completely with the ball. His 4 for 27 spell was built on intelligent use of flight and pace variations,



consistently forcing Sri Lankan batters into false strokes. Ravindra operated with tight lines around off

stump while occasionally drifting the ball wider to invite attacking shots, a tactic that produced two key

stumpings as Kusal Mendis and Pavan Rathnayake were both lured down the track and beaten in the air

and off the pitch.

Ravindra also struck with bounce and deception to break Sri Lanka's middle or-

der. Dasun Shanaka was dismissed when he attempted a back-foot cut against extra bounce but only managed a top edge to backward point. Dushan Hemantha fell in similar fashion, attempting an aggressive stroke but finding deep mid-wicket instead. Ravindra's spell completely dismantled Sri Lanka's chase momentum and kept the run rate climbing beyond control.

New Zealand's dominance was further cemented by their death-overs batting, led by captain Mitchell Santner and Cole McConchie. Santner produced a devastating finishing assault, repeatedly targeting Sri Lanka's spin and pace bowlers with powerful hits down the ground and over the leg side. He struck four sixes in his 47 off 26 balls, including towering strikes against Maheesh Theekshana and Dilshan Madushanka, where he used strong bottom-hand power

and excellent timing to clear the shorter boundaries.

McConchie played the perfect supporting role during this assault. His unbeaten 31 off 23 balls was built on intelligent strike rotation and selective boundary hitting. He punished loose deliveries with well-timed cuts and drives, helping New Zealand accelerate after early wickets fell. The Santner-McConchie partnership transformed New Zealand's innings from a rebuilding phase into an aggressive death-overs surge, ultimately pushing the total to a challenging 168 for 7.

Santner's innings ended in dramatic fashion in the final over when he attempted another aggressive drive off Dushantha Chameera but was brilliantly caught by Charith Asalanka at extra cover, bringing the crowd to life but too late to change the game's outcome.

New Zealand's bowlers

had earlier set the tone with early breakthroughs. Matt Henry struck on the very first ball of the innings by bowling Pathum Nissanka with a classic nip-backer, while Glenn Phillips also chipped in with a crucial wicket. Ravindra's all-round brilliance ensured Sri Lanka never recovered in the chase.

Sri Lanka's only meaningful resistance came from Kamindu Mendis, who scored 31 off 23 balls, and Dunith Wellalage, who counterattacked with 29 off 23 balls including a six over deep backward square-leg. However, the target proved too steep as Sri Lanka were bowled out of contention, finishing at 107 for 8.

Brief Scores: New Zealand 168/7 (Santner 47, McConchie 31*, Ravindra 32; Theekshana 3/30, Chameera 3/38) beat Sri Lanka 107/8 (Kamindu Mendis 31, Wellalage 29; Ravindra 4/27, Henry 2/3).

BCCI invites bids to replace Dream 11 as national team lead sponsor

Mumbai, Feb 25: The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) invited bids from entities for acquiring the national team lead sponsor rights on Tuesday. The board announced the release of an Invitation for Expression of Interest (IEOI), which provides the detailed terms and conditions governing the submission and evaluation of bids. The last date to purchase IEOI documents is September 12, while the deadline for submission of bid documents is set on September 16.

Last month, BCCI secretary Devajit Saikia confirmed to IANS that the board's association with fantasy sports company Dream11 has ended after the Promotion and Regulation of Online Gaming Bill 2025 was passed in both Parliament, and deliberations over finding a new lead sponsor are on. Dream11 had signed a three-year deal worth Rs 358 crore in July 2023 to replace edtech company Byju's as the lead



sponsor of the Indian cricket team. The BCCI said that the IEOI will be made available on receipt of payment of a non-refundable fee of Rs 5 lakh plus any applicable Goods and Services Tax.

"Bidders are to email the details of payment made for the purchase of the IEOI to sponsorship@bccivt, as per the procedure laid down in ANNEXURE A. It is clarified that the IEOI documents shall be shared only upon the confirmation of payment of the non-refundable IEOI fee. "Any bidder wishing to submit a bid is required to

purchase the IEOI. However, only those satisfying the eligibility requirements set out in the IEOI and subject to the other terms and conditions set out therein, shall be eligible to bid. It is clarified that merely purchasing the IEOI does not entitle any person to bid," it said in a release.

BCCI also said it reserves the right to cancel or amend the IEOI process at any stage in any manner without providing any reason. The bidder must note the following requirements and restrictions pertaining to eligibility with respect to the IEOI.

A bid may only be submitted either by: (i) the person/entity which has purchased a copy of this IEOI upon payment of the IEOI fee; or (ii) any person/entity which is in the same Group as such person/entity. The IEOI fee paid by the bidder (whether successful or unsuccessful) shall not be refunded or adjusted against any other payment obligation of the bidder in any circumstances. As per the financial eligibility laid out by the BCCI, the average turnover of each bidder for the last three years must be at least Rs 3,00,00,00,000 (Indian Rupees

Three Hundred Crore only) as per the last three audited accounts; or the average net worth of each bidder for the last three years must be at least Rs 3,00,00,00,000 (Indian Rupees Three Hundred Crore only) as per the last three audited accounts.

Under the 'Fit and Proper Person' criteria, the bidder (i) not having been convicted by a court of a criminal offence or offences involving moral turpitude, economic offence or fraud; (ii) not having any conflict of interest as per the BCCI Conflict of Interest Rules; (iii) absence of conviction for any offence punishable with imprisonment for 2 (two) years or more in any jurisdiction; (iv) absence of categorisation as a wilful defaulter by the Reserve Bank of India; and/or (v) a person having integrity and reputation will be deemed a 'Fit and Proper Person' to submit a bid. Under the Promotion and Regulation of Online Gaming Act, 2025, the bidder.

Madhav Kamath wins world youth scrabble 2025

Mumbai, Feb 25: In a historic moment for Indian Scrabble, 14-year-old Madhav Gopal Kamath from Delhi has won the 2025 World Youth Scrabble Championship (WYSC), becoming the first Indian ever to claim a major global Scrabble title. Madhav, India's highest-ranked Scrabble player in the world and the reigning national champion, emerged victorious among 218 under-18 players from 18 countries at the 20th edition of the annual tournament held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, organised by the World English-Language Scrabble Players Association (WESPA).

Madhav clinched the championship in the penultimate round, finishing with an impressive 21 wins from 24 rounds. Like every year, India sent a strong contingent to WYSC, comprising 12 of the country's best youth Scrabble players, seven boys and five girls, mentored by Mumbai-based player and



coach Neeta Bhatia. Among them, 15-year-old Suyash Manchali from Bengaluru, runner-up at last year's edition in Sri Lanka, secured fifth place with 17 wins.

The Indian contingent was supported by the Essar Foundation, in partnership with the Scrabble Association of India (SAI) and Wordaholic. Harvinderjit Bhatia, President, Scrabble Association of India, said: "Madhav's victory is a historic milestone for Indian Scrabble and a proud moment for the entire community. Over the years, our young players have shown

immense promise, and this world title validates India's growing stature in global Scrabble. We thank Essar Foundation for supporting Team India at WYSC 2025 and helping create the platform for such achievements." An Essar Foundation spokesperson said: "We are immensely proud and thrilled by Team India's historic achievement at WYSC 2025, especially Madhav Gopal Kamath's extraordinary victory. At Essar Foundation, we believe sports, whether physical or intellectual, have the power to inspire, educate,

India's quest to create AFC U23 Asian Cup qualification history begins with Bahrain clash

Doha, Feb 25: The Indian men's U23 team will take on Bahrain in their AFC U23 Asian Cup Saudi Arabia 2026 Qualifiers Group H opener on Wednesday, September 3, at the Suheim bin Hamad Stadium in Doha. The Blue Colts, led by head coach Naushad Moosa, are aiming to qualify for the AFC U23 Asian Cup for the first time ever. In the previous six attempts, India have not made it past the Qualifiers, so Moosa and his youngsters will be gunning to create history in the Qatari capital.

Hosts Qatar and Brunei Darussalam are the other two teams in Group H. The group winners and the four best runners-up across all 11 groups will qualify for the final tournament, to be held in January 2026, in Saudi Arabia. In the pre-match press conference on Tuesday, Moosa said, "I don't think any team is 'big'. It's important to respect every opponent. As far as Bahrain are concerned, we have watched



two or three of their matches to prepare. We know Qatar are a very strong side. They play tomorrow, so I'll get some analysis from that game." The Blue Colts have had two separate camps in the lead-up to the Qualifiers. In June, they played two friendly games against Tajikistan (2-3 defeat) and Kyrgyz Republic (0-0 draw) in Tajikistan. They had a 20-day camp at the Padukone-Dravid Centre for Sports Excellence in Bengaluru in August. In the last week of August, the India U23s travelled to Malaysia to play two closed-door friendly games

against Iraq, where they lost 1-2 and 1-3, respectively.

"All four friendlies we played were tough. But I was happy with the way the team played. We are well prepared - both mentally and physically - and I'm really looking forward to it. We are ready for the opening game against Bahrain," said Moosa.

"Bahrain are a strong side. Watching them, I was very impressed with the way they attack, defend, and the intensity they bring. I have a lot of respect for them. It will be a competitive game, and it definitely won't be easy for Bahrain," he added.

Bahrain head coach Ali Abdulmajed said, "India are a strong team with quality players. We've watched their recent matches, and they have good elements. It will be a 50-50 match. If we manage to deal with India's strengths, we can have the upper hand. But if India succeed in imposing their game, it will be difficult."

After the friendlies in Malaysia, the Blue Colts directly flew to Qatar, arriving in Doha on Saturday, four days before the first match. With temperatures soaring to 43 degrees during the day, Moosa said that the team are gradually adjusting to the different weather conditions.

"It's hot and humid, of course, but in the last few days, we've been trying to adapt as quickly as possible. The boys are working hard. We are working on it by training in the mornings and trying to get used to the conditions."

The facilities are very good, and we're excited to

India could field five bowling options plus Abhishek for Asia Cup, says Pathan

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Sports take centre stage at IMT Ghaziabad's Climate 11 summit

Ghaziabad, Feb 25: With extreme weather events such as floods and heatwaves affecting the country, IMT Ghaziabad hosted the Climate 11 Summit, the first initiative in India to explore how sports can drive the fight against climate change. The summit put sports at the heart of climate action, showing how athletes, federations, and the wider industry can become global leaders in sustainability. Inaugurating the event, Atish Chattopadhyay, director of IMT Ghaziabad, said the institute was committed to tackling environmental challenges through partnerships between academia, business, and sport.

The sessions were led by Kanishka Pandey, Head of the Centre for Sports Research, who explained the interdependence of sports, society, and climate. "If we make environmental issues a part of the identity of sports, we will not only save sports but also lives, com-

munities and futures," he said. The discussions featured powerful voices from the global sporting landscape. Renowned author David Goldblatt warned that worsening climate crises could darken the future of sports. Piara Power, Trustee of the Chelsea Football Club Foundation, emphasised that the massive reach of sport must be used to raise climate awareness. Arhan Bagati, founder of the Bridging Gaps Foundation, urged young people to contribute to conservation through sport, while Shaji Prabhakaran of the Asian Football Confederation and Neeraj Jha, Head of Sports at Warner Bros. The summit ended with key resolutions designed to position sports as a game-changer in climate action. These included creating a global knowledge network linking sports bodies with universities and experts, building green stadiums and eco-friendly infrastructure.