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## Strict action against gas agencies that commit mistakes: Minister Nadendla



Amaravati, April 8 (Skyline Correspondent) : State Civil Supplies Minister Nadendla Manohar has made it clear to the top officials that continuous monitoring and field inspection are necessary in the supply of gas cylinders. Minister Nadendla Manohar held a video conference with top officials of the Civil Supplies Department, district joint collectors and representatives of oil companies in the capital Amaravati on Wednesday on issues such as gas booking, supply of cylinders. Speaking on the occasion, Minister Nadendla Manohar said that strict action should be taken against agencies (Contd. page 2)

## Amaravati to become growth engine of Andhra Pradesh: World Bank team

Amaravati, April 8 (Skyline Correspondent) : The capital city of Amaravati is set to emerge as a key growth engine for the state of Andhra Pradesh, according to representatives of the World Bank. The delegation met Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu at the State Secretariat on Wednesday and appreciated the steady progress in the development of the capital. During the meeting, the World Bank team expressed satisfaction over the pace and planning of infrastructure development in Amaravati. They noted that the government's focus on building modern infrastructure, including roads, administrative complexes, and urban facilities, is in line with international standards. The delegation also highlighted the reforms introduced in the information technology and power sectors, stating that such initiatives would significantly improve the investment climate in the state. According to the representatives, Amaravati's strategic planning and emphasis on sustainability will attract global investors and multinational companies. They expressed confidence that the capital city will soon evolve into a major hub for commerce, trade, and services. The presence of world-class infrastructure and (Contd. page 2)



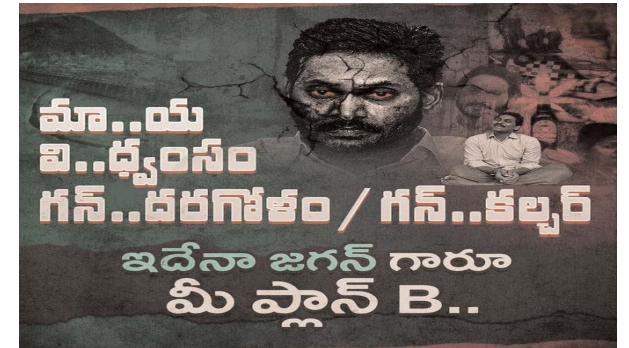
international standards. The delegation also highlighted the reforms introduced in the information technology and power sectors, stating that such initiatives would significantly improve the investment climate in the state. According to the representatives, Amaravati's strategic planning and emphasis on sustainability will attract global investors and multinational companies. They expressed confidence that the capital city will soon evolve into a major hub for commerce, trade, and services. The presence of world-class infrastructure and (Contd. page 2)

## India welcomes US-Iran ceasefire, hopes agreement 'will lead to lasting peace'



New Delhi, April 8 : India on Wednesday welcomed the agreement reached between the US and Iran (Contd. page 2)

## Is this what 'Mavigan' means? Jagan: Minister Lokesh



Amaravati, April 8 (Skyline Correspondent) : The 'MAVI GUN' issue in Andhra Pradesh politics has now led to a war of words between the ruling and opposition parties. State Education Minister Nara Lokesh has reacted strongly to this issue proposed by YS Jagan Mohan Reddy on Twitter. Lokesh's tweet criticizing Jagan's stance is currently going viral on social media. While the ruling party leaders and the people of AP are immersed in great joy in the wake of the legalization of Amaravati, the capital of Andhra Pradesh.. YSRCP chief Jagan has once again defended his 'Mavigun' comment. He made inappropriate comments about (Contd. page 2)

## Unseasonal Rains, Thunderstorms likely in Coastal AP; Heatwave Continues in Rayalaseema

Amaravati, April 8 (Skyline Correspondent) : The State Disaster Management Authority has urged people to remain alert amid rapidly changing weather conditions across Andhra Pradesh, warning of a mix of intense heat and unseasonal rains accompanied by thunderstorms. According to the authority, a trough is influencing weather patterns, bringing rain to coastal districts on



Thursday. Thunderstorms are likely in Kakinada, Konaseema, and East Godavari districts, while light drizzle may occur in other parts of the state. Officials cautioned (Contd. page 2)

## Iran Issues 10-Point Ceasefire Conditions, Trump Says "Plan Workable"



Washington, April 8: The US military has agreed to a two-week ceasefire with Tehran in a last-minute off-ramp, allowing him to delay his threat to obliterate Iran's power grid and bridges. Trump said the proposal, extended by Pakistan, would include opening the Strait of Hormuz --

through which a fifth of the world's energy supplies pass in peacetime-- while Washington and Tehran tried to negotiate a peace deal. Iran Claims Victory Tehran also claimed victory in the war that started after US-Israeli strikes on February 28 and said it forced the United States to accept its 10-point plan, including lifting sanctions and accepting its nuclear enrichment. In a statement, Iran's Supreme National Security Council said the ceasefire plan would require "continued Iranian control over the (Contd. page 2)

## TDP's philosophy is to recognize those who have worked hard: Minister Lokesh.

Amaravati, April 8 (Skyline Correspondent) : TDP National General Secretary and Education and IT Minister Nara Lokesh said that their philosophy is to recognize those who have worked hard for the Telugu Desam Party. He said that those who have stood by the party will never be forgotten. Minister Lokesh met the top-10 farmers of 'My TDP App'. An intimate meeting was held with them at the party's central office in Mangalagiri, Guntur district. On this occasion, Minister Lokesh expressed his hap-



Minister Lokesh met the top-10 farmers of 'My TDP App' and enthusiastic participation in the programs called by the party. He praised them for their hard work and said that they have come this far. He felicitated the best workers. Later, he greeted everyone cordially and inquired about their (Contd. page 2)

## CM Naidu calls for reducing operational cost of electric buses



Amaravati, April 8 : Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu on Wednesday directed officials to study various models to reduce the operational cost of electric buses. Currently, the operational cost of electric buses is about Rs 72 per km. At a review meeting on roads and highways, he asked officials to explore models to bring down costs further. Key areas of focus include expanding charging infrastructure and standardising battery systems. He also suggested that all categories of buses should gradually be switched over to air-conditioned electric buses. In addition, he said e-cycles should be promoted as a mass transport option by creating greater public awareness. Stating that public transport should be affordable, he observed that efficient and increased usage of electric buses is a key factor to achieve this goal. The Chief Minister noted that clean fuel usage reduces operational costs and benefits the public. He said that through efficient solar power management, the state has already reduced electricity procurement costs by approximately Rs 1 per unit. He called for further focus on fuel cost optimisation to deliver better services at lower costs. Naidu directed officials to expedite the construction of national and state highways to boost economic activity across the state. He emphasised that highways should be developed to effectively connect ports within the state as well as link Andhra Pradesh with other parts of the country. He said road maintenance must be robust and continuous. Out of the total 45,433 km of roads in the state, around 10,238 km require annual maintenance. He stressed that potholes should be repaired immediately to avoid inconvenience to the public. Officials were instructed to study national and international best prac-

## Minister Narayana reviews in Amaravati work, asks officials to expedite works

By Skyline Staff Reporter Amaravati, April 8: The State Government has intensified efforts to accelerate the development of Amaravati, with a renewed focus on completing key buildings, residential units and essential infrastructure. At a review meeting held on Wednesday, Minister Narayana assessed the progress of ongoing construction works and emphasised the need for timely completion. Officials and contractors



were instructed to expedite pending works to ensure that several buildings are completed and handed over to the government within the current month. A major component of the initiative is the (Contd. on pg.2)

## Agriculture has suffered immense losses during Jagan's tenure: Atchannaaidu



Amaravati, April 8 (Skyline Correspondent) : AP Agriculture Minister Kinjarapu Atchannaaidu expressed his deep anger that there has been irreparable damage to agriculture during the rule of YSRCP chief YS Jagan Mohan Reddy. He questioned why not even a single soil was removed from the canal in Godavari districts during the five years of YSRCP rule. Atchannaaidu toured West Godavari district today (Wednesday) and participated in several programs. He spoke to the farmers that during the YSRCP regime, the farmers had nothing to do and declared a crop holiday. He flagged that Jagan was a bad guy.. He had taken a loan of Rs. 12 lakh crore. He said that his government (Contd. page 2)

## If Stalin had power... my meeting would not have taken place

Tirunelveli April 8 : Tamil Nadu Assembly election campaign is in full swing. TVK chief Vijay participated in an election campaign meeting held in Tirunelveli on Wednesday. He criticized the ruling DMK. He said that if Chief Minister MK



Stalin had 'full powers', this meeting would not have been held in Tirunelveli today. "The CM used to create some kind of obstacles and prevent us from coming here. But now it is a caretaker government. He is a CM without any offi-

## Decision on utilisation of Rushikonda buildings soon, says minister



By Skyline Staff Reporter Visakhapatnam, April 8: The Cabinet Sub-Committee has prepared its report on options for using the Rushikonda buildings, said State Tourism Minister Kandula Durgesh. The Minister, who chaired the panel meeting in Amaravati on Tuesday, stated that the report would be submitted to Chief Minister N. Chandrababu later this week, and a final decision on the utilisation of the Rushikonda buildings is expected at the upcoming Cabinet meeting scheduled for next week. Durgesh, who is a (Contd. on pg.2)

## CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

## Strict action against gas agencies that commit mistakes: Minister Nadendla

that repeatedly make mistakes. He suggested that the backlogs should be completed within this week. He told the officials to be aware of the problems of the people from time to time. He also explained to them that they should also focus on the problems arising in the call center and media. He said that farmers should not face any problems during the Rabi season. He said that all the machinery should be available at the field level at crucial times. He said that the backlogs of high gas bookings that occurred in the second week of March in the backdrop of public concerns due to the developments in the West Asian war are gradually decreasing. This is a good development. Minister Nadendla Manohar instructed them to continue this and prepare a plan to complete all the backlogs this week. He asked them to keep an eye on the problems that come up in the media and make arrangements to resolve them. He said that the State Consumer Center 1965 should also focus on the problems that come to the call center. He said that special arrangements should be made to monitor the problems every day. He suggested that strict action should be taken if mistakes are made repeatedly. He said that gas should be delivered to the people at the right time. He said that strict action should be taken against the agencies that cause trouble to the

people and divert the gas cylinder that is due to them. It was made clear to the participants in this video conference that they should focus on those who make repeated mistakes and agencies that receive a lot of complaints from the public. They advised to warn the agencies first. If they still do not get in the way, strict action should be taken. They wanted to send a message to the public that action should be taken only if people are inconvenienced. They said that there is a need for joint collectors to regularly review with the agencies to ensure that the bookings received are completed on time. He said that there seems to be a lack of coordination in the delivery of gas in rural areas. He said that coordination should be done with the agencies in rural areas to overcome this. He said that there is a need to bring a special system so that the agencies can update the details every day about how many bookings are coming in daily. How many deliveries are coming in. How many of the previous backlogs are being completed. Guidelines for distribution of 5 kg gas cylinders. He said that to overcome the gas shortage at a crucial time, the central government has made alternative arrangements to provide 5 kg gas cylinders. He said that these 5 kg stones should be distributed to those in need as per central guidelines.

## India welcomes US-Iran ceasefire, hopes agreement 'will lead to lasting peace'

and expressed hope that the ceasefire would lead to lasting peace in West Asia. In a statement, the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) reiterated that dialogue and diplomacy are important for bringing an end to the conflict. The MEA noted that the conflict in West Asia has caused suffering to people and disrupted the global energy supply. The MEA stated, "We welcome the ceasefire reached and hope that it will lead to a lasting peace in West Asia. As we have continuously advocated earlier, de-escalation, dialogue and diplomacy are essential to bring an early end to the ongoing conflict." "The conflict has already caused immense suffering to people and disrupted global energy supply and trade networks. We expect that unimpeded freedom of navigation and global flow of commerce would prevail through the Strait of Hormuz," it added. The MEA's statement comes after US President Donald Trump announced a conditional two-week pause in planned attacks tied to reopening the Strait of Hormuz, a development that came as a big relief to people across the world. The decision came 90 minutes before the self-imposed 8 PM EST deadline set by Trump for Iran to reach a deal, after backchannel diplomacy. Trump, in a post on Truth Social on Tuesday (local

time), said he would "suspend" an escalation of attacks for two weeks if Iran agrees to open the key shipping route. "The reason for doing so is that we have already met and exceeded all Military objectives, and are very far along with a definitive Agreement concerning long-term peace with Iran, and peace in the Middle East," Trump wrote. He added that the United States had received "a 10-point proposal from Iran" that was "a workable basis on which to negotiate." Trump said "almost all of the various points of past contention" had been agreed, and the two-week pause would allow the agreement "to be finalised and consummated." The ceasefire is conditional. Trump said it depends on Iran agreeing to the "complete, immediate, and safe opening of the Strait of Hormuz." Iran signalled tentative acceptance, Iranian Foreign Minister Seyed Abbas Araghchi said Tehran would halt operations if attacks stop. "If attacks against Iran are halted, our Powerful Armed Forces will cease their defensive operations," he said. "For a period of two weeks, safe passage through the Strait of Hormuz will be possible via coordination with Iran's Armed Forces and with due consideration of technical limitations," he added.

## Is this what 'Mavigan' means? Jagan: Minister Lokesh

Lokesh's tweet criticizing Jagan's stance is currently going viral on social media. While the ruling party leaders and the people of AP are immersed in great joy in the wake of the legalization of Amaravati, the capital of Andhra Pradesh. YSRCP chief Jagan has once again defended his 'Mavigan' comment. He made inappropri-

ate comments about Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu in a meeting with party leaders in Tadepalli. It is in this context that AP Minister Nara Lokesh satirized Jagan's comments. Mavigan means.. 'Ma' means illusion, 'V' means destruction, 'Gun' means chaos, gun culture. Is this Jagan's plan - B? Minister Lokesh tweeted.

## Unseasonal Rains, Thunderstorms likely in Coastal AP; Heatwave Continues in Rayalaseema

the public against standing under trees during thunderstorms due to lightning risks. Farmers and livestock owners have also been advised to take necessary precautions. Heavy rainfall was recorded in several areas, with 44 mm in Pydimetta (East Godavari), 37.7 mm in D. Polavaram, 32.2 mm in

Sitanagaram, and 26 mm in Payakaraopet. Meanwhile, the heatwave continues to grip Rayalaseema. Temperatures have crossed 42°C in Palnadu and Tirupati, with severe heat reported in Nagari, Chagalamarri, and Pulivendula. Many regions across the state recorded temperatures above 41°C. The authority

warned that the extreme heat could lead to heatstroke and advised people to stay hydrated, avoid direct sun exposure, and take adequate precautions. On Wednesday, the highest temperatures recorded were: 42.2°C in Krosur (Palnadu), 42.1°C in Nagari (Chittoor), 41.9°C in Chagalamarri, 41.8°C in Pulivendula

la 41.7°C in Terannapalli (Anantapur), 41.6°C in Tovi (Kurnool) and Anumalapalle (Markapuram), 41.5°C in Cheruvukommupalem (Prakasam). Authorities reiterated that people in Rayalaseema districts must take special care to protect themselves from extreme heat and possible heat-related illnesses.

## Iran Issues 10-Point Ceasefire Conditions, Trump Says "Plan Workable"

vessels through the critical waterway during the two-week ceasefire but insisted that "Iran's Armed Forces" would retain control of the passage. **Iran Claims Victory** Tehran also claimed victory in the war that started after US-Israeli strikes on February 28 and said it forced the United States to accept its 10-point plan, including lifting sanctions and accepting its nuclear enrichment. In a statement, Iran's Supreme National Security Council said the ceasefire plan would require "continued Iranian control over the Strait of Hormuz, acceptance of enrichment, and lifting of all primary and secondary sanctions". Other key demands in the blueprint, offered through mediators in Pakistan, include US military withdrawal from the Middle East, an end to attacks on Iran and its allies, the release of frozen Iranian assets and a UN Security Council resolution making any deal binding. "It is to be noted that the adoption of such a resolution shall render all these agreements binding under international law and shall constitute a significant

diplomatic victory for the Iranian nation," the country's Supreme National Security Council said in a statement. Crucially, the plan also calls for expanded Iranian control over the Strait of Hormuz, a conduit for around a fifth of the world's oil that has been effectively blocked to maritime traffic since the start of the five-week conflict. **'Demands Workable'** In a post on Truth Social, Trump said that he has received a "workable" 10-point ceasefire proposal from Iran. He said the reason for agreeing to the proposal is that the US has already met and exceeded all military objectives and is very far along with a "definitive agreement concerning Longterm PEACE with Iran, and PEACE in the Middle East." "Based on conversations with Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and Field Marshal Asim Munir, of Pakistan, and wherein they requested that I hold off the destructive force being sent tonight to Iran,

and subject to the Islamic Republic of Iran agreeing to the COMPLETE, IMMEDIATE, and SAFE OPENING of the Strait of Hormuz, I agree to suspend the bombing and attack of Iran for a period of two weeks. This will be a double-sided CEASE-FIRE!" Trump said. "The reason for doing so is that we have already met and exceeded all Military objectives, and are very far along with a definitive Agreement concerning Longterm PEACE with Iran, and PEACE in the Middle East. We received a 10-point proposal from Iran, and believe it is a workable basis on which to negotiate," he added. Trump said that Iran has agreed to almost all the various points of past contention, and this extension will allow time for a permanent agreement to be finalised. "Almost all of the various points of past contention have been agreed to between the United States and Iran, but a two-week period will allow the

Agreement to be finalised and consummated. On behalf of the United States of America, as President, and also representing the Countries of the Middle East, it is an Honor to have this long-term problem close to resolution," he said. Iran's 10-Point Conditions Iran's 10-point conditions that the US has accepted as "workable" include: 1. Non-aggression 2. Continuation of Iran's control over the Strait of Hormuz 3. Acceptance of enrichment 4. Lifting all primary sanctions 5. Lifting all secondary sanctions 6. Termination of all UN Security Council resolutions 7. Termination of all IAEA Board of Governors resolutions 8. Payment of compensation to Iran 9. Withdrawal of US combat forces from the region 10. Cessation of war on all fronts, including against the heroic Islamic Resistance of Lebanon.

## TDP's philosophy is to recognize those who have worked hard: Minister Lokesh.

On this occasion, Minister Lokesh expressed his happiness over the effective use of 'My TDP App' and enthusiastic participation in the programs called by the party. He praised them for their hard work and said that they have

come this far. He felicitated the best workers. Later, he greeted everyone cordially and inquired about their hardships. Minister Lokesh assured them to work harder for the party and that TDP will always stand by them.

## Agriculture has suffered immense losses during Jagan's tenure: Atchannaidu

was charging interest on the loans taken by the bad guy Jagan. He made it clear that the agricultural canals would be cleaned in the coming days. He was angry that Jagan had submerged the Polavaram during the YSRCP regime. He flagged that they were

telling blatant lies with a corrupt paper and a corrupt TV. If Jagan and Koku have the courage, they should come and talk about how much they spent on agriculture in the last five years, Atchannaidu challenged.

## If Stalin had power... my meeting would not have taken place

"The CM used to create some kind of obstacles and prevent us from coming here. But now it is a caretaker government. He is a CM without any officials," said Vijay. He described the DMK alliance as a 'cash-box alliance'. He alleged that there is no unity among the partner parties and that they do not even vote for each other. He also criticized the Congress party. He alleged that the DMK is giving crores of rupees to the Tamil Nadu Congress. However, he said that the real Congress is on the side of

TVK. Explaining the importance of this election, he said that for other parties, these may be just elections, but for TVK, these elections are an emotion. Meanwhile, the main contest in Tamil Nadu is between the DMK-led Secular Progressive Alliance and the AIADMK-led NDA alliance, with Vijay contesting the elections for the first time with TVK, creating a three-way contest. The Tamil Nadu Assembly elections will be held on the 23rd of this month. The results will be announced on May 4.

## CM Naidu calls for reducing operational cost of electric buses

international best practices in road maintenance and ensure adequate funding for Roads and Buildings works. The Chief Minister highlighted the importance of considering geographical and climatic conditions in road construction and maintenance. In regions with black cotton soil, particularly in the Godavari districts, he suggested adopting hybrid models such as BT or white-topping roads. For the 570 km of canal-side roads that are frequently damaged, innovative construction materials should be explored in collaboration with universities. Keeping in view the upcoming Godavari Pushkarams, Naidu directed that road repairs be undertaken in Godavari, Krishna, and Guntur districts. In the Godavari region alone, 531 km of roads will be developed for Rs 400 crore using SASCI funds. He also instructed officials to write to the Central Government seeking special funds for Pushkarams on the lines of the Kumbh Mela. The Chief Minister

stressed the need for connecting all national highways to major ports, as ports are key centres of economic activity. Drawing parallels with Gujarat's port connectivity model, he said Andhra Pradesh holds strategic importance on the eastern coast. He called for the development of East-West corridors to reduce logistics costs significantly. With nearly 73 per cent of cargo currently transported by road, reducing road logistics costs is essential. He emphasised connecting ports such as Mulapeta, Visakhapatnam, Gangavaram, Kakinada, Machilipatnam, Ramayapatnam, and Krishnapatnam with highway networks, including alternate routes linking neighbouring states. Ministers B. C. Janardhan Reddy, Mandipalli Ramprasad Reddy, Transport Department Special Chief Secretary Krishna Babu, APSRTC Managing Director Bala Subrahmanyam, and officials from the National Highways Authority participated.

## Minister Narayana reviews in Amaravati work, asks officials to expedite works

A major component of the initiative is the construction of 4,026 residential units intended for public representatives, officials and government employees. Discussions during the meeting also centred on the provision of basic infrastructure at sites nearing completion, including roads, drainage systems, water supply

and electricity. The Minister directed concerned agencies to take immediate steps to ensure that these facilities are delivered without delay. The meeting was attended by AGICL Managing Director Srinivas, along with engineers and representatives of various contracting firms.

## Decision on utilisation of Rushikonda buildings soon, says minister

The Minister, who chaired the panel meeting in Amaravati on Tuesday, stated that the report would be submitted to Chief Minister N. Chandrababu later this week, and a final decision on the utilisation of the Rushikonda buildings is expected at the upcoming Cabinet meeting

scheduled for next week. Durgesh, who is a member of the sub-committee, said the meeting discussed various options, including opening the buildings to the public as a source of income for the government. Other members, Payyavula Keshav and Dola Sri

Bala Veeranjanya Swamy (both Ministers), took part in the meeting virtually. He further said that hospitality groups like Taj Hotels, Atmosphere Core, the Leela Palaces Hotels and Resorts, and Fema Hotels were keen on managing the buildings.

## Narayana Health Marks 10,000+ Surgeries Milestone, Strengthening Leadership in Advanced Orthopedic & Spine Care

*With over 1,000 robotic joint replacements, the hospital continues to expand access to advanced, patient-centric treatment for complex orthopaedic and spine conditions*

Anantapur, April 8, 2026: Reinforcing its leadership in delivering advanced, technology-enabled care, Narayana Health has achieved a significant milestone of over 10,000 successful orthopaedic and spine surgeries, including more than 1,000 robotic joint replacements. This milestone reflects the network's continued focus on clinical excellence, innovation, and improving patient outcomes. As part of this achievement, the hospital recently managed two complex cases: advanced knee arthritis and a rare multi-level spine tumour with highly successful outcomes. Commenting on the milestone, Dr. Abhinandan S. Punit, Senior Consultant, Clinical Lead – Arthroplasty Narayana Health, said, "At Narayana Health, our endeavour has always been to make high-quality, advanced healthcare accessible to a larger population. This milestone is a testament to our continued investment in cutting-edge technologies such as robotic-assisted surgery and our focus on building strong multidisciplinary teams. These capabilities not only enhance surgical precision but also enable faster recovery and better long-term outcomes for patients, even in highly complex cases." In one of the recent cases, Mr. A P Chandrappa (69 years) presented with severe knee pain for over six months, significantly impacting his mobility and quality of life. Upon evaluation, he was diagnosed with advanced osteoarthritis of the left knee. The orthopaedic team, led by Dr. Abhinandan S Punit, performed a successful total knee replacement. The patient was mobilized from the first post-operative day and showed steady recovery and was discharged in stable condition with improved mobility. In another complex case, Mr. Mohanraj (53 years) had been experiencing chronic back pain for over two years with weakness of both lower limbs, which had worsened in recent months, affecting his ability to walk. Detailed investigations revealed a rare spinal tumour in paraspinous locations known as epithelioid haemangioma (on minimally invasive biopsy) involving multiple spinal levels (L2-L5). The spine surgery team, led by Dr. Shashidhar B K, along with Tumor surgeons Dr. Suman Byregowda and Dr. Anjana Reddy,



performed a highly advanced surgical procedure involving tumour excision and multi-level spinal stabilization from D11 to S1 with innovative triple rod pillar technique under the guidance of latest O arm guided neuro navigation and multimodal advanced neuromonitoring. The advanced technologies and hugely trained expert team ensure enhanced precision and safety, with patient regaining full power in lower limbs. Preoperatively patient underwent Digital subtraction angiography for reduction in Tumor blood supply which made the surgery easy. "Robotic-assisted technology allows us to operate with a level of precision that was previously very difficult to achieve in complex spine surgeries. It enables accurate implant placement, better visualization of critical structures, and minimizes the risk to surrounding tissues. In cases like this, it not only enhances surgical safety but also plays a crucial role in improving patient outcomes and recovery," said Dr. Shashidhar BK. Post-surgery, the patient regained full power in lower limbs and walked home comfortably in a highly intricate and rare spinal condition. With a continued focus on early diagnosis, clinical innovation, and integrated care delivery, Narayana Health is strengthening its position as a center of excellence in orthopaedic and spine care. The milestone underscores the institution's commitment to making advanced surgical solutions for complex spine and orthopaedic conditions more accessible while consistently delivering high standards of patient care across its network.

## Traditional Kumbhotsavam performed with devotion



**Srisailem: Apr. 8**

A traditional Kumbhotsavam was conducted on Tuesday, for Goddess Bhramaramba Devi, invoking blessings for the welfare of the world. As per long-standing custom, the festival is observed annually during the Chaitra month on the first Tuesday or Friday following the full moon. The ritual primarily involves offering "sattvic bali" (pure offerings) to the deity, symbolizing peace and prosperity. In a press release the temple authorities have stated that as part of the ceremony, large quantities of pumpkins, coconuts, lemons, and cooked rice were offered to the Goddess. This year, the offerings included over 25,000 pumpkins, more than 5,000 coconuts, and nearly

one lakh lemons, along with heaps of cooked rice presented as sacred "kumbham." Turmeric and vermilion were also offered in abundance as part of a ritual known as the "Shanti process." The local traders' association contributed significantly by donating these items for the offerings. Earlier in the day, temple priests performed a series of rituals including Navavarana Puja, Trishati, Khadgamala, and Ashtottara Kumkuma Puja in a secluded manner, strictly adhering to tradition. Special rangoli known as "Rajaka Rangavalli" was drawn near the Sri Chakra, followed by elaborate puja rituals. Subsequently, the first phase of sattvic offerings was made to the Goddess,

and special prayers were also offered to Mahishasuramardini (Kotamma) at the Harihara Raya Gopuram entrance. In the evening, following Pradosha Kala rituals for Lord Mallikarjuna Swamy, Annabhishekam have been performed. Later, cooked rice were ceremoniously placed in heaps at the Simha Mandapam facing the Goddess temple. The main highlight of the festival began with a male devotee in female attire offering Kumbha Harati to the Goddess, followed by the second phase of sattvic offerings. The celebrations conclude with special puja and Maha Naivedyam comprising traditional food offerings. Additionally, special prayers were also conducted in the morning for the village deity Ankallamma as part of the festivities.

## Sailajanath seeks Jagan's leadership to achieve 'Gram Swaraj'



**Anantapur: Apr 8**

Former minister Sake Sailajanath on Sunday stated that strong leadership is essential to achieve village self-governance and asserted that YS Jagan Mohan Reddy is best suited to lead that effort. He was speaking at a felicitation programme organised for retired YSRCP sarpanches in the Singanamala constituency. The event was held at the constituency party office in Bukkarayasamudram mandal under the leadership of Panchayat Raj president Bhaskar Reddy. Addressing the gathering, Sailajanath honoured the sarpanches with shawls and bouquets, praising their contributions to rural development and their dedicated service to the public. He said that

sarpanches played a crucial role in strengthening grassroots governance and addressing local issues effectively. Recalling the previous YSRCP government, he said governance under Jagan Mohan Reddy was aligned with the vision of "Gram Swaraj." He criticised the current coalition government, alleging that people are facing increased difficulties after the change in administration. Sailajanath urged party workers and supporters to strive for the return of Jagan Mohan Reddy as Chief Minister to restore village self-governance. YSRCP State Panchayat Raj wing president Vennapusa Ravindra Reddy also attended the event and appreciated the efforts of sarpanches in resolving public issues at the grassroots level.

## 1st 'Bartan Bank' launched to promote plastic-free villages



**Tirupati: Apr 7**

Gudibanda: Sri Sathya Sai District Collector A Shyam Prasad inaugurated the district's first "Bartan Bank" in Karikera village of Gudibanda mandal on Tuesday, aiming to promote a plastic-free environment. The initiative, which provides steel utensils for community use, is designed to reduce dependence on single-use plastics during social and public events.

Addressing a gathering after the inauguration, the Collector praised the unity and efforts of the women in Karikera village, calling them a model for the district. He noted that many families in the village are adopting multiple livelihood options and progressing economically. Emphasizing the importance of sustainability, he urged residents to make effective use of the Bartan Bank facility and contribute to transforming the village into a plastic-free zone.

Members of local self-help groups attended the event in uniform, showcasing their collective strength and coordination. Officials including DRDA Project Director Narasayya, DPO Samatha, ZP Additional CEO Venkatasubbayya, along with district and mandal-level officers and local leaders, were present at the programme.

## PVKK IT student Lakshmi wins gold medal



**Anantapur: Apr 8**

PVKK Institute of Technology has once again demonstrated its academic prowess. B Rajya Lakshmi (213N1A3804), a student from the college's Department of Computer Science and Design, displayed exceptional talent by winning a gold medal from Jawaharlal Nehru Technological University, Anantapur (JNTUA), for the 2024-25 academic year. On this momentous occasion, it was a matter of immense pride for the college when she received the gold medal at the hands of the Governor, Abdul Nazeer. This remarkable achievement by Rajya Lakshmi stands as a testament to PVKK IT's high educational standards, effective teaching methodologies, and unwavering dedication to student development. Speaking on this occasion, College Chairman Dr Palle Kishore remarked, "It gives us immense joy to see our students demonstrating their talent not only at the state level but also at the national level. The gold medal won by Rajya Lakshmi brings distinct honor to our institution and has elevated our academic standards to a prestigious position within the state."

## Medicover Hosp organises World Health Day prog



**Tirupati: Apr 7**

Kurnool: Medicover Hospitals Kurnool conducted a special health awareness programme on World Health Day to promote healthy living, disease prevention, and timely treatment. The event featured talks by Nephrologist Dr Siddharth Herur, Gastroenterologist Dr P Abdul Samad, General Surgeon Dr Bhargav Vyas, and Emergency Medicine Specialist Dr T V Sunil Yadav. The doctors emphasized that many diseases can be prevented by maintaining a balanced diet, regular exercise, ade-

quate sleep, and prioritizing mental health. They also highlighted the importance of kidney, digestive, and emergency medical services, urging people to seek timely medical attention. Dr Maheswar Reddy, Head of Medicover Hospitals Kurnool, said, "Health is wealth, and it's crucial to focus on prevention rather than treatment. Our goal is to raise awareness about health precautions through such programs. Medicover Hospitals Kurnool is committed to providing continuous healthcare services to the community."

## Training for trainee excise SIs on toddy licensing held



**Kurnool: Apr 8**

Kurnool District Prohibition & Excise Officer M Sudheer Babu, imparted training on today administration procedures to the Trainee Excise Sub-Inspectors allocated to the Kurnool district. The training session was held at the Eetha Vanam (today palm grove) in Subbarayanapalle, Maddikera Mandal. As part of this programme, the trainees were instructed on various aspects, including the different categories of today licenses; the allocation of today palm trees to licensees; the methodology for extracting today from the trees and the precautions to be observed during the

process. Measures required for the conservation of the palm grove the protocols to be followed when issuing new licenses and the procedures and precautions involved in the renewal of toddy licenses. Furthermore, as a practical component of the training, today licensees provided a hands-on demonstration to the trainees on the technique of tapping today from the palm trees. The training session was attended by AES Ramakrishna Reddy CIs Chandrahahas, Rajendra Prasad, and Swarnalatha Sub-Inspectors Rehana and Rajesh and the seven Trainee Excise Sub-Inspectors allocated to the district.

## Fire breaks out at Nallajerla Health Centre in East Godavari, no casualties

A fire broke out on Tuesday at the Primary Health Centre (Government Hospital) in Nallajerla after flames suddenly erupted in the facility's medicine storeroom. Hospital staff quickly raised the alarm, and preliminary reports suggest the blaze was caused by an electrical short circuit. Initial efforts to control the fire using extinguishers proved



unsuccessful as the situation worsened when medicine bottles inside the room began exploding. Fire service personnel rushed to the scene and worked extensively to contain the blaze. The incident led to a complete power outage at the hospital. Officials confirmed that medicines worth approximately Rs 15 lakh, including recently supplied essential stock amid an ongoing

shortage, were destroyed. Fortunately, no casualties were reported, as only a few patients were present at the time. Locals noted that the outcome could have been far more serious had the hospital been crowded. Authorities have launched an investigation into the incident and stated that steps will be taken to prevent such occurrences in the future.

## YS Jagan reiterates MAVIGUN capital Proposal, announces plans for padayatra

**Vijayawada, Apr 8**

Y. S. Jagan Mohan Reddy, chief of the YSR Congress Party, on Wednesday defended his party's approach to resolving Andhra Pradesh's capital issue, while addressing party cadre from the Tadepalligudem constituency. Reddy said that upon assuming office, his government had proposed a decentralised capital model, with Visakhapatnam as the executive capital, Kurnool as the judicial capital, and Amaravati as the legislative capital. As an alternative, he reiterated the "Plan B" proposal — the MAVIGUN corridor — a 110-kilometre stretch linking Machilipatnam, Vijayawada, and Guntur. According to Reddy, developing Amaravati would impose a financial burden of ₹2 lakh crore on the state, whereas investing a fraction of that amount in the MAVIGUN corridor could deliver world-class infrastructure. The former Chief Minister also



announced plans to undertake a padayatra next year, during which he intends to engage directly with the public to understand their concerns. He warned that party cadre would intensify their activities during the march and levelled further criticism at the government, alleging that projects such as the Rayalaseema Lift Irrigation Project had been stalled. Reddy added that despite nearly half of its five-year term having passed, the current administration had yet to provide a clear resolution on the state capital issue.

## Mixed Weather Across Telugu States, here is the forecast for next three days



**Tirupati: Apr 8**

The Telugu states of Andhra Pradesh and Telangana are currently experiencing contrasting weather patterns, with intense daytime heat followed by evening rainfall in several regions. While temperatures in some areas have crossed 40°C, others are witnessing spells of rain. Regional Politics Analysis The India Meteorological Department (IMD) has issued an update indicating that light to moderate rainfall, accompanied by thunderstorms, lightning, and gusty winds, is likely across parts of both states over the coming days. According to the Amaravati South Coastal Andhra Meteorological Centre, a north-south trough has

developed at an altitude of around 0.9 km above mean sea level. This system extends from a surface circulation over Chhattisgarh, passing through Telangana, Rayalaseema, and Interior Tamil Nadu, and reaching up to the Gulf of Mannar. North Coastal Andhra Pradesh and Yanam are expected to receive light to moderate rain or thundershowers at isolated places on Wednesday, with thunderstorms, lightning, and gusty winds of 40-50 kmph. Similar conditions are forecast for Thursday and Friday, though wind speeds may reduce to 30-40 kmph. South Coastal Andhra Pradesh is likely to witness light to moderate rain

or thundershowers at a few places on Wednesday and Thursday, accompanied by thunderstorms and lightning, with winds reaching 30-40 kmph. On Friday, similar rainfall activity is expected, though wind intensity may ease slightly. In Rayalaseema, light to moderate rain or thundershowers are forecast at isolated locations on Wednesday, along with thunderstorms, lightning, and gusty winds of 40-50 kmph. For Thursday and Friday, similar conditions are expected, with wind speeds ranging between 30-40 kmph. Officials have advised residents to remain cautious, particularly during thunderstorms and strong winds.

## MP Ambica distributes CMRF cheques to beneficiaries



The Member of Parliament for Anantapur, Ambica Lakshminarayana, on Tuesday distributed cheques from the Chief Minister's Relief Fund to beneficiaries at the MP Camp Office. The cheques amounting to Rs. 2,45,859 were handed over to Sivanna from Anantapur, and Rs. 1,01,208 to Sri B Nagappa from the Bukkarayasamudram region who are suffering from health ail-

ments. Upon learning of the plight of these individuals—who had approached him while facing financial difficulties regarding medical treatment for their illnesses—MP Ambica Lakshminarayana took proactive measures to ensure they received government assistance, thereby facilitating the sanctioning of funds under the CMRF scheme.

## SKYLINE

Thursday 9.4.2026

## Edge of escalation

When a downed fighter pilot is recovered from hostile terrain, it is tempting to see only a story of military competence and individual survival. Yet the recent rescue of a US airman inside Iran reveals something far more consequential: how modern conflict is increasingly defined by rapid escalation triggered by isolated tactical events. At the operational level, the mission reflects the formidable reach of the United States military. Combat search and rescue is among the most complex undertakings in warfare, requiring precise coordination between air assets, intelligence networks, and ground survival protocols. The reported involvement of the CIA ~ including real-time tracking and deception tactics ~ suggests a fusion of covert and overt capabilities rarely acknowledged so openly. That such an operation could be executed inside adversary territory, and within a narrow time window, underscores how far surveillance and rapid-response doctrines have evolved. But this tactical success masks a deeper instability.

The very act of inserting aircraft and personnel into Iranian airspace transforms a recovery mission into a potential flashpoint for interstate confrontation. The reported engagement with elements of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps, alongside the downing of an American drone, indicates that the line between rescue and retaliation is becoming increasingly blurred. What begins as a humanitarian imperative ~ to retrieve a stranded serviceman ~ can quickly resemble an incursion. This is where the role of political signalling becomes critical.

President Donald Trump's characterisation of the mission as one of the most daring in military history is not merely descriptive; it is declaratory. It frames the operation as a demonstration of resolve, reinforcing deterrence narratives at a time of heightened regional tension. Yet such rhetoric also raises expectations of continued assertiveness, narrowing the diplomatic space for de-escalation. Equally telling is Iran's response. By attributing the aircraft's downing to its air defence systems and highlighting local participation ~ whether by formal units or armed tribes ~ it projects a narrative of distributed resistance.

This decentralisation complicates accountability. If non-state or semi-autonomous actors engage US forces, the threshold for direct retaliation becomes ambiguous, increasing the risk of miscalculation. What emerges, then, is a pattern characteristic of contemporary conflict zones: micro-events with macro consequences. A single aircraft loss triggers surveillance surges, covert operations, cross-border incursions, and information warfare ~ all within hours. The speed compresses decision-making cycles, leaving little room for restraint. This compression of time and space also shifts risk downward, placing extraordinary pressure on field commanders whose split-second decisions can carry strategic consequences far beyond the immediate battlefield.

The rescued airman's survival will rightly be celebrated within military circles. But strategically, the episode illustrates a more troubling reality. In an environment where advanced militaries operate in close proximity, even routine contingencies ~ like airman recovery ~ carry the latent potential to spiral into wider confrontation. Success, in this context, is not just measured by extraction. It is measured by what does not happen next.

## PM Mudra has transformed India's credit architecture

The structural transformation of the Indian economy over the past decade has been anchored by a fundamental shift in the credit architecture, moving away from a historically top-heavy banking model toward a decentralized, inclusion-driven framework. At the vanguard of this revolution is the Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojana (PMMY), launched in 2015 with the strategic mission of "funding the unfunded". For an economy where micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) form the backbone ~ employing over 25 crore people and contributing nearly 30 per cent of GDP ~ the availability of formal, collateral-free credit has transitioned from a policy aspiration to a vital economic reality.

As of late March 2026, the PMMY has facilitated the flow of Rs 39.18 lakh crore across 57 crore loan accounts, marking one of the most ambitious microfinance interventions in global history. The PMMY's design recognized that the "bottom of the pyramid" was historically credit-starved not due to a lack of entrepreneurial energy, but due to institutional rigidities and the absence of collateral. By removing the requirement for security-free credit and providing refinancing support through MUDRA, the government effectively lowered the barrier to entry for millions of micro-entrepreneurs.

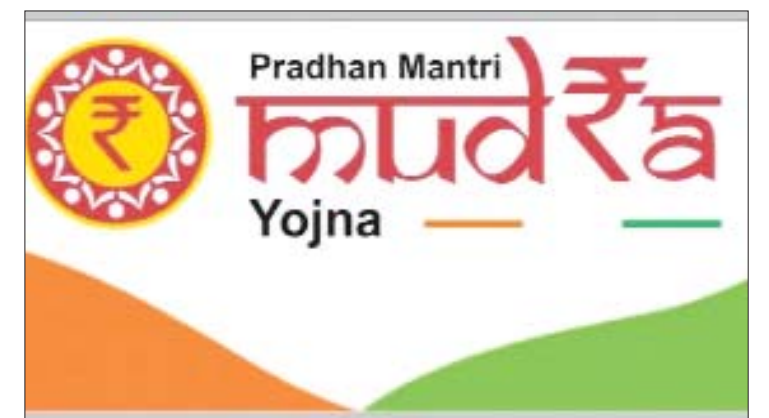
Analysis of disbursement trends reveals a significant "graduation effect" over the scheme's decadal journey. In its nascent years, the Shishu category (up to Rs 50,000) dominated the portfolio. However, data from 2025 indicates a robust upward shift. The share of Kishor loans (Rs 50,000 to Rs 5 lakh) grew from 5.9 per cent in FY16 to 44.7 per cent in FY25. This trend indicates that micro-units are not merely surviving but are successfully scaling their operations, requiring larger capital infusions to sustain growth. The scheme has demonstrated remarkable policy dynamism. In the Union Budget 2024-25, the loan limit was doubled to Rs 20 lakh with the introduction of the "Tarun Plus" category for borrowers with strong repayment records.

This strategic move rewards credit discipline and addresses the "missing middle" problem, where firms often struggle to transition from small to medium entities due to a lack of incremental capital. One of the most profound impacts of the PMMY has been the restructuring of India's social credit fabric. According to SBI Research, the Social Fabric Index ~ representing the participation of marginalized groups in formal banking ~ jumped 3.2 times in the five-year period ended FY22. Currently, over 50 per cent of Mudra accounts are held by

Scheduled Caste (SC), Scheduled Tribe (ST), and Other Backward Class (OBC) entrepreneurs.

Women have emerged as the most significant beneficiaries, accounting for 68 per cent of all loan accounts. By providing collateral-free loans to women ~ who often lack title to property ~ the scheme has bypassed persistent barriers to gender parity. Between FY16 and FY25, the per-woman disbursement amount grew at a CAGR of 13 per cent, while incremental deposits by women grew at 14 per cent. This dual growth in borrowing and saving indicates a deepening of financial literacy and the creation of household-level safety nets. A primary criticism of economic growth has often been its "jobless" nature. PMMY has directly addressed this by funding the labour-intensive micro-sector.

A sample survey by the Ministry of Labour and Employment established that the PMMY helped generate 1.12 crore net additional jobs in just its first three years. The survey highlighted that 51 lakh beneficiaries were self-employed business owners, while 60 lakh were hired workers, demonstrating a shift from job seekers to job providers. Furthermore, PMMY has acted as a catalyst for economic formalization. The Udyam Registration Portal now boasts 5.93 crore registered MSMEs, with the vast major-



ity being micro-enterprises. This digital integration allows units to access Priority Sector Lending and participate in government procurement.

The impact is visible in banking data: MSME credit surged from Rs 8.51 lakh crore in FY14 to Rs 27.25 lakh crore in FY24. Concerns regarding asset quality in collateral-free lending have been mitigated by improved monitoring. As of FY24, the Mudra loan NPA rate for public sector banks dropped to 3.4 per cent, while private sector banks maintained a low of 0.95 per cent. The scheme is now expanding into high-potential sectors like tourism. The introduction of Mudra loans for homestays in the 2025-26 Budget, integrated with the 'Pradhan Mantri Janatiya Unnat Gram Abhiyan,' aims to develop 1,000 tribal homes-

tays. This initiative enables local families to transform their homes into income-generating assets, driving employment-led growth in rural regions.

The Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojana has transcended its identity as a credit scheme to become apilla of India's economic transformation. By systematically addressing the structural credit gap, it has empowered 57 crore entrepreneurs and shifted the labour narrative toward self-reliance. As India seeks to become the world's third-largest economy, sustaining this grassroots momentum will be indispensable. By "funding the unfunded," the scheme ensures that the promise of the Indian economy is the privilege of the many, not the few.

## Why the Iran war worries Taiwan

The United States and Israeli strikes on Iran have become increasingly concerning for the world due to the risks of further escalation and the impact on energy markets. In Taiwan, however, the focus has shifted in a different direction. Rather than treating the war as geographically distant, Taiwanese political leaders and analysts are viewing it as a real-time indicator of how the United States operates under strategic pressure. The key question is less about whether the United States would act if a conflict with China were to break out in the Indo-Pacific region, and more about how it would manage competing pressures if multiple crises unfolded at once.

There is growing recognition in Taiwan that US resources are not unlimited. The Middle East war has caused energy prices to fluctuate and stoked fears of rising inflation in the United States, demonstrating the domestic costs of military operations. US President Donald Trump's approval ratings have also taken a hit, with some in his own party now questioning his rationale for going to war. Some reports have indicated US supplies of interceptor missiles are running low. The US military has, for example, had to move some THAAD missile interceptors from South Korea to the Middle East. The US has also struggled to

defend against Iran's use of asymmetrical fighting tactics. This has direct implications for the deterrence Washington has long maintained in the Indo-Pacific.

This deterrence depends not only on US war-fighting capability, but on the expectation this capability will remain intact under strain. Conflicts elsewhere may not weaken the US resolve to intervene if China were to invade or pressure Taiwan in some fashion. But they can drain American resources and influence where these items are prioritised. The US has also framed its strikes on Iran as a "preventive" action aimed at mitigating a future threat rather than responding to an imminent attack. This raises broader questions about the changing threshold for the use of force in the Indo-Pacific.

For Taiwan, this is not an abstract notion. If the threshold for military action is lowered from imminent threat to potential risk, the strategic environment becomes less predictable in the Indo-Pacific. This broadens the range of circumstances under which force by the United States may be justified. The speed with which the Trump administration has acted in Iran has also increased uncertainty for regional partners like Japan and South Korea in assessing when and how the United States would act against China. The US' NATO partners weren't told about the Iran



strikes before they happened.

This could make Japan and South Korea similarly worried about a lack of communication on potential US actions over Taiwan. The Iran war has also raised broader questions about how the United States adapts as crises evolve. Much of the discussion around Taiwan has traditionally centred on the possibility of a large-scale Chinese invasion. However, recent developments suggest escalation may be less linear than this. Rather than following a single, predictable pathway, conflicts can develop through a sequence of smaller decisions, the ambiguity over signals sent by an adversary, or rapidly changing political conditions.

This has contributed to a shift in strategic discussion in Taiwan. Recent defence policy debates and security forums have increasingly examined scenarios in which China

pressured Taiwan with grey-zone tactics, blockades and incremental escalatory moves, rather than focusing solely on full-scale invasion. As a result, attention is shifting to how such pressure might build over time ~ through cyber operations, maritime restrictions or limited military actions ~ and possibly spiral out of control. The current crisis in the Strait of Hormuz has been watched closely in Taiwan as an example of how disruption of a strategic chokepoint can quickly impact the world.

This raises questions about whether similar dynamics could emerge in the Taiwan Strait, and how prepared external actors ~ including the US ~ would be to respond. The US has also been unable to prevent the Iran war from spilling over into the Persian Gulf states. This raises questions about whether a war over Taiwan could

be contained or produce wider regional effects. For Taiwan, the most immediate challenge comes from how China interprets US actions in Iran. If Beijing concludes that diminishing military resources or domestic pressures would limit the US' ability to wage a sustained conflict in the Indo-Pacific, it may reassess the risks of applying coercive pressure on Taiwan. This does not imply immediate conflict is likely over Taiwan. However, it increases the likelihood that China would try to pressure or coerce Taiwan just below the threshold of full-scale war. History suggests that escalation is often shaped by how situations are interpreted by adversaries, rather than by clear shifts in power. When states believe conditions are more favourable than they actually are, the risk of misjudgement increases. For Taiwan, the challenge is therefore not only to assess developments in the Middle East, but to ensure that its own position is not misunderstood. This involves: maintaining credible defensive capabilities reinforcing internal cohesion against possible threats signalling clearly that any attempt at coercion would face robust resistance. Deterrence depends not only on what a country can do, but what others believe it will do ~ and whether those beliefs discourage risk-taking.

## Corporate (mis) governance

Resignation of the non-executive, independent Chairman of HDFC Bank Ltd. sent its share prices in a tailspin ~ declining by 5 per cent immediately, and reaching a sixteen year low within a fortnight. Apparently, the former Chairman spooked markets by his ultra-brief resignation letter wherein he cryptically observed: "Certain happenings and practices within the bank that I have observed over last two years, are not in congruence with my personal Values and Ethics. This is the basis of my aforementioned decision (resignation)." No amount of clarifications from HDFC Bank itself, or even RBI, could stem the downward price spiral of HDFC shares, because in the absence of details, investors feared the worst. The resigning Chairman ~ an IAS officer in his previous avatar, who was in his present office for more than five years ~ pointedly declined to elucidate his concerns. Corporate grapevine has attributed his resignation to an ego clash with the Managing Director, alleging disagreements on a host of issues. Investors, who have lost heavily, are at a loss to understand, firstly, as to why the Chairman resigned abruptly, without specifying any reason, and secondly, why the Board of Directors had not even discussed the contentious issues hinted at in the Chairman's resignation letter.

Independent Directors (IDs), the class of directors to which the former Chairman belonged, have no material relationship with the company, its executives, or its daily operations, hence IDs are expected to ensure unbiased decision-making, mitigate conflicts of interest, and impartially monitor manage-

ment and financial reporting. One can say that IDs are appointed to provide transparency, accountability, ethical conduct, and boost investor confidence by their objectivity and oversight ~ tasks in which the ex-Chairman pointedly failed. The Companies' Act 2013, lays down that one-third of directors of every listed company should be Independent Directors; additionally, through Listing Obligation and Disclosure Requirements (LODR), SEBI has mandated that one-half of directors should be IDs in case the MD also functions as the Chairman, or is related to any of the promoters. It was hoped that the presence of a sizable number of IDs on the Board of Directors would ensure good corporate governance. However, this seldom happens; contrary to what is public knowledge now, no disagreements were noted in the minutes of Board meetings of HDFC Bank; thus, it would appear that minutes of board meetings were not faithfully recorded ~ the first requirement for good corporate governance.

Thus, many of the present crop of IDs, are not aware of their rights and responsibilities, and sad to say, most of such IDs blindly toe the management line ~ provided the management panders to their massive egos ~ contributing little to the improvement of corporate governance. Another category of IDs are famous and well-recognised faces, who are taken on board for their brand value, but who do not have the time and inclination to involve themselves with the affairs of the companies they are associated with. No wonder, with such kinds of independent directors, the purpose of having IDs on company boards is



often lost. As of today, the aggregate market capitalisation of 593 top Indian companies stands at a massive Rs.357 lakh crore, with Reliance Industries Limited heading the list at Rs.19 lakh crore. Controlling such humongous capital, sometimes dishonest managers are tempted to line their pockets at company expense. Since company funds belong to shareholders, elaborate rules have been framed to ensure good corporate governance ~ so that investors' money remains secure. However, the enforcement of such rules leaves much to be desired; till the scam is on a small scale, like booking personal expenses to company accounts, or routing CSR funds to NGOs of directors' relatives, no one ever complains. Larger scams lead to resignations, typically 'on health grounds' or 'for better opportunities,' but seldom does a director's misfeasance come out in the open. The IL & FS scandal of 2018, amply demonstrated what damage a corrupt management may cause, even to unrelated entities, and what happens when principles of corporate governance are not observed. To recapitulate:

Infrastructure Leasing & Financial Services Ltd (IL&FS), promoted by Central Bank of India, HDFC Ltd, and the Unit Trust of India, was a systemically significant Core Investment Company, which provided loans and advances for infrastructure development.

Also, 46 IAS officers, serving and retired, sat on the boards of various IL&FS group companies. The reason for the inability of IL & FS to repay its debt was simple ~ it had taken short-term loans for long-term projects. The failure of the talented boards of IL & FS and its subsidiaries to detect this patent anomaly and correct its business model defies understanding. What followed was even more ignominious; manipulation of financial statements by IL & FS management to show non-existent profits and payment of outrageously high remuneration to managerial personnel. Sadly, account books of IL & FS consistently passed muster by RBI, and some renowned auditors. Also, till the last IL & FS had top credit ratings by all agencies ~ pointing to deft 'management' by the earlier IL & FS Board. Incidentally, the new

management has filed a suit for recovery of excess remuneration of Rs.187 crore, from the old management. The total outstanding debt of IL & FS and its subsidiaries was Rs.99,000 crore, after eight years the new management has set a target for recovery of Rs.61,000 crores ~ a significant loss for the public. The Justice Sapre Committee, appointed by the Supreme Court, to probe allegations made by Hindenburg Research against the Adani Group, noted:

\* There was a need to consider if an abundance of disclosures, mandated by SEBI, overwhelms investors with data, causing them to miss essential information for decision-making.

\* SEBI should prioritize the quality and relevance of information provided rather than just the volume.

\* SEBI could better achieve its regulatory goal by more focused enforcement, implying that SEBI should concentrate its efforts on "timely and sharp action in a few large and complex cases" rather than numerous smaller ones. To avoid repetition of IL & FS, and HDFC episodes, good corporate governance should be the topmost priority for SEBI. For this purpose, the institution of independent directors needs strengthening; firstly, by having domain experts as IDs, and secondly, by thoroughly familiarising prospective IDs with the nuances of corporate functioning. Also, the performance of IDs should be closely monitored, and their concerns should be noted seriously by SEBI. Finally, it is the quality of leadership of a company (true for a country also), that determines its worth.

## Nepal PM Balendra Shah holds group discussions with foreign ambassadors stationed in Kathmandu

Kathmandu [Nepal], April 8 (ANI): Nepal's newly sworn-in Prime Minister Balendra Shah on Wednesday afternoon held group discussions with foreign ambassadors stationed in Kathmandu. It is the first time that ambassadors from multiple countries have met the newly appointed Prime Minister, whose party has a super-majority in Parliament. Over a dozen foreign ambassadors from India, the United States, China, Bangladesh, the EU, the UK, Saudi Arabia, and others reached the Office of the Prime Minister inside Singhadurbar in Kathmandu. According to the Prime Minister's Secretariat earlier in the day, ambassadors from over a dozen countries, including India, China, the US, Japan, and the UK, had been invited to the Prime Minister's Office for the discussion. Since assuming office, Shah has not personally met with foreign representatives, despite repeated requests for traditional courtesy calls. Traditionally, newly appointed prime ministers invite ambassadors individually to their offices or residences within days of assuming office, a practice often criticised for its excessive formalities. Asim Shah, political advisor to the Prime Minister, said, "Previously, there was a culture of excessive movement of ambassadors and easy access that went beyond standard diplomatic etiquette. This time, that tradition will end." Shah, who was sworn in as prime minister on March 27, has not met foreign envoys individually despite several requests from embassies for courtesy calls. In 2022, a structural engineer with a signature pair of black rectangular sunglasses and a history in the underground rap scene did the unthinkable: Balendra "Balen" Shah dismantled the estab-



lished political machinery of Nepal to become the Mayor of Kathmandu. Running as an independent under the symbol of a walking stick, Balen secured 61,767 votes, comfortably outstripping veteran Sirjana Singh of the Nepali Congress, who received 38,341 votes, while CPN-UML candidate Keshav Sthapit, also a former mayor of the capital, got 38,117 votes. Now, just four years later, the 35-year-old is no longer just a local phenomenon; he is poised to become one of the youngest Prime Ministers in the nation's history. Balen's success was never accidental. While he rose to fame in 2013 through the rap battle league Raw Barz, he spent two and a half years quietly laying the groundwork for his mayoral run. His academic pedigree, a degree in engineering from Himalayan White House College and a Master's in structural engineering from India, gave him the technical credibility that resonated with a disillusioned electorate. His political strategy has been equally deliberate. Following the tragic death of 77 people during the September protests and the subsequent resignation of KP Sharma Oli, Balen was the first choice for Gen-Z activists to lead an interim government. He declined the interim role, supporting former Chief Justice Sushila Karki instead. It was a mas-

terstroke of foresight; he traded a six-month temporary stint for a shot at a full five-year term as Prime Minister. On January 18, 2026, Balen formally joined the Rastriya Swatantra Party (RSP), launching his campaign from Janakpur the very next day. In a move many labelled "foolish," Balen chose to contest the election from Jhapa-05, the long-standing stronghold of political heavyweight KP Sharma Oli, and defeated him by a huge margin. Located about 500 kilometres from the capital, Jhapa-5 had become the epicentre of a political earthquake. Balen's relationship with the public is defined by a massive digital footprint and a volatile temperament. With over 3.5 million followers on Facebook, he bypasses traditional press conferences to speak directly to the masses. However, his "unfiltered" persona has courted significant controversy. In a now-deleted November post, he lashed out at geopolitical giants (the USA, India, China) and every major Nepali political party, including the RSP, which he would join just two months later. Despite his aggressive rhetoric, including past threats to "burn down" the administrative hub of Singhadurbar, his supporters see him as the only "authentic" alternative to a stagnant status quo. Born in 1990, Balen is the youngest of four siblings. His late father, Ram Narayan Shah, was an Ayurvedic practitioner who passed away just before Balen's formal entry into mainstream politics. Even as he takes over the premiership, Balen continues to pursue a PhD in traditional infrastructure at Kathmandu University, blending the roles of an academic, a technical expert, and a populist firebrand.

## Unchecked gunfire turns Karachi into city of fear

Karachi [Pakistan], April 8 (ANI): Karachi continues to grapple with a disturbing surge in stray bullet incidents, leaving at least nine people injured over a span of three days, according to officials and residents. Despite police claims that overall crime rates have declined, the persistence of indiscriminate firing has heightened anxiety among citizens, who no longer feel safe either outdoors or inside their homes, as reported by The Express Tribune. According to The Express Tribune, authorities confirmed that investigations are ongoing, but the randomness of the shootings has made it difficult to trace those responsible. In one of the most serious incidents, 22-year-old Ayan suf-

fered a critical chest injury after being shot near Ghaus Pak Road in Korangi 5. He was transported to Jinnah Postgraduate Medical Centre by rescue volunteers. In another case, Sherina, 45, was wounded in Baldia 24, while Jamila Begum, aged 52, sustained injuries at Al-Azam Square in Liaquatabad 10. The wave of violence extended across multiple neighbourhoods. Bilal Ahmed, 27, was injured in North Karachi, while 12-year-old Muzammil was hit near a bus stop in Chakiwara. Murtaza, 30, was wounded in New Karachi's Gabol Town, and Nauman, 28, was shot near Usman Park. Elderly citizen Naseer, 74, was injured in Paposh Nagar, and Najma, 39, was



wounded in Orangi Town, highlighting that victims span all age groups. All incidents occurred between April 4 and April 6, with police noting that the bullets appeared to have been fired from unknown locations, further complicating the situation. Residents have voiced anger and fear, criticising law enforcement for failing to control the unchecked use of firearms, as highlighted by The Express Tribune. Citizens argue that the ongoing crisis reflects a deeper breakdown in public safety measures. Many believe that without stricter enforcement and accountability, Karachi risks normalising a culture of reckless gun use, as reported by The Express Tribune.

## Israel contradicts 'mediator' Pakistan, says Lebanon not part of ceasefire deal

A fresh divergence emerged over the scope of the newly announced ceasefire between the United States and Iran, with Israel on Wednesday asserting that Lebanon is not part of the arrangement, contradicting claims made by Pakistan Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif. In a statement, the Office of the Prime Minister of Israel said it supported US President Donald Trump's decision to suspend strikes against Iran for two weeks, subject to Tehran immediately reopening key maritime routes and halting attacks on the US, Israel and other countries in the region. However, it clarified that the "two-weeks ceasefire does not include Lebanon," underlining that the understanding was limited in scope and conditional in nature. The Israeli statement also backed ongoing US efforts to ensure that Iran no longer poses what it described as a nuclear, missile or terror threat to the region and beyond. It added that Washington



had assured Israel of its commitment to achieving these shared objectives through upcoming negotiations involving regional allies. The assertion stands in contrast to an earlier announcement by Pakistan Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, who said an "immediate ceasefire everywhere including Lebanon and elsewhere" had come into effect. He described the develop-

ment as a "sagacious gesture" and credited both Washington and Tehran for demonstrating "remarkable wisdom and understanding." Sharif also invited delegations from both sides to Islamabad on April 10 for further talks aimed at reaching a comprehensive agreement, expressing hope that the proposed "Islamabad Talks" would lead to sustainable peace and more positive devel-

opments in the coming days. The conflicting statements have introduced uncertainty over the exact contours of the ceasefire, even as diplomatic efforts intensify to stabilise a region that has witnessed escalating tensions in the past 40 days. Clarity on the inclusion of flash-points such as Lebanon will be critical in determining the durability of the truce.

## West Asia War: US, Iran agree to 2-week ceasefire, Strait of Hormuz to reopen

In a dramatic breakthrough after days of escalating hostilities, the United States and Iran agreed to a two-week ceasefire, raising hopes of a broader de-escalation in the West Asia conflict. Announcing the development, US President Donald Trump said Washington would suspend planned military strikes against Iran, describing the pause as a "double-sided ceasefire" aimed at paving the way for a long-term peace agreement. The decision followed consultations with Pakistan Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and Army Chief Asim Munir, who urged restraint amid fears of a wider regional war. "Subject to the Islamic Republic of Iran agreeing to the complete, immediate, and safe opening of the Strait of Hormuz, I agree to suspend the bombing and attack on Iran for a period of two weeks," Trump said, adding that the US had already "met and exceeded all military objectives". He indicated that negotiations were at an advanced stage, with Washington viewing Iran's 10-point proposal as a "workable basis" for a final agree-



ment. "A two-week period will allow the agreement to be finalised and consummated," he added. Tehran confirmed the ceasefire framework shortly thereafter, with Foreign Minister Seyed Abbas Araghchi announcing that Iran would halt its defensive operations if attacks ceased. "On behalf of the Islamic Republic of Iran... if attacks against Iran are halted, our powerful armed forces will cease their defensive operations," Araghchi said, adding that safe passage through the Strait of Hormuz would be ensured for two weeks in coordination with Iranian forces. He also acknowledged Pakistan's role in mediating the breakthrough, thank-

ing Sharif and Munir for their "tireless efforts" to end the conflict. The agreement marks the first significant pause in hostilities since tensions spiralled into open confrontation, which got the entire Gulf region involved and disrupted the global energy supplies. The reopening of the Strait of Hormuz—through which a substantial portion of the world's oil shipments pass—is expected to stabilise energy markets in the short term, though uncertainties remain over the durability of the truce. Diplomatic sources said the coming fortnight will be critical, with both sides expected to finalise a broader framework addressing longstanding disputes, including security concerns, regional influence and economic sanctions. While the ceasefire has been widely welcomed as a step back from the brink, analysts cautioned that the situation remains fragile, with any violation or miscalculation capable of reigniting hostilities. For now, however, the attacks have fallen silent—offering a narrow but crucial window for diplomacy in one of the world's most volatile regions.

## Whole civilisation will die, Trump warns Iran ahead of deadline

The West Asia crisis spiralled towards a dangerous inflection point on Tuesday, with US President Donald Trump issuing an extraordinary threat against Iran, warning that an entire civilisation could be wiped out, even as Tehran responded with defiance, its military signalled a widening conflict. Amid the mounting tensions, India urged its nationals in Iran to remain indoors and avoid any movement. The sharply escalating rhetoric came despite ongoing diplomatic efforts by intermediaries to broker a ceasefire. In a post on his social media platform Truth Social, Trump declared, "A whole civilisation will die tonight, never to be brought back again. I don't want that to happen, but it probably will." He described the moment as "one of the most important" in world history, asserting that decades of what he called "extortion, corruption, and death" would finally end. The statement was issued hours ahead of a self-imposed US deadline for Iran to open the strategically critical Strait of Hormuz, a key artery for global oil shipments, failing which Washington has warned of severe consequences. The deadline is

set to expire late Tuesday in the US, corresponding to early Wednesday morning in India. Even as he struck a combative tone, Trump left a narrow window for diplomacy open, saying "maybe something revolutionarily wonderful can happen," indicating that backchannel negotiations may still be underway. Tehran, however, responded with a mix of historical defiance and direct threats. Iranian officials invoked the country's civilisational resilience, noting that Iran had survived invasions by Alexander the Great and the Mongols, and would endure current threats as well. "You and your allies will suffer an unforgettable hit from the ancient civilisation of Iran," Tehran warned, signalling readiness for retaliation. Iran's Ambassador to India Mohammad Fathali said, "We had said if you start a war, you won't be able to finish it. And we have said again: if you target our infrastructure... learn from past mistakes." Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian too struck a defiant tone, claiming that more than 14 million Iranians had expressed willingness to sacrifice their lives in defence of

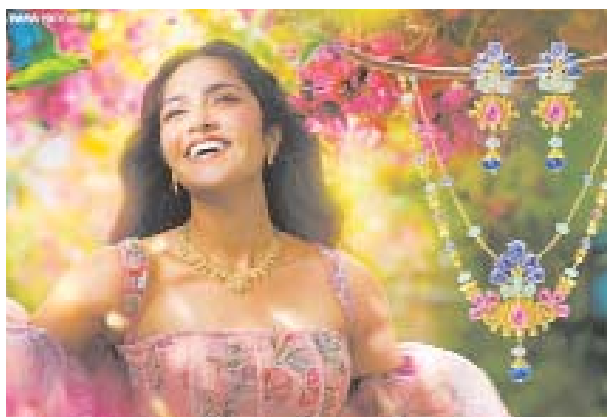


the country. "I too have been, am, and will remain ready to give my life for Iran," he said. The US, meanwhile, again struck the Iranian oil hub of Kharg Island, according to a White House official. As the crisis deepened, countries across the region and beyond are bracing for fallout. In New Delhi, the government issued a fresh advisory for Indian nationals in Iran, urging extreme caution. The advisory underscores growing concerns in India over the safety of its nationals. Since February 28, around 7,60,000 passengers have travelled from the West Asia region to India while at the same time Indian Embassy in Tehran has facilitated the movement of 1862 Indian nationals from Iran to Armenia and Azerbaijan for onward

travel to India, including 935 Indian students and 472 Indian fishermen. There is still a sizeable chunk of Indians who are believed to be in Tehran. Meanwhile, Iran's warning aligns with messaging from its Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC), which on Tuesday declared that previous restraint had ended and that any future confrontation with the US would extend beyond the immediate theatre of conflict. It warned if US forces crossed what it termed "red lines", Iran's response would "go beyond the region" and could deprive Washington and its allies of access to oil and gas resources for years -- an explicit threat to global energy security.

## TANISHQ MARKS A NEW CHAPTER IN NATURAL GEMSTONE CATEGORY BY ROPING IN RUKMINI VASANTH AS THE FACE OF ITS NEW CAMPAIGN FOR SOUTH

Rajamahendravaram, 08th, April 2026: As we approach the auspicious festival of Akshaya Tritiya, Tanishq, India's leading jewellery brand from the House of Tata, unveils its latest launch in the natural gemstones category featuring Rukmini Vasanth. In South India, gemstones have always been more than adornment, they are tradition, identity, and everyday elegance. From temple jewellery influences to vibrant celebrations, colored gemstones are deeply woven into the region's aesthetic language. The South has embraced the richness of rubies, emeralds, and other vivid stones as a staple, and Rukmini Vasanth embodies the modern South Indian jewellery as Tanishq's new face in the south. Effortlessly elegant and refreshingly modern, she embodies the spirit of Hues, the latest collection where individuality meets timeless grace. Hues collection reimagines the way gold is experienced this Akshaya Tritiya, moving beyond traditional, investment-led purchases to jewellery that is expressive and meant to be worn. The new Hues collection takes centre stage with a focused design language that celebrates contemporary colour stories



in gold, crafted for those seeking distinctive yet affordable fine jewellery, starting at an accessible price of ₹35,000. Bringing together sculptural forms, radiant gemstones, and precision cuts that reveal the depth in every hue. Each piece places colour at its core, crafted for the woman who embraces jewellery as a reflection of her mood, style, and spirit. With a renewed focus on natural-colored gemstones, the collection deepens Tanishq's presence in a category the region already values, pairing contemporary design with timeless preference. The use of smooth, cabochon-cut stones introduces a sculpted, luminous quality, while layered colour compositions and techniques such as bunching and slicing add depth, texture, and a sense of movement,

resulting in jewellery that feels dynamic and distinctly modern. Bringing together a curated selection of natural coloured gemstones such as emeralds, amethysts, citrines, tourmalines, and tanzanites, among others, each stone is sourced with expertise and selected through rigorous quality benchmarks for its exceptional colour, clarity, and intrinsic character. This lends the collection a sense of rarity and authenticity, while ensuring both beauty and durability for everyday wear. The range spans statement neck pieces & bangles for special occasions, alongside lighter earrings, rings, and pendant sets designed for everyday elegance, offering a versatile wardrobe that balances the enduring value of gold with the vibrance of contemporary design. At the heart of this narrative is Rukmini Vasanth, introduced as the face of the campaign and a symbol of the contemporary South Indian woman. Marking the beginning of a long-term collaboration with Tanishq, her association signals a shared vision that extends beyond a single season. Effortlessly elegant and refreshingly modern, she embodies the spirit of Hues, where individuality meets timeless grace.

# HBD Allu Arjun: He is always different and extraordinary

Allu Arjun is always different and extraordinary; this line perfectly describes the journey of one of Telugu cinema's biggest stars. From a simple beginning to becoming a pan-India icon, his story is full of hard work, change, and success. First Step with Gangotri In 2003, Telugu cinema was mostly filled with mass movies. Audiences were waiting for something fresh. At that time, Allu Arjun entered films with Gangotri, directed by K. Raghavendra Rao. Coming from the family of legendary comedian Allu Ramalingaiah and producer Allu Aravind, Bunny chose acting instead of production. He worked very hard for his first film. He even agreed to dress as a girl for a song and performed confidently with senior actors like Prakash Raj. The movie became a success, but most credit went to the director. Bunny also faced criticism for his looks and acting. But just like a stone becomes a sculpture after hitting blows, he improved himself. Sensation with Arya Everything changed with Arya, directed by Sukumar. The concept of one-sided love was new. Bunny completely transformed himself, his dance improved, his acting became lively, and his style attracted youth. He won the Nandi Special Jury Award and gained a



huge fan following. People were surprised to see such a different Telugu hero. With films like Bunny and Desamuduru (directed by Puri Jagannadh), Bunny reached mass audiences. His six-pack body in Desamuduru created a trend in Tollywood. Advertisement Though some films like Varudu and Badrinath didn't succeed, his role in Vedam was highly appreciated by critics. In Arya 2, he played a complex character and made it a cult film. Stylish Star with Blockbusters His collaboration with Trivikram Srinivas started with Julayi, where he played an intelligent and energetic character. The film was a big

hit. Movies like Race Gurram and S/O Satyamurthy showed his versatility. He could entertain both mass and family audiences with ease. In Rudramadevi, Bunny played the role of Gona Ganna Reddy with a Telangana accent. Even with limited screen time, he impressed everyone. With Sarrainodu, directed by Boyapati Srinu, he proved his box office power by entering the 100-crore club. Record-Breaking Success with Ala Vaikunthapurramuloo This family entertainer became a huge success. Songs like "Butta Bomma" became viral across the world. The film showed that con-

tent-based cinema can also break records. Pushpa - A Huge Sensation The biggest turning point came with Pushpa, again with Sukumar. Bunny's role as a smuggler became iconic. His dialogue "Tagged Le" was followed by millions worldwide. The film was a massive hit across India, especially in the Hindi market. Pushpa 2 went even bigger, reaching close to 2000 crore collections, creating history. Awards and Recognition Allu Arjun is not just a star but a performer. He won many awards, including Filmfare, Nandi Awards, and even the National Award for Best Actor. This shows his dedication and passion. Starting as a child artist in films like Swathi Muthyam, Bunny has now become a global name. He even gained a huge fan base in Kerala, where fans lovingly call him "Mallu Star." Now, Bunny is aiming for international success. His upcoming project with Atlee Kumar is expected to be on a grand scale. Allu Arjun believes in being real, not copying others. He believes that true heroism lies in strong content. His journey shows that success comes from hard work, discipline, and constant improvement. That is why Allu Arjun is not just a stylish star. He is truly an Icon Star shaping the future of Indian cinema.



## "This will be Mrunal's best Film": Venkatesh at Dacoit Event

The pre-release event of Dacoit was held in a grand way. The film stars Adivi Sesh and Mrunal Thakur in lead roles. It is directed by Shaneil Deo and produced by Supriya Yarlagadda under Annapurna Studios presentation. The movie is set to release on April 10 and its teaser, trailer and songs have already created huge buzz. At the event, senior star Venkatesh Daggubati attended as the chief guest and has shared his words about the film. Speaking at the event, Venkatesh said, "Many think I came here for Supriya but I came for my favorite uncle Surendra. I am very happy that Supriya made such a wonderful film." He said, "There was always a strong vibe that this will be a great film because it is made by a passionate team. Everyone worked with the intention to give a big hit." Venkatesh also appreciated Adivi Sesh recalling



that he saw his talent long back and believed he would become a great actor. He added, "Dacoit will definitely be a blockbuster. There is no doubt about it." He also praised Mrunal Thakur and said this could be one of her best performances. He said that he liked the fresh concept of combining love and action in a new way. Dacoit starring Adivi Sesh and Mrunal Thakur also features Anurag Kashyap in an important role.

## Dacoit Censor Report: Adivi Sesh delivers another masterpiece



Adivi Sesh returns to the big screen after a massive four-year gap, a testament to his unparalleled patience and eye for detail to deliver best for the audiences. His most anticipated film, Dacoit, is ready for release and the censor reports are extremely positive. The movie completed its censor formalities with U/A certification and movie runtime is locked for 2 hrs 30 minutes. The reports suggest that the film is going to continue Sesh's phenomenal success streak and it is a masterpiece from him. Investing the audiences right away, the film begins to explore a love story which feels fresh, authentic and genuinely interesting. But as the world of manipulation strikes, we see the layers peeling out and

interval twist is mind-blowing. Reports suggest that the terrain changes with slick edits and cinematography add to the gripping narrative as audiences are hooked to the flow. Second hour delivers tear-jerking moments with unpredictable twists and turns that make it a writer Adivi Sesh special. The actor Adivi Sesh delivers a knockout performance, dominating the screen with an intense presence while effortlessly pulling off a flawless dialect change. His chemistry with leading lady Mrunal Thakur is the highlight of the film. Their love-hate relationship add to the thriller elements with International standard action sequences and screenplay. Icing on the cake are cameos of Pawan Singh, Jonitha

Gandhi, and Bheems Ceciroleo. Anurag Kashyap is brilliant as Swamy while Prakash Raj adds his experience to the mix. The brilliant background score constantly elevates the heavy, tear-jerking emotions and unthinkable revelations. Reports suggest that the film successfully leaves you with an unforgettable love story ever told in the most commercial way. Presented by Annapurna Studios, Dacoit is produced by Supriya Yarlagadda and Suniel Narang, whose penchant to deliver the best ensures stellar production values throughout this grand cinematic experience. The movie is hitting theaters worldwide on April 10, 2026, with a loads of promise and anticipation.

## Sumanth says sorry for Mrunal Thakur



The pre-release event of Dacoit was held in a grand manner, and many film personalities attended the event. Among them was actor Sumanth, who came to support the film. It is known that his sister Supriya Yarlagadda is handling the production of this movie. During the event, Sumanth spoke in a fun way while interacting with actress Mrunal Thakur. He made an interesting comment that made everyone laugh. He said, "First of all, I want to say sorry for taking Ram away from you in Sita Ramam." He then clarified the reason behind this statement. He said that there was actually a similar scene in the movie Sita Ramam, but it was later deleted. So, he jokingly said those lines now at the event. He continued his speech and added, "As compensation,

now me and my sister are giving you this film." His comment quickly became a highlight of the event, and everyone present enjoyed the moment. Dacoit is directed by Shaneil Deo and stars Adivi Sesh and Mrunal Thakur in lead roles. The movie is expected to be a mix of romance and high-level action, which has already created a lot of buzz among fans. The film also features a strong supporting cast including Anurag Kashyap, Prakash Raj, Sunil, Atul Kulkarni, Zayn Marie Khan, and Kamakshi Bhaskarla. With good expectations and strong promotions, Dacoit is all set to release in theatres on April 10, 2026. Fans are eagerly waiting to watch this entertaining film on the big screen.

## Tollywood Stays silent; Swapna Dutt Dares to Speak out



The Telugu film industry has been very careful when it comes to Andhra Pradesh politics. Many people in the industry still remember the difficult time during the rule of Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy between 2019 and 2024. Because of that experience, most film personalities are now staying silent on political matters. Earlier, well-known producer Ashwini Dutt was one of the few people who openly spoke about political issues. He did not stay quiet even when he was working on a big-budget movie like Kalki. He shared his opinions without fear, even if it could affect his projects. Now, once again, the industry is mostly silent after Amaravati was officially accepted as the capital through changes in the Andhra Pradesh Reorganisation Act. Since Jagan is against Amaravati, many people in the film industry are avoiding taking any side. They may be worried about possible problems in the future if political power changes again. Only a few people like Pawan Kalyan and Balakrishna supported Amaravati openly. However, both are active politicians, so their opinions are seen more as political views rather than reactions from the film industry. In this situation, Swapna Dutt, daughter of Ashwini Dutt, stood out. She became one of the first from the industry to respond. She shared the official Gazette on her Instagram story and welcomed the decision. Her action clearly showed her opinion without fear.

## Mythri movies drops a banger on #NTRNeel Project

In the last two days, there's been huge talk about pan-India star Jr NTR and his latest movie "Dragon" which is being directed by Prashanth Neel of KGF fame. It has come out that the actor is taking a break from the movie, preparing for the shoot, and some even stated that the shooting got halted. Till then, everyone is putting up exclusive news, and it looks like producer Mythri Movie Makers is fed up with all this. Finally, they have shed light on all the rumours by dropping a banger. "There is absolutely no truth to the rumours circulating about the look or any schedule cancellation. The film is progressing as planned, with only a routine preparation gap. We request that everyone not to believe or spread unverified information. Official updates will always come from us", tweeted Mythri Movie Makers, killing all the rumours at the budding stage itself. The gap that has come is only a



preparation gap for the next schedule, but nothing else, and fans could now breathe a sigh of relief after hearing lots of disturbing rumours about the movie's halted schedules. On the other hand, a huge set is being erected on the outskirts of Hyderabad to make this film very soon, and Jr NTR is now working on his new look so that they can restart the shooting. Dragon revolves around a vintage drug saga, where Jr NTR will be seen playing the role of a Drug Lord, a Telugu-Tamil guy settled in the north eastern part of India.

## Overseas Trouble: No Buyers For Big Telugu films?

Many mammoth Telugu films lined up for the next couple of years are facing an unexpected issue from the overseas market, if reports are to be believed. They are struggling to find traditional distributors in the North American market, an arena where Telugu films used to make quick millions. Though it used to be like Overseas buyers used to buy Telugu films for simple prices and then make huge there, most of the times, right now the asking price is said to be worrying them. In fact, Overseas Distributors in the US are now treating anything above 250 crore as a risky deal, because a film has to collect nearly \$6 million 'share' to recover that investment. But the current quotes for big films are going close to 200 crore or even higher, as per the reports. If you look at the lineup, films like Allu Arjun's Raaka, Prabhas' Kalki 2, Rajamouli-Mahesh's Vanasis, Jr NTR-Prashanth Neel's Dragon, and Prabhas-Vanga's Spirit fall into this high-price bracket. Except for Peddi, which was sold for 740 crores, rest of these movies haven't been committed to any distributor so far. In the



past, overseas deals were a major recovery zone for Telugu films. But things are changing now as distributors are playing it safe, and don't want to release movies for marginal profits. As a result, producers are now planning to release films independently. Instead of selling rights, they are using US distribution networks on a commission basis. That's a good move, because there will be no involvement of upfront investment for distributors, and the risk of giving back money if a film fails, from the producer's side. However, some distributors who had become accustomed to making huge money from overseas releases were upset by this trend, as commissions are nowhere near outright profits.

## Molineux was the best captaincy option, on track for T20 WC: Australia chief selector Shawn Flegler

New Delhi, April 8 : Australia's chair of selectors Shawn Flegler has acknowledged that the early phase of Sophie Molineux's captaincy has been anything but conventional, citing her ongoing back issue as an unusual challenge, while backing the decision to appoint her as leader across formats. Molineux, who succeeded Alyssa Healy earlier this year, assumed leadership duties in phases, initially during the T20I series against India and then on a full-time basis for the West Indies tour following Healy's retirement. However, a stress reaction in her back disrupted those plans, significantly limiting her role during the Caribbean leg. The allrounder was unable to bowl in that series and featured only as a specialist batter in the T20Is and the opening ODI before being rested for the remainder of the tour, a situation Flegler described as a setback during a crucial transition phase. Despite the complication, selectors have maintained their long-term focus on the upcoming T20 World Cup, which headlines a packed global calendar that also includes the 2027 Champions Trophy and the 2028 Olympics. "We were clear from the start that the T20 World Cup was the priority series and we were going to make decisions around that," Flegler told reporters as the 2026-27 contracts list was announced. "So, yeah, the stress reaction in the back during the Indian series, not ideal, but things do happen. We just made decisions around that and we decided we could either push through with it, take a big risk and see if she got through, or we just pull back a little bit. We decided to pull back, but we still thought it was important that she was around the group [in the West Indies]. She's on track for the T20 World Cup and that's what the goal was at the start. It's probably a fair point to say it's



unprecedented. But we think, on balance, she was the candidate that was the best option for a number of reasons: her on-field experience and success that she'd had, her off-field connection and a vision for the team. "We're being judged on that as time goes on, but we think it was the right decision at the time. I think she's done really well in the games that she has captained and the way she's been around the group so far. I guess we'll see how that ends up in the T20 World Cup and how it goes in the future as well," he added. Flegler made it clear that Molineux's role in the World Cup will hinge on her all-round capabilities, ruling out the possibility of her featuring solely as a batter. "We're certainly not looking at her as a batting captain. She'll be playing as a bowling allrounder to be available," Flegler noted. The selector also stressed that the decision to elevate Molineux ahead of other senior figures such as Tahlia McGrath and Ashleigh Gardner was the result of a prolonged evaluation rather than a reactive call. Both McGrath and Gardner currently serve as vice-captains, with McGrath stepping in as stand-in skipper during the West Indies tour. "These conversations took place over 12 months, essentially. Sophie was picked as a 20-year-old initially and her leadership capabilities were recognised very early. So if she wasn't injured, you could easily have seen her being captain a cou-

ple of years earlier. "I guess it's hard when you're not on the inside, you don't get to see all the stuff that does happen with team dynamics and how the group operates and what energy is around. When you're seeing decisions made and from an external point of view you go, that doesn't make sense, but we're comfortable internally that that was the right decision for this group at this time. So we're happy to be judged on that down the track," he stated. Molineux's limited bowling role in the West Indies has also added complexity to Australia's selection plans for the World Cup, particularly concerning the composition of the spin attack. Alana King impressed during the T20I leg, earning Player of the Series honours, while Georgia Wareham continues to be viewed as a frontline option. Gardner further strengthens the spin resources, leaving selectors with a challenging balancing act. Conditions in England, where the tournament will be held, are expected to play a significant role in shaping the final squad, especially with some matches scheduled in the morning. "One of the things we need to look at is conditions. We spoke to Alana about this as well... but she's certainly put her hand up. I think with Sophie's injury, that does come into the discussions about what's the best fit in the squad if we have four spinners or are we comfortable with three that we've got. Whoever misses out is going to be really unlucky because I think there's a number of players who have put their hand up," Flegler said. Australia are likely to finalise their squad early next month, with preparatory camps lined up in Brisbane before they travel to the United Kingdom. The team is also scheduled to play a warm-up series against South Africa, followed by official ICC practice matches ahead of the marquee event.

## 'He's instilled fear into bowlers': Steyn on Vaibhav's heroics against Bumrah

New Delhi, April 8 : Former South Africa pacer Dale Steyn believes that the Rajasthan Royals (RR) opener Vaibhav Sooryavanshi has already begun to create a psychological edge over bowlers, even forcing the likes of Jasprit Bumrah into rare errors. Steyn pointed to the moment when Sooryavanshi launched Bumrah over mid-on off the very first ball in the Rajasthan Royals clash against the Mumbai Indians on Tuesday, suggesting that the youngster's aggressive reputation is already influencing how bowlers approach him. "I think that's what he's done. I mean, honestly, he's created and instilled the fear into bowlers that he's going to hit you for boundaries," Steyn told ESPNcricinfo. Highlighting the influence of Sooryavanshi, Steyn added that even the pre-

mier Indian pacer, Bumrah, appeared to be second-guessing himself and missed his mark, which is very rare for a bowler of his calibre. "That delivery from Bumrah, that's in the slot. That's so rare of Bumrah. So even the great Bumrah is thinking in the back of his mind: 'don't get it wrong, because if I get it wrong, this guy's going to hit me for six'," he said. "I feel, if you think like that, more often than not, you do get it wrong. You can see even when he's hit him for six, he almost started to laugh afterwards and then go, 'I knew that was going to happen if I got it wrong'. And that's exactly what happened," he explained. Steyn believes that Sooryavanshi is not scared of anyone, and his fearless intent makes him dangerous regardless of the bowler's stature. "And this



kid's not scared, man. If you miss a half-volley, he's going to hit you out of the ground. So drag your length back and hit a good length, and you might be on the money with him. Miss and you're travelling the distance. It doesn't matter who you are, Bumrah or Joe Average. So that's fantastic batting," he added. Speaking of the match, RR rode on an explosive 80-run opening stand between Yashasvi Jaiswal and Sooryavanshi to beat MI by 27 runs in a rain-curtailed match at the ACA Stadium in Guwahati on Tuesday and registered their third straight victory of the IPL 2026 campaign. Vaibhav scored 39 runs off just 14 balls, which included two sixes against Bumrah and three vs other bowlers. While Jaiswal remained unbeaten at 77 off just 32 balls.

## MCA to unveil Ravi Shastri stand, honour Sardesai, Solkar and Edulji at Wankhede

The Mumbai Cricket Association (MCA) is set to honour four of Indian cricket's distinguished figures with the unveiling of the Ravi Shastri Stand and the dedication of stadium gates in the names of Dilip Sardesai, Eknath Solkar, and Diana Edulji at Wankhede Stadium on Thursday. The ceremony will be attended by Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnis, along with MCA President Ajinkya Naik, members of the Apex Council, office bearers, and prominent figures from the cricketing fraternity. The decision to honour these stalwarts was approved during the MCA Apex Council meeting in February. As part of the initiative, the Level 1 stand located below the press box will be named after Ravi Shastri, recognising his immense contribution to Mumbai and Indian cricket as a player, former India captain, coach, and broadcaster. In addition, Gate No. 3, Gate No. 5, and Gate No. 6 at the venue will be renamed as the Dilip Sardesai Gate, Diana Edulji Gate, and Eknath Solkar Gate, respectively. The move



pays tribute to three iconic Mumbai cricketers who left a lasting legacy in Indian cricket. "This ceremony marks a proud moment for Mumbai cricket as we come together to honour these iconic figures," said Ajinkya Naik. "The unveiling of the Ravi Shastri Stand, along with the dedication of stadium gates, reflects our deep respect for their invaluable contributions. We hope their legacy continues to inspire future generations."

The initiative highlights the MCA's continued effort to preserve its rich cricketing heritage while building a strong foundation for the future. Notably, in May 2025, the MCA had unveiled a stand in honour of Rohit Sharma. The Wankhede Stadium already houses stands named after legends such as Sunil Gavaskar, Dilip Vengsarkar, and Sachin Tendulkar, while gates have been dedicated to greats like Polly Umrigar and Vinoo Mankad.

## Minakshi, Jaismine to fight for gold

Reigning world champions Jaismine Lamborria and Meenakshi Hooda progressed to the finals along with two others at the Asian Boxing Championships here on Tuesday, taking India's total finalists to eight. Vishvanath Suresh (50kg) and Sachin Siwach (60kg) also registered impressive semifinal wins, while Akash (75kg), Lokesh (85kg), Narender Berwal (90+kg) and Harsh Choudhary (90kg) signed off with bronze medals. India will thus have eight boxers -- six women and two men fighting in the final. In the women's 48kg semifinal, Meenakshi secured a confident 4-1 win over Thailand's Thipsatcha Yodwaree to book her place in the gold medal bout, where she will



face local favourite Nomundari Enkh-Amgalan. Jaismine joined her in the finals after edging past Uzbekistan's Nigina Uktamova 3-2 in a hard-fought 57kg semifinal. The 2022 Commonwealth Games bronze medallist will take on Thailand's Punrawee Ruenros in the title clash. In the men's section, Vishvanath, who had

stunned reigning world champion and world No. 1 Sanzhar Tashkenbay of Kazakhstan in the previous round, continued his fine run with a dominant 5-0 victory over Jordan's Huthaifa Eshish to advance to the final. World Cup medallist Sachin (60kg) also impressed, posting a solid 4-1 win over Thailand's Sakda Ruamtham in his semifinal. Akash, however, lost 1-4 to Uzbekistan's Javokhir Abdurakhimov while Lokesh went down 0-5 against Jasurbek Yuldoshev of Uzbekistan. Asian Games bronze medallist Narender suffered a 1-4 defeat to China's Bayikewuzi Danabieke with the bout being stopped in the first round due to a cut. Harsh Choudhary also went down by a similar 1-4 margin to Tajikistan's Parviz Karimov. In other key finals featuring Indian boxers, Preeti (54kg) will go up against Chinese Taipei's Huang Hsiao-wen, while Priya (60kg) faces North Korea's Un Gyong Won. Arundhati Choudhary (70kg) is set to meet Kazakhstan's Bakyt Seidish in her gold medal bout.

## Dhruv-Tanisha pair wins on mixed day for India

India's leading mixed doubles pair of Dhruv Kapila and Tanisha Crasto advanced to the second round, but the duo of Rohan Kapoor and Gadde Ruthvika Shivani crashed out of the Badminton Asia Championships 2026, which got underway here on Tuesday. Kapila and Crasto won 21-14, 11-21, 21-15 over Thailand's Phuwanat Horbanluekit and Benyapa Aimsaard. However, Rohan Kapoor and Gadde Ruthvika Shivani went down fighting against Malaysia's eighth seeds Goh Soon Huat and Lai Shevon Jemie 13-21 19-21 in a 34-minute contest at the Ningbo Olympic Centre. The Indian duo of Kapoor and Shivani struggled to find rhythm early on, conceding the first game comfortably, but showed signs of resistance in the second before the experienced Malaysian combination shut the door in straight games. In another match, Ashith Surya and Amrutha Pramuthesh also failed to cross the opening hurdle, losing 16-

21 15-21 to Malaysia's Wong Tien Ci and Lim Chiew Sien in 31 minutes. The Indian pair fought hard but were unable to sustain pressure at crucial junctures against their steady opponents. The focus will shift to singles competition on Wednesday with India's top stars set to begin their campaigns. Lakshya Sen, fresh from a runner-up finish at the All England Championships, will spearhead the men's singles challenge. The country's top-ranked shuttler faces a tricky opening match against Hong Kong's Lee Cheuk Yiu, against whom the Indian has a 2-3 head-to-head record. In the women's singles, double Olympic medallist PV Sindhu



returns to action after a disrupted European leg and will open her campaign against Malaysia's Wong Ling Ching. Apart from Sen and Sindhu, India will also have Kidambi Srikanth, HS Prannoy and Ayush Shetty in men's singles, while Tanvi Sharma, Unnati Hooda and Malvika Bansod will feature in the women's draw, with all of them slated to begin their campaigns on Wednesday.

## IPL 2026: 'Jaiswal's biggest strength is self-belief,' says Rathour after RR beat MI

Guwahati, April 8 : Rajasthan Royals (RR) lead assistant coach Vikram Rathour heaped praise on Yashasvi Jaiswal after his unbeaten 77 powered the side to a convincing win over Mumbai Indians (MI) in IPL 2026 and said the opener has shown again and again that if "he believes that he can do something, he'll achieve that." After rain reduced the match to 11 overs per side, Yashasvi Jaiswal began the innings with a bang as he hit Deepak Chahar for four boundaries and a maximum to extract 22 runs off the very first over. He remained unbeaten at 77 as RR posted a mammoth total of 150 runs, which proved too much for the five-time champions, as they scored just



123/9 in 11 overs. "The biggest strength Yash has is basically the belief that he has in himself. If he believes that he can do something, he'll go all out for that, and he'll achieve that. He's shown that again and again," Rathour said in a video released by IPL on X. The former India batting coach further noted that Jaiswal's ability to fully commit to his decisions at the crease sets him apart.

"Whenever he wants to do certain things, he'll make up his mind, and he'll go with 100% commitment. Today, we could also see that he was committed to playing his shots. He went there with a very clear game plan, and he really backed it, and today it came off," he added. Jaiswal is in top-notch form in the ongoing season. He has scored 179 runs in three matches at a strike rate of over 160. He is also currently holding the Orange cap. Meanwhile, the Rajasthan Royals are at the top of the points table with six points in three matches and a net run rate of 2.403. They will next face defending champions Royal Challengers Bengaluru (RCB) on April 10.

## Badminton Asia c'ships: Sindhu, Shetty, Prannoy advance, Lakshya, Kidambi exit

New Delhi: Two-time Olympic medallist P. V. Sindhu and men's singles stars Ayush Shetty and H. S. Prannoy kept India's campaign on track, while Lakshya Sen and Kidambi Srikanth exited early as Indian shuttlers experienced a mixed outing on the opening day of the Badminton Asia Championships on Wednesday. Indian badminton player P. V. Sindhu in action against Nguyen Thuy Linh of Vietnam during the Yonex Sunrise India Open 2026 at the Indira Gandhi Stadium, in New Delhi on Wednesday, January 14, 2026. (Photo: IANS/Wasim Sarvar) Two-time Olympic medallist P. V. Sindhu and men's singles stars Ayush Shetty and H. S. Prannoy kept India's campaign on track, while Lakshya Sen and Kidambi Srikanth exited early as Indian shuttlers experienced a mixed outing on the opening day of the Badminton Asia Championships on Wednesday. Sindhu was pushed hard by Malaysia's Wong Ling Ching before coming through a gruelling three-game contest. After conced-

ing the first game 15-21, the Hyderabad found her rhythm to take the second 21-11. The decider proved to be a closely fought affair, with both players trading points in a tense finish. Locked at 19-19, Sindhu held her nerve to win back-to-back points and close out the match in one hour and seven minutes. She will next face China's Wang Zhi Yi in the second round. One of the biggest positives for India came in the form of promising Ayush Shetty, who produced a stunning upset by defeating China's world No. 7 Li Shi Feng in straight games. The youngster's composed performance secured him a place in the pre-quarterfinals, where he will take on Chinese Taipei's Chi Yu Jen for a spot in the last eight. Prannoy, meanwhile, battled his way into the next round with a 24-22, 21-12 victory over Vietnam's Nguyen Hai Dang. The opening game was a tight contest, with Prannoy saving multiple game points before edging ahead 24-22. He then took control in the second game, maintaining pressure to wrap up the match comfortably. He is set

to face China's Weng Hong Yang next. In contrast, Lakshya Sen's campaign ended in the opening round following a straight-game loss to Hong Kong's Lee Cheuk Yiu. Coming into the tournament with some momentum after a solid run at the All England Championships, Lakshya struggled to find consistency, going down 12-21, 19-21 in a 41-minute match. While he showed improvement in the second game, Lee's composure in key moments proved decisive. Former world No. 1 Kidambi Srikanth also bowed out after a three-game defeat to Singapore's Loh Kean Yew. Srikanth started well, taking the opening game 21-18 after building momentum midway through. However, Loh responded strongly to claim the second game 21-9 and carried that dominance into the decider, sealing it 21-11 with a series of attacking rallies. Elsewhere, India endured setbacks in women's singles as Malvika Bansod and Tanvi Sharma crashed out following straight-game defeats in their respective matches.

## We Will Rebuild the Demolished House: MP Vallabhaneni Balashowry Assures Support



By Our Staff Reporter Machilipatnam, Apr 8: MP Vallabhaneni Balashowry has assured that the house of a Jana Sena party worker, which was recently demolished in Kobarthi Thota, will be rebuilt by them. He emphasized that the party will stand by every Jana Sena activist who faces injustice. On Wednesday, Balashowry visited the site where municipal officials had demolished the house belonging to Jana Sena activist Venkatachalam and expressed deep shock over the incident. He stated that while he was in Delhi, he received hundreds of phone calls

informing him about the issue. Speaking to the media, he said, "Politics is not just about criticism; it is also about standing in support of people during difficult times." He strongly criticized the overenthusiasm of officials and the hasty actions of the police, which he said led to this incident. After consoling Venkatachalam's family, Balashowry expressed anguish that a house built with hard-earned money—worth around ₹40 lakh—was demolished within moments. He termed the action as unfortunate, especially if carried out without proper evidence. He advised that in such situations, officials should allow

some time and follow due legal process. He pointed out that lower and higher courts can sometimes give different verdicts, so decisions should not be taken in haste. Balashowry assured that he would personally bear the loss and rebuild the demolished house. He also urged the municipal authorities to process a fresh application honestly and grant proper approval to the victim. He warned that misuse of power by officials can hurt people's sentiments and lead to unrest. He concluded by stating that the alliance remains united and committed to supporting its members.

## Quality Standards Must Be Followed in Bridge Construction: District Collector D.K. Balaji



By Our Staff Reporter Machilipatnam, Apr 8: District Collector D.K. Balaji has directed officials to strictly adhere to quality standards in bridge construction works. On Wednesday evening, the Collector inspected a 32-meter bridge being constructed by the Panchayat Raj Department at a cost of ₹3.38 crore on the Pedana-Parnasala road under the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY) in Guduru mandal. During the inspection, the Collector personally conducted a rebound hammer test on the concrete of the bridge to assess its strength. He examined both the upper and lower portions of the structure using appropriate testing equipment to ensure quality compliance. Speaking on the occasion, he observed that the lower portion of the

bridge had gained good strength due to proper water curing. However, he pointed out that the upper portion still required adequate curing and instructed officials to take necessary steps. He emphasized that there should be no compromise in the quality of construction under any circumstances and that all standards must be strictly followed. The Collector also stated that he would re-inspect the bridge during his next visit along the same route. He made it clear to officials that the structure would be tested again before the final bill payment is released. During the inspection, Panchayat Raj SE Ramana Rao, Guduru Mandal Tahsildar Rajyalakshmi, MPDO Shailaja Kumari, Panchayat Raj DEE Nagaraju, AE Gopi, and other officials were present.

## RUSAL Implements Neural Networks to Improve Alumina Quality



Vijayawada, April 8, 2026 – RUSAL, one of the world's largest aluminium producers, has implemented a proprietary neural network-based technology for controlling aluminium hydroxide particle fractions. The technology improves the quality of alumina, which in turn enhances the quality of the aluminium produced from it and reduces energy consumption during electrolysis. Decomposition is a key stage in the multi-step process of producing alumina (aluminium oxide) from bauxite ore, as the quality of the decomposition intermediate directly affects the quality of the final alumina and the aluminium smelted from it. In the decomposition battery, the aluminate-alkaline solution derived from bauxite processing is decomposed, precipitating aluminium hydroxide, which is then used in the final stage of the cycle to produce alumina. The technology was developed by RUSAL's Engineering Department. It has completed trials and is now in industrial operation at the decomposition unit of the RUSAL Kamensk-Uralsky alumina refinery. The technology comprises a neural network digital twin of the decomposition process, trained on 15 years of

historical data, and a mathematical algorithm for multi-parameter process optimisation. The neural network continuously accumulates data on the fractional composition of aluminium hydroxide and the physical parameters of decomposition over the preceding 120 days, and generates a forecast of the fractional composition for the following 90 days. Based on this forecast, the optimisation algorithm recommends parameter adjustments to improve the fractional composition of the aluminium hydroxide. With a forecast error rate below 5%, the system enables process engineers to control the decomposition process with greater precision than was previously possible. This has resulted in a 4.4% reduction in fine fraction content in the product. Coarsening the alumina improves dry gas cleaning performance at aluminium smelters and reduces the consumption of alumina, anodes, and electricity per tonne of metal, thereby improving overall electrolysis performance. Energy efficiency and environmental sustainability remain central priorities for the company. RUSAL has previously been among the first global producers to implement digital twins at its alumina refineries to optimise production processes, achieving lower resource consumption and higher productivity. The digital twin of the decomposition process at the Kamensk-Uralsky refinery marks a further advance in the application of artificial intelligence. By leveraging neural networks, RUSAL has, for the first time, achieved predictive, advisory control of the decomposition process, surpassing comparable solutions developed elsewhere.

## Vijayendra Appointed as BJP Krishna District SC Morcha President



By Our Staff Reporter Machilipatnam, Apr 8: Ekkula Vijayendra Babu has been appointed as the President of the SC Morcha for Krishna district by the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP). From Machilipatnam, noted advocate G. Vijay Babu has been appointed as District Vice President, while Bandaru Someswara Rao has been named as District

Secretary in the committee. It is reported that both Vijay Babu and Someswara Rao were recently attracted to the BJP and joined the party in the presence of State BJP President PVN Madhav. Krishna District BJP President Tataneni Sriram stated that responsibilities have been entrusted under the guidance of State Executive Member Pantham

Venkata Gajendra Rao. Speaking on the occasion, the newly appointed leaders expressed gratitude to the BJP district leadership for placing their trust in them and assigning these responsibilities. They assured that they would work with full dedication, uphold party discipline and principles, and strive to take the party closer to the people.

## Water Security is the Responsibility of Water Committees: Gopu Satyanarayana



By Our Staff Reporter Machilipatnam, Apr 8: Krishna District Telugu Desam Party (TDP) General Secretary Gopu Satyanarayana stated that ensuring water security is the primary responsibility of water user associations. He emphasized that with the approaching summer, everyone must use water judiciously and ensure that no village faces water scarcity. Speaking on Tuesday at Sarangipalem village in Kanuru Panchayat under Machilipatnam North Mandal, he said that both water committees and the public share the responsibility of tackling severe water shortages during summer. As part of the "Water Security and Irrigation Responsibility" program, he inaugurated works related to desilting of ponds, strengthening of bunds, and cleaning of drainage canals under the employment guarantee scheme by breaking a coconut. He also personally participated in the works in

the village. Later, he interacted with around 270 MGNREGA workers at the site, inquiring about their work, facilities, and overall conditions. He also reviewed the development activities being carried out in the village. He stated that after the coalition government came to power, the number of guaranteed workdays for rural families was increased from 100 to 125 days annually, which has greatly benefited the workers. Villagers, he said, are expressing gratitude to the government, and such progress has been possible due to the coalition administration. He added that providing employment opportunities, especially to unskilled rural people, is the main objective, which helps improve their livelihoods. He called for continued public support and blessings for such welfare initiatives. Several officials and local leaders, including Panchayat Secretary Vara Prasad, VRO Subbaya Das, and others, participated in the program.

## Fill Ponds with Rainwater to Assure Farmers: District Collector D.K. Balaji

By Our Staff Reporter Machilipatnam, Apr 8: District Collector D.K. Balaji stated that the main objective of the "Jaladhara-Water Security" program is to capture every drop of rainwater and fill all ponds in the district, thereby ensuring confidence and support for farmers. On Wednesday morning, the Collector visited Banampeta in Jagannadapuram revenue village of Pedavegi mandal in Eluru district. He inspected injection wells constructed by a farmer, Parvathaneni Babji, near a pond. The Collector interacted with the farmer to understand how the injection wells were built and how they function. Explaining the system, farmer Babji said that he spent around ₹4 lakh to construct the wells near the pond. He mentioned that although he does not own land, he undertook this initiative to ensure water availability in the village. He added that these wells can recharge groundwater for up to 10 months and can pump about 20 lakh liters of water per day at a rate of one lakh liters per hour. He also informed that groundwater levels in surrounding villages have improved due to these wells. Later, speaking to the media, the Collector said that the state government

has launched the "Jaladhara-Jalharathi Water Security" program to store rainwater in ponds and provide sufficient irrigation water to farmers without any difficulty. He emphasized that the government's aim is to economically strengthen farmers. He further stated that the visit to Banampeta was to study methods to improve groundwater levels in areas of Krishna district where water levels are low. He appreciated the effectiveness of injection wells and said similar structures would be implemented in Krishna district to enhance groundwater recharge. The Collector noted that a large amount of Krishna River water is being wasted into the sea and stressed the need to conserve it. Since constructing large dams is expensive, he suggested that cost-effective and natural methods like injection wells would be highly beneficial. He assured that steps would be taken to fill all ponds with rainwater and ensure uninterrupted irrigation supply to farmers. During the visit, officials including DWAMA PD Shiva Prasad, Water Resources SE Gunakar, Groundwater Department DD Vijayavardhan, Eluru District DD Kodandaram, AD Bindu Shri, and others participated.

## Ensure Daily Drinking Water Supply: Lankiseti Balaji Demands

By Our Staff Reporter Machilipatnam, Apr 8: Lankiseti Balaji, former president of the Machilipatnam Bar Association, has demanded that steps be taken to ensure daily supply of drinking water to the residents of Machilipatnam, the headquarters of Krishna district. He urged the Municipal Special Officer and District Collector D.K. Balaji to address the issue on priority. Speaking at a media conference on Wednesday, he said that despite changes in governments over the past 15 years, the city has been receiving drinking water only once every two days, and that too for just 30 minutes, causing severe inconvenience to the public. He questioned the justification of the municipal corporation collecting Rs.100 per month per tap while supplying water only for about 15 days. Balaji pointed out that after the construction of the Tarakaturu drinking water reservoir during the tenure of former MLA Perni



Krishnamurthy, successive MLAs and MPs failed to develop additional water storage facilities in line with the growing population. He noted that water from the Tarakaturu tank is also being supplied to Pedana and Machilipatnam rural areas, making it insufficient for the city's needs. He criticized the authorities for their failure to meet the drinking water requirements of the city and said that neither the ruling party nor the opposition has taken serious initiative on the issue. He questioned why press meets are not held on such essential public concerns instead of less important

matters. Balaji appealed to District Collector D.K. Balaji, known for his integrity, to take immediate action to resolve the drinking water problem. He also suggested that Machilipatnam MP Vallabhaneni Balashowry should secure special funds from the central government to provide a permanent solution to the issue. Additionally, he urged the development of cremation and burial grounds at the Hindu crematorium on Bypass Road, the Christian burial ground at Bandaru Fort, and the Muslim burial ground at Buttayyapeta using government funds.

## Human service is... Madhava service Annadanam at GGH

Kakinada April 8: Annadanam was organized with the spirit of Manava Seva Madhava Seva. A huge food donation was held at Kakinada Government General Hospital on Raja Rammohana Roy Road on Wednesday. On this occasion, the organizers said that they organized a food donation program for the poor people and the relatives of GGH patients as an inspiration to serve their fellow man. They said that 350 people participated in the food donation program. Many congratulated those who organized food donation program for the poor. Kadali Shekhar, Katta Venkat, Gollapally Kishore Kumar, Chelluboina Sai from Ramachandrapuram, Kudupudi Pattabhi, Guthula Prasad, District President of BC Employees Association Venkatesh, NRIs from Kuwait Injeti Nagaraju were present in this program. Indu Venkata Reddy, Nagendra, Gubbala Venkata Subbarao, Ravishree Food Yanamada and others participated.

## Students Should Aim for Higher Goals: District Collector D.K. Balaji



By Our Staff Reporter Machilipatnam, Apr 8: District Collector D.K. Balaji encouraged students to study well and strive to achieve higher positions in life. On Wednesday afternoon, the Collector visited Madicherla village in Bapulapadu mandal of Gannavaram constituency and conducted a surprise inspection at the upper primary school. He also inspected the village pond and interacted with irrigation association leaders to understand water availability in the area. At the school, the Collector interacted with Class 9 students and asked whether they wake up early in the morning and focus on their studies. He advised them that studying only two to three months before exams creates stress and affects performance. Instead, he suggested that students should develop the habit of waking up at 5 a.m.

daily and studying regularly. He also recommended writing at least one page on any topic every day to improve knowledge and expression skills, stating that such habits would help students reach higher positions in life. He emphasized that education should not be limited to scoring marks but should focus on gaining knowledge. Later, the Collector instructed volunteers to provide special attention to academically weak students in the primary school. He asked them to ensure regular practice in reading, writing, and comprehension in Telugu and English, along with mathematics, which would help bring noticeable improvement in students. Subsequently, the Collector inspected the village pond and discussed its condition with irrigation leaders, including DC Chairman Devineni Satyanarayana and Water Users

Association President Putta Jaganmohan Rao. They informed him that the pond, which once spread across 98 acres, has now reduced to 72 acres due to encroachments. They requested restoration of the pond bund and removal of encroachments. Responding immediately, the Collector directed officials to strengthen the pond bund, remove encroachments, and take up desilting works under employment guarantee schemes. Officials including DWAMA PD Shiva Prasad, Water Resources SE Gunakar, Groundwater Department DD Vijayavardhan, AD Bindu Sri, Tahsildar Murali Krishna, MPDO Jogeswara Rao, MEOs Vageswara and Ram Balasingh, Headmistress Mythili, volunteers Meghana and Swathi, along with farmers and villagers, participated in the program.