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## Trump Says Iran "About To Surrender", 24 Hours Later New Leader Vows Revenge



**Washington / New Delhi:** US President Donald Trump told G7 leaders that Iran is "about to surrender" during a virtual meeting on Wednesday, Axios reported. On the call, Trump bragged

about the results of Operation Epic Fury and told allies that he "got rid of a cancer that was threatening us all". Trump claimed that Iran cannot announce the surrender because "Nobody knows who is

the leader." According to the report, G7 leaders urged Trump to end the war soon and emphasised that the Strait of Hormuz must be secured. Regarding the strategic chokepoint, Trump said

that the situation is improving and that commercial ships will be able to resume operations in the area. However, explosive-laden Iranian boats attacked two fuel tankers in Iraqi waters, setting them ablaze and killing one crew member the same night.

### Iran Shows No Signs Of "Surrender"

Moreover, Iran shows no signs of backing down, and 24 hours later, Iran's new Supreme Leader, in his first public statement, said that his country will seek revenge for the US-Israeli strikes. "We will not forgo avenging the blood of the martyrs."

## PM Modi unveils Rs 19,680 Crore projects, Hands land pattas to Assam tea workers

**Guwahati:** Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Friday dedicated to the nation and laid the foundation for projects worth around Rs 19,680 crore, with focus on infrastructure and energy sectors. He also launched the distribution of land pattas to tea workers of Assam in garden housing lines, and released the 22nd instalment of the PM-KISAN scheme for over 9.3 crore farmers across the country. PM Modi had reached Guwahati earlier in the day on a two-day visit to the poll-bound state, his fourth in as many months.



## No Shortage Of Fertilisers, Adequate Provision Made: Nirmala Sitharaman



**New Delhi:** Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Friday said the Rs 1 lakh crore Economic Stabilisation Fund will give fiscal headroom to allow India to respond to global headwinds. Replying to the debate on the second batch of supplementary demands for grants in the Lok Sabha, she said the fund will act as a buffer to absorb shocks arising due to unforeseen global challenges like the current one in West Asia. "The Rs 1 lakh crore Economic Stabilisation Fund will give fiscal headroom to allow India to respond to global headwinds," she said. Through the second batch of supplementary demands, the government sought Lok Sabha approval for spending a gross Rs 2.81 lakh crore extra in the current fiscal year. With additional receipts of Rs 80,000 crore budgeted for the current fiscal year, the net additional cash spending will be Rs 2.01 lakh crore.

## "Domestic Production Up 30%" : Centre Says No Need For LPG Panic Booking

**New Delhi:** The demand pattern for cooking gas in the country has changed, showing massive panic buying in view of the ongoing US-Israel war against Iran, the government has said, underscoring that domestic production of LPG has gone up by 30 per cent. All 100 per cent of the supply is going to domestic consumers.



### First Kidney Transplant Surgery Successfully Performed in Palasa

**From Our Staff Reporter Srikakulam, March, 13:** The first kidney transplant surgery conducted at the Kidney Research Center in Palasa was successful. Doctors performed a kidney replantation surgery on a young woman named Hemashree. After the surgery was completed, Goutu Sirisha visited and met Hemashree and her father. Speaking on the occasion, MLA Goutu Sirisha said that the Uddanam region has been suffering from a serious kidney disease problem for many years. She expressed happiness that the kidney transplant surgery was successfully performed in Palasa on Friday. She said the patient was a poor young woman from a remote area who had been suffering from kidney problems, and that a team of renowned doctors came together to perform the surgery. Sirisha stated that the doctors involved in the surgery have given new hope to people suffering from kidney disease in the Uddanam region. She thanked the coalition government for keeping its promise regarding medical support and facilities. The MLA recalled that during the cyclone in 2018, N. Chandrababu Naidu stayed in Palasa for 18 days to monitor relief efforts. At that time, when donors came forward to provide financial help for cyclone relief, he suggested that the funds be used to establish a Kidney Research Center in the region, which later became a reality.

# CM announces Rs 20000 annual support to farmers

**From Our Staff Reporter Vijayawada, March, 13:** Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu assured that the state government will support farmers. He said that currently Rs.6,000 is being given to each farmer, and Rs.20,000 is deposited annually into farmers' bank accounts. He explained that while the central government provides Rs.6,000, the state government contributes Rs.14,000. On Friday, the Chief Minister participated in the Annadata Sukhibhava-PM Kisan Yojana program in Surampalli village in the Gannavaram Assembly constituency of Krishna district and released Rs.6,000 to farmers' bank accounts under the scheme. Speaking on the occasion, Chandrababu Naidu said farmers are also adopting technology. He mentioned that several programs are being implemented for farmers and that irrigation water is being supplied to crops on time.

He explained that through the Pattiseema Lift Irrigation Project, water from the Godavari River has been linked with the Krishna River. He stated that Narendra Modi released funds for farmers across the country from Assam, showing the power of technology. The funds released by the central government and the state government are now directly credited into farmers' bank accounts, which farmers can immediately verify. The Chief Minister said that before the elections, he and Pawan Kalyan traveled across the state promising to rebuild Andhra Pradesh and support farmers. He said several welfare schemes were promised, including the "Super Six" schemes, and later the Bharatiya Janata Party joined them to form the National Democratic Alliance. He also remarked that people should remember how the previous government allegedly deceived them.

Chandrababu Naidu said that Rs.6,000 is being deposited into the accounts of 4,685,000 farmers in the third installment. He emphasized that together the central and state governments are providing Rs.20,000 in total to farmers annually. He added that he himself comes from a farmer's family and grew up in a middle-class household. His aim, he said, is to ensure that farmer families do not face hardships. He noted that a separate budget for agriculture was introduced during the united Andhra Pradesh period. In Krishna district, crops suffered due to delayed water supply and cyclones, but after the state's bifurcation, water from the Godavari River was supplied to the Krishna Delta through the Pattiseema project, helping protect crops. He said Andhra Pradesh is currently facing heavy debt and that the state's image had been affected, making investments difficult.



However, he explained that the government has been gradually solving problems over the past 20 months. The Chief Minister said the government procured 4.7 million metric tonnes of paddy and credited payments to farmers' accounts within 24 hours. During natural disasters,

the government provided input subsidies, including: Rs.300 crore as compensation, Rs.500 crore for price stabilization. He said neighboring states like Tamil Nadu and Karnataka did not provide such financial support to farmers. He added that the government also supported

tobacco, onion, tomato, and cocoa farmers with financial assistance and minimum support prices when crops were affected. A total of Rs.1,338 crore was provided to farmers who suffered losses. The government has prepared Vision 2047, aligning with the "Viksit Bharat 2047" vision under Prime Minister Modi. Chandrababu Naidu expressed confidence that the "Swarna Andhra 2047" goal will be achieved. He said that India will complete 100 years of independence in 2047, and by then both the country and the state should reach top positions in development.

## First AI Campus in India to be Built: BITS Pilani Representatives

**From Our Staff Reporter Amaravati, March, 13:** Representatives of Birla Institute of Technology and Science, Pilani informed Nara Lokesh that the BITS Pilani campus being constructed in Amaravati will become the first AI-focused campus in India. They explained that the campus will offer advanced technology programs, along with courses related to agriculture, climate studies, and healthcare. The representatives discussed these plans during a meeting with Minister Lokesh at his residence in Undavalli on Friday. Minister Lokesh reviewed the construction plans prepared by BITS



Pilani and expressed satisfaction. He asked the representatives to take steps to start the Amaravati campus as soon as possible. The BITS team explained that the campus will offer courses in: Artificial Intelligence (AI), Data Science, Robotics, Computational Linguistics, Cyber-

Physical Systems Investment and Capacity BITS representatives said the Amaravati campus will be developed in two phases and will provide opportunities for 7,000 students. They also announced that Rs.1,000 crore will be invested in the project over the next five years. The campus is being developed in line with the vision of Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu, focusing on next-generation technologies. Construction work has already started, and the campus will follow environmentally friendly practices, including: Green buildings, Renewable energy usage. Representa-

tives Siddhartha Banerjee, N. Chennaveer, and B. S. Sahani were among those who met Minister Lokesh. Later, the BITS representatives also met P. Narayana and explained the design plans for the buildings in the Amaravati campus. They informed the minister that the first phase of admissions will begin within two and a half years. The BITS campus will be built on 70 acres of land along the Seed Axis Road between Mandadam and Venkatapalem in Amaravati. The institution plans to develop the project in three phases as an AI+ campus under the Birla Institute of Technology and Science (BITS).

## Poor Quality Midday Meal for Students; Minister Nara Lokesh Expresses Anger

**From Our Staff Reporter Amaravati, March, 13:** Students of a government school in Devunicheruvu complained that they had been receiving poor-quality midday meals for the past three months. According to the students, the food served was not of acceptable quality, and they threw the meal into a dustbin in protest. The incident sparked significant discussion and concern locally. Reacting to the incident, Nara

Lokesh expressed strong displeasure. He said he had received information that the food served to students at the school was of poor quality, and immediately instructed officials to take prompt action on the issue. Minister Lokesh announced that a three-member committee has been formed to investigate the incident thoroughly. The committee will conduct a detailed inquiry and submit a

report, based on which strict action will be taken against those responsible. The minister also said that initial actions have already been taken, including: Changing the agency responsible for supplying the food Taking action against the school's headmaster. He emphasized that the government will ensure strict measures so that such incidents do not happen again in the future.

## EDITORIAL

### 'SIR' vibes before the election

After the Election Commission of West Bengal conducted the Special Comprehensive Voter List (SIR) revision, about 63 lakh people were removed from the lists due to various irregularities. This has led to massive protests from voters. Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee herself took up the issue and brought it to the notice of the Supreme Court. She even staged a dharna on the issue till yesterday. The Supreme Court has set up appellate panels to hear petitions against the Election Commission. The Supreme Court has ordered the services of former High Court judges to be used to conduct these panels. While 63 lakh people were removed from the final voters' lists on February 28, only 10 lakh complaints were received. It has become questionable whether the appellate panels will complete the examination of these 10 lakh complaints before the upcoming assembly elections in two months. One would believe that even a cursory examination of these complaints would take enough time to take a decision. Even if the Supreme Court and the Election Commission jointly request more judges from more states to strengthen this system, it is estimated that it will take a long time.

According to the new appellate procedure being formulated by the Supreme Court, it will take a long time to fully hear each appeal on its merits and decide. To be honest, even if the Supreme Court and the Election Commission are racing to complete this process before the elections, it is not possible to say whether it will be completed or not due to the lack of time. In this situation, why is there such a rush to complete this process anyway? To be honest, there is no law that strictly states that voting should be held only after the revision of such lists is completed. Only those who are recognized as per the verdict of the appellate or the Election Commission will be allowed to vote in this election. The Election Commission is making it clear that a sanctioned document containing all the entries in the voters' list is mandatory. It has also explained that one should be a legal citizen of this country. No political party or citizen or even the courts can deny this. The voters' lists have been revised eight times in the country since independence. In fact, the objections being raised now were never raised in the past. In all the previous cases, the lists were prepared smoothly and promptly. Voters did not face any major obstacles. On this occasion, it is worth mentioning what the Greek mathematician Euclid once said to the Egyptian king Ptolemy I. However, Euclid categorically declared that there is no such thing as a royal road to learning geometry. Similarly, now the Supreme Court and the Election Commission are only concerned with giving citizens the right to vote, and finding ways to do so would be a waste of time. The Supreme Court, the Election Commission and the appellate systems are all trying to provide the most sacred right of citizens to vote. It should be noted that there is no such thing as a royal road to democracy. However, in this process, justice for citizens takes some time. Therefore, one needs to be patient. Whoever sits in high positions in the Election Commission or the Supreme Court and other institutions, their duty is to facilitate the people to exercise their right to vote. No one has the authority to undermine anyone's right to vote. Freedom is a birth-right for Indians. They have achieved this after enduring many hardships and losses for a long time. No one has the right to stand in the way of that achievement. That is why eligible voters must exercise their right to vote. If someone does not have the right to vote, they are considered dead. Such a situation should not arise. The disappearance of 60 lakh people from the list in West Bengal has become a hot topic of discussion. The Election Commission has clarified that currently only 7.04 crore voters in that state have been declared net voters. That is why appellate tribunals are being formed with former High Court judges to consider those who are not on the list as within the jurisdiction and resolve their petitions. It is not possible to say whether the elections in Bengal will be held after this process is over or whether it will be completed before then. Meanwhile, the opposition is raising the flag that Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar is siding with the ruling BJP in this voter list revision process. They are preparing to introduce a resolution in Parliament to remove him from that post. To give a notice in the Lok Sabha for the impeachment of the CEC, like the Lok Sabha Speaker, at least 100 members and 50 members in the Rajya Sabha must sign. It is understood that signatures have been collected from about 120 Lok Sabha members and 60 Rajya Sabha members. This will be the first time that a no-confidence notice has been given in Parliament against the CEC.

# Mojtaba's First Message Makes It Clear: Iran Won't Give An Easy 'Exit' To Trump

The appointment of Mojtaba Khamenei as Iran's new Supreme Leader was effectively Iran's slap in the face to US President Donald Trump and Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, who had insisted that Iran's next leader should somehow meet their approval. Delusional? Without a doubt. The message from Iran was loud and clear: Iran's leadership will be decided in Tehran, not in Washington or Tel Aviv. For weeks, rhetoric from Washington suggested that the US believed it could reshape Iran's political future through force. President Trump had even mused publicly about influencing who might succeed Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, who was assassinated by US-Israeli forces in the first wave of attacks on Iran. That illusion collapsed the moment Iran's clerical establishment closed ranks and elevated Mojtaba Khamenei to the most powerful position in the Islamic Republic. In effect, the message from Tehran was, 'You do not decide Iran's leadership. We do.' The sudden emergence of Mojtaba Khamenei from relative obscurity has profound geopolitical implications, not just in the Middle East but across the world. His appointment marks a hardening moment for Iran and perhaps for the wider Middle East.

### The First Signal From Tehran

There are reports that the new Supreme Leader was injured in the attacks that killed his father, along with several members of his family, including his wife, mother and sister. He has yet to make a public appearance. That absence prompted Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to mock him publicly (at a press conference yesterday) and even hint at possible action against him, similar to what happened to his father. But on

Thursday, Iranian state television broadcast a statement attributed to Mojtaba Khamenei. It was read out by a presenter rather than delivered by him personally. Whether this was due to security concerns or injuries sustained during the attacks remains unclear. But the message itself left little room for doubt. Iran, he said, would avenge the blood of its martyrs. And the country would continue to use the "lever" of blocking the Strait of Hormuz. That single phrase immediately captured the attention of governments and markets around the world. Roughly a fifth of the world's oil supply passes through the narrow waterway that is the Strait of Hormuz. By invoking the possibility of closing it, Mojtaba Khamenei was delivering a stark strategic reminder: Iran may be under attack, but it still holds powerful levers capable of imposing immense economic costs on its adversaries.

### The Long Memory of War

Mojtaba Khamenei belongs to a generation shaped by conflict and siege. Born in 1969, he grew up in the aftermath of Iran's 1979 revolution and came of age during the brutal Iran-Iraq war. That war remains etched deeply in Iran's collective political psyche. The conflict lasted eight years and claimed hundreds of thousands of lives. It was also fought with the open support of Western powers for Saddam Hussein's Iraq. For Iran's leadership, the lesson from that period was clear: in moments of existential crisis, the country must rely primarily on its own resilience. This historical memory explains much of Iran's worldview today. Iranian leaders often interpret external pressure not as limited tactical manoeuvring but as part of a broader attempt to dismantle the Islamic Republic. The assassination of Ali Khamenei

has reinforced that perception dramatically. If the US and Israel believed the killing of Iran's Supreme Leader would weaken the regime or open the door to internal collapse, the early signs suggest they were highly mistaken and perhaps poorly advised by their intel-heavy advisers. Instead, it has strengthened the narrative of resistance - even 'martyrdom' - that has sustained the Islamic Republic for decades.

### The Hardening Of Tehran's Stance

The elevation of Mojtaba Khamenei suggests that Iran's leadership is preparing for a long-term confrontation, a fight to the end, if you like. Unlike reformist figures who occasionally emerged in Iran's political system, Mojtaba is widely viewed as closely aligned with the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps, perhaps the most important organisation in Iran today. The Revolutionary Guard has long advocated a strategy of resistance and deterrence against external pressure. It emphasises asymmetric warfare, proxy alliances and economic leverage. Mojtaba's first statement already reflects this thinking. The reference to the Strait of Hormuz signals that Iran intends to remind the world of the strategic costs of continued attacks. Broadly speaking, the new Supreme Leader is unlikely to grant Trump the easy exit that some of his policymakers are quietly hoping for. In Iran's political culture, the assassination of a supreme leader demands a response, a do-or-die response. Backing down quickly would risk undermining Mojtaba's legitimacy at home and weakening his authority among the hardline institutions that underpin the regime. For that reason, Iran under his leadership is most likely to pursue a calibrated strategy of retaliation -



not necessarily a direct conventional war with its adversaries, but a series of actions designed to impose pressure and demonstrate resilience. Therefore, under him, the so-called axis of resistance, such as the Houthis, Hezbollah and Hamas, will continue to get Iran's material and personnel support

### The End of Illusions

The appointment of Mojtaba Khamenei, therefore, marks more than a succession within Iran's political hierarchy. It symbolises the beginning of a potentially more dangerous phase in the confrontation between Tehran, Washington and Tel Aviv. We all know that external force rarely produces the political outcomes that its architects imagine. Instead, it often strengthens the very forces it sought to weaken. In Tehran today, the rise of Mojtaba Khamenei embodies precisely that dynamic. A leader - a hardliner - thrust into power by crisis, hardened by war, and now determined to demonstrate that Iran will not bend under pressure. The only way out would have been to surrender or go for a ceasefire. But under Mojtaba Khamenei, this is unthinkable. Instead, Iran is likely to make its retaliation harder and more painful. We can already see, despite heavy censorship, pictures of destruction in Tel Aviv, Jerusa-

lem, Dubai, Qatar, Kuwait and Saudi Arabia

### A Region on Edge

Iran's neighbours are watching the unfolding crisis with growing anxiety. Mojtaba Khamenei's warning on Thursday that countries hosting US forces could become targets places them in a deeply uncomfortable position. In the longer term, Mojtaba's hardline posture could reshape the regional balance of power. Gulf states may increasingly hedge their bets between Washington and Tehran rather than aligning fully with one side. Israel may face a more entrenched Iranian strategy built around proxies and asymmetric warfare. American military bases in the region could become persistent pressure points, while any attempt to weaken or fragment Iran could instead push the country into a prolonged cycle of confrontation with the West. Come what may, my view is that Iran will never surrender under Mojtaba Khamenei's command, as demanded by Trump and Netanyahu. The geopolitical consequences of that determination are only beginning to unfold. And the world may soon discover that destroying a government is far easier than reshaping a civilisation or making the region an island of peace and prosperity.

## What Happens If Saudi Arabia Really 'Asks' Pakistan To Go To War?

When Pakistan signed the Strategic Mutual Defence Agreement (SMDA) with the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in September last, its military-controlled regime never imagined that this agreement would soon become so onerous. Pakistani generals and politicians had convinced themselves and their public that Saudis would shower Pakistan with money and, in return, Pakistan would guarantee Saudi security while expanding its own political and diplomatic influence all over the Middle East. The way the Pakistanis sold this deal was that it was a recognition of their military prowess and that it was primarily directed against Israel, which had carried out an airstrike in Doha just days before Pakistan and Saudis signed the SMDA. There was some talk of Pakistan giving Saudi Arabia security assistance against the Houthis and other para-state and state actors.

### An Unexpected Turn

The Pakistanis, however, never imagined that their 'rent-for-hire' security services would be requisitioned against Iran. This was because Saudi Arabia and Iran were steadily improving their relations and putting their bitter rivalry, even enmity, aside. But Pakistan's too-clever-by-half calculations have caught them in a bind between the US-Israeli Operation Epic Fury (and Lion's Roar) on one side, and on the other, Iran's Operation Fatah Khyber. With Iran targeting Saudi Arabia among other Arab Gulf states that are allies of the US, Pakistan fears being called upon to fulfil its SMDA obligations towards Saudi Arabia, something it is reluctant to do because of its larger and long-term repercussions for Pakistan's own stability and security. Since the beginning of the conflict, questions have been raised about what role Pa-

kistan would play on the side of the Saudis, especially since Iran was lobbing missiles and drones at targets in the country. The Pakistanis claimed that it was their clear warning to Iran not to force their hand, which, ultimately, made Iran spare Saudi Arabia to some extent. Pakistan's Foreign Minister postured that Iran was so scared of Pakistan jumping into the fray to support the Saudis that while it launched multiple attacks on other Gulf countries - Kuwait, UAE, Oman, Bahrain and Qatar - it avoided targeting the Saudis. This was sold as a sort of satisfactory military and diplomatic solution for both Saudi Arabia and Pakistan.

### No Time For More War

At a time when Pakistan is battling two full-blown insurgencies in Balochistan and Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa, waging an undeclared war against the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan, contending with widespread civil disturbances with sectarian overtones after the killing of Iran's Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei, and trying to keep the political opposition at bay and manage a broken, bankrupt economy, the last thing Pakistan wanted would be to get embroiled in a wider Middle Eastern war, and that too along with Israel and the US against another Muslim country. The fact that the Arab states, including Saudi Arabia, are reluctant to declare war or even retaliate against Iran - they have all only tried to defend themselves against the Iranian missile and drone attacks - has created some space for Pakistan. After all, if Saudi Arabia was not ready to declare war on Iran, how could it expect Pakistan to do so on its behalf? The Saudi reluctance was, in part, a function of their vulnerabilities to Iran targeting their critical assets - refineries, oil fields, infrastructure. Pakistan, in their



view, was better-placed to open a second front on Iran's rear. But Pakistani analysts argued that the SMDA pact was for Saudi Arabia's defence and not for attacking another country. At the same time, Pakistani leaders were quick to sweet-talk the Saudis. Shahbaz Sharif told a gathering saying that he and Pakistan will be forever indebted to Saudi Arabia for assistance during its nuclear tests in 1998 and all the financial assistance that Saudi Arabia has bestowed on Pakistan. Shahbaz's spokesman declared in a TV interview that Pakistan will always stand with the Saudis, no matter what. These empty words are cold comfort for the Saudis, who expected Pakistan to step up to the plate when push came to shove from Iran. According to the Saudis, Iran has been firing missiles at them, which have been intercepted by Saudi air defence. While the damage has been limited so far, the fact remains that because Saudi Arabia has

been targeted by Iran, it obligated Pakistan to come to the latter's aid under SMDA. But Pakistan is conflicted between the benefits it could expect coming its way and the political and security fallout of opening yet another front against Iran when it is already engaged on multiple fronts against Baloch freedom fighters, Pakistani Taliban insurgents, Afghan Taliban Emirate, a restive Shia population incensed over the attacks on Iran and growing public frustration over rising inflation and economic distress.

### Hiding Behind Russia, China

The UNSC resolution against Iran, which was moved by Bahrain and co-sponsored by 135 countries, including Pakistan, could serve as a cover for Pakistan. Propagandists of the Pakistan military are putting a spin on their support for the resolution by hiding behind Russia and China, both of which abstained and did not

veto the resolution. The logic being given is that if Russia and China, both close to Iran, did not stand up for Iran, how could Pakistan?

### Iran's Growing Isolation

The resolution itself is a sign of Iran's total isolation. Its strategy of widening the conflict has a certain logic. Iran seems to have strategised that the Arabs have no stomach for a fight and will respond only non-kinetically to its attacks. The Iranian calculation is that if it can hold the entire global economy hostage for a long time, it could force its enemies to end the fight. If this means burning down the entire Middle East economy and the global economy, so be it. This is an asymmetric strategy combining low-cost weapon systems with high-value political and economic brinkmanship to raise costs to an unacceptable level for everyone. The problem is that the pain this Iran's strategy inflicts is not just on Gulf states but on the entire world.

## Tight Arrangements for Forest Clearances Needed for Tribal Hamlet Development: Collector Kritika Shukla



**Vijayawada, March 13 (Pen Power):** NTR District Collector Dr. G. Lakshmitha said that comprehensive arrangements have been made for the smooth conduct of Class 10 examinations scheduled from March 16 to April 1.

Addressing the media along with DEO L. Chandrakala at the Collectorate, he stated that 27,360 students (13,909 boys and 13,451 girls) will appear for the exams at 149

centers across the district. The exams will be held from 9:30 AM to 12:45 PM, and students will be allowed into centers from 8:30 AM. Mobile phones, digital watches, and other electronic devices are strictly prohibited, and all exam centers have been declared as "No Mobile Zones." Section 144 will be enforced, and photocopy shops within a 1 km radius of exam centers will remain closed. Students can avail free bus travel in RTC buses by showing their hall tickets. A district control room (9154970454) has also been set up to address any exam-related queries. DEO L. Chandrakala said the exams will be conducted with transparency and proper facilities such as furniture, electricity, and drinking water have been arranged. About 300 staff members have been appointed as chief superintendents and departmental officers. Special arrangements have also been made for 193 CWSN (Children With Special Needs) students, including scribes and ground-floor exam facilities.

## Five-Day Workshop on "Advanced Embedded Systems" at Aditya University

**Gandepalli, March 13 (Pen Power):** A five-day practical workshop on "Advanced Embedded Systems" was successfully conducted from March 9 to 13 for second-year engineering students by the Electronics and Communication Engineering (ECE) Department at Aditya University. The workshop, organized with the support of industry experts, aimed to enhance students' practical knowledge and technical skills in embedded systems and provide awareness of real-time industrial applications. During the program, students gained hands-on experience in embedded programming, hardware interfacing, and system debugging by working with various electronic components. The training focused on real-time applications and demonstrated how embedded technologies are used in smart systems and everyday electronic devices. A key highlight of the workshop was the hands-on learning approach, where students worked in teams to develop simple embedded projects and interactive games, improving their creativity, problem-solving abilities, and teamwork skills. The sessions were conducted



by Executive Trainer S. Ganesh, who shared his industry experience and practical insights into embedded system design. The program received support and encouragement from the university's senior administration and the School of Engineering leadership.

## International Conference Begins at Aditya University Forensic Department



**Gandepalli, March 13 (Pen Power):** The first International Conference on Forensic Science, Cyber Security and Digital Forensics began successfully at Aditya University on Friday. Over 500 experts, academicians, researchers and students from India and abroad participated in the event.

The conference was inaugurated in the presence of Deputy Pro-Chancellor Dr. M. Srinivasa Reddy and Vice-Chancellor Dr. M. B. Srinivas. Vice-Chancellor of India International University of Legal Education and Research, Goa, Prof. Dr. R. Venkata Rao delivered the keynote address on "From Crisis of Confidence to Restoration of Trust: Technology as an Enabler in Modern Criminal Justice and Investigations." He explained the growing importance of technology in modern criminal investigations. Forensic expert Ram Dhanabalan from Italy-based Amped Software spoke on "Deepfake Forensics and AI: Analyzing Digital Risks Alongside Amped Product Capabilities," highlighting the dangers of deepfake technology and forensic methods to detect it. Associate Professor Dr. Rachel Bolton-King from Nottingham Trent University, UK, addressed the topic "The Future of Forensic Science: Intelligence-led Investigations, Global Quality Standards and the Next Generation Workforce." The conference also featured research paper presentations and technical sessions, where students and researchers presented their findings. According to Associate Dean Vilas Anil Chavan, expert lectures and technical discussions will continue on the second day of the conference.

## Forest Clearances Needed for Tribal Hamlet Development: Collector Kritika Shukla

**Narasaraopet, March 13 (Pen Power):** Palnadu District Collector Kritika Shukla directed officials to ensure faster forest department clearances so that welfare and development schemes of the Central and State governments can reach remote tribal hamlets in the district. During a review meeting held at the S.R. Shankaran Video Conference Hall in the Collectorate on Friday, she stressed that schemes such as PM Jan Man, Jal Jeevan Mission and PM Surya Ghar should be implemented without delay. The Collector instructed the forest, revenue and other departments to work in coordination for projects including restoration of old power lines in forest areas, road construction under the Endowments Department and tourism development works. She also emphasized providing basic infrastruc-



ture in tribal habitations and completing necessary clearances quickly to avoid technical delays.

## Actress Regina Cassandra Unveils 'Drugs Vaddu Bro' Awareness Posters



**Srikakulam, March 13:** Actress Regina Cassandra unveiled anti-drug awareness posters titled "Drugs Vaddu Bro," "Nari Shakti," and "Shakti App" during a private event held on Palakonda Road in Srikakulam town. The programme was organized by the Srikakulam Two Town Police to create awareness against drug abuse. Speaking on the occasion, Regina Cassandra urged youth to stay away from drugs and adopt a healthy lifestyle. She also appealed to the public to cooperate in eliminating drug use from society and encouraged people to utilize police services through the Shakti App during emergencies. SI Lakshmi, police personnel, and local youth participated in the programme.

## Four Revenue Officials Suspended Over Land Mutation Irregularities



**Pen Power, Guntur, March 13:** District Collector A. Thameem Ansariya has ordered the suspension of four revenue officials, including the Tahsildar and Revenue Inspector of Tadikonda, over irregularities in a land mutation case. The action was taken after an inquiry found that the mutation process was carried out in violation of rules and with serious procedural lapses. The Collector warned that strict action would be taken against officials involved in such violations.

Those suspended include Tahsildar P. Meher Kumar, Revenue Inspector N. Hanumantha Rao, and Village Revenue Officers T. Brahmaiah (Tadikonda-3 Swarna village) and G. Rambabu (Tadikonda-4 Swarna village).

## Awareness Program on Electric Vehicles at Vignan Engineering College

**Visakhapatnam, March 13 (Pen Power):** An awareness program on Electric Vehicle (EV) technology was organized by the Department of Electrical and Electronics Engineering at Vignan Institute of Information Technology (Autonomous). The event began with a guest lecture and saw enthusiastic participation from second and third year students. D. Pradeep Kumar Reddy, Chairman and Managing Director of Athala Industrial Private Limited, Visakhapatnam, attended as the chief guest and delivered a lecture on the fundamentals of electric vehicles. He explained key components such as batteries, electric motors, power electronics, charging systems, and control units, and how these subsystems contribute to the efficient functioning of EVs. Students gained valuable insights into the rapid developments in electric mobility, eco-friendly transportation systems, and future career opportunities in the EV sector. The session also included an interactive discussion where students clarified their doubts. The program was coordinated by Dr. K. Venkata Nagaraju. Head of the EEE Department Dr. P. Sekhar and



faculty members encouraged students to enhance their knowledge of emerging technologies. Principal Dr. J. Sudhakar and Rector Dr. V. Madhusudana Rao appreciated the department for organizing the informative program and emphasized the importance of awareness about environmentally friendly technologies like electric vehicles.

## NTR District aims to be No.1 in Road Safety: Collector Dr. G. Lakshmitha



**Vijayawada, March 13 (Pen Power):** NTR District Collector Dr. G. Lakshmitha called upon all departments to work in coordination to reduce road accidents and make the district No.1 in road safety. He chaired the District Road Safety Committee (DRSC) meeting held at the Collectorate's Pingali Venkaiah Conference Hall on Friday. Officials informed that 1,105 road accidents occurred in the district last year, resulting in 373 deaths and 967 injuries, while 171 accidents and 58 deaths were reported in the first two months of this year. The Collector directed officials from transport, police, traffic, R&B, national highways, and Vijayawada Municipal Corporation to strengthen coordination and implement

effective measures to curb accidents. He noted that 38% of accidents involve two-wheelers and stressed the need for extensive awareness programmes. He also instructed officials to focus on 123 identified accident black spots, including 20 on NH-16, 38 on NH-65, and 10 on NH-30, and to take preventive measures such as installing speed breakers, signboards, warning boards, speed-limit boards, and preparing proposals for foot overbridges and underpasses. Police Commissioner S.V. Rajasekhar Babu said real-time traffic data is being analysed to improve traffic management in Vijayawada and to reduce road accidents and fatalities through coordinated efforts.

## Rs 24.56 Crore Cheques Distributed to Tribal Farmers



**Rampachodavaram, March 13:** Cheques worth ₹24.56 crore were distributed to 40,358 tribal farmers of Polavaram district under the Annadata Sukhibhava and PM-Kisan schemes at a programme held at the ITDA meeting hall in Rampachodavaram on Friday. Speaking on the occasion, MLA and Legislative Committee Chairperson urged tribal farmers to utilize welfare schemes introduced by the Central and State governments to achieve economic progress. She said farmers have already received ₹14,000 in two instalments, and ₹6,000 is

being credited as the third instalment.

State ST Commission Chairman, Commission member, and Polavaram Joint Collector attended the programme.

Officials stated that out of the total amount, ₹16.14 crore was released under Annadata Sukhibhava and ₹8.42 crore under the scheme. The cheque was symbolically handed over to farmers, and speeches of Prime Minister and Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister were played via live broadcast during the event.

## No Shortage of Cooking Gas in District: Collector Dr. G. Lakshmitha

**Pen Power, Vijayawada, March 13:** District Collector Dr. G. Lakshmitha clarified that there is no shortage of LPG cooking gas in the district and consumers need not worry. He warned that strict action will be taken against anyone attempting to create an artificial shortage or indulge in black marketing. After reviewing the situation with officials at the Collectorate on Friday, the Collector made a surprise visit to the Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOCL) bottling plant at Kondapalli in Ibrahimpatnam mandal. Officials informed him that adequate LPG cylinder stocks are available and supply is continuing smoothly. The Collector said the district requires about 16,000 cylinders per day, while around 25,500 cylinders are readily available at any given time. He also noted that the district has three bottling plants

of IOCL, BPCL and HPCL, with the capacity to bottle lakhs of cylinders daily. He urged the public not to believe rumors about LPG shortage and assured that



the district administration is continuously monitoring supply. Consumers facing any issues can contact the Collectorate Control Room at 9154970454. Strict action will be taken against agencies or individuals spreading panic or engaging in black marketing, he added.

## Teachers Should Work with Dedication for Holistic Development of Students



**Parvathipuram, March 13:** Joint Collector Yashwanth Kumar Reddy urged teachers to work with dedication for the holistic development of students and focus on improving their basic learning abilities. He was speaking at a meeting of headmasters held at the DVM High School premises on Friday. The Joint Collector reviewed various issues including the implementation of the mid-day meal scheme, progress of "Nadu-Nedu" works, and execution of government welfare programmes at the school level. He also instructed headmasters to conduct special classes for students in view of the upcoming annual examinations and pay special attention to slow learners. He emphasized that there should be no compromise in providing drinking water, toilets, and cleanliness in schools. District Education Officer P. Brahmaji Rao, Mandal Education Officers, headmasters, and education committee representatives attended the meeting.

## Will India LPG Crisis Hit IPL 2026? BCCI Breaks Silence: "Everything Is Alright"

The ongoing LPG crisis in India is unlikely to affect the upcoming Indian Premier League (IPL), according to a report. The US-Israel attacks on Iran and Tehran's retaliation have shut the Strait of Hormuz, a key sea route through which India gets the majority of its LPG imports from West Asian countries, including Saudi Arabia and Qatar. Concerns have been raised over the logistical and infrastructural challenges if tension escalates in the region. According to a report in India Today, while the IPL governing council is monitoring the situation closely, it has not taken any preemptive decisions.

"We cannot preempt the situation. We have to wait and watch. Everyone we have spoken to says things are under control. Hotels are saying the same, so we have to go by that for now," the official was quoted as saying in the report. The report added that while the situation is under control at the

moment, the organizers have a contingency plan in place to tackle the challenges.

"As of now, everything is alright. We will keep an eye on the situation. Why should we preempt and decide something now?" he said. However, the organizers see no immediate reasons to make changes to the schedule or arrangements. "We will definitely act as per the situation. If the situation demands that we do something, we will take the necessary steps," the official added. Aside from LPG concerns, travel logistics also remain a challenge, as seen during the recently concluded Men's T20 World Cup won by India. Zimbabwe, West Indies and South Africa were unable to leave immediately for home due to the conflict disrupting their flight routes. With their major layover destination in Dubai not available due to the conflict, Zimbabwe had to leave in three batches and reached home via Addis Ababa via Ethiopian Airlines. South



Africa and West Indies, meanwhile, were stuck in Kolkata before a charter flight was arranged to get them home via Johannesburg. Though Australia and New Zealand airspaces are unaffected, it remains to be seen if all foreign

players, coaches and broadcasters from the West Indies, South Africa and England will come to India for IPL 2026 considering the current situation and that most of them usually come via a stopover in Dubai.

## Senior National Table Tennis Championships begin in Indore

**Hyderabad:** India's leading paddlers will converge at the Abhay Prashal Stadium as the 87th UTT Inter-State Senior National Table Tennis Championships get underway from tomorrow at Indore, bringing together traditional powerhouses and ambitious state teams in one of the country's most prestigious domestic competitions. Memories of last year's dramatic finals in Surat remain vivid. The Petroleum Sports Promotion Board (PSPB) men produced a remarkable comeback to defeat the Railways Sports Promotion Board (RSPB) 3-2 after trailing 0-2, retaining the coveted Barna Bellak Cup. In the women's final, however, Railways turned the tables, edging PSPB by the same margin in a marathon encounter to lift the title. Once again, PSPB enters the men's team event as the strongest side on paper. With international stars Harmeet Desai and Manav Thakkar spearheading the squad and rising paddler Payas Jain adding depth, PSPB possesses formidable strength and experience. The presence of seasoned campaigner Sanil Shetty and youngster Divyansh Srivastava further enhances their balance, making them the team most likely to chal-

lenge for the crown. Their combined ranking strength also tops the field with 775 points from their best three players. Railways, last year's runners-up, will once again be among the principal challengers. With players such as Ronit Bhanja, Akash Pal, and the experienced Anirban Ghosh in their ranks, Railways could trouble even the strongest opponents. Having come agonisingly close to the title last year, they will be eager to go one step further this time. Among the state teams, West Bengal appears to be one of the strongest contenders, led by the talented Ankur Bhattacharjee. Telangana, powered by the technically sound Snehit Suravajjula, also has the potential to mount a serious challenge, while Delhi, Mizoram, and Uttar Pradesh field promising combinations capable of producing upsets during the competition. The women's team event promises an equally compelling contest. PSPB once again heads the strength chart with an impressive lineup that includes Syndrela Das, Swastika Ghosh, Yashaswini Ghorpade, and Sayali Wani, giving the institutional side tremendous depth and experience. Their top three play-



ers collectively account for 725 ranking points, the highest among all teams. The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) could pose the stiffest challenge, boasting the presence of international paddlers Diya Chitale and Sreeja Akula, both capable of turning matches single-handedly. Tamil Nadu also fields a strong unit with Yashini Sivashankar, Selena Deepti, and Nithyashree Mani, and Maharashtra and Haryana have balanced squads capable of pushing the favourites deep into the contest. Defending champions Railways will also be keen to retain their women's crown, banking on the experience of Sutirtha Mukherjee and the fighting spirit that carried them to victory last year. With 35 men's teams and 30 women's teams participating from across the

country, the championships promise several days of intense competition, showcasing both established stars and emerging talent eager to leave their mark on the national stage. Once the team events conclude, attention will shift to the marquee individual competitions, where the country's top paddlers will battle for the coveted singles crowns. The men's singles have attracted close to 500 entries, making it the largest-ever participation in the history of the Senior National Championships. The unprecedented numbers have prompted the competition department to expand the format, introducing a 256-player main draw. The preliminary phase will feature 156 groups, from which the qualifiers will advance to join the top-ranked 16 players who receive direct entry into the main draw.

## Avneet Kaur Raises Temperatures In Bold Backless Gown



Avneet Kaur, the 24-year-old Bollywood actress known for her work in TV serials, movies, and music albums, is once again trending on social media after sharing a new set of stylish photos. In the pictures, the young actress is seen wearing a stunning black backless gown that highlights an elegant and bold fashion statement. The gown has a deep open back design, giving the look a glamorous and modern vibe. Her simple hairstyle, soft makeup, and confident pose add more charm to the overall look. In one of the photos, the actress poses gracefully on a balcony, leaning slightly while showing off the dramatic backless cut of the gown. The lighting and dark background make the outfit stand out beautifully, while a small tattoo on her upper back adds a stylish personal touch. Another shot captures a cinematic moment where she stretches her arms wide while standing on a high balcony with a city view in the background, creating a powerful and artistic frame. The black gown flows perfectly with the mood of the photos, making the entire shoot look classy and dramatic. Last year, Avneet also appeared in the international project Love in Vietnam, which brought her more attention beyond Indian audiences.

## Mythri's Masterplan for Ustaad Hikes in Nizam?



In a significant development, production house Mythri Movie Makers has approached the Supreme Court of India regarding the ticket price hike rule in Telangana. The court has now temporarily stayed the interim orders issued earlier by the Telangana High Court, which had directed that if ticket prices were to be increased, the government must issue a G.O. at least 90 days before the film's release. This rule had created uncertainty for several big-ticket films, including Ustaad Bhagat Singh starring Pawan Kalyan. Until recently, trade circles believed that the makers might settle for normal ticket prices due to the restrictions. However, with the Supreme Court's stay on the rule, fresh buzz has started in the industry that the team could seek a moderate ticket price hike in the Nizam region. Mythri's legal move is now being seen as a strategic step to secure better box office prospects for the film. At the same time, sources suggest that the makers may still opt for a balanced approach. Instead of holding premiere shows the previous night, the team is reportedly considering benefit shows on the release day itself, as Dhurandhar premieres will take four and a half hours in the evening shows. Many feel it will be exhausting to watch Ustaad right after the Dhurandhar shows due to time constraints. With the film's release approaching, all eyes are now on whether the producers will officially request a price hike from the government and how the final release strategy unfolds. Pawan Kalyan, Raashii Khanna and Sreeleela play leads in Ustaad Bhagat Singh.