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Rahul Gandhi's Conduct Inappropriate In Parliament, Say 200 Ex-Officials



New Delhi: Hundreds of retired bureaucrats and former military officers have accused Leader of Opposition Rahul Gandhi of undermining the dignity and decorum of parliament and demanded an apology from the Congress leader. Questioning Gandhi's conduct, over 200 signatories noted in a joint letter that on March 12, Opposition MPs defied Speaker Om Birla's directives and staged a protest within the parliament complex. Last Thursday, several opposition MPs staged a protest near parliament's 'Makar Dwar' over LPG concerns; some were seen with mock-brick stoves and raising slogans. Hitting out, the BJP stressed the parliament

is not a picnic spot. Such actions undermine parliamentary decorum and weaken democratic institutions, especially when the Leader of Opposition is involved, the letter argued, emphasizing that parliament is the highest constitutional forum and its dignity must always be upheld. Gandhi and other opposition MPs were seen sitting on parliament stairs and having tea and biscuits, the signatories noted, an act that they described as inappropriate and contrary to parliamentary dignity. Parliament's stairs are not a venue for any form of political demonstration or symbolic activism, and such behaviour reflects a lack of respect for the in-

stitution, they contended. The letter stressed that parliament is regarded as the "Temple of Democracy," where serious deliberations on issues of national importance ought to take place. But such activities transform parliament into a stage for political theatrics rather than a forum for meaningful deliberation, it alleged. Gandhi's actions inside and outside parliament debate the standard of public discourse and disrupt parliamentary proceedings, thereby resulting in a wastage of public time and resources, the signatories contended. The retired officials expressed particular concern over his behaviour since he holds the constitutional office of the Leader of the Opposition.

Mamata Banerjee's 2026 Endgame - A 226 Target, And Kolkata Dare For Ex-Aide

Kolkata: West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee will take on her lieutenant-turned-arch-rival, BJP's Suwendu Adhikari, in south Kolkata's Bhabanipur constituency in the upcoming Assembly polls, making this poll battle the clash of the titans this election season. Banerjee, and her nephew and Trinamool general secretary, Abhishek Banerjee, announced the names of 291 candidates for the two-phase election to be held on

April 23 and April 29. She said Trinamool won't contest three seats in Darjeeling as part of an understanding with the Bharatiya Gorkha Prajatantrik Morcha. Interestingly, Mamata Banerjee won't contest from the Nandigram seat in Purba Medinipur district, where she lost to Adhikari last time. Trinamool has fielded Pabitra Kar, a close aide of Adhikari who recently switched to Banerjee's party, in Nandigram.



"Ideologically, No Place For Me In Current JD(U)": KC Tyagi

New Delhi: KC Tyagi, a founder-member of Nitish Kumar's Janata Dal United and once the party's face in Delhi, has unplugged himself from the party, ending a 40-year association. "Ideologically, there is no place for me in the current JD(U)," he told in an exclusive interview a day after Nitish Kumar got elected to Rajya Sabha. Asserting that the party has under-

gone a transformation, he said he is no longer able to have a dialogue with the people with whom he built the party. "To whom shall I voice my concerns," he said he often found himself wondering. The words reflect deep misgivings, dating back from the days when Nitish Kumar decided to end ties with the Grand Alliance and go back to the NDA fold. Since then, Tyagi has found himself out of sync and got sidelined within the party.

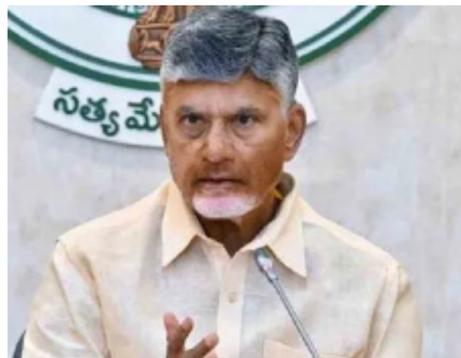


Tyaga Shilpam will inspire and motivate people: Madhav



From Our Staff Reporter Amaravati, March, 17: BJP State President P.V. Naraiah Reddy said that the installation of the Tyaga Shilpam (Sacrifice Memorial) in Amaravati will inspire and motivate the Telugu people. He stated, "Amaravati is a land of sacrifices. After a 58-day fast, Amarajeevi Potti Sriramulu sacrificed his life to achieve the formation of Andhra State. The farmers here sustained a protest for 1,631 days to uphold Amaravati." He added that the people elected the coalition government by defeating the alleged conspiracy of the previous government against Amaravati. Union Minister of State for Rural Development, Pemmasani Chandrasekhar, said that Andhra State was formed due to the sacrifice of Potti Sriramulu, and Amaravati has stood strong because of the sacrifices made by farmers.

"All set for the launch of Divyang Shakti scheme"



From Our Staff Reporter Amaravati, March, 17: The Stree Shakti scheme, which provides free bus travel for women in RTC buses, has been success-

ful. Now, the coalition government has introduced the Divyang Shakti scheme, offering free bus travel for persons with disabilities in the state.

Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu will launch this scheme Wednesday in Mangalagiri as an Ugadi festival gift. Deputy CM Pawan Kalyan, IT Minister Nara Lokesh, and AP BJP chief P.V.N. Madhav, among others, will participate in the program. After launching the scheme, CM Chandrababu Naidu, along with Pawan Kalyan, Lokesh, and others, will travel in an RTC bus along with persons with disabilities. Later, the Chief Minister will host a special meal for them. Across the state, MLAs will also launch the scheme in their respective constituencies on Wednesday. They will

travel in RTC buses with persons with disabilities and later share a meal with them. The government is launching this scheme as an Ugadi gift for 11.16 lakh persons with disabilities in the state. Through this scheme, around 12.76 lakh beneficiaries, including assistants accompanying them, will benefit. Assistants accompanying persons with disabilities will get a 50% ticket concession in RTC buses. The scheme applies to persons with disabilities having more than 40% disability. It has been extended to 4 to 21 categories of disabilities. The government will pay around ₹207 crore

annually to RTC for implementing this scheme. Persons with disabilities will be allowed to travel free in Stree Shakti buses under this initiative. So far, more than 52 crore women have traveled free under the Stree Shakti scheme. The government has spent over ₹1,826 crore on this scheme till now. December 3 is observed as International Day of Persons with Disabilities. On that occasion, CM Chandrababu had announced the free bus travel scheme for persons with disabilities. Accordingly, the coalition government is launching the Divyang Shakti scheme a day before the Ugadi festival.

Minister Lokesh's surprise inspection at school; officials rushed

From Our Staff Reporter Vijayawada, March 18: Allegations surfaced that students at a government school in Mylavaram were being served poor-quality food. In this context, Andhra Pradesh IT and Education Minister Nara Lokesh personally stepped in. On Tuesday, he conducted a surprise inspection at the Mandal Parishad Primary School in Taraka Ramanagar, Mylavaram of NTR district. During the visit, Minister Lokesh interacted with students and inquired about the quality of food being served.



He asked them, "Is the food bad every day, or was it just bad on that one day?" The students responded that the food at the school is generally good. Following this, the minister had a meal along with the students. Later, he also visited a nearby Anganwadi center and interacted with young children there. He then discussed the school's condi-

tion with the Mylavaram MEO (Mandal Education Officer) and the headmaster. It is reported that Lokesh also reviewed a report he had brought along and discussed it with the MEO. The minister visited the school without informing senior officials or party members in advance. It is said that even Mylavaram MLA Vasantha Krishna Prasad was not informed about the visit. Upon learning about Lokesh's visit, education department officials rushed to Mylavaram.

Development of municipalities in mission mode: Minister Narayana

From Our Staff Reporter Visakhapatnam, March 17: Minister Narayana visited Gajuwaka on Tuesday morning. Along with TDP State President Palla Srinivasa Rao, he inaugurated several development works. He inspected the garbage transfer station in the Gajuwaka zone and also inaugurated the Alluri Sitarama Raju Park in HB Colony of Ward 76. Speaking on the occasion, the minister said that garbage is being regularly transported to a waste-to-energy plant, eliminating the need for a dumping yard in the city. He added that a park with all facilities has been developed in Gajuwaka

over an area of 4.75 acres. The minister criticized the previous government, stating that it had completely weakened the municipal department. He alleged that taxes collected from people in municipalities were diverted for other purposes. He said that Rs.1,700 crore funds diverted by the previous government have still not been returned to municipalities. After the coalition government came to power, a "green channel" was introduced to ensure that municipal funds are spent within the municipalities themselves. He stated that tenders worth Rs.14,000 crore have been invited to provide drinking water to

every household in the state. The minister assured that clean drinking water will be supplied to every home in municipalities within the next two years. He further said that proper drainage systems are being constructed in several cities with an investment of Rs.5,000 crore. Additionally, another Rs.4,000 crore from the central government will be used for drinking water, drainage, roads, and street lighting. The minister emphasized that the government is moving forward in "mission mode" to develop municipalities. Regarding the Visakhapatnam Metro Rail project, he said that the central government has



asked the RITES organization to conduct a survey. Once the report is received,

discussions will be held with the Centre to take up the project.

"YSRCP in-charge creates ruckus; public in fear"

From Our Staff Reporter Bapatla, March 17: After the clear verdict given by voters in the recent Assembly elections, YSRCP not only lost power but also failed to secure even the status of the opposition. However, there are widespread claims that the aggressive behavior of its leaders has not reduced. Recently, party members created unrest once again in Bapatla district. In Repalle, local YSRCP in-charge Peetha Naga Mohan Krishna caused a commotion. He lashed out at municipal staff over the removal of party flex banners in the town. Accompanied by his supporters, he conducted a rally in Repalle with loud slogans. At the same time, YSRCP cadre tore down TDP flex banners found on the town roads. During the incident, the town CI (Circle Inspector) tried to intervene and stop the YSRCP workers. However, they behaved aggressively even towards him. The YSRCP in-charge reportedly warned the CI, saying he would "deal with him." As a result, a sense of fear and tension has spread among the residents of Repalle town.

EDITORIAL

Elections amid
impeachment of EC

Elections are scheduled to be held in four states of Assam, West Bengal, Kerala, Tamil Nadu and the Union Territory of Puducherry between April 9 and 29. However, this time, the elections will be held after the Comprehensive Voter List (CRL) revision process. Therefore, there is no scope for speculation about the vote share as usual. However, the predictions are not wrong. TMC in West Bengal, DMK in Tamil Nadu and CPI(M) in Kerala are not only the ruling parties at present, but they have also announced the impeachment of Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar. It is noteworthy that elections are being held in these states under the leadership of the Chief Election Commissioner. It is a litmus test to determine whether the governments ruling in three of the four states have any chance of success again. The CPM-LDF alliance has been in power in Kerala for the last ten years. The CPM is also in the lead in Assam. The Mamata Banerjee-led Trinamool Congress regime in Bengal has completed 15 years. West Bengal is known as a state where voters are not happy about the same government again and do not know how to vote for a change of administration in a hurry. In Kerala, the Congress-led UDF is the main opposition to the LDF, but at the national level, these two parties are allies. However, the respective governments are flagging that the special comprehensive revision process in the voter lists has become a problem for the states. They argue that this process is not adding voters and disqualifying genuine voters. According to the Election Commission rules, a person should register to vote in the constituency where he lives. If he lives somewhere else, this vote should be cancelled and registered there. However, this will not happen so smoothly. 100 percent registration in the voter list will never be possible.

There are allegations that even though the Election Commission staff has been re-registering voters door to door, some percentage of voters are not included in the list or incorrect details are entered. Election officials have assured that the additional voters list in West Bengal will be included in the final list after it is published. In other states and union territories, the total number of voters has been confirmed. In 2021, polling was held in West Bengal in 8 rounds. The Election Commission may have considered the complaints received from voters at that time. But now, since the elections will be concluded in two rounds, it remains to be seen how well the complaints received will be resolved. The Election Commission believes that there will be no possibility of political violence since there will be only two rounds. But nothing can be said in this regard. The Election Commission says that even if there are incidents of political violence, they will be resolved. The disputed voter lists will be available before the election day, April 23, in West Bengal. There is no question of re-implementing the old lists. Even though the voter list revision process was carried out systematically as per the rules, if anyone does not get the opportunity to vote, the election officials are assuring that the problem will be resolved and justice will be done. Now, the controversy over the hasty decision in voter registration should end. Now, will the Muslim votes in Assam, Bengal and Kerala remain stable as per the old lists or have they been removed in the process? The question arises. In fact, Muslim votes constitute a large percentage of the state's population in these three states. Muslim voters support the Bengal TMC and the Kerala UDF. Muslim voters support the opposition parties in Assam. Owaisi's AIMIM and Ajmal's AIUDF are leaning towards the opposition parties in Assam. Only if Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi shows the ability to prevent the BJP from infiltrating the Hindu community in the LDF in Kerala, there will be a chance of winning the elections. The BJP's saffron flag hoisting in the Thiruvananthapuram Corporation elections a few weeks ago seems to have given it some strength. It is not clear how much it will affect these assembly elections. The BJP is campaigning in Bengal to portray Muslim voters as infiltrators from Bangladesh. However, judicial officers from other states are coming to Bengal to identify these infiltrators and are wreaking havoc. The census authorities are finding that the Dalit community called Matua is a Bangladeshi national. These communities are being removed from the voter lists. Now there is a possibility of agitation over this. For this reason, the current voter list in Bengal cannot be considered as the final list. The final lists will be finalized only after the Supreme Court allows supplementary voter lists after all these discrepancies are removed. Meanwhile, the removal of 30 lakh women voters from the lists has also become a major problem. The fact that elections are being held amidst so many problems is a test for voters.

West Bengal: BJP's Grand Plan Behind
Fielding Suwendu Adhikari From 2 Seats

As elections draw nearer, West Bengal's political stage is becoming increasingly dramatic. In its history in the state, the BJP has never fielded a single candidate from two constituencies simultaneously. This time, however, an exception has been made: Leader of the Opposition Suwendu Adhikari is contesting not only from Nandigram but also against Mamata Banerjee in Bhabanipur. In its first list of candidates, the BJP announced Adhikari's name for Bhabanipur. Even before the official declaration, he had said, "Wherever Mamata Banerjee goes, I will reach there." After defeating her in Nandigram by a margin of 1,956 votes, he now seeks to contest from Bhabanipur and build momentum for the BJP.

Why The BJP Took The Risk

Why did Adhikari take such a risk? When his candidacy was announced, Mamata Banerjee declined to comment, while TMC spokesperson Kunal Ghosh mocked the decision. According to BJP sources, the central leadership pushed Adhikari to contest

from Bhabanipur. The initial proposal was for him to contest only from Bhabanipur, but he resisted. A defeat there would have been politically damaging, while refusing to contest could have exposed him to criticism for failing to match his rhetoric. Contesting both seats, therefore, became a strategic compromise - raising the political temperature regardless of the eventual outcome.

Goal 1: Confine Mamata Banerjee to Bhabanipur

One aim is to confine Mamata Banerjee's campaign to Bhabanipur. The constituency has a sizeable non-Bengali, Hindi-speaking, Marwari, Gujarati, and Bihari voter base, where the BJP has performed relatively well in the past. Although Banerjee won comfortably in the previous election, Adhikari's candidature elevates the contest into a high-profile Mamata-versus-Suwendu battle.

Goal 2: Project a Principal Challenger

Adhikari is not officially the BJP's chief ministerial candidate, and the party seems to have internal disagreements on



that question. The party doesn't have a single strong face against Mamata. By positioning Adhikari directly against Banerjee, the BJP signals that he is its principal challenger. With the backing of Amit Shah, this move strengthens his prominence within the party.

Goal 3: Creating Pre-Poll Momentum

The BJP leadership also believes the move will generate momentum ahead of the polls. Alongside developments such

as the change of Governor, revisions in voter rolls, and large-scale administrative transfers by the Election Commission, the party is creating administrative pressure. The TMC has alleged coordination between the Centre, the Governor, and the Election Commission. BJP sources describe it as a "war of nerves"; whether or not it succeeds, for the moment, it has succeeded in somewhat limiting the aggressive war cry of the Trinamool Congress. The

decision to field Suwendu Adhikari from both Nandigram and Bhabanipur is thus more than an electoral gamble. By turning the contest into a direct confrontation with Mamata Banerjee, the BJP aims to sharpen the narrative, energise its base, and raise the stakes of the election battle. Whether this strategy yields electoral gains will be decided by voters, but it has already intensified the campaign and reshaped the political narrative.

In Numbers: The Curious Reason Iran Eased
Down Its 'Drone Swarms' After March 9

The recent Iranian strike campaign against the United Arab Emirates (UAE) has largely been viewed through images of drones striking skyscrapers and residential buildings. But it can also be understood through the dataset emerging from daily interception reports. Beginning on February 28, Iranian forces have launched nearly 1,800 drones and missiles towards the UAE, according to compiled data and interception timelines based on the daily releases shared by the UAE's Ministry of Defence. While interception rates remained high and protected key locations, a closer examination of the data reveals a structured operational campaign. The pattern suggests that Iran's objective was not necessarily infrastructure destruction but imposing economic and operational strain on advanced air-defence networks. Based on the data compiled, we can bucket the strike pattern broadly into three distinct phases: an initial saturation attack, a sustained drone attrition campaign, and a sudden decline in attack intensity.

Phase 1: Shock Saturation

The campaign opened with massive waves of projectiles on February 28 and March 1.

On February 28, approximately 346 incoming drones and missiles were detected, including 137 ballistic missiles and more than 200 drones.

The following day saw an even larger wave of 362 projectiles, the highest of the campaign. This opening phase bears the hallmarks of reconnaissance-by-fire, a tactic used to map defensive systems by forcing them to respond. Large multi-weapon combinations can force the defending nation to activate radars, deploy interceptors, and thereby reveal its response patterns. The heavy use of ballistic missiles in this opening phase is particularly notable. Ballistic weapons are one of the most valuable assets in Iran's repertoire and their early deployment served both a psychological and operational purpose.

Phase 2: The Drone Swarm Campaign

After the initial shock phase, the nature of the attacks changed. Between March 2 and March 8, the number of incoming threats

stabilised at roughly 120-160 projectiles per day. However, the composition shifted dramatically toward drones. Across this period, drones accounted for nearly 90% of incoming threats, while ballistic missile launches dropped to single digits on most days. This shift reveals the core logic of the campaign: drone swarm saturation. Iranian Shahed-type drones are relatively inexpensive compared with the sophisticated air-defence missiles used to intercept them. Estimates place the cost of these drones at roughly USD 20,000 to USD 50,000 per unit, while the defending interceptor missiles can cost USD 3-6 million for Patriot systems and up to USD 12 million for THAAD interceptors. This asymmetry forms the economic centre of the strategy. Analysts estimate that Iran spent USD 11-27 million producing the drones used in one wave of attacks, while the defending side spent hundreds of millions of dollars on interceptors to destroy them. Across the broader campaign, the UAE may have spent between USD 1.45 billion and USD 2.28 billion on air-defence responses, compared to USD 177 million to USD 360 million worth of Iranian drones and missiles. In other words, the defender may have spent five to 10 times more money defending than the attacker spent attacking.

Phase 3: Sudden Drop in Attack Intensity

The campaign entered a third phase with an abrupt decline in attack volume beginning on March 9.

Incoming threats fell sharply:

March 8: 134
March 9: 33
March 10: 27
March 11: 52
March 12: 36

Several factors could explain this shift. One possibility is that launch infrastructure was disrupted, either through airstrikes or covert operations targeting Iranian launch sites and drone facilities, which we have seen happen. Another is that the early waves depleted forward-positioned drone stocks, forcing a temporary pause while logistics were reorganised. A third possibility is strategic restraint. Iran may have sought to demon-



strate its ability to sustain drone pressure without triggering a wider regional war.

Defensive Performance

Despite all this, the UAE's defensive systems appear to have performed effectively. Across most days of the campaign, interception rates remained between 95 and 99%, based on the data compiled here, suggesting the successful operation of a layered defence network likely involving systems such as THAAD, Patriot PAC-3, and shorter-range anti-drone defences. But, incoming projectiles will penetrate. Around 60 projectiles did penetrate and strike the UAE territory or nearby areas, representing a penetration rate of approximately 3-4%. In the context of things, this is a strong defensive outcome.

The Temporary Dip in Interception Rates

One of the more interesting signals in the data appears later in the campaign. On March 9 and March 10, the UAE's interception rates dipped to roughly 88%, the lowest levels recorded during the attack window, even if the absolute number of successful penetrations remained relatively small (the UAE's defence ministry stopped publishing interception rate data after March 11). Also, during these same days, the number of incoming threats from Iran also collapsed as attack volumes fell from over 130 projectiles per day to fewer than 30. Data indicate a more nuanced explanation for this drop in the UAE's interception rates, possibly related to

a change in attack tactics from Iran. Smaller groups of drones are often used to test air defences. Unlike large swarms, they are harder to detect and can approach from different directions or at lower altitudes. Based on military and warfare doctrine and similar events in the past, it looks more likely that Iran may have shifted to 'probing attacks' to identify gaps in the UAE's air-defence network. Each attack, whether intercepted or not, provides valuable data on where the system is strongest and where it may be vulnerable.

Aviation Disruption

Even with high interception rates, the attacks produced measurable disruption to UAE aviation activity. Flight data indicates that Dubai International Airport (DXB), one of the busiest airports in the world, experienced sharp reductions in daily flights during the peak attack period. Daily traffic fell from around 1,060 flights before the conflict to around 800, with brief periods of steeper declines when airspace restrictions were imposed. Other major aviation hubs within the UAE also experienced disruption. Abu Dhabi International Airport saw traffic fall to roughly half of normal levels at certain points, while Al Maktoum International Airport experienced traffic fluctuations as flights were diverted. These disruptions show an often-overlooked effect of drone warfare: even intercepted attacks can impose economic and

logistical costs by forcing temporary airspace closures. For a country whose economy relies heavily on tourism, aviation and global connectivity, even short-term disruptions can carry symbolic and financial implications.

A Campaign of Pressure, Not Destruction

Looking at all of the available data, one can safely surmise that the Iranian strike campaign thus far has not been designed to destroy UAE infrastructure. Instead, it appears to represent a coercive signalling operation built around economic attrition. The attack pattern suggests three overlapping objectives:

Demonstrating the ability to strike Gulf economic centres

Forcing expensive air-defence responses

Testing the resilience of regional missile-defence networks and weaknesses

Drone swarms have increasingly become a tool of strategic pressure rather than outright destruction. Their ability to impose disproportionate costs on defenders may reshape the dynamics of conflict in the Gulf. For the UAE and its partners, the lesson is clear: advanced missile-defence systems remain highly effective, but they are economically vulnerable to saturation by cheap unmanned systems. For Iran, the campaign underscores the strategic value of mass-produced drones capable of stressing even the most sophisticated air-defence networks in the region.

Free Bus Travel for Persons with Disabilities from Today



Rajamahendravaram, March 17: District Collector announced that free bus travel for persons with disabilities will be launched from Wednesday at 11:30 AM under the Divyangashakti scheme implemented by the state government. During a teleconference held at the Collector's camp office with officials from various departments, the Collector directed authorities to make necessary arrangements. The scheme will be formally launched at the state level by Chief Minister, who will also travel in a bus along with persons with disabilities. In the district, buses will start from locations suggested by local MLAs in eight constituencies. Officials have been instructed to identify 60 to 80 persons with disabilities in each constituency and arrange the programme in two batches. After the bus journey, food will be provided and local MLAs will participate in a community lunch with beneficiaries in their respective areas. A similar programme will also be held at the District Collectorate. Officials from the Welfare Department for Persons with Disabilities, RTC, DRDA, MEPMA, municipal, police, education and information departments participated in the review meeting.

Government Support for Farmers: Minister Gummidi Sandhyarani

Parvathipuram, March 17: Andhra Pradesh Minister for Women & Child Welfare and Tribal Welfare, said the government is committed to supporting every farmer and strengthening the economic condition of tribal families. She emphasized that promoting livestock will increase rural employment and farmers' income. The minister attended the "Rythanna Meekosam - Mega Dairy Cattle Distribution" programme held at Ammalavasa village in Pachipenta mandal, along with District Collector Dr. N. Prabhakar Reddy. Under the scheme, dairy cattle units were distributed to tribal beneficiaries through ITDA and the Animal Husbandry Department. She stated that 451 units comprising 902 dairy cattle were distributed at a cost of ₹5.86 crore, with the government providing 75% subsidy for each unit. The initiative is expected to help tribal families improve their livelihoods and income through milk production. The minister also highlighted several welfare initiatives of the state government, including financial assistance of ₹20,000 to farmers under the "Annadata



Sukhibhava" scheme, free bus travel for women, and the upcoming launch of free bus travel for persons with disabilities by Chief Minister. She added that the government is committed to the welfare of tribal communities, women's safety, and farmers' development across the state.

Line Clear for Mulapeta Port Project

Srikakulam, March 17: A major hurdle in the construction of the Mulapeta Greenfield Port has been resolved with the transfer of 385.24 acres of salt land. The Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) under the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Government of India issued official orders on Tuesday to lease the land from the Naupada Salt Factory to the Andhra Pradesh Maritime Board for 99 years. The issue was resolved with the initiative of Union Minister for Civil Aviation and Srikakulam MP, who coordinated with central ministries, port authorities, and the state government to clear the long-pending land transfer. The land is crucial for constructing a 330-foot-wide connectivity road linking the port to Tekkali and the national highway, and for future port expansion. With this key obstacle removed, the construction of the is expected to progress faster. The port will feature three cargo berths, one coal berth, and modern



infrastructure, and is expected to play a significant role in boosting imports, exports, and economic development in and the.

Youth Time Bank Launched at GGH

Pen Power, Vijayawada, March 17: District Collector Dr. G. Lakshmi on Tuesday inaugurated the Youth Time Bank services at the New Government General Hospital (GGH) under the supervision of the District Youth Services and Welfare Department. The program was launched in the presence of Youth Services Chief Executive Officer and NSS Coordinator Dr. Kolleti Ramesh and medical officials. Under this initiative, around 20-30 NSS volunteers from various colleges will provide daily voluntary assistance to patients at the OPD block, Dr. NTR Vaidya Seva counters, scanning block and other hospital areas with the support of Vasavya Mahila Mandali. The volunteers will help elderly people, persons with disabilities and illiterate patients access medical services easily. The Collector appreciated the youth for coming forward with social responsibility and said such innovative programs would strengthen the spirit of service and cooperation in society. Guidelines have also been issued to award special internship marks for volunteers participating in the Time



Bank services. GGH Superintendent Dr. Edukondalu, RMO Dr. Padmavathi, NSS volunteers from Andhra Loyola College and VIT for Women, members of Vasavya Mahila Mandali and Youth Welfare Department staff attended the event.

Action Against Negligence in Revenue Works: Collector



Paderu, March 17: Alluri District Collector A.S. Dinesh Kumar warned that strict action will be taken against officials who show negligence in revenue duties. During a video conference held on Tuesday with revenue officials of Alluri and Polavaram districts,

the Collector reviewed various issues and directed officers to focus on resolving revenue-related problems at the village level. He instructed officials to conduct revenue awareness meetings in villages and promptly address grievances received through PGRS and IVRS systems. Pending resurvey and mutation files should be verified at the field level and cleared immediately, he said. The Collector also directed that pattadar passbooks with the state emblem be verified carefully and distributed in April without errors. Officials were asked to conduct regular inspections of civil supplies and ration shops and ensure online ration distribution. He warned that negligence in this matter would invite action against concerned Tahsildars. The Collector also emphasized speeding up the issuance of caste certificates through a suo motu drive, ensuring effective use of the AP Seva Portal and e-Office, focusing on tax and water tax collections, monitoring progress of NH-516E works, and remaining alert in the voter registration process ahead of upcoming elections. Several departmental officials, Tahsildars, Deputy Tahsildars and VRVs participated in the meeting.

Bankers' Role Key in Achieving Government Scheme Targets



Kakinada, March 17 (Pen Power): District Joint Collector Apoorva Bharat stated that bankers play a crucial role in achieving the targets of government welfare schemes and asked them to speed up loan sanctions for farmers, self-help groups and youth. He was speaking at the District Consultative Committee and District Level Review Committee meetings held at the Collectorate on Tuesday, attended by MLC Karri Padmasri. The Joint Collector said that out of the annual credit plan target of ₹26,408 crore in the district, banks have already sanctioned ₹26,074.5 crore, achieving 98.73% of the target. Under short-term agricultural loans, ₹12,632 crore has been disbursed against a target of ₹13,733 crore. He also stated that loans worth ₹1,298.71 crore were provided to 10,186 DWCRAs groups through the Rural Development Department and ₹420.52 crore to 2,737 urban SHGs

through MEPMA. Additionally, ₹55.55 crore was sanctioned to 3,526 women entrepreneurs.

Under PMEGP, loans were sanctioned to 180 units against a target of 122 units, while under Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojana, 386 beneficiaries received loans worth ₹170 crore. MLC Karri Padmasri urged officials and bankers to increase awareness about central and state government employment and financial schemes at the grassroots level. During the meeting, NABARD released a credit plan of ₹23,598 crore for the 2026-27 financial year. NABARD LDM Y. Somanayudu said the undivided East Godavari district has been selected to promote women entrepreneurs, with plans to establish 150 units across nine businesses in Kakinada district, providing loans of about ₹5 crore and creating employment for 500-800 people.

Minister Narayana Visits Gajuwaka; Assures Solution for Garbage Transfer Station Issue

Visakhapatnam, March 17: Municipal Administration Minister P. Narayana visited Gajuwaka on Tuesday and assured that a permanent solution would be implemented for the long-pending garbage transfer station issue troubling local residents. After inspecting the facility along with city officials, the minister directed authorities to modernize the station and ensure that waste is directly transported to the waste-to-energy plant without causing inconvenience to the public.



Later, the minister inaugurated the Alluri Sitarama Raju Park developed on 4.75 acres in HB Colony of the 76th ward. The park, built at a cost of around ₹10 crore, includes an amphitheatre with gallery, skating ring, cricket net, cafeteria, walking track, children's play equipment, gym facilities, fountains, and other modern amenities.

Speaking on the occasion, the minister said the state government under Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu is prioritizing urban development and basic infrastructure. He also stated that major initiatives are being taken to provide safe drinking water, improve drainage systems,

and strengthen civic infrastructure in municipalities across the state. Local MLA Palla Srinivasa Rao, Mayor Peela Srinivasa Rao, GVMC Commissioner Ketan Garg, VMRDA Commissioner N. Tej Bharat, Deputy Mayor Dalli Govindaraju, corporators, and officials were present during the visit.

Bapatla District Collector Reviews Housing Progress



Bapatla, March 17 (Pen Power): District Collector Dr. V. Vinod Kumar directed housing beneficiaries to complete the construction of their houses by utilizing finan-

cial assistance provided under various government schemes. During a video conference held from the Mini VC Hall at the District Collectorate on Tuesday, the Collector reviewed the progress of housing construction, property and house tax collection, and the Unified Survey with District Panchayat Officer L. Prabhakara Rao and Housing Corporation PD Venkateswara Rao, along with MPDOs and housing officials. The Collector stated that the government has provided house sites and pattas to eligible beneficiaries and urged them to complete construction using the financial support available under different schemes. He also noted that ₹30,000 assistance is available for toilet construction and that additional financial support can be accessed through DWCRAs groups. Officials were instructed to ensure that all pending Unified Survey work is completed within the stipulated deadline and to submit daily reports on property and house tax collection. MPDOs, housing department engineers, and panchayat secretaries from various mandals participated in the video conference.

Tight Security Arrangements for Nookambika Jatara in Anakapalli

Anakapalli, March 17: Tight security arrangements have been made for the month-long Kotha Amavasya Jatara of Goddess in , said District SP. With lakhs of devotees expected to attend the festival, police have deployed extensive bandobast to prevent any untoward incidents. The SP inspected the temple surroundings on Tuesday and directed officials to ensure special facilities for devotees considering the summer heat. Shade shelters, drinking water and ORS packets will be arranged in queue lines. Police have also been instructed to prevent overcrowding and assist women, children and elderly devotees. Traffic diversions and designated parking areas have been arranged to avoid congestion. Special teams in plain clothes will monitor the crowd to prevent chain-snatching and pickpocketing. Fire safety measures will also be in place during electrical decorations and



stage events. Officials urged devotees to cooperate with police and take necessary precautions during the festival.

BH. Bhavani Shankar Assumes Charge as PADA Project Director

Kakinada, Pen Power, March 17: BH. Bhavani Shankar, who was appointed by the state government as the Project Director of the Pithapuram Area Development Authority (PADA), assumed charge at the PADA office in Pithapuram on Tuesday. Later, he paid a courtesy visit to PADA Chairman and Kakinada District Collector Shanmohan at the Collector's camp office in Kakinada.



Hrithik Creates Mess While Krrish 4 Stays Missing!



Bollywood star Hrithik Roshan has sparked fresh conversations with his latest move, not as an actor, but as a producer. The actor has teamed up with Amazon Prime Video for a new comedy film titled *Mess*, directed by Rajesh A Krishnan. The film marks Hrithik's second collaboration with the streaming giant after *Storm*, and will be backed by his home banner HRX Films. Unlike his earlier intense projects, *Mess* is said to be a quirky comedy revolving around a group of robbers who find themselves trapped in a bizarre situation during a home invasion gone wrong. However, this announcement has once again raised a big question among fans, what is happening with *Krrish 4*? For the longest time, Bollywood media reported that the superhero film was facing budget constraints, delaying its progress. But Hrithik's recent choices tell a different story. The actor is not only actively producing multiple projects but has also been making significant personal investments, indicating that finances may not be a major hurdle. This contrast has left fans surprised and curious. Is Hrithik consciously prioritizing new-age content over revisiting his iconic superhero franchise? Or is *Krrish 4* still in the pipeline, waiting for the right moment? For now, *Mess* signals Hrithik's growing interest in content-driven cinema. But until there is official clarity, the uncertainty around *Krrish 4* continues to remain a hot topic.

Most Unaccepted Lyrics In The Item Song!

Bollywood is often praised for making progressive films in Indian cinema. At the same time, many commercial films still rely on outdated and problematic themes. A similar debate has now started around a newly released song from the film *KD: The Devil*.

The song titled *Sarke Chunar Teri Sarke* features Bollywood actress Nora Fatehi, who is widely known for performing in popular dance numbers.

The visuals follow the typical item song format with glamorous presentation and noticeable skin exposure. However, the main criticism from social media users is about the lyrics. Many viewers say the words are vulgar and carry a tone that disrespects women.

A particular line from the song has been widely circulated online. The lyrics go:

"Pahle uthale, ander wo dale, neeche ek boond na girae, khali kar ke nikale, mujhe pe na girana mujhe lagta hai dar."

The translated meaning of the line is:

"First lift it, put it inside, don't drop even a single drop below,



empty it fully and then pull out, don't spill on me, I feel scared."

Because of this wording, many people on social media have expressed anger and criticised the filmmakers. Some users have also questioned the

decision of the performers and the film's team to be part of a song with such lyrics.

KD: The Devil is promoted as an action drama starring Kannada actor Dhruva Sarja in the lead

role. The song was released recently as part of the film's promotional campaign. The extremely well approach taken by the makers has clearly backfired as people are criticising the same.

Oscars 2026: Tribute Paid To Legendary Kota Srinivas Rao



Kota Srinivas Rao was one of the greatest actors of Indian cinema. His demise created a void in the cinema space, and he is irreplaceable. However, here is some news to rejoice for all the fans of Kota and Telugu cinema. During the 98th Academy Awards ceremony, Kota was remembered. In the "In Memoriam segment," the Academy paid tribute to Kota Srinivas Rao. It is their annual ritual to pay tribute to several legendary figures from Holly-

wood and across the globe. However, a select group of celebrities made this list, and Kota was among them. Along with Kota Srinivas Rao, we also have other celebrities from Indian cinema in the list, who passed away in the last one year. Apart from Kota Srinivas Rao, Indian film personalities like Dharmendra, Manoj Kumar, and B. Saroja Devi were also given tributes on this occasion. Hollywood stars like Rob Reiner, Robert

Redford, Robert Duvall, Catherine O'Hara, and Diane Keaton, among others, were also remembered during the occasion. Kota Srinivas Rao was born on July 10, 1942, beginning his career as a bank employee. He acted in more than 700 films across Telugu, Tamil, Hindi, and Kannada languages. He served as an MLA from Vijayawada East constituency from 1999 to 2004, representing the Bharatiya Janata Party.

Buchi Eyes Multi-Heroine Blast in Peddi Special Song?

Excitement around *Peddi* starring Ram Charan continues to grow as new updates about a special song are making the rounds in film circles. According to insider reports, director Buchi Babu Sana is planning a massive rural mass number that could feature multiple heroines. Sources say the director is keen on roping in at least three to four actresses for this special track. The idea is to create a grand, high-energy song that will become a treat for Mega fans. With Ram Charan known for his electrifying dance moves, a rustic mass number similar in vibe to *Jigelu Rani* could turn into a major highlight of the film. Earlier reports suggested that actresses like Pooja Hegde, Mrunal Thakur, and Ayesha Khan were being considered for the song. However, insiders now say the makers might finalize the cast based on the availability of dates.

If everything falls into place, the song could feature multiple glamorous appearances along with Charan's energetic dance, making it a big crowd-puller. At the same time, sources reveal that if coordinating several actresses becomes difficult, Buchi Babu may opt for a single prominent heroine to avoid any delay in the shooting schedule. Either way, fans are eagerly waiting to see how this mass number shapes up on the big screen.



Mother's Dream, Son's Success – Civil Services Achiever Felicitated



Srikakulam, March 17: District Collector of, felicitated Civil Services achiever at the Collectorate on Tuesday evening. Ramu secured All India Rank 463 in the

Civil Services Examination, bringing pride to the district. Ramu, who studied in a government school and overcame poverty, lost his father at a young age. His mother Lakshmi worked as a daily labourer to support his education. He later graduated from and achieved success in the Civil Services exam. District officials honoured him with a shawl, bouquet, and books. The Collector praised Ramu as an inspiration to students and expressed hope that he may join the IPS or even IAS in the future. In a heartfelt gesture, the Collector also respectfully escorted Ramu and his mother out of the office, appreciating the sacrifices of the mother behind his success.

Support Organic Farming, Provide Easy Loans to Farmers: Collector Dr. G Lakshmisha

Vijayawada, March 17: District Collector Dr. G. Lakshmisha directed banks to promote organic farming and provide easy loans to interested farmers to develop the district as a hub for organic agricultural products. Chairing the District Consultative Committee and District Level Review Committee meeting at the Collectorate on Tuesday, the Collector reviewed banking services provided through 555 bank branches and progress in various banking indicators. Lead District Manager informed that against the annual credit plan target of ₹83,500 crore for 2025-26, banks achieved 106% by disbursing ₹88,269 crore by December 31. The Collector noted the growing demand for organic products due to increasing awareness of healthy lifestyles and said organic farming in the dis-



trict already covers about 50,000 acres, with efforts underway to expand it to over one lakh acres in the coming years. He urged banks to extend financial support to organic farmers and focus on schemes such as PMEGP, Mudra, PM Vishwakarma and PMFME. He also stressed the importance of

supporting agriculture, animal husbandry, MSMEs, self-help groups, youth and tenant farmers through timely credit and coordinated efforts to promote self-employment and entrepreneurship. NABARD's Potential Linked Credit Plan for 2026-27 worth ₹39,038 crore was also unveiled during the meeting.

Speed Up Distribution of Pattadar Passbooks: Collector



Vizianagaram, March 17: District Collector S. Ramsundar Reddy directed revenue officials to speed up the distribution of Pattadar Passbooks in the district and complete the process without delay. During a video conference from the State Secretariat with Chief Secretary Sai Prasad and other se-

nior officials, issues related to pattadar passbooks, resurvey works and 22A lands were reviewed. The Collector briefed the Chief Secretary on the district's progress. Later, the Collector instructed officials to ensure that pattadar passbooks are distributed by the 9th of every month without any

errors and that farmers do not face inconvenience. He also directed revenue officials to expedite mutation processes. Joint Collector S. Sedhu Madhavan, DRO C.H. Sattibabu, RDOs Venkateswara Rao and Sudha Rani, and other revenue officials participated in the meeting.

"Hard To Find Any Difference Between Israel, Pakistan" : Ex-IPL Star After Deadly Strike Kills 400 In Kabul

Naveen Ul Haq on Pakistan's actions in Kabul: In a deadly Pakistani airstrike, at least 400 people were killed and around 250 injured in Afghanistan's capital, Kabul. The attack is the deadliest in Afghanistan's history after the suicide bombing at Kabul airport during the US withdrawal in 2021, when at least 169 Afghan civilians and 13 US service members died. The strike has been condemned by Afghanistan's cricketers. Afghanistan fast bowler Naveen-ul-Haq, who has played 15 ODIs and 48 T20Is, compared Pakistan with Israel in a Facebook post, referring to Israel's recent attack on Iran. "Hard to find any difference between Israel and Pakistani regime period," wrote Naveen, who has played for the IPL team Lucknow Super Giants, on his verified Facebook account that has



over 4 lakh followers. Other Afghanistan cricketers have also lashed out at the loss of lives "as a result of Pakistani airstrikes," especially during the holy month of Ramadan. "I am deeply saddened by the latest reports of civilian casualties as a result of Pakistani airstrikes in Kabul. Targeting civilian homes, educational facilities or medical infrastructure-either in-

tionally or by mistake-is a war crime," Rashid Khan wrote on X. "The sheer disregard for human lives, especially during the holy month of Ramadan, is sickening and deeply concerning. It will only fuel division and hatred. I call upon the UN and other human rights agencies to thoroughly investigate this latest atrocity and hold the perpetrators to account.