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INDIA Bloc Opposes Delimitation Linked Women's Quota Plan

Opposition demands reservation within existing seats as regional parties back Centre's revised formula

Munsif Desk, New Delhi:



The INDIA bloc leaders on Saturday announced joint opposition to the Centre's delimitation-linked women's reservation proposal, demanding that the quota be introduced without expanding the Lok Sabha or changing the distribution of seats among states.

At a meeting hosted by Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge, opposition leaders sought three safeguards: retain the existing House strength, implement one-third reservation for women within those seats, and freeze states' present allocations for 25 years.

The Union Cabinet approved the revised proposal on Friday. It envisages a uniform 50 per cent increase in Lok Sabha and state Assembly seats to facilitate women's reservation, while protecting states' relative parliamentary shares until 2051. The government argues that the formula addresses concerns over population-based redistribution.

Kharge alleged that the changes could weaken representation for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes and serve the ruling party's political interests. Those are opposition claims, not established effects of the draft.

The opposition position does not command uniform support across regional parties. The DMK, Sharad Pawar-led NCP (SP) and Telangana's BRS have indicated support for the revised framework, citing safeguards for state representation or wider women's participation.

According to Saturday's parliamentary agenda, three related bills are listed for Lok Sabha consideration on Monday, November 30. None has been passed.

Before approval, lawmakers face questions over the population figures, constituency boundaries, reserved seats and whether the proposed expansion delivers fair representation without reducing the relative voice of states and disadvantaged communities. Publication of the allocation methodology would enable independent scrutiny.

Telangana Waqf Land Transfer Proposal Sparks Legal Row

Alur Sharif acquisition proposal sparks legal objections and protests at Haj House



HYDERABAD: Telangana Waqf Board's first meeting in nearly two years was reportedly adjourned on Saturday for lack of quorum, amid controversy over a proposed transfer of dargah land for industrial development.

The proposal concerns land endowed to Dargah Hazrat Makhdoom Biyabani at Alur Sharif, Rangareddy district, earmarked for Telangana Industrial Infrastructure Corporation. Published estimates range from 1,248 to 1,264 acres; the exact extent requires official confirmation.

Hyderabad MP Asaduddin Owaisi questioned whether the Board's current membership complied with the amended Waqf law and urged the government to reconstitute it.

His legal objection remains unresolved.

Police detained BRS workers protesting outside Haj House, Nampally. BRS representatives alleged the transfer could benefit private interests; the allegation remains unsubstantiated.

No final transfer approval was confirmed. The government and Board should disclose the legal basis, meeting records, land valuation, compensation terms, statutory safeguards for the endowment's beneficiaries and proposed industrial use.

IN BRIEF



UN Condemns Deadly Kuwait Drone Attack

UN chief António Guterres condemned a drone attack in Kuwait that killed two Italians and urged restraint. P5

Lebanon's Beauty and Resilience

An editorial explores Lebanon's heritage, diversity and scenery alongside political and economic troubles. P6



BRS Backs Centre's Delimitation Bill

BRS said its three Rajya Sabha MPs will support the Bill, citing safeguards for Telangana's representation. P8

BRS Alleges Kodangal Land Scam

BRS alleged a Rs 60-crore compensation scam involving land in Kodangal. The claims remain unproven. P3

Telangana Reshuffles Key Hyderabad Civic Officials

HYD: Telangana reshuffled eight IAS and non-cadre officers on Saturday, making key changes to Hyderabad's civic administration. E.V. Narasimha Reddy became HMDA Metropolitan Commissioner, while Sarfaraz Ahmad was appointed Metropolitan Area and Urban Development Secretary and special officer for three municipal corporations.

B. Ajith Reddy received additional charge as Hyderabad Metro Rail MD, with IESSD Manoj as Joint MD. K. Chandrakala became HMDA Joint Metropolitan Commissioner, while Mayank Mittal took additional charge as Shamshabad Zonal Commissioner.

The reshuffle aims to improve coordination on Metro expansion, land acquisition and civic projects.

Clear accountability, timely execution and better public services remain essential.

Azharuddin Urges Diaspora to Support Telangana's Growth



Hyderabad: Minorities Welfare and Public Enterprises Minister Mohammed Azharuddin urged Telangana's overseas community to contribute investments, expertise and ideas ahead of the Invest Telangana Global Summit, scheduled for December 7–9 in Hyderabad.

Speaking to the Diaspora Executive Council by video link on Saturday, he said Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy wanted partnerships in information technology, artificial intelligence, pharmaceuticals, aerospace, semiconductors, logistics and advanced manufacturing.

Council members raised concerns about Hyderabad's urban governance and suggested improvements to make the city more attractive for investment.

Azharuddin promised to convey their suggestions to the Chief Minister.

The initiative seeks to connect overseas entrepreneurs with state priorities.

Its success will depend on workable projects, transparent follow-up and jobs for Telangana residents.

AFGHANISTAN SCHOOL EXPLOSION KILLS 10, INJURES 110

Explosion near Kunar school reportedly originated at explosives depot; most victims were children

KABUL: An explosion near a school in Afghanistan's eastern Kunar province killed 10 people and injured 110 others on Saturday, most of them children, officials said.

The blast occurred around 10 a.m. in the Andar Ser area near Asadabad, near a school and a depot reportedly storing mining explosives. Preliminary findings suggest the material detonated accidentally, but the cause remains unconfirmed.

An earlier official account put the toll at seven killed and up to 99 injured. Later reports revised the toll.

Medical teams took injured children, including pupils aged 10 to 14, to local facilities. UNICEF expressed concern over the loss of young lives.

The tragedy raises urgent questions about why hazardous materials were stored near a school, whether safety inspections were conducted and how quickly emergency services could respond. Authorities must establish responsibility, provide continuing medical care and assess whether nearby schools face similar industrial hazards.



BPCL Clears Rs 1.27-Lakh-Crore Andhra Refinery

Mumbai: BPCL on Saturday approved a Rs 1,26,656-crore refinery and petrochemical complex at Ramayapatnam, Andhra Pradesh.

The greenfield project will process nine million metric tonnes of crude annually and include a 1.5-million-tonne ethylene cracker and petrochemical units. Commercial operations are targeted for July 2032.

BPCL's board also approved equity investment of up to Rs 44,330 crore through a subsidiary, subject to approvals. The overall cost estimate may vary by 20 per cent, while debt financing remains unsettled.

The project is intended to strengthen fuel and petrochemical supplies and reduce import dependence.

Board approval does not authorise construction. Government, environmental and other statutory clearances remain necessary.

Congress Leader Calls for Protests Against Delimitation



Hyderabad: Congress leader and Karwan constituency incharge Osman bin Mohammed Al Hajri called for protests against the Centre's proposal to link women's reservation with a 50 per cent increase in Lok Sabha and Assembly seats.

He said he supported 33 per cent reservation for women but questioned whether redrawing constituencies would protect southern states and preserve the federal balance.

Al Hajri criticised the Bharat Rshtra Samithi (BRS) for backing the proposal and alleged it could benefit the BJP politically. Those concerns are political claims, not established consequences of the bill.

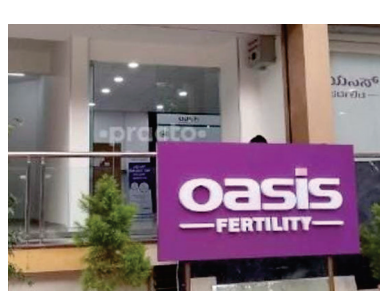
He urged Telangana Congress president Mahesh Kumar Goud to organise district-level demonstrations and a Hyderabad rally before Parliament meets on November 30. The proposal requires parliamentary approval.

Two Oasis Executives Held in Egg Procurement Probe

Hyderabad: Malkajgiri police on Saturday arrested two senior executives of the company operating Oasis Fertility centres over an alleged unauthorised egg procurement network.

Police identified them as Pratik Anil Gaglani, chief operating officer, and Dr Rajarshi Deb, medical administrator at its Begumpet office. Investigators seized mobile phones for forensic analysis.

The inquiry concerns allegations that women from different states were recruited for egg donation through intermediaries without required regulatory safeguards. Police are examining links between fertility clinics, donor records, consent documents and financial transactions.



Earlier searches at the corporate office recovered electronic records and other material now being analysed. Police are tracing referral and payment arrangements.

Telangana Rakshana Sena Demands Detailed OBC Census

New Delhi: Telangana Rakshana Sena (TRS) leader Rangu Naveen Achari joined a protest organised by the All India Caste Census Coordination Committee at Ramlila Maidan on Saturday, demanding enumeration of Other Backward Classes in the census.

Achari said party president Kalvakuntla Kavitha supported representation for backward communities in education, employment and politics in proportion to their population. He accused the BJP-led Centre of neglecting OBC concerns, an allegation not independently established.



The organisers demanded a dedicated OBC column and standardised caste identification codes, saying the open-column method risked unreliable counts. They threatened to boycott the census unless the format changed.

The dispute centres on whether census design can deliver usable evidence for social policy and fair representation.

STATEWATCH | Where Telangana Moves.
Governance, development, welfare and districts shaping the State.

NDSA Team Inspects Polavaram, Reviews Dam Safety

(NSS),**Polavaram :**

A team of the National Dam Safety Authority (NDSA) on Saturday inspected the under-construction Polavaram Irrigation Project for the first time to assess safety measures and monitoring arrangements.

The team, comprising Southern Zone Director Giridhar and Deputy Director Hemaditya, inspected the spillway, Gap-1, Gap-2 and Earth-cum-Rock Fill (ECRF) dam sections following directions from the Union Ministry of Jal Shakti.

During a review meeting with Water Resources department officials, the team examined safety instrumentation, monitoring systems and construction progress.

The officials were briefed on the project through a scale model and a powerpoint presentation at the project meeting hall. Superintending Engineer P Ramachandra Rao explained the progress of various components, including the works completed so far and the status of ongoing construction.

Officials explained that an advanced Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition (SCADA) system was being established to enable real-time monitoring of project structures through sensors and other equipment. They also informed the team that the Emergency Action Plan was being prepared by IIT Roorkee and would be submitted to the NDSA.

The visit assumes significance as the authority, constituted under the Dam Safety Act, 2021, has so far largely focused its inspections on completed dams. Officials said the team expressed satisfaction with the safety arrangements and monitoring systems explained during the visit.

Adilabad Trader Arrested for Rs 8.55 Crore Tax Evasion

Munsif Desk,
Adilabad:

An Adilabad trader was arrested on charges of evading income tax by opening mule accounts using workers' documents and allegedly forging their signatures on Saturday. Another trader is at large.

Adilabad Deputy Superintendent of Police (DSP) L. Jeevan said Raj Kumar Mittal was apprehended, while Sanjeev Kumar Mittal remained at large. Both were earlier booked for their alleged involvement in duping employees by opening accounts to evade income tax of their commercial establishments using the Aadhaar and PAN cards of their workers.

Jeevan said that during interrogation, Raj Kumar Mittal confessed to the offence. He allegedly admitted to evading income tax worth Rs 8.55 crore over four years by using the documents of five employees — Perka Bhumanna, Anil Kumar, Madastu Santosh, Ramakanth Kendre and Pendram Gajanan. He allegedly obtained the employees' signatures on blank cheque leaves.

Jeevan said the alleged acts came to light when Bhumanna's bank account was frozen. Bhumanna realised that he had been duped after the two traders continued to postpone resolving the issue when he questioned them a few days earlier, he said.

Pawan Kalyan Backs Delimitation Reform, Seeks Wider Representation

Munsif Desk,
Amaravati:



Andhra Pradesh Deputy Chief Minister Pawan Kalyan expressed support for the proposed delimitation reform, saying it would strengthen democratic representation by giving every state and region an adequate voice in Parliament.

The deputy CM said a stronger democracy is built when every citizen is heard, and every state moves forward with confidence.

"The proposed delimitation reform will strengthen democratic representation by ensuring that every state and region has an adequate voice in Parliament," said Kalyan in a post on X late on Friday.

He said the proposed reform, ahead of the special Parliament session scheduled for November 30, envisaged a 50 percent increase in Lok Sabha seats across all states while maintaining their existing proportional representation until 2051.

The proposed framework would create more opportunities for representation while protecting the proportional share of southern states, which have made progress in population stabilisation, he said. According to the Deputy CM, the proposal reflected the spirit of cooperative federalism by recognising the contributions and progress of different states while ensuring that their parliamentary representation was protected.

He also welcomed the proposed 33 per cent reservation for women in the Lok Sabha and state legislative assemblies, saying it would boost their participation in decision-making.

Crediting Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Union Home Minister Amit Shah and Union Parliamentary Affairs Minister Kiren Rijiju for driving inclusive institutional reforms, Kalyan urged all political parties, elected representatives and other stakeholders to set aside political differences and support the initiative in the larger interest of democracy.

Waqf Board Takes Over 46 Acres of Jamia Masjid Land in Mahabubnagar

Munsif Desk
Hyderabad :

The Waqf Board has taken possession of 46 acres and 17 guntas of land belonging to Jamia Masjid at Indiyal village in Chinna Chintakunta Mandal of Mahabubnagar district.

The Revenue Divisional Officer (RDO), Mahabubnagar, in an order dated November 17, 2026, declared that the land measuring 46 acres and 17 guntas, covered under Survey No. 131 and various other survey numbers, belonged to Jamia Masjid, Indiyal.

The land had been registered and notified as Waqf property in the AP Gazette. The RDO also directed the Tahsildar of Chinna Chintakunta to take necessary action in this regard.

Following the RDO's order, Waqf Board officials formally took possession of the Jamia Masjid Inam land situated in Indiyal village.

Governor Calls for Universities to Drive Viksit Bharat 2047

Munsif Desk
Hanumakonda :

Telangana Governor and Chancellor of Kakatiya University, Shiv Pratap Shukla, has called upon universities to play a pivotal role in realising the vision of Viksit Bharat–2047 by motivating young people to contribute to national development through education, research, innovation and skill development. He said education should not be confined to earning degrees but must focus on shaping responsible citizens capable of bringing positive changes to society. The Governor was addressing the 24th Convocation of Kakatiya University at its auditorium in Hanumakonda on Saturday. He said the convocation held special significance as the university was celebrating its 50-year academic journey and Golden Jubilee. Established on August 19, 1976, Kakatiya University had been providing higher education opportunities to students



from both urban and rural areas of Telangana, producing first-generation graduates in several families. He also lauded the university's contribution to expanding educational, employment and leadership opportunities for women. Shukla congratulated students who received their degrees for the academic years 2022-23, 2023-24 and 2024-25.

DGP C.V. Anand Calls for Measures to Make India Drug-Free

Munsif Desk,
Nizamabad:



Telangana Director General of Police (DGP) C.V. Anand has called for practical and effective measures to make India drug-free, on the lines of the efforts taken to eliminate Maoist extremism in the country.

Addressing a press conference at the Police Commissionerate Conference Hall during his visit to Nizamabad on Friday, the DGP said the country had made significant progress in tackling Maoist extremism, with extremists surrendering their weapons and returning to normal life.

He said the government was providing rehabilitation assistance, including financial incentives, residential houses and land, to those who surrendered.

Recalling his association with Nizamabad, Anand said he had served as Superintendent of Police in the district for three-and-a-half years and was visiting the place after 27 years in a higher position. He recalled conducting day-and-night patrols and search operations in Naxalite-affected areas, facing difficult situations involving extremist groups and landmines.

Konda Murali Seeks Graduates' Support for Congress Candidate

Munsif Desk, Warangal:



Former MLC Konda Murali has appealed to graduates to extend their support to Congress candidate Ramreddy Sarvotham Reddy in the forthcoming Graduate MLC elections, highlighting his educational qualifications and understanding of the education sector.

A review meeting was held at a camp office in the Warangal East Assembly constituency to discuss issues relating to the Graduate MLC elections and the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls.

The meeting reviewed concerns over deletion of votes, transfer of votes to other constituencies, difficulties in the mapping process and pending voter registrations.

Former MLC Konda Murali attended the meeting as the chief guest along with Congress Graduate MLC candidate Ramreddy Sarvotham Reddy, AICC Observer K.R. Naidu, PCC Observer Duddilla Srinubabu, former MLC Narsa Reddy, Suryapet District Congress Committee President Narasaiah and Hyderabad Market Committee Chairman Srinivas, among others. Addressing the gathering, Konda Murali described Ramreddy Sarvotham Reddy as a highly educated candidate with a sound understanding of the education sector and urged graduates to support him.

Free Knee Replacement Surgery Performed in Karimnagar

(NSS), **Karimnagar:**

A free left knee replacement surgery was successfully performed on Meka Mallaiah, a resident of Korutla, at Adarsh Hospital in Karimnagar with the support of the Dr. B.N. Rao Foundation.

The patient was discharged from the hospital following a full recovery.

According to the foundation, free surgeries of this nature have so far been performed on 30 patients. Mallaiah and his family members expressed their gratitude to the foundation for providing the treatment free of cost.

Naidu urges parties to back Delimitation Bill and women's

Mohd Baleegh Ahmed,
Amaravati:

Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister and Telugu Desam Party (TDP) president N. Chandrababu Naidu appealed to all political parties to support the Delimitation Bill, saying a 50 per cent increase in Lok Sabha seats would benefit everyone.

Backing the Centre's move to link delimitation with women's reservation, Naidu said the Bill should be supported in the national interest.

Addressing a press conference along with Central ministers H. D. Kumaraswamy and Ram Mohan Naidu, the Chief Minister said increasing the number of Lok Sabha seats by 50 per cent would not cause injustice to anyone. Naidu said South India, which currently has 129 Lok Sabha seats, would have 195 seats after delimitation. He said the region's representation in the Lok Sabha would remain unchanged at 23.76 per cent.

Andhra Pradesh currently has 25 parliamentary constituencies and, according to Naidu, this would increase to 38 after delimitation, while the State's representation would remain at 4.6 per cent. Karnataka's seats would increase from 28 to 42, while its representation would remain unchanged at 5.16 per cent, he said.



Naidu said the number of Lok Sabha seats would rise to 59 in Tamil Nadu, 26 in Telangana and 30 in Kerala, taking South India's total to 195.

He said that under the previous delimitation, based on the 2001 Census, one Member of Parliament (MP) represented a population of 19 lakh. This has now risen to 27 lakh, he said.

Public Cooperation Key to People's Government: MLA Naini

Munsif Desk, Warabgal:

Warangal West MLA Naini Rajender Reddy said that public cooperation is the strongest support for a people's government and that development programmes can be implemented more effectively only with active public participation. He urged people to give equal importance to environmental protection along with development and appealed to every household to plant at least one sapling in front of their house to promote greenery. He made it clear that colonies and households that actively promote greenery will be given first priority in sanctioning new CC roads, drainage facilities and other development works in the constituency.

On Saturday, MLA Naini Rajender Reddy, along with local public representatives, party leaders and colony residents, laid the foundation stone for the construction of internal CC roads and drainage facilities in Teachers Colony, Waddepally, under the 60th Division of Warangal West Assembly Constituency.

108 Ambulance Service Suspended for 20 Days in Kalwakurthy

Munsif Desk
Kalwakurthy:

BJP State Council Member Mogili Durga Prasad and BJP District Vice-President and local councillor Boda Narasimha strongly condemned the non-availability of the 108 emergency ambulance service at the Kalwakurthy constituency headquarters for the past 20 days, reportedly due to repair work.

Expressing their displeasure, the BJP leaders said that the government, which should give top priority to public health and safety, had failed to ensure the availability of the 108 ambulance service for the past 20 days. They pointed out that the emergency service plays a crucial role in saving lives, particularly those of poor and needy people.

Residents of Kalwakurthy town and surrounding villages depend heavily on the 108 ambulance service to reach government hospitals during medical emergencies. The leaders expressed concern that the absence of the service could cause serious difficulties in cases of road accidents, heart attacks and medical emergencies involving pregnant women.

STATEWATCH | Where Telangana Speaks.

People, civic issues, communities and developments from across Telangana.

Adilabad Agriculture Students Visit Market Yard for Practical Learning

Munsif Desk, Adilabad :

As part of the practical agricultural marketing programme, third-year students of Adilabad Agricultural College visited the Agricultural Market Committee Yard on Saturday to gain practical knowledge of the functioning of agricultural markets and the procedures involved in the purchase and sale of farm produce.

During the visit, the students interacted with Market Committee Chairman Bornancho Srikanth Reddy, Secretary Vitthal and other staff members.

Chairman Bornancho Srikanth Reddy briefed the students on agricultural commodity marketing, electronic weighing systems, online auctions under the e-NAM (National Agriculture Market) platform and various mechanisms adopted to ensure fair prices for farmers' produce.

Suryapet Flyover Delay Leaves Commuters Facing Traffic Woes

Munsif Desk, Suryapet:

The flyover being constructed on National Highway 65 in Suryapet town remains incomplete even after nearly three years, causing considerable inconvenience to the public.

The project was taken up to ease traffic congestion on the Hyderabad–Vijayawada highway, but the slow pace of construction has turned it into a major source of hardship for commuters.

Due to the ongoing construction, service roads have become narrower, resulting in daily traffic congestion. During festivals and weekends, commuters are forced to remain stuck in traffic for long hours.

The lack of adequate lighting, directional signboards and safety arrangements at construction sites has raised concerns over the risk of accidents, particularly at night. Meanwhile, dust generated by incomplete roads is causing difficulties for local shopkeepers, pedestrians and motorists.

Despite inspections by the District Collector, Superintendent of Police and National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) officials, who reportedly directed the agencies concerned to speed up the work, no significant improvement in the pace of construction has been witnessed.

BRS alleges Rs 60 crore land compensation scam in CM's Kodangal

(NSS), Hyderabad:

The Bharat Rashtra Samithi (BRS) has alleged a Rs 60 crore land compensation payment scam in Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy's Kodangal constituency. The party demanded a probe into the alleged irregularities and stern action against those involved.

BRS general secretary RS Praveen Kumar alleged that around 300 acres of land were available in Hakimpet village under Dudyala mandal, but false records were created to show the land extent as 500 acres. He made the allegations at a press conference on Saturday.

Citing an example, Praveen Kumar alleged that an individual who owned three acres in survey number 252/10 had the land shown as 70 acres by creating 32 sub-survey numbers. He said 32 farmers were listed as owners of the 70 acres and each was paid Rs 25 lakh per acre as compensation for the growth corridor project. He said this was one example and alleged that the total scam in Kodangal was worth Rs 60 crore.

"If you are a Congress leader and have the blessings of Chief Minister's elder brother Tirupathi Reddy, you can create as many records as you want," Praveen Kumar alleged.

He further claimed that people without land records could also claim compensation. Similarly, records were allegedly created for people who did not own assigned land and handed over to those involved in the irregularities.

Praveen Kumar alleged that established procedures for land acquisition were not followed. Normally, when the government acquires land for a project, the District Collector issues a notification. Officials then verify records, identify land boundaries and determine compensation. However, he alleged that none of these procedures were followed in this case.

He also alleged that local Congress leaders had developed ventures in the area. Despite complaints being submitted to the Narayanpet and Vikarabad District Collectors.

TTD recovers 60 grams of lost gold jewellery, returns it to devotee within hours

(NSS), Hyderabad:

The Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams (TTD) Command Control team recovered 60 grams of gold jewellery lost by a devotee at Tirumala and returned it to him within hours, according to a TTD press release. G. Mahesh of Madanapalle in Annamayya district accidentally dropped the jewellery while getting out of a car at the CRO Office bus stop at around 4.30 pm on November 27. He realised the loss later and contacted the Command Control team.

The staff examined CCTV footage and found that two persons had picked up the jewellery. Using the footage, they traced the first person, a devotee from Tiruvannamalai, and asked him to come to Tirumala.

Two gold chains and a bracelet weighing around 52 grams were recovered from him at 4.30 am on November 28. The second person was traced to Narayanagiri Shed No. 7.

Teachers Key to Shaping Students' Bright Future: Adviser

Mohd Baleegh Ahmed, Nizamabad:

State Government Adviser P. Sudarshan Reddy has urged teachers to discharge their duties with dedication and provide quality education to pave the way for a bright future for students.

On Saturday, Government Adviser Sudarshan Reddy, along with Additional Collector V. Bhujanga Rao, inaugurated six newly constructed additional classrooms and science laboratories at the Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya (KGBV) in Mokanpally village of Navipet mandal. The facilities were constructed at a cost of over Rs. 80 lakh. He also inspected the facilities available at the school and reviewed the quality of food being served to students.



Addressing a gathering on the occasion, Sudarshan Reddy said that the State Government, under the leadership of Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy, was according top priority to the development of the education sector. He appealed to teachers to provide quality education in accordance with the government's vision and take initiatives to ensure a 100 per cent pass percentage. He stated that the government was spending crores of rupees on strengthening infrastructure in government schools and would not compromise on improving educational standards under any circumstances.

Police Bust Cannabis Cultivation in Three Nirmal Fields

Munsif News, Mudhole:



The police have intensified their crackdown on the illegal cultivation and trade of narcotic substances, particularly cannabis, across Nirmal district.

Under the special supervision of District Superintendent of Police Dr. G. Janaki Sharmila, IPS, a special police team led by Bhainsa ASP Sai Kiran, IPS, conducted an extensive search operation in Bhembra village of Tanoor mandal under Mudhole constituency and unearthed illegal cannabis cultivation in three agricultural fields.

During the operation, the police identified and seized approximately 250 to 300 cannabis plants. The illegal cultivation was allegedly concealed behind cotton crops to avoid detection.

During the cordon-and-search operation, the special police team also recovered harvested cannabis from one of the fields, which was reportedly kept ready for sale. In addition, harvested cannabis had been concealed in an agricultural field located behind the house of the persons concerned.

With the assistance of the dog squad, the police traced the smell of cannabis and identified the concealed location, recovering the hidden stock as well.

According to police officials, special search operations against illegal cannabis cultivation, storage and other narcotics-related activities are continuing in the area, with further revelations expected. The value of the seized cannabis plants and stock will be announced after inspection by officials of the Agriculture Department.

After completion of the panchanama, cases will be registered against the persons concerned and strict legal action will be initiated under the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act.

Speaking on the occasion, SP Dr. G. Janaki Sharmila said that the ongoing 'Ganja Gashti' campaign across the district was yielding positive results.

Public Urged to Make Best Use of National Lok Adalat

(NSS), Hyderabad:

District Chief Judge and Chairperson of the District Legal Services Authority (DLSA), Sharda, has appealed to the public to make the best use of the National Lok Adalat scheduled to be held on December 12 to resolve various legal disputes and pending cases quickly and amicably through mutual settlement.

In a statement, she said that cases pending before courts, as well as pre-litigation matters that could be settled before approaching the courts, could be resolved through the National Lok Adalat.

She explained that resolving disputes through mutual consent and compromise between both parties would save time and expenses while helping people avoid lengthy legal proceedings.

Sharda stated that various cases could be taken up at the National Lok Adalat, including criminal and civil cases, pre-litigation matters, banking disputes, electricity-related issues, land disputes, matrimonial and family disputes, motor vehicle accident compensation claims, cases under the Negotiable Instruments (NI) Act, chit fund disputes, cheque bounce cases and other compoundable offences that are legally permissible for settlement.

She advised litigants to approach the respective courts and the District Legal Services Authority to resolve their cases through mutual settlement.

She also called upon advocates, court staff and officials of the concerned departments to work in coordination to create awareness among the public about the National Lok Adalat and make the programme a success.

KKRDB Allocates Rs. 5,000 Crore Annually: Chairman Dadal

Munsif Desk, Bidar:

The State Government has allocated Rs. 5,000 crore annually to the Kalyana Karnataka Regional Development Board (KKRDB). Newly appointed Board Chairman Basanagouda Dadal said that ensuring timely utilisation of funds and completing development works within the stipulated time would be his top priorities.

Speaking to reporters after assuming charge as Chairman at the KKRDB office here on Saturday, he said that the Board was not facing any shortage of funds. However, there was a shortage of staff to utilise the allocated funds effectively. He assured that vacancies would be filled and the Board would be strengthened.

The new Chairman said that greater emphasis would be placed on promoting dairy farming in rural areas during his tenure.

The Board was established under Article 371J to accelerate the development of the backward Kalyana Karnataka region, particularly in employment, education and infrastructure. It has been undertaking several development initiatives. Former Chairman Dr. Ajay Singh introduced programmes such as Akshara Avishkara and Arogya Avishkara.

Basanagouda Dadal, who represents Raichur Rural constituency as an MLA, said that the party and the government had entrusted him with the responsibility with confidence. He assured that he would work under the guidance of ministers, MLAs and senior leaders from the region.

He said the State Government was committed to the development of the region by allocating Rs. 5,000 crore annually to the KKRDB. However, he urged the Central Government to provide a matching grant to support the development initiatives.

Woman Dies After Train Hits Her in Kothagudem



Kothagudem: A woman died after a goods train struck her while she was moving goats across railway tracks near Burgudem village in Annapureddypalle mandal of Bhadradri Kothagudem district on Saturday.

The deceased was identified as B. Krishnaveni, a resident of Burgudem. According to local reports, she had taken her goats to nearby fields for grazing and was guiding them across the line when the train approached.

She suffered multiple serious injuries in the collision. Residents who witnessed the incident rushed her to Government General Hospital, Kothagudem, where she died while undergoing treatment.

Railway police reportedly registered a case and began an inquiry. The fatal accident highlights the danger of crossing tracks while tending livestock in rural areas.

Three Arrested for House Burglary and Illegal Cannabis Trade in Suryapet

Munsif Desk, Suryapet:

Kodad Town Police in Suryapet district have busted a gang allegedly involved in house burglaries and the illegal purchase and sale of cannabis, arresting three accused in connection with the cases.

Police seized gold ornaments weighing 9.150 tolas and silver ornaments weighing 12.3 tolas, collectively valued at approximately Rs. 15 lakh, along with 6.2 kg of cannabis, Rs. 16,000 in cash and a mobile phone from the accused.

Addressing a press conference at the District Police Office, District Superintendent of Police K. Narasimha IPS said that the police had successfully apprehended the gang involved in breaking into houses in Kodad Town and stealing gold and silver ornaments, besides engaging in the illegal sale of cannabis.

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BRS OPPOSES TRANSFER OF 1,248 ACRES OF WAQF LAND TO TGIIC

(NSS), Hyderabad:

The BRS Minority Cell has strongly opposed the alleged move to transfer 1,248 acres of Waqf land belonging to Dargah Hazrat Makhdoom Biyabani at Alur Sharif in Rangareddy district to Telangana Industrial Infrastructure Corporation (TGIIC).

BRS Minority Cell general secretary Abdul Muqeet Chanda, along with party workers, staged a protest here at Razaaq Manzil, the Telangana State Waqf Board office, against a Board meeting convened on Saturday to consider the proposal. The protesters were detained by Abid Road police and taken to the police station.

Chanda questioned the convening of the meeting after nearly two years, alleging that the government had allowed the Board to meet specifically to facilitate the transfer of valuable Waqf properties to TGIIC.

Accusing the Revanth Reddy government of attempting to deprive the Muslim community of its endowed properties, he alleged that Waqf lands were being handed over to private builders and individuals with political influence.

NATION | India's Politics, Policies & People.

Politics, economy, society and developments shaping the nation.

At a Glance

Minor Driving SUV Hits Pedestrian in Delhi

(IANS) New Delhi, A 40-year-old pedestrian was injured after an SUV allegedly driven by a minor hit him on Ambedkar Road in Delhi's Paharganj area on Saturday, police said. The driver abandoned the vehicle and fled.

The victim, Ramesh, a local vendor, was taken to Dr Ram Manohar Lohia Hospital. Police said two other minors were injured, but their identities and medical condition were being verified. Police said no further casualties were reported so far.

A preliminary inquiry indicated that a minor was driving the SUV. A crime team inspected the spot and vehicle as police worked to identify the driver. Further investigation continues now.

Power Company Employee Stabbed to Death in Jabalpur

(IANS) Jabalpur, Outsourced power company employee Gajendra Singh was stabbed to death by unidentified assailants while on night duty at a substation in Nanwara village, Jabalpur district, police said.

Singh, brother-in-law of BJP MLA Virendra Singh Lodhi, was attacked with sharp weapons at around 9 p.m. at the facility under Patan police station limits.

His family told police he had disputes with local residents over power supply shutdowns. Police said the motive was yet to be established and they were probing personal enmity and robbery.

A murder case has been registered against unidentified persons. Police and forensic teams inspected the scene, collected evidence and are examining CCTV footage. Teams have been formed to trace the attackers, SDOP Ashish Dwivedi said.

'OUR RESOLVE TO EMPOWER WOMEN REMAINS UNSHAKEN': PM MODI AHEAD OF SPECIAL PARLIAMENT SESSION

(IANS) New Delhi, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday asserted that his government's resolve to empower the country's women by providing reservation in the Lok Sabha and state Assemblies "remains unshaken".

His assertion comes days ahead of the Special session of the Parliament, from November 30 to December 3, where the government is expected to reintroduce the Constitution (131st Amendment) Bill, 2026, which includes the Delimitation Bill, 2026, and the Union Territories Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2026.



It seeks to enable delimitation using the 2011 census, raise the maximum Lok Sabha seat limit from 550 to 850, and operationalise one-third reservation for women in the Parliament and state Assemblies.

In a video message posted on X, PM Modi said: "The struggle to provide equal participation to women have been ongoing for decades. For years I am also among the ones attempting to do so."

"So many women have been raising this topic before me. Many sisters have written letters to me regarding this. I know we have the blessings of 100 per cent of the nation's women power," he said.

Addressing the women of the country, the Prime Minister asserted, "With a high morale, indomitable spirit and steadfast resolve, we will remove all obstacles in the way of women's reservation."

In a warning to the Opposition, he said: "Those parties who are opposing women's reservation will never be able to stop the increase in women's participation in the Lok Sabha and state Assemblies. It is only a matter of time."

In his post on X, the Prime Minister reiterated, "Our resolve to empower women remains unshaken."

This comes a day after the Union Cabinet cleared the amendments to the Constitutional Amendment Bill, linked to the proposed delimitation and women reservation legislation.

This paves the way for an increase in the legislative strength of the Lok Sabha, effectively taking it from the existing 543 to around 815 seats. Also, according to multiple reports, the increased strength of the Lower House will remain frozen for the next 25 years, i.e. till 2051.

The details or the contours of the delimitation bill are yet to be revealed, but reports suggest that the proportional share of all the states will be retained, to pacify the Opposition-ruled and Southern states, in particular, as they have repeatedly flagged getting treated 'unfairly' due to an increase in LS seats.

Centre's delimitation push to increase UP's representation in state Assembly: Amit Shah

(IANS) New Delhi, Union Home Minister Amit Shah, on Saturday, said that the proposed Constitution (131st Amendment) Bill, 2026, which includes the Delimitation Bill, 2026, and the Union Territories Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2026, will enable Uttar Pradesh to increase its representation in the State Assembly.

This comes a day after the Union Cabinet cleared the amendments to the Constitutional Amendment Bill, linked to the proposed delimitation and women reservation legislation, ahead of the Special session of the Parliament from November 30 to December 3.

Taking to 'X', HM Shah said the Cabinet's approval of the 132nd Constitutional Amendment Bill under Prime Minister Narendra Modi is a major step towards increasing public representation across all states and bringing governance closer to the people.

"The proposal also includes an amendment to Article 170(1), raising the maximum strength of State



LegislativeAssemblies from 500 to around 650 seats," he mentioned.

The Home Minister noted that this provision will enable an undivided Uttar Pradesh "to increase its representation in the State Assembly".

"At the same time, the one-third reservation for women will give the women of the state their highest-ever level of representation," he added.

He underlined that with more elected representatives, local priorities can be voiced more effectively in the legislature.

According to HM Shah, this will help formulate development plans that are better aligned with local needs and will accelerate overall development.

"This decision will further strengthen both good governance and public participation in Uttar Pradesh," he said while urging all political parties in the state to welcome and support this "historic legislation".

Earlier on Saturday, Samajwadi Party (SP) President Akhilesh Yadav criticised the BJP-led Central government over the Union Cabinet's decision to clear amendments to the Constitution Amendment Bill linked to delimitation, saying that the ruling party's sole focus is the elections rather than the country's security.

In a post on X, Akhilesh Yadav said: "For the BJP, elections are everything, not the country. That's why it cares about the boundaries of Lok Sabha constituencies, not the country's borders."

TVK Targets Stalin With Morphed RSS Image Over DMK's Delimitation Stand

(IANS) Chennai, Tamilaga Vettri Kazhagam (TVK) on Saturday targeted DMK president and former Chief Minister M.K. Stalin over his party's decision to support the BJP-led Centre's revised delimitation Bill, circulating a morphed image portraying him as an RSS activist.



The image, shared by the party's Information Technology wing, showed Stalin in the uniform of a Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) member and carried the caption, "Stalin, aka Savarkar 2.0". Another animated post depicted Stalin and his son Udhayanidhi Stalin taking an oath as RSS members, questioning the DMK's ideological position.

The TVK's attack followed the DMK's announcement that it would support the revised Bill, saying the Centre had accepted its key demands on protecting Tamil Nadu's parliamentary representation.

DMK Deputy General Secretary and Lok Sabha MP A. Raja said the proposed legislation provided for a uniform 50 per cent increase in Lok Sabha constituencies across all states, safeguarding their existing proportion of representation. The DMK has 22 members in the Lok Sabha and eight in the Rajya Sabha.

Defending the decision, Stalin described the revised Bill as a major victory in the state's efforts to secure fair delimitation and protect the interests of southern states. He said the Centre had accepted two key demands raised in the DMK's 2024 Assembly resolution.

The DMK had opposed the earlier proposal, arguing that it could disproportionately benefit northern states with higher population growth. Under the revised legislation, the 1971 Census would remain the basis for determining parliamentary representation, the party said.

Stalin said the arrangement would allow Tamil Nadu to gain additional Lok Sabha seats without reducing its existing share of representation for the next 25 years.

The DMK had accused the Union government of seeking to push through delimitation without adequately addressing southern states' concerns. The latest exchange has added to the political rivalry between the TVK and the DMK over the issue. The posts fuelled fresh tensions.

Shivakumar Warns of 'Delhi Chalo' Protest Over Pending Drought Relief

(IANS) Bengaluru, Karnataka Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar on Saturday warned that his government would launch the 'Delhi Chalo' protest after the Belagavi Winter Session if the Centre failed to release drought relief before it concludes.

Addressing a press conference at Vidhana Soudha in Bengaluru, Shivakumar said the Centre had not released any drought compensation. He said the issue had been discussed in the Cabinet and the government would launch protests if relief was not provided soon.

Shivakumar said the state would approach the Supreme Court if the Centre failed to release the funds. The government had also sought an appointment with the Prime Minister for an all-party delegation.

He said the government would seek recognition for the Kannada flag during the winter session. On Scheduled Caste reservation, he said there was a unanimous decision to include the enhanced quota in the Constitution's Ninth Schedule after a setback in court.

Shivakumar said he would travel to Delhi on Saturday night and meet the Chief Ministers of Kerala and Telangana on Sunday to discuss the proposed delimitation of Lok Sabha constituencies. They would discuss concerns of southern states, including a likely greater increase in seats in northern states.

Accusing the BJP of pursuing delimitation for political advantage, Shivakumar said southern states could become minorities in



Parliament despite their contribution to development. He said the Congress supported women's reservation but opposed delimitation.

Responding to Union Minister H.D. Kumaraswamy's statement that the proposed legislation would protect Kannadigas, Shivakumar asked him to explain his contribution to Karnataka.

On the ASHA workers' protest, Shivakumar said he had discussed the issue with officials on Friday and state ministers had met the workers on Saturday. He accused NDA leaders of instigating the workers against the state government. He said the Centre provided Rs 2,000 to ASHA workers and both the Centre and state shared responsibility for them. The government would honour its assurance, he said.

Abhishek Banerjee releases videos accusing Bengal Police of filling out affidavits for DTC

(IANS) Kolkata, Lok Sabha member Abhishek Banerjee on Saturday accused West Bengal Police personnel of filling out affidavits for the Democratic Trinamool Congress (DTC), led by Ritabrata Banerjee, and submitting them to the Election Commission of India (ECI) in the dispute over the All India Trinamool Congress name and its 'Grass and Flower' symbol.

Addressing the media in New Delhi, Abhishek released short video clips which he claimed showed police personnel filling out affidavits. The release came a day after the Calcutta High Court set aside Speaker Rathindra Bose's decision to appoint Ritabrata Banerjee as Leader of the Opposition in the West Bengal Assembly.

Abhishek alleged that signatures of around 50 MLAs were taken at gunpoint and sent to the Speaker in support of Ritabrata. He claimed the clips showed police personnel preparing false affidavits for the ECI. He said action would be sought against the personnel involved and senior officers who allegedly instructed them.

He claimed some officers had admitted they were forced to carry out the exercise. Abhishek said the documents and videos would be submitted to the ECI and the Supreme Court, and that legal action would be initiated. He urged the judiciary to take suo motu cognisance.

Abhishek also criticised 20 Trinamool Congress-turned-NCPI Lok Sabha members, saying they remained officially listed as Trinamool MPs. He said the party had issued a whip for its MPs to support its stand during the session beginning November 30.

Citing the Tenth Schedule of the Constitution, he warned that the 20 MPs could face consequences if they defied the whip. He claimed their membership could be lost within a month.

PRESIDENT DROUPADI MURMU ARRIVES IN MIZORAM ON THREE-DAY VISIT

(IANS) Aizawl, President Droupadi Murmu arrived in Aizawl on Saturday afternoon on a three-day visit to Mizoram. Governor General (Dr) Vijay Kumar Singh (Retd), Chief Minister Lalduhoma, Higher and Technical Education Minister Dr Vanlalthlana, Chief Secretary Khili Ram Meena, Director General of Police Sharad Agarwal and officials received her at Lengpui Airport.

Lalduhoma welcomed the President in a post on X, describing her visit as a moment of pride for the state. Murmu later proceeded to Lok Bhavan.

Officials said she would visit the Ropuiliani Tribal Freedom Fighters' Museum at Kelsih near Aizawl on Sunday. On Monday, she is scheduled to attend Mizoram University's 21st convocation and the closing ceremony of its Silver Jubilee celebrations at Tanhril.

Named after Ropuiliani, a Mizo chieftainess who resisted British rule in the erstwhile Lushai Hills, the museum was virtually inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on November 15 on Janjatiya Gaurav Divas. Arrested by the British, Ropuiliani was imprisoned and taken to present-day Bangladesh, where she died in captivity in January 1895.

The museum at the Tribal Research Institute in Kelsih includes an open-air theatre, traditional hut, heritage walk and Birsa Munda Tribal Pride Garden. The Union Ministry of Tribal Affairs sanctioned Rs. 25.59 crore for the project.

The ministry is establishing 11 tribal freedom fighters' museums across 10 states to commemorate resistance to British rule.

Murmu will travel to Nagaland to attend the 27th Hornbill Festival at Kisama near Kohima on December 1. The 10-day festival, coinciding with Nagaland's 64th Statehood Day, will run until December 10 and showcase tribal traditions, art, music, dance and cuisine. Several countries are expected to participate.

100 Bomb Blasts, 92 Vehicles Torched in Bangladesh



(IANS) Dhaka, At least 100 crude bomb explosions and arson attacks on 92 vehicles were reported across Bangladesh between November 7 and 25, while four police establishments were targeted, local media reported on Saturday.

Another 28 vehicles were set on fire or vandalised, bombs were detonated at three establishments and one vehicle was damaged in an explosion, Dhaka Tribune reported, citing police sources.

Police have registered 46 cases and arrested 80 people in connection with the incidents. Investigations and operations are underway to identify and apprehend those involved.

Kamarum Munira, Assistant Inspector General (Media and Public Relations) at Police Headquarters, said police were on high alert to prevent sabotage and anti-state activities.

She said a coordinated security plan had been introduced, including intelligence gathering, increased surveillance at key locations, intensified patrols and checkpoints in vulnerable areas.

Police were also maintaining heightened vigilance around important installations and areas considered vulnerable to attacks, Munira said, adding that firm action would be taken against attempts to disrupt public order.

Meanwhile, a separate Dhaka Tribune report said at least five police personnel had been killed and over 370 seriously injured in more than 484 attacks on police across Bangladesh this year.

The report cited attacks on patrol teams, police stations and officers involved in arresting suspects, highlighting continuing security concerns in the country.

UN CHIEF CONDEMNS DRONE ATTACK IN KUWAIT THAT KILLED TWO ITALIANS



(IANS) United Nations, UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres condemned a drone attack in Kuwait that killed two Italian nationals.

Guterres is deeply concerned about the continued escalation in the region and called on all parties to exercise restraint and refrain from actions that could further undermine regional peace and security or jeopardize ongoing diplomatic efforts, said Stephane Dujarric, the secretary-general's spokesperson.

"Renewed hostilities would have devastating consequences for the region and beyond," Dujarric said, adding that Guterres reaffirmed that dialogue and diplomacy remain the only viable path toward lasting peace in the region.

Kuwait blamed Iran for Thursday's attack, while Tehran denied any involvement, Xinhua news agency reported.

Meanwhile, Kuwait summoned Iran's ambassador Mohammad Totonchi to protest a drone attack that killed two Italian nationals and wounded two others in the Gulf country a day earlier.

In a statement on social media platform X, Kuwait's Foreign Ministry on Friday said it had handed Totonchi a formal protest note over what it described as "continued Iranian attacks" against the country, the latest of which it said targeted a vital facility and caused "extensive material damage."

Kuwaiti Deputy Foreign Minister Hamad Sulaiman Al-Mashaan called the attacks "a flagrant violation" of Kuwait's sovereignty and territorial integrity and a serious breach of international law, holding Iran fully responsible for the attacks and their repercussions, according to the statement.

Al-Mashaan stressed that Kuwait reserved its "inherent right to self-defense" and to take all necessary measures to safeguard its sovereignty and protect its citizens and residents.

Kuwaiti military spokesperson Saud Abdulaziz Al-Atwan said on Thursday that Kuwaiti forces had detected and engaged several "hostile drones" in the country's airspace, attributing them to Iran. Al-Atwan said falling debris from the targeted facility killed two Italians and injured a Kuwaiti and a Pakistani national.

Iranian Foreign Minister Seyed Abbas Araghchi said on Thursday in separate phone calls with his Kuwaiti and Italian counterparts that Iran "had no role or involvement whatsoever" in the incident.

Araghchi expressed regret over the casualties and said Tehran was ready to conduct a joint investigation with Kuwait and Italy to identify the origin of the attack and the parties involved.

Nuclear-powered submarine Perm to join Pacific Fleet: Putin



(IANS) Moscow, Russian President Vladimir Putin said that the new nuclear-powered submarine Perm will join Russia's Pacific Fleet and undertake combat duty.

Putin made the remarks on Friday while attending a ceremony to raise the Russian naval flag on the Perm at the Sevmash shipyard in Severodvinsk, a major shipbuilding center in northwestern Russia, the Kremlin said in an official statement.

The Perm was the fifth Yasen-M-class nuclear-powered submarine delivered to the Russian Navy over the past six years, Putin said, adding that Russia is one of the few countries in the world capable of building such advanced nuclear-powered submarines, which are weapons systems of global strategic significance, Xinhua new agency reported.

According to the Kremlin, the Perm is a fourth-generation, multipurpose nuclear-powered submarine, and also the first Russian Navy submarine equipped with Zircon hypersonic cruise missiles as standard armament.

Submarines of the Yasen-M class are designed to operate in different parts of the world's oceans while remaining undetected. In the near future, the Perm will join Russia's Pacific Fleet to protect Russia's maritime borders, Putin said.

Russia plans to continue expanding and modernizing its Navy, particularly its submarine fleet, according to Putin. He said that the Sevmash shipyard is continuing construction of several types of nuclear-powered submarines, with five missile-carrying submarines scheduled for delivery to the Navy by 2030, including three of the Yasen-M class.

Putin said measures to expand serial ship production and modernize weapons systems would help ensure stable operations in the shipbuilding and defense industries, promote advanced technologies and strengthen Russia's defense capabilities and technological sovereignty.

Cargo ship hijacked in Gulf of Aden off Yemen: UKMTO



(IANS) London, Armed individuals hijacked a cargo ship in the Gulf of Aden off Yemen on Saturday, the United Kingdom Maritime Trade Operations (UKMTO) said.

The ship's master reported that armed individuals boarded the vessel at 0630 GMT, 64 nautical miles (about 119 km) southwest of Balhaf, Yemen, and took control of it.

UKMTO said the authorities were investigating the incident. It advised vessels in the area to proceed with caution and report any suspicious activity to UKMTO, Xinhua News Agency reported.

The Gulf of Aden connects to the Red Sea through the Bab el-Mandeb Strait and lies on a major shipping route between Asia and Europe. Several merchant vessels have been attacked or hijacked in the Gulf and nearby waters in recent months.

Earlier this month, the Indian Navy rescued all 20 crew members of the pirated fishing vessel Azini in a meticulously coordinated 48-hour operation in the Arabian Sea, more than 3,000 km from Mumbai, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh said.

The operation was successfully carried out on November 2, with the Indian Navy locating and intercepting the vessel and securing the safe release of all crew members from heavily armed pirates.

Congratulating the Indian Navy for the successful mission, the Defence Minister said that the operation demonstrated the force's high operational readiness and its ability to respond decisively to maritime threats across the region.

In a post on X, Singh said: "My congratulations to Indian Navy for successfully executing a meticulously coordinated 48-hour operation to rescue all 20 crew members of the pirated fishing vessel, Azini, more than 3000 km from Mumbai in the Arabian Sea, on 02 Nov 26."

"The swift localisation, interception and safe release of the crew and vessel from significantly armed pirates, with timely support from the Indian Air Force, speak well of the Indian Navy's high operational readiness and ability to respond decisively to maritime threats across the region," he added.

India conducts maiden international capacity-building programme for officers of Fiji's Ministry of Defence



(IANS) New Delhi, The first phase of India's maiden international capacity-building programme for officers of Fiji's Ministry of Defence and Veteran Affairs concluded in Suva, the Ministry of Defence said on Saturday.

The 'Global Leadership Programme in Defence Governance and Public Administration for Emerging Leaders', conducted by the Defence Headquarters Training Institute (DHTI) under the Ministry of Defence, was concluded at Lami in Suva on Friday.

"The programme covered facets of good governance, defence procurement, ethics in governance, talent management and capacity building, administrative law, citizen centric governance, modernisation of the audit framework in defence, AI for digital transformation, purpose-driven leadership, strategic communication and emotional intelligence for leaders in the defence sector," the ministry said in a statement.

The valedictory ceremony of the nearly two-week-long programme was attended by Eroni Rokisi, Acting Permanent Secretary in Fiji's Ministry of Defence and Veteran Affairs, and Ranjeet Kumar, Second Secretary (Political and Head of Chancery) at the High Commission of India in Fiji, along with DHTI faculty and participating officials.

"Addressing the gathering, Mr Rokisi commended the team of DHTI for delivering an impactful curriculum that brought about a paradigm shift in participants' capabilities and outlook across administration, transparency and accountability, financial management, behavioural and leadership skills, cyber security, and artificial intelligence," the statement read.

The second phase of the training is scheduled to take place in New Delhi for two weeks in the first quarter of 2027, the ministry said, adding that the programme has added another milestone to DHTI's commitment to strengthening capacity building for defence personnel.

Earlier this month, Rashtriya Raksha University (RRU) launched three specialised training programmes in Fiji to strengthen the professional and institutional capabilities of around 180 government officials from nine Pacific countries, including Fiji.

The month-long initiative, which began on November 2 in Suva, is being conducted in collaboration with the Ministry of Civil Service of the Fijian government, with support from the High Commission of India in Fiji.

HEAVY RAINS INUNDATE NEARLY 1,700 HOMES IN CENTRAL VIETNAM

(IANS) Hanoi, Nearly 1,700 houses were inundated in Vietnam's central province of Quang Ngai on Saturday as torrential rain battered the region, cutting off communities and triggering landslides, local media outlet VnExpress reported.

Flooding affected 21 communes and wards, with Thien Tin and Phuoc Giang among the worst-hit areas, recording 1,115 and 490 inundated houses, respectively. Authorities relocated 83 households from flooded and landslide-prone areas, the report said.

Floodwaters also affected residential areas and roads in Gia Lai, Dak Lak and Khanh Hoa provinces. Water levels exceeded 30 cm on some urban streets, while landslides disrupted traffic along several routes.

The National Centre for Hydrometeorological Forecasting predicted rainfall of more than 500 mm in parts of central Vietnam through the morning of November 30, warning of further flooding, flash floods and landslides, Xinhua news agency reported.

The latest spell of heavy rain comes after severe flooding triggered by Typhoon Matmo in October left more than 15 people dead and several others injured across northern and north-central Vietnam, according to the Vietnam Disaster and Dyke Management Authority.

More than 225,000 houses were submerged and over 1,500 others severely damaged during the disaster. Around 24,000 hectares of rice and other crops were also inundated, while nearly 587,000 livestock and poultry were killed or swept away.

The typhoon also disrupted transportation, blocking 27 road sections due to flooding and landslides. Power outages affected around 181,000 households, while telecommunications networks in several provinces remained partially disrupted.

Prime Minister Pham Minh Chinh had issued an urgent directive calling for intensified measures to prevent flash floods and landslides and ensure the safety of residents in affected areas.

Explosion near school kills 10, injures over 110 in Afghanistan's Kunar province

(IANS) Kabul, At least 10 people were killed and over 110 injured in an explosion near a school in Afghanistan's eastern Kunar province on Saturday, the Interior Ministry said, according to local media reports.

Ministry spokesperson Abdul Matin Qani said preliminary findings indicated that the blast occurred shortly before noon at an explosives storage site belonging to mining companies near a school in the Andir Sir area of Asadabad, the provincial capital.

The ministry said the incident appeared to have been caused by negligence and inadequate safety precautions. An investigation is underway to establish further details.

Pajhwok News Agency reported that four injured students had been shifted to Jalalabad Provincial Hospital, while the remaining victims were receiving treatment in Kunar.

The incident highlights Afghanistan's continuing danger from landmines and unexploded ordnance left behind by decades of conflict.

According to figures reported by Tolo News, 257 people were killed and 87 injured in landmine and unexploded ordnance incidents across the country in 2026. Children accounted for 189 deaths and 73 injuries.

Over 900 square kilometres of land in Afghanistan remain contaminated despite ongoing clearance operations. Around 3.3 million people live near affected areas and face daily risks.

The United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs said in July that unexploded ordnance kills or injures around 50 people every month in Afghanistan, with children accounting for nearly 80 per cent of the victims.

The UN agency warned that declining international funding had reduced mine clearance operations, even as contaminated areas continued to threaten civilians.

PERSPECTIVE | Beyond the Headlines. Context. Clarity. Consequence.

LEBANON: THE PARIS OF THE MIDDLE EAST

Celebrated for its ancient civilisations, breathtaking landscapes, cultural diversity and intellectual heritage, Lebanon remains a remarkable land where historical grandeur meets contemporary challenges.

By: Munsif Editorial Desk

Lebanon, a small but historically significant country along the eastern Mediterranean coast, occupies a distinguished position in the cultural and civilisational history of the Middle East.

Renowned for its natural beauty, ancient traditions and cosmopolitan lifestyle, Lebanon has long attracted travellers, historians and scholars from across the world.

Its capital, Beirut, was once famously celebrated as the "Paris of the Middle East", reflecting its sophisticated urban culture, intellectual vibrancy and distinctive architectural character.

Despite political instability and economic difficulties, Lebanon continues to symbolise an extraordinary combination of history, beauty, diversity and resilience.

An Ancient Home of Civilisation

Lebanon's historical significance extends back thousands of years, making it one of the oldest centres of human settlement and maritime civilisation.

The ancient Phoenicians established flourishing coastal communities and developed extensive trading networks across the Mediterranean.

Their achievements in navigation, commerce and writing contributed significantly to the advancement of human civilisation.

The Phoenician alphabet became particularly influential, helping shape later writing systems used throughout the Mediterranean world.

Ancient cities such as Byblos, Tyre and Sidon preserve evidence of this remarkable heritage.

Egyptians, Romans, Arabs, Ottomans and other civilisations subsequently influenced the region, leaving behind architectural, cultural and historical legacies.

Nature's Extraordinary Gift

Lebanon possesses exceptional geographical diversity despite its relatively small size.

The country's Mediterranean coastline, magnificent mountains, fertile valleys and picturesque villages create an extraordinary natural landscape.

During winter, mountain regions receive snowfall, while coastal areas generally experience comparatively mild conditions.

Summer brings opportunities for mountain retreats, scenic exploration and seaside recreation.

This unusual geographical combination has traditionally made Lebanon an attractive destination for international tourism.

Its famous cedar trees, celebrated for centuries, remain an enduring symbol of national identity and natural heritage.

Beirut: A City of Culture and Sophistication

Beirut has historically represented Lebanon's intellectual, commercial and cultural spirit.

Its streets, restaurants, universities and artistic establishments once attracted visitors seeking a distinctive combination of Middle Eastern traditions and European influences.

Fashion, literature, journalism, education and commerce contributed to the city's cosmopolitan identity.

Lebanon's reputation for hospitality, cuisine and cultural refinement further strengthened its international appeal.

However, beneath this celebrated sophistication lies a society repeatedly challenged by political divisions, economic uncertainty and social pressures.

The contrast between cultural achievement and institutional difficulties remains among Lebanon's defining characteristics.

Religious Diversity and Social Harmony

Lebanon is distinguished by its complex religious and cultural composition.

Muslims, Christians and other communities have contributed to its social development, intellectual traditions and cultural identity.

Its population reflects numerous religious denominations, each possessing distinct customs and historical experiences.

This diversity has enriched Lebanese society while also creating challenges concerning political representation, national unity and equitable governance.

Mutual respect and peaceful coexistence remain essential for preserving the country's social fabric.

Lebanon's history demonstrates that cultural pluralism can become a source of strength when supported by fairness, tolerance and responsible leadership.

Education and Intellectual Achievement

Education has traditionally occupied an important position in Lebanese society.

The country has developed respected universities, academic institutions and centres of intellectual activity.

The American University of Beirut, established in 1866, represents a longstanding tradition of higher education and scholarly development.

Lebanese writers, journalists, educators and intellectuals have contributed to literature, research and public debate far beyond their country's borders.

Despite periods of conflict and economic hardship, the pursuit of education remains an important part of Lebanon's national character.

Education continues to inspire intellectual growth and opportunity across society.

The Political and Economic Struggle

Lebanon's modern history has also been marked by political confrontation, foreign intervention, institutional instability and economic hardship.

Its civil war and subsequent periods of unrest inflicted serious damage upon infrastructure, public confidence and economic development.

Political divisions have frequently complicated national decision-making, while financial pressures have affected ordinary citizens.

Economic instability has encouraged migration, particularly among educated young people seeking employment and security abroad.

The contrast between wealthy commercial interests and struggling households highlights the importance of accountable government and inclusive economic development.

The Challenge of Migration and Displacement

Lebanon has historically experienced substantial migration, both among its own citizens and through the arrival of displaced populations from neighbouring countries.

Conflict and instability across the region have placed additional pressures on public services, employment opportunities and social infrastructure.

Meanwhile, many Lebanese families have sought more secure futures overseas.

These developments have reshaped communities and demonstrated how regional conflicts can affect even comparatively small countries.

Preserving a Remarkable Legacy

Lebanon's identity cannot be defined solely by political instability, financial difficulties or historical conflict.

Its ancient cities, educational traditions, cultural achievements and breathtaking landscapes continue to represent an extraordinary national inheritance.

The country's future depends upon the preservation of this heritage alongside greater political stability, economic opportunity and social understanding.

Lebanon remains a compelling reminder that civilisation is measured not merely through monuments and material prosperity, but through knowledge, coexistence and the resilience of its people.

Such resilience can guide Lebanon's recovery, preserving its cultural identity while nurturing peace, prosperity and opportunity for generations.

* * * * *

"Lebanon's true greatness lies in its ancient heritage, cultural diversity and enduring spirit."

WORLD TRAVEL | MYSTERIOUS DESTINATIONS & DARK TOURISM

BEYOND BEAUTY: THE WORLD'S MOST UNSETTLING DESTINATIONS

From abandoned cities and historic prisons to mysterious forests and unusual museums, certain attractions draw visitors through their disturbing histories rather than their scenic appeal.

The world offers countless beautiful destinations, but some places attract attention for reasons far removed from conventional tourism. Their stories involve death, imprisonment, abandoned settlements, strange traditions and unexplained legends. Such locations can appear frightening, although an unsettling history does not necessarily make a destination dangerous. Exploring them requires curiosity, caution and respect for the people whose experiences shaped these sites.

Capela dos Ossos, Portugal

In Évora, Portugal, the Chapel of Bones presents an extraordinary sight: walls and pillars decorated with human bones and skulls. Associated with Franciscan religious traditions, the chapel encourages visitors to confront human mortality. Its sombre interior transforms a historical monument into a powerful meditation on the briefness of life.

Port Arthur, Tasmania

Australia's Port Arthur Historic Site preserves the legacy of a nineteenth-century penal settlement. Its former prisons, buildings and surrounding landscape recall the harsh conditions endured by convicts. Today, the site offers an opportunity to understand colonial punishment and the difficult experiences behind Australia's history.

Museums of Death and Mummies

Hollywood's Museum of Death features unsettling material relating to mortality, violent crime and criminal history. In Mexico, the Museo de las Momias de Guanajuato displays naturally preserved human remains uncovered during cemetery exhumations. Both attract curiosity, but their exhibits require sensitivity, particularly towards the dignity of the dead.

The Winchester Mystery House

San Jose's Winchester Mystery House is renowned for its architectural oddities, including staircases leading nowhere and confusing passages. Built through decades of expansion by Sarah Winchester, the mansion inspired numerous supernatural stories. Its unusual construction is genuine; claims of paranormal activity belong to folklore rather than established fact.

Monte Cristo Homestead, Australia

The historic Monte Cristo Homestead in Junee, New South Wales, has acquired a reputation as one of Australia's most haunted houses.

Stories of mysterious sounds and apparitions surround the property, although such experiences remain unverified.

Its real historical character is more substantial than the frightening legends attached to it.

The Island of Dolls, Mexico

In the canals of Xochimilco, weathered dolls hang from trees on an island associated with a local story about a drowned child.

Their damaged faces and unusual arrangement create an eerie atmosphere. The tale remains a legend, yet the island has become internationally recognised for its unsettling appearance.

Pripyat, Ukraine

The 1986 Chernobyl nuclear disaster forced the evacuation of Pripyat.

Empty apartment blocks, abandoned classrooms and a silent amusement park became enduring images of technological catastrophe.

Unlike many supposedly haunted locations, the surrounding exclusion zone has genuine safety and access restrictions linked to radioactive contamination.

Oradour-sur-Glane, France

The ruins of Oradour-sur-Glane commemorate residents murdered by Nazi forces in June 1944. Streets and damaged buildings have been preserved as reminders of wartime atrocities. This is not a place for sensational thrills, but a solemn memorial demanding historical understanding and respect.

Poveglia, Italy

Poveglia, an island in the Venetian Lagoon, served historical quarantine and medical purposes. Abandoned buildings have inspired stories of restless spirits and sinister experiments. Many popular ghost narratives, however, lack reliable historical evidence. The island's authentic past is compelling enough without presenting legends as proven events.

Aokigahara Forest, Japan

Near Mount Fuji, Aokigahara's dense woodland is known for its quiet, sometimes disorienting landscape.

Its association with deaths by suicide has encouraged sensational publicity.

A responsible account should instead emphasise mental-health sensitivity, respect for affected families and the importance of staying on designated routes.

Pine Barrens, New Jersey

The extensive Pine Barrens woodland in the United States is linked to the legend of the Jersey Devil, a mysterious creature said to inhabit its forests.

The story is part of regional folklore, while the forest's natural environment offers its own striking atmosphere and ecological significance.

Kabayan Mummy Caves, Philippines

In the mountains of Benguet, the Kabayan burial caves preserve an extraordinary funerary tradition involving ancient mummified remains.

These sacred cultural sites deserve careful protection, respect for Indigenous heritage and responsible visitation rather than treatment as mere objects of horror.

Zambia's Spectacular Migration of Millions of Bats

Each year, millions of fruit bats gather in Zambia's Kasanka National Park.

Their extraordinary migration can darken the evening sky and overwhelm first-time observers.

Yet this dramatic spectacle is a natural phenomenon, not a supernatural threat, demonstrating that mystery often emerges from wildlife itself.

Tunguska, Russia

In 1908, a powerful atmospheric explosion flattened vast areas of Siberian forest near Tunguska.

Scientists widely attribute the event to an incoming space object exploding above the ground.

The remote landscape continues to provoke fascination, but its mystery is best approached through scientific investigation.

Beyond Fear and Fascination

These destinations demonstrate that travel is not always about comfort and picturesque scenery.

Some places preserve painful memory, others challenge perceptions, and still others inspire folklore.

Their lasting value emerges when visitors distinguish documented history from speculation and approach unfamiliar environments with care.

Ultimately, these extraordinary destinations reveal that true discovery lies beyond fear, inviting travellers to explore history, question legends, respect human suffering and appreciate nature's wonders.

"The most unsettling journeys often reveal history's deepest lessons and nature's greatest mysteries."

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Hasan Nawaz's all-round show powers Pakistan A into Rising Stars Asia Cup final



Doha, (IANS): Hasan Nawaz delivered an impressive all-round performance, scoring a half-century and taking two wickets as Pakistan A defeated Bangladesh A by five wickets in the second semi-final of the Rising Stars Asia Cup in Doha on Friday to book a place in Sunday's final against Sri Lanka A.

Chasing 233, Pakistan A reached the target with 4.4 overs to spare, thanks to half-centuries from Nawaz and Shahzaib Khan. Captain Abdul Samad scored 44, while Farhan Yousaf remained unbeaten on 46 to guide the team home.

Pakistan A suffered early setbacks as Ripon Mondol dismissed two batters in four deliveries, reducing them to 21/2. Nawaz and Shahzaib then stitched together a 110-run partnership for the fourth wicket to put the chase back on track. Shahzaib batted cautiously, while Nawaz attacked the spinners to keep the scoring rate in check.

After both batters departed, Samad and Yousaf added 74 runs to seal the victory. Samad fell for 44 with Pakistan A just nine runs away from the target, while Yousaf remained unbeaten to complete the chase.

Earlier, Bangladesh A posted 232/8, largely through Shahadat Hossain's brilliant 103 off 118 balls, including seven fours and three sixes. Mahidul Islam Ankon contributed 42 as the duo added 95 runs for the third wicket.

Pakistan A's Ali Raza struck early, while Sufyan Moqim claimed three wickets to trigger a middle-order collapse, reducing Bangladesh A from 110/2 to 118/5. Shahadat later helped revive the innings, with a late 40-run stand for the last wicket taking Bangladesh A past 200.

Pakistan A will now face Sri Lanka A in Sunday's final as they look to defend their Rising Stars Asia Cup title.

2nd Test: NZ bowlers seize control as India down to 116/6 at stumps on Day 2

Christchurch, (IANS): New Zealand strengthened their grip on the second Test against India, dismissing the visitors for 116/6 at stumps on Day 2 after posting 356 in their first innings at Hagley Oval on Saturday. India trail by 240 runs, with the hosts' pace attack exploiting the conditions to put the visitors under pressure.

New Zealand, who resumed at 246/5, added valuable runs through the lower order and overnight batter Tom Blundell. Blundell scored a patient 89 off 211 balls, narrowly missing a century in his 50th Test. Nathan Smith made 26, Kyle Jamieson 19 and Matt Henry 19 as New Zealand were bowled out for 356 in 116.3 overs.

Akash Deep led India's bowling with 5/95, his second five-wicket haul in Test cricket, while Gurnoor Brar and Anshul Kamboj picked up two wickets each and Washington Sundar claimed one.



India's reply got off to a disastrous start as Yashasvi Jaiswal was bowled by Matt Henry for a duck in the opening over. Devdutt Padikkal scored 21 off 20 balls before falling to Jamieson, while Shubman Gill made 17 before edging to Tom Latham at second slip. India went into tea at 59/3.

KL Rahul, who scored 25 off 80 balls, was dismissed by Jacob Duffy, while Rishabh Pant made 23 before falling to Jamieson. Washington Sundar was then dismissed for 10 by Nathan Smith in the final over of the day, leaving Dhruv Jurel unbeaten on seven as India ended at 116/6 in 46 overs.

With New Zealand's seamers maintaining pressure and India still 240 runs behind, the visitors face a challenging task on Day 3 to stay in contention in the series-deciding Test.

Brief Scores: India 116/6 in 46 overs (KL Rahul 25, Rishabh Pant 23; Kyle Jamieson 2-33, Jacob Duffy 2-21) trail New Zealand 356 (Tom Blundell 89, Tom Latham 59; Akash Deep 5-95, Anshul Kamboj 2-79, Gurnoor Brar 2-78) by 240 runs.

Rinku Singh Likely to Lead KKR in IPL 2027, Says Irfan Pathan

New Delhi, (IANS): Former India pacer Irfan Pathan believes Rinku Singh is the frontrunner to captain Kolkata Knight Riders (KKR) in IPL 2027 following Ajinkya Rahane's retirement.

Pathan said Rinku is the best option, a view also backed by Aakash Chopra, who noted that he served as vice-captain last season. Sunil Narine could be another option.

Pathan said Rahane's exit may allow Angkrish Raghuvanshi to open, while Harshit Rana's return would strengthen the bowling attack.

Chopra questioned Green's Rs 25.20 crore retention, citing fitness concerns, while Mukund said KKR need another pacer and middle-order batter.

'I wasn't prepared initially; MI needed direction': Rohit on returning to captaincy for IPL 2027



New Delhi, (IANS): Former India captain Rohit Sharma has admitted that he was initially reluctant to return as Mumbai Indians captain for the 2027 Indian Premier League (IPL) season but eventually accepted the responsibility, believing the five-time champions needed clear direction after three disappointing campaigns.

Rohit was named Mumbai Indians captain on Friday following Hardik Pandya's trade to Punjab Kings earlier this month. In an interview with the franchise, the 38-year-old revealed that a discussion with team owner Akash Ambani played a crucial role in his decision.

Rohit said the team's disappointing performances in the previous season had frustrated several players, prompting discussions about how to restore the franchise's winning standards. After speaking with his wife, he met Ambani, who asked whether he would be willing to lead the team again.

The veteran batter admitted that he was initially unsure about taking up the role, considering everything that had happened over the previous few seasons. However, after reflecting on his 10-year association as captain, he felt he should accept the challenge once again.

Rohit said Mumbai Indians needed direction at that stage and he was willing to take responsibility if he could help move the team forward. He also stressed that the recent struggles were not the failure of any individual but a collective setback. Mumbai Indians finished near the bottom of the points table in 2022, 2024 and 2026, something Rohit said did not reflect the franchise's identity and standards.

Rohit joined Mumbai Indians in 2011 and remains the franchise's most successful captain, having guided them to five IPL titles in 2013, 2015, 2017, 2019 and 2020. He will now begin his second stint as captain ahead of the franchise's 20th IPL season in 2027.

Rishabh Pant surpasses Ben Stokes to become leading six-hitter in WTC history

Christchurch, (IANS): India's wicketkeeper-batter Rishabh Pant became the leading six-hitter in the history of the ICC World Test Championship (WTC), surpassing former England captain Ben Stokes during the second Test against New Zealand in Christchurch on Saturday.

Pant achieved the milestone on Day 2 when he hit a six off Jacob Duffy, taking his tally to 89 sixes in 44 WTC matches and 76 innings. Stokes finished his WTC career with 88 sixes in 64 matches and 117 innings. Rohit Sharma ranks third with 56 sixes, followed by Shubman Gill (48) and Yashasvi Jaiswal (45).

However, Pant could not make the most of the milestone, scoring 23 off 39 balls, including one four and a six, before being dismissed by Duffy. He was caught by Kyle Jamieson while attempting an attacking shot after advancing down the track.

Pant now has 109 sixes in 92 innings across 54 Test matches, placing him second among the leading six-hitters in Test cricket, behind Ben Stokes, who has 138 sixes in 220 innings. India were struggling in their first innings after New Zealand posted 356. Pant shared a 37-run partnership



with KL Rahul, who scored 25 off 80 balls, but the visitors continued to lose wickets and were left under pressure.

Dawson Backs Adil Rashid as England's Best White-Ball Spinner



Sydney, (IANS): England spin all-rounder Liam Dawson has backed veteran leg-spinner Adil Rashid as the country's best white-ball spinner despite his recent struggle to secure a regular place in the ODI side.

Rashid has played only one of England's last seven ODIs, while Dawson has received more opportunities due to his batting ability. However, both remain part of England's T20I plans as the team leads Australia 2-1 in the five-match series.

Speaking ahead of the fourth T20I on Sunday, Dawson said Rashid remained England's No. 1 white-ball spinner and expressed confidence that the experienced leg-spinner would regain his form.

England have also included young spinners James Coles and Rehan Ahmed, both 22, in their squad. Dawson praised their talent and work ethic, saying he was happy to share his experience and guide them.

Siraj's Exclusion from New Zealand Tests Raises Questions over His Place in India's Test Setup



New Delhi, (Agencies): Hyderabad pacer Mohammed Siraj's future in India's Test setup has come under scrutiny after he was left out of the playing XI for the second consecutive Test against New Zealand. Following India's failure to take all 20 wickets in the opening Test, Siraj was expected to return to the side, but the team management instead handed a debut to young pacer Gurnoor Brar. Notably, since making his Test debut in Australia in 2020, this is the first time in his six-year career that Siraj has been part of an overseas Test series without playing a single match.

Disappointed after missing out on selection once again, Siraj was seen wearing dark sunglasses at the ground on Friday morning, with the visuals reflecting his frustration. Former India captain Ajinkya Rahane and ex-spinner Murali Kartik expressed concern over the treatment meted out to the Hyderabad pacer. Kartik questioned why Siraj was picked for the tour if the management had concerns about his form or bowling in practice, arguing that taking a player overseas only to keep him on the bench could be deeply demoralising. Former players Sunil Gavaskar, Mohammad Kaif and Ravichandran Ashwin also reportedly criticised the selection decision.

Siraj has been India's leading wicket-taker in the current World Test Championship cycle, claiming 43 wickets in 11 matches. During last year's England tour, he delivered 23 wickets in 185.3 overs, playing a vital role in the team's bowling attack. However, his return of just five wickets in three recent Tests against Afghanistan and Sri Lanka, along with a reported dip in pace to 120-125 kmph during the Sri Lanka tour, are believed to have influenced the management's decision.

Despite his workload, Siraj is known for his stamina and ability to bowl long spells. He has also produced impressive performances in South Africa, England and Australia. Former players believe he deserved an opportunity in New Zealand to demonstrate his pace and effectiveness in challenging conditions.

Questions have also been raised over whether the pacers selected in his place, including Prasidh Krishna and Anshul Kamboj, have delivered performances strong enough to justify Siraj's exclusion. If India suffer another setback in the second Test and their World Test Championship final hopes take a hit, the decision to leave out the Hyderabad pacer could face further criticism.

Opening slot easiest to fill, SRH needn't worry about Head's exit: Aakash Chopra

New Delhi, (IANS): Sunrisers Hyderabad (SRH) need not be overly concerned about the absence of Australian opener Travis Head from the 2027 IPL season, as the opening slot is relatively easy to fill, former India opener Aakash Chopra has said.

Head was released by SRH on the retention deadline after deciding to skip the 2027 season to manage his workload and spend time with his family ahead of a busy international calendar.

Chopra said replacing an opener like Head would have a limited impact compared to losing a quality fast bowler such as Josh Hazlewood, Jofra Archer, Mitchell Starc or Pat Cummins. He suggested that SRH consider signing West Indies captain Shai Hope at next month's auction.

According to Chopra, Hope could provide a left-right batting combination alongside Ishan Kishan, who could bat at No. 3, while also strengthening the team's flexibility. He added that SRH have around Rs 40 crore available and can afford to make a strong bid for the West Indies batter. Chopra said the franchise should be more concerned about the possibility of captain Pat Cummins missing the season than finding a replacement for Head. Head's departure brings an end to one of the most explosive opening partnerships in recent IPL cricket, alongside Abhishek Sharma. The duo played a key role in transforming SRH's powerplay approach through aggressive batting.

SRH bought Head for Rs 6.8 crore in the 2024 auction. He made an immediate impact, scoring 567 runs at an average above 40 and a strike rate of 191.55, helping the franchise reach the final. Retained for Rs 14 crore ahead of the 2025 mega auction, he scored 374 runs in 2025 and 410 in 2026.



Overall, Head scored 1,351 runs in 43 matches for SRH at an average of 32.95 and a strike rate of 176.14.

Tanvi Sharma, Unnati Hooda Enter Syed Modi Tournament Semifinals

Lucknow, (IANS): Tanvi Sharma, Unnati Hooda and the women's doubles pair of Gayatri Gopichand and Treesa Jolly entered the semifinals of the Syed Modi India International Super 300 badminton tournament on Friday.

Second seed Tanvi defeated Indonesia's Ni Kadek Dhinda Amartya Pratiwi 21-19, 18-21, 21-14, while third seed Unnati beat fellow Indian Anmol Kharb 21-19, 15-21, 21-18. The two Indians will now clash in the semifinals. Gayatri and Treesa advanced after their opponents withdrew, while Satwik Reddy Kanapuram and Reshika entered the mixed doubles semifinals with a 21-8, 21-14 win.

Tushar Suveer, Hariharan-MR Arjun and Sai Pratheek-Ruban Kumar bowed out of the tournament.

CITYBEAT | Life in the Twin Cities Civic affairs, Crime & infrastructure

Govt transfers several IAS, non-cadre officers



Hyderabad (NSS) : The Telangana government on Saturday issued orders transferring and assigning new postings to several IAS and non-cadre officers on administrative grounds.

As part of the reshuffle, Sarfaraz Ahmed (IAS–2009), who was serving as HMDA Metropolitan Commissioner, has been transferred and appointed Secretary to the Government, Metropolitan Area and Urban Development Department. He has also been designated Special Officer for the GHMC, Cyberabad and Malkajgiri Municipal Corporations.

E.V. Narasimha Reddy (IAS–2017) has been appointed HMDA Metropolitan Commissioner, while being given Full Additional Charge (FAC) as Managing Director of the Musi Riverfront Development Corporation.

B. Ajit Reddy (IDES–2012) has been given FAC as Managing Director of Hyderabad Metro Rail Limited. He will continue to serve as CEO of Invest Telangana in the Industries and Commerce Department.

Mayank Mittal (IAS–2020), currently serving as Joint Managing Director of HMWSSB, has been given FAC as Zonal Commissioner of GHMC.

K. Chandrakala has been appointed Joint Metropolitan Commissioner of HMDA. She has also been given FAC as Special Collector (Land Acquisition) of Hyderabad Growth Corridor Limited.

I.E.S.S.D. Manoj (IAS–2023), who was serving as Sub-Collector of Bellampalli in Mancherial district, has been transferred and posted as Joint Managing Director of Hyderabad Metro Rail Limited.

P. Ramu has been transferred from his post as Regional Deputy Director of State Audit and appointed Special Officer (Projects) in the Education Department. Meanwhile, V. Srinivas Reddy has been directed to report to his parent department following his transfer.

Govt committed to expanding oil palm cultivation to 10 lakh acres: Tummala



Hyderabad (NSS) : Agriculture Minister Tummala Nageswara Rao on Saturday reiterated the State government's commitment to expanding oil palm cultivation to 10 lakh acres and resolving growers' issues in a phased manner.

Addressing district presidents of the Telangana State Oil Palm Growers Association at Chevella, the Minister noted that oil palm is currently cultivated across 3.37 lakh acres by 92,504 farmers in the State. Since the Congress government took office in December 2023, an additional 46,840 farmers have brought 1.54 lakh acres under the crop, he said. To support growers, the government has credited ₹442.74 crore in subsidies directly to the bank accounts of 75,628 farmers for establishing and maintaining new plantations, as well as cultivating intercrops. The State provides a subsidy of ₹46,250 per acre, the Minister said.

Highlighting its long-term financial viability, Tummala Nageswara Rao said oil palm yields returns for nearly 30 years and can generate a net income of up to ₹2 lakh per acre. He observed that the crop, once restricted to a few pockets, is now driving economic upliftment among tribal, Dalit, and backward-class farmers.

The Minister urged association leaders to take proactive field-level steps to further accelerate oil palm adoption across Telangana.

BRS backs Centre's Delimitation Bill, three Rajya Sabha MPs to support



Hyderabad (NSS) : The Bharat Rashtra Samithi (BRS) has announced its support for the Centre's Delimitation Bill, stating that the proposed 50 per cent expansion in parliamentary seats addresses its core concerns regarding southern representation.

In a post on X on Saturday, BRS working president K.T. Rama Rao confirmed that the party's three Rajya Sabha MPs would vote in favour of the legislation, which is set to increase Telangana's Lok Sabha tally from 17 to 26.

"Our stand on delimitation has always been clear. There should be no reduction in the parliamentary representation of southern States, and we will not tolerate any injustice to Telangana," Rama Rao said. He noted that the proposal meets the party's demand to maintain the inter-State ratio of parliamentary representation unchanged until 2051.

Reiterating the party's backing for women's reservation, Rama Rao added that the decision was taken keeping Telangana's interests paramount.

Musi Jan Andolan boycotts consultation, alleges project decisions already finalised

Hyderabad (NSS) : Musi Jan Andolan (MJA) has boycotted the stakeholder consultation convened by the Musi Riverfront Development Corporation Limited (MRDCL), alleging that tenders for Phase-I works had already been issued, rendering the exercise meaningless.

At a press conference at Somajiguda Press Club here on Saturday, MJA representatives alleged that the government was holding consultations after finalising key project decisions and promoting the riverfront development project at the upcoming Global Investment Summit.

The group said tenders for Zone-IA and Zone-IB works were issued on October 12, covering river training, flood mitigation, embankments, roads, bridges, drainage, sewer mains and related infrastructure. It alleged that the consultation was scheduled after the tender submission deadline, undermining meaningful public participation.

MJA also questioned the Asian Development Bank's involvement, alleging that while the bank described loan consideration as being at a "conceptual stage", it had supported project planning and hosted tender documents.

The organisation demanded dissolution of MRDCL, establishment of a participatory Musi River Basin Authority, suspension of project works, revocation of GO No.921 exempting thousands of properties from Social Impact Assessment and public hearings, and publication of the Detailed Project Report (DPR) and environmental studies in Telugu, Urdu and English.

It sought a 60-day public review period and said the project should prioritise ecological restoration, sewage treatment and river rejuvenation over commercial development.

MJA alleged that the project was being promoted as a commercial investment opportunity without adequately addressing the concerns of riverbank communities and affected residents.

Press meet was addressed and attended by MJA activists and affected people, including Sajaya K, Sandhya V, Syed Bilal, Vishali, Ruchith Asha Kamal, Sanjeev, Lissy Joseph, Shailendra, Subbalakshmi, Kondal Rao and Sudha Goparaju.

Vakiti directs officials to ensure foolproof arrangements for Khelo India Games



Hyderabad (NSS) : Sports Minister Vakiti Srihari has directed officials to ensure foolproof arrangements for the smooth conduct of the Khelo India Games, scheduled to begin in Telangana on December 11.

As part of the preparations, the Minister visited the Gachibowli Stadium here on Saturday to inspect ongoing works for the event. During the visit, he reviewed sports facilities, athlete infrastructure, sanitation, and washrooms across the stadium premises.

Vakiti Srihari instructed officials to complete all pending arrangements well ahead of schedule to ensure the event is hosted successfully.

Hyderabad to Host India's First Stepwell Art Biennale from December 1



Hyderabad (NSS) : Hyderabad is set to host India's first stepwell-based art biennale, Baoli Art Sangam (BAS) 2026, from December 1 to January 10, bringing together heritage, contemporary art and cultural performances at historic sites across Telangana.

The 40-day festival will feature over 200 artists from India and abroad, more than 50 programmes and live performances, and is expected to attract over 2,000 visitors daily. The initiative aims to transform historic stepwells and heritage sites into vibrant cultural spaces while highlighting their architectural significance and role in water conservation. The first edition will cover several locations, including Bansilalpet, Adikmet, Ammapalli, Bapu Ghat, Falaknuma, Mah Laqa Bai and Manchirevula stepwells, besides Golconda Fort and other heritage sites.

The event was announced at EkChitra, Hitech City, in the presence of HYDRAA Commissioner AV Ranganath, Telangana Tourism Development Corporation Managing Director Kranti Valluru, and the biennale's founders, Kalpana Ramesh and Annapurna M.

Ranganath said Telangana's rich architectural and cultural heritage needed to be preserved and presented to future generations. He noted that stepwells had traditionally served not only as sources of water but also as community spaces for social gatherings.

Valluru said the initiative would promote cultural tourism by connecting restored stepwells and historic monuments through art and performances, giving visitors new reasons to explore Hyderabad and Telangana. The programme will include Kathak, ghazals, Sufi nights, theatre, jazz, global music and folk performances. The biennale is being organised by Kalpana Ramesh, known for her work in stepwell and water conservation, and artist, curator and gallerist Annapurna M, with a curatorial team comprising practitioners from Telangana and other states.

The initiative also seeks to place Telangana on the national and international cultural tourism map, in line with the state's Telangana Rising 2047 vision.

UNIVERSITIES MUST LEAD VIKSIT BHARAT VISION: GOVERNOR

Hyderabad (NSS) : Universities must focus on education, research, innovation and skill development to contribute to the vision of Viksit Bharat–2047, Governor and Kakatiya University Chancellor Shiv Pratap Shukla said on Saturday.

Addressing the University's 24th convocation, he urged students to uphold 'Nation First', ethical values and social responsibility, and called upon youth to contribute to the goal of a drug-free India by 2029.

Stressing the need for technology-driven and inclusive education, the Governor advocated research in emerging fields such as Artificial Intelligence, digital technologies and healthcare. He also urged universities to strengthen industry partnerships, promote innovation and provide equal opportunities to rural students.

The Governor congratulated graduates, Ph.D. scholars and gold medal winners, and called upon them to pursue lifelong learning, integrity and service to society.

Padma Shri Dr. B.V.R. Mohan Reddy, who delivered the convocation address, urged graduates to follow the motto 'Learn, Build and Lead'. Vice-Chancellor Prof. K. Pratap Reddy outlined the university's achievements.

Governor conferred degrees on the graduates. Governor's Special Chief Secretary M. Dana Kishore, Registrar, faculty members, officials, students, research scholars, parents and other dignitaries attended.

Harish, Jagga Reddy meet after 21 years; Congress leader rules out political angle



Hyderabad (NSS) : Former minister and senior BRS leader T. Harish Rao and Telangana Pradesh Congress Committee (TPCC) Working President T. Jagga Reddy met in person after a gap of nearly 21 years at the latter's residence in Sangareddy town on Saturday.

Harish Rao visited Jagga Reddy's home upon invitation to bless and congratulate the Congress leader's son, Bharat Sai Reddy, who recently got married. The two leaders spent some time interacting during the visit. Former MLA Chanti Kranthi Kiran and DCMS Chairman Shivakumar accompanied Harish Rao.

Speaking about the meeting, Jagga Reddy clarified that the visit carried no political significance or hidden agenda, stating that politics was a separate matter. He noted that while Harish Rao is a senior figure in the BRS, he holds his own standing within the Congress.

Recalling their past association, Jagga Reddy said he used to meet Harish Rao and share meals in his chamber when the latter served as a Minister in 2004. However, after joining the Congress, the two had not met even during Harish Rao's decade-long tenure as a Minister when Jagga Reddy was an MLA.

Jagga Reddy added that while he could not invite Harish Rao to his daughter's wedding or other family events in the past, he personally insisted that the BRS leader attend this occasion.

FIT INDIA SUNDAYS ON CYCLE TO CELEBRATE 100TH EDITION IN HYD

Hyderabad (NSS) : The 100th edition of Fit India Sundays on Cycle will be held at Smart Bike, Narsingi, on Sunday, with around 200 participants. Former Olympian J.J. Shobha and Asian Games medallist Nandini Agasara will attend the event organised by the Sports Authority of India's Hyderabad Training Centre. The programme begins at 9.30 am with a cycling rally and fitness activities. The nationwide celebration will take place at 100 locations, led by Union Sports Minister Mansukh Mandaviya in Pune. Participants will also take the Nasha Mukt Bharat pledge.

The 100th Fit India Sundays on Cycle event will be held at Narsingi on Sunday, with Olympian J.J. Shobha and Asian Games medallist Nandini Agasara attending.

DGP warns against attacks on police, calls for tough action against drug gangs

Hyderabad (NSS) : Telangana DGP C.V. Anand has warned that attacks on or obstruction of police personnel performing their duties would not be tolerated, while assuring the public that complaints against police misconduct would be acted upon in accordance with the law.

Addressing a police review meeting in Nizamabad, the DGP directed the officers to intensify efforts to curb drug trafficking, ganja networks and rowdy gangs. He appreciated the district police for maintaining communal harmony and law and order, but asked them to address shortcomings in policing.

Referring to the Tellampur village incident, he cautioned against creating disturbances in the name of Village Development Committees, stating that 69 cases had been registered against such activities this year.

He also urged surrendered Maoists to join the mainstream and contribute to society, while making it clear that their movements would continue to be monitored.

Anand inaugurated the Nizamabad Rural DSP office and a new police station building at Mugpal. He also reviewed preparations for the upcoming Godavari Pushkarams, with security and traffic arrangements being planned for an estimated 1.3 crore devotees.

Local leaders Mohd Shabbir Ali, Nizamabad Rural MLA Bhupathi Reddy and other public representatives participated in the inauguration of the new police station offices.

KCR's HUNGER STRIKE WAS RESULT OF CONGRESS BETRAYAL: VINOD KUMAR



Hyderabad (NSS) : Former MP and BRS senior leader B. Vinod Kumar on Saturday accused the Congress of betraying the people of Telangana by going back on its promise to create a separate state, forcing BRS chief K. Chandrashekar Rao (KCR) to launch his indefinite hunger strike in 2009.

Speaking to the media ahead of the Deeksha Diwas programme to be organised by BRS working president K.T. Rama Rao in Karimnagar on Sunday, Vinod Kumar said Congress had promised Telangana during the 2004 elections but failed to honour its commitment after coming to power.

Recalling KCR's slogan, "KCR dies, Telangana will come", he said the hunger strike laid the foundation for the Centre's December 9, 2009 announcement initiating the formation of Telangana.

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