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Volume : 1 No. 214 VISAKHAPATNAM Friday, June 12, 2026 Editor: GANTYADA APPARAO Pages : 4 Rs: 5-00

Omar Abdullah Doubles Down On J&K Statehood Demand, Meets PM Modi



New Delhi: Days after inviting the INDIA bloc leaders to join his proposed protest on the restoration of statehood to Jammu and Kashmir, Chief Minister Omar Abdullah met with Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday. Among the key issues concerning the union territory discussed at the meeting was statehood. The National Conference leader also congratulated PM Modi for completing 12 years in office. "Called on honourable Prime Minister Narendra Modi to discuss issues of

and enhance public welfare across Jammu and Kashmir. On Monday, Omar Abdullah attended the INDIA bloc meeting in New Delhi. He invited all the INDIA bloc members to join his proposed protest.

He said he would write letters to all the INDIA bloc leaders to join his planned march outside Parliament next month. Last week, Omar Abdullah's National Conference announced that all its MLAs and MPs will protest at the start of Parliament's Monsoon session. "In the INDIA bloc meeting held today, Hon'ble CM @OmarAbdullah asked all the participants to join JKNC when we come

importance to Jammu and Kashmir, including early return of Statehood, the state of the economy, pace of development and promotion of tourism. I congratulated him on the landmark of completing 12 uninterrupted years in office," he said in a post on X. In a statement, the Chief Minister's Office said that Omar Abdullah also highlighted the need for continued support from the Government of India to accelerate economic growth, strengthen connectivity, generate employment, expand infrastructure

to Delhi to protest for the restoration of statehood. He also informed them that we would be writing to each of them individually as well," said the party in a statement on Monday. Omar Abdullah has been facing criticism for not doing enough to fight for the restoration of the statehood. It appears the chief minister is now trying to make the restoration of statehood central to his politics. He is building momentum for his demand. Last week, Abdullah took all his party's MLAs, MPs and ministers to a no-network zone at Dachigam National Park about 22 kilometres from Srinagar.

Amid Meenakshi Natarajan Row, All 3 BJP Rajya Sabha Picks Elected Unopposed

Bhopal: The BJP on Thursday swept the Madhya Pradesh Rajya Sabha election. The party won all three seats unopposed while the Congress' challenge over Meenakshi Natarajan's rejected nomination remained stuck between the Election Commission and the Supreme Court. The EC issued certificates to the BJP's Rajnish Agrawal, Tarun Chugh, and Mahesh Kevat, to confirm their wins. Agrawal only to express gratitude to the party for the victory. Dramatic legal and political challenges by the Congress failed to stop this result. The party approached the

court against the poll panel rejecting Natarajan's nomination.

The court, however, opted to defer the hearing till Friday, which left room for the Election Commission to confirm the BJP candidates' 'unopposed victory'. A 10-member Congress delegation also met the EC in Delhi on Wednesday afternoon. But like the court, the poll did not issue a ruling before the election process was to be completed. The Congress had earlier insisted it had the numbers to send Natarajan to the Rajya Sabha. But her nomination was rejected June 9, turning an expected



close contest into a one-sided finish.

In the Supreme Court, senior advocate Abhishek Manu Singhvi pressed the Congress' case for an urgent hearing, arguing the deadline for withdrawal of nominations was 3 pm the same day. The EC, however,

said it had not received a petition copy and needed time to respond. Singhvi then asked that the results not be declared in the meantime. However, the court noted the law on such issues had already been settled and listed the matter for Friday.

Mamata Fan To Rebel Camp: Saayoni Ghosh's Political Trajectory

Kolkata: Actor turned politician Saayoni Ghosh has openly taken pride in the fact that she has styled herself by taking inspiration from Mamata Banerjee. During the election campaign in April this year, the Trinamool Congress Youth Wing Chief Saayoni Ghosh said, "I am supposed to follow my leader. I am not supposed to follow Narendra Modi, and thank god I don't follow him. If I followed Narendra Modi,

I would be travelling in an Rs 8000 crore private jet. My leader is very simple." Ghosh has not yet denied reports of her move to the rebel camp in the Trinamool Congress. "If Didi wins, Bengal wins," Saayoni Ghosh told. And now, after Mamata Banerjee's loss in the election, Ghosh has been seen meeting top BJP leaders like Bhupendra Yadav in New Delhi. Ghosh, a well-known actor who essayed the role of Bimala Ray

in Aparajito (2022), where she played the supportive wife of the iconic filmmaker Satyajit Ray in the acclaimed biographical tribute. She played Koli in Rajkahini (2015), where she essayed the role of a woman living in a brothel on the border during the Partition of Bengal. In 2021, she joined the Trinamool Congress before the Assembly elections. Saayoni Ghosh joined the Trinamool Congress in the presence of

Mamata Banerjee during a rally addressed by Mamata Banerjee in Hooghly during the 2021 Assembly elections in the state. Saayoni Ghosh fought the Assembly election from the Asansol South constituency in 2021 but lost to BJP's Agnimitra Paul, who is now a minister in the newly elected BJP government in the state. She was appointed the President of the youth wing of the Trinamool Congress in June 2021 and was reappointed to the position recently after a meeting last week at Mamata Banerjee's residence.



Had YSRCP Returned to Power, It Would Have Sold the Steel Plant Too: Palla Srinivasa Rao



From Our Staff Reporter Visakhapatnam, June 11: Andhra Pradesh TDP President Palla Srinivasa Rao alleged that if the YSRCP had returned to power in the state, it would have sold the Visakhapatnam Steel Plant just as it had allegedly done with Gangavaram Port. He said that neither the people of Visakhapatnam nor the

Steel Plant workers were in a position to believe the claims being made by YSRCP leaders. He recalled that the Steel Plant did not operate at its full capacity during the YSRCP regime. Palla asserted that it was only after the coalition government came to power that a financial package was secured and the Visakhapatnam Steel Plant

was stabilized. He further criticized YSRCP chief Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy, alleging that when Steel Plant workers staged protests and hunger strikes during the previous government's tenure, Jagan did not even pay attention to their concerns. A review meeting chaired by the District Collector was held on Thursday with public representatives and chairpersons from the Visakhapatnam Parliamentary constituency. Speaking on the occasion, Palla Srinivasa Rao said that housing title deeds, land-related issues under GO. Nos. 30 and 45, and other matters affecting the district were discussed in detail. He stated that special attention had been given to revenue-related issues, including Urban Land

Ceiling (ULC) matters, unobjectionable lands, and deletion of lands from the 22A prohibited list. He said officials had been instructed to immediately grant title deeds for lands that fall within the prescribed regulations. Palla, who is also the Gajuwaka MLA, added that the District Collector had been requested to bring land issues to the notice of higher authorities and ensure their speedy resolution. He stated that full responsibility for addressing land encroachments had been entrusted to the Vigilance Department and that strict action would be taken against violators. He said that the meeting also held extensive discussions on land issues related to the Simhachalam Panchagramas

and Gajuwaka Inam lands. Referring to the recent accident at the Visakhapatnam Steel Plant, Palla noted that a committee had already been constituted to investigate the incident. He said that the government had been urged to take stringent action against those responsible. Palla emphasized that ensuring the highest level of safety for workers is the responsibility of the management of the organization. He expressed concern that workers were attending duties amid fear and anxiety. He urged the management to provide complete assurance and confidence to employees. The MLA also suggested that a special mechanism should be established to regularly monitor safety standards at the Steel Plant.

Jagan and Sharmila Must Stop Corpse Politics: PVN Madhav

From Our Staff Reporter Vijayawada, June 11: BJP Andhra Pradesh President PVN Madhav criticized Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy and Y.S. Sharmila, saying that they should stop engaging in what he described as "corpse politics." Addressing a media conference in Vijayawada, he stated that an extensive action plan had been prepared to effectively take to the people the developmental initiatives undertaken by the NDA government in Andhra Pradesh. He said that at the massive NDA public meeting to be held in Tirupati on Thursday, the Chief Minister, Deputy Chief Minister, and senior BJP leaders would participate and explain

the coalition's future plans. Madhav asserted that the achievements of 12 years of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's governance and the development taking place in Andhra Pradesh would be taken to every household, and that the NDA was moving forward with the goal of achieving "Viksit Bharat, Viksit Andhra Pradesh" by 2047. PVN Madhav said that the recent deaths of workers in the iron ore-related accident at the Visakhapatnam Steel Plant were deeply tragic. He accused Jagan of shedding "crocodile tears" over the incident and criticized him for allegedly using the deaths for political purposes. Madhav advised



Jagan to stop doing politics over dead bodies. He maintained that it was the Central Government that had allocated funds to the Visakhapatnam Steel Plant and prevented its privatization. Questioning Jagan's claims, he asked, "How can Jagan say that he alone prevented the privatization of the Steel Plant?"

TDP and Jana Sena Candidates Elected Unopposed to Rajya Sabha

From Our Staff Reporter Amaravati, June 11: Four candidates of the Telugu Desam Party (TDP) and Jana Sena Party from Andhra Pradesh have been elected unopposed to the Rajya Sabha. With the deadline for withdrawal of nominations ending and only four candidates remaining in the fray for the four available seats, their election was confirmed unopposed. Sana Satish, Bashyam Ramakrishna, and Chintakayala Vijay contested on behalf of the TDP, while Lingamaneni Ramesh filed his nomination as the Jana Sena Party candidate. Since only four candidates remained in the contest for the four seats, their election was finalized. The Election Com-



mission of India (ECI) had announced the election schedule on June 1 for Rajya Sabha seats in 10 states, including Andhra Pradesh. According to the schedule, elections for a total of 27 Rajya Sabha seats are to be held on June 18. The terms of 24 Rajya Sabha members are set to expire during June and July. In addition, by-elections are to be conducted for three seats that

became vacant before the completion of their respective terms. The ECI had stated that nominations would be accepted from June 1 to June 8. Scrutiny of nominations was conducted on June 9, while June 11 was fixed as the last date for withdrawal of nominations. The Election Commission also announced that the entire election process would be completed by June 20.

Jagan Is Playing Axe Politics Even in Teacher Recruitment Process: TDP MLC Fires Back

From Our Staff Reporter Amaravati, June 11: TDP MLC Bhoomireddy Ramgopal Reddy lashed out at YSRCP chief Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy, alleging that he was indulging in "axe politics" even in the DSC teacher recruitment process, which he described as transparent. Speaking to reporters in Amaravati on Thursday, the MLC said Jagan's press conference resembled the saying, "Let people laugh, why should I be ashamed?" He remarked sarcastically that while the coalition government was rebutting every allegation with evidence, Jagan was speaking like a blind man who cannot see despite having eyes. He further alleged that extremists and terrorists were better than the YSRCP

group, claiming that the party was behaving even more irresponsibly. The TDP MLC mocked YSRCP leaders, saying they did not even have a basic understanding of what "certificate verification" means. He accused the YSRCP of using unemployed youth for its political agenda. Ramgopal Reddy recalled that the DSC final selection list was released only after all objections had been thoroughly examined on September 15, 2025. He explained that the entire recruitment process was conducted with utmost transparency under the supervision of SCERT experts and special security arrangements. He noted that in earlier times, results were displayed on notice boards outside offices, whereas

today everything is clearly available online.

The MLC alleged that during the YSRCP government, there was a history of jobs being given to ineligible candidates using fake certificates. He claimed that Secretariat jobs had been awarded to individuals who merely participated in inter-collegiate cricket competitions by using fraudulent certificates. Questioning the former Chief Minister, he asked whether Jagan had even known what ball badminton was when such appointments were made. He accused Jagan of falsely claiming that justice had been done to sportspersons in Secretariat recruitments. Bhoomireddy explained that the portal contained only the list of 65 sports rec-



ognized nationwide through a Gazette Notification issued by the Central Government. He clarified that not a single sport had been added independently by the coalition government. Referring to an athlete named Yadaya, he said the individual had failed to submit proper certificates and had admitted the same in his grievance petition. He also stated that an FIR had been registered, along with

a phone number, against a person named Bontha Roshaiha for allegedly misleading unemployed youth in the name of DSC recruitment. Questioning Jagan's understanding of the law, Ramgopal Reddy asked whether the former Chief Minister was unaware that notices under Section 41A are issued and explanations sought in cases carrying punishments of up to seven years.

EDITORIAL

India alliance should not be weakened

The country's politics continues to be in a state of contradiction today. While the ruling coalition led by the BJP is not only riding high with consecutive victories, but is already formulating strategies and tactics for winning the next election, the frustrated opposition parties are running a recreation club called 'India Coalition'. They meet occasionally with incompatible partners and spend their time meeting when they are defeated. Now there are many public problems in the government's governance. The inability to even conduct simple exams is haunting.

Apart from basic and comprehensive economic and political issues like inflation and foreign policy, rising unemployment, shortcomings in the education system, deteriorating democratic policies, the crisis of civil rights, and other key issues are weapons for the opposition to take up. But the opposition is not focusing on them properly. In order to gain public support, the opposition needs to intensify its agitations on these issues. In a naturally turbulent political system, it is the responsibility of the opposition to take up movements that attract the attention of the people. But all their efforts are being wasted because the partner parties in the 'India Alliance' are working with conflicting goals instead of working together. 25 opposition parties met in Delhi on Tuesday under the banner of the 'India Alliance'.

But this meeting did not focus on the real situation. They behaved in a way that covered up their shortcomings without giving them a chance to introspect. They did not review why their party lost in their own states. They held discussions with opposing Prime Minister Modi as the only main agenda. It is noteworthy that the ruling BJP and other political analysts have interpreted this meeting as a mere alliance of opportunity. In the context of the BJP's rise as a strong political force, there is a need for an alternative alliance or an alliance of regional parties to make local problems, unemployment and development issues the main agenda and go out and fight among the people. No matter how weak the opposition alliance may seem, it is impossible to imagine the India alliance without the two main founding allies, the DMK and the AAP. If we look at the political field situation, it is clear to anyone that opposing the BJP's Hindutva politics is the only important issue that will bring the partner parties in the 'India alliance' on the same platform. Despite ideological differences, the main goal of regional parties is to thwart the rise of the BJP. What unites them is the view that the autonomy of regional parties is threatened by a BJP in power at the Centre.

As the Congress is the only national party in the 'India Alliance', regional parties' aspirations and local political alignments are causing differences with other parties in the alliance in the states. Although the Congress wants to lead the 'India Alliance', it is natural for regional parties to feel that they should have the upper hand in their own states. In this context, local leaders often oppose or express dissatisfaction with the decisions taken by the national leadership. Even after three years of the formation of the 'India Alliance', there are comments that the alliance has not been able to formulate a constructive approach to practically resolve the conflicts between the partners. The policies that the Congress is following, determined to regain the position it has lost in the states of Tamil Nadu, Delhi and Punjab, are sometimes not liked by the partner parties. This situation has arisen in Jharkhand. The Congress party's ally in Jharkhand is alleging that the Congress did not consult them before taking a very important decision like selecting a Rajya Sabha candidate. It is known that the decisions taken by the Congress during the Kerala elections gave adverse results to the ruling Left party there. At the national level, the Congress and the Left are working together as part of the 'India Coalition'. But in Kerala, they are competing as rivals. The Left parties are criticizing that these developments are seriously disrupting the unity of the opposition parties at the national level. Each of the five main issues identified by the 'India Alliance' is crucial for the people. The youth is fuming over the shortcomings in the education system. The policies being followed in the name of the Comprehensive Revision of Voters' Lists (CVR) process are suppressing the constitutional rights of adults. The economy is also facing serious problems. All these need to be urgently corrected. Therefore, the opposition alliance should intensify its struggles with the support of the people and get rid of the government's slumber. An effective opposition is necessary for the smooth functioning of democracy. If the opposition alliance remembers this responsibility and can effectively carry out that role, it will be a welcome development.

Courage Or Folly? Inside Rahul Gandhi's Big Madhya Pradesh Gamble

The controversy over Meenakshi Natarajan's rejected Rajya Sabha nomination from Madhya Pradesh has been read largely as a Congress embarrassment. On the surface, it is that. A candidate's papers have been rejected. The BJP is poised to gain from it. The Congress is crying foul. Legal arguments, affidavit technicalities, and Election Commission procedures have now taken centre stage. But the larger political story lies elsewhere. The question is not merely whether Natarajan should have disclosed the Telangana court matter in her affidavit. If a court had issued summons in a private complaint and she had knowledge of it, she was ill-advised not to mention it. In election affidavits, over-disclosure is safer than clever disclosure. A political party entering a high-risk Rajya Sabha contest should not leave even a pinhole for the opponent to exploit.

Yet the more interesting question is this: was Rahul Gandhi taking a risk in fielding her?

The answer is yes. And, more importantly, he seems to have known it. The Leader of Opposition was not walking into Madhya Pradesh under the illusion that the Rajya Sabha seat was secure. Trouble could have come at three stages. First, at the nomination stage, where the BJP could raise technical objections. Second, through the possible defection or abstention of a small number of Congress MLAs. Third, through cross-voting on polling day. In other words, the danger was not accidental. It was part of the political terrain.

The BJP had already disturbed Congress calculations by fielding a third candidate. In the Madhya Pradesh Assembly, the BJP had a comfortable majority, while the Congress had just about enough strength to fight for one of the three seats if its flock held firm. The margin was not generous. The Congress leadership was reportedly considering moving MLAs to Congress-ruled states to prevent poaching or cross-voting. That itself revealed the nervous arithmetic. A cautious Congress would have responded to such a situation by choosing a candidate who could manage the state unit, calm the old guard, speak to fence-sitters, and perhaps even neutralise sections of the local BJP establishment. In

Madhya Pradesh, that name would have been Kamal Nath. Rahul Gandhi chose otherwise.

Kamal Nath or confrontation

One option before Rahul Gandhi was to field an aging warhorse such as Kamal Nath. He may not represent renewal, but he represents power. He knows Madhya Pradesh. He knows its factions, its contractors, its district leaders, its caste equations, and its arrangements. He has the capacity to negotiate, persuade, cajole, and contain. He may have given the Congress a better chance of saving the Rajya Sabha seat. But choosing Kamal Nath would also have meant choosing the old grammar of Congress survival. It would have meant that, when numbers are tight and the BJP applies pressure, the Congress falls back on the very leaders who have repeatedly dominated its state units, blocked transition, and treated renewal as a decorative slogan. Rahul Gandhi was not willing to make that bargain.

This is not to romanticise his decision. Nor is it to offer him an excuse. Politics is not a theatre of good intentions. The Rajya Sabha is a numbers chamber, not a seminar room. If the Congress loses a seat, it loses a vote, a voice, committee space, parliamentary presence, and political momentum. But one must understand Rahul's mindset. He seems to have decided that saving one seat through compromise was less important than showing that the Congress would not bend its choices to either BJP pressure or old-guard blackmail. The outcome, even if adverse, would carry a message: no compromise with the BJP, even if it means going one down in the Rajya Sabha; no automatic surrender to the old guard, even if the candidate of renewal is vulnerable.

Why Meenakshi became the signal

Meenakshi Natarajan is not an accidental Congress nominee. She is a Rahul Gandhi politician in the fullest sense of the term. She belongs to the cohort that came into prominence when Rahul first tried to rework the Youth Congress and NSUI structures. She was NSUI president, later Madhya Pradesh Youth Congress president, and was brought into the AICC when Rahul began assembling a younger political team. In



2009, he picked her for the Mandasaur Lok Sabha seat, where she defeated BJP veteran Laxminarayan Pandey. She later lost in the Modi wave, but she remained within Rahul's circle of trust. That circle has often been labelled inside the Congress as the "Jai Jagat" group: left-of-centre, social-justice oriented, morally earnest, organisationally uneven, often accused of having an NGO-style approach to politics. Its critics see in it a lack of electoral cunning. Its defenders see in it the ideological spine Rahul believes the Congress must recover. Natarajan's nomination has to be seen through this lens. It was not merely a ticket. It was an internal note to the party. Rahul was telling the old Congress that proximity to state power is not the only qualification for reward. He was telling the younger Congress that loyalty, ideological clarity, and long association still count. He was telling the BJP that the Congress would contest even in unfavourable terrain. He was also telling himself, perhaps, that renewal cannot be postponed every time the arithmetic becomes uncomfortable.

BJP's opening, Congress's Failure

The BJP, of course, did what the BJP does well. It identified vulnerability and acted on it. The objection to Natarajan's nomination centred on her alleged non-disclosure of a court matter in Telangana. The Congress argued that this was a legal notice or complaint where, according to its side, disclosure was not mandatory in the way the BJP claimed. The BJP insisted otherwise. The Returning Officer accepted the objection. The nomination was re-

jected. The Congress has called it political manipulation. Natarajan herself has described it as political, not legal. Senior Congress leaders rushed to complain to the Election Commission. There were accusations of democracy being undermined, and familiar charges that the BJP uses institutions and technicalities to deny opponents a fair contest. There is merit in examining whether the rejection was disproportionate. But there is also no escaping the Congress's own failure. A party that knows it is contesting against a ruthless and alert opponent cannot afford casualness. It cannot say the BJP will exploit loopholes and then leave a loophole. Procedural competence is now part of political resistance. Rahul Gandhi may have chosen risk. But the organisation around him had to reduce avoidable risk. It did not. This is the larger Congress problem. Rahul often frames politics in moral and ideological terms. The BJP fights it in institutional, procedural, and tactical terms. The Congress cannot answer one kind of politics with only the other. It needs both. It needs the moral argument and the form correctly filled. It needs the slogan and the polling agent. It needs the idea and the arithmetic.

A seat lost, a line drawn
The easy conclusion is that Rahul Gandhi miscalculated. Perhaps he did. If the Congress ends up one seat short in the Rajya Sabha because of this episode, the cost is real. But the more meaningful conclusion is that Rahul made a choice with eyes open. He could have played safe. Instead, he treated the situation as a political signal. That signal is not without contradiction. It may not com-

fort Congress workers who want winnability over symbolism. It may irritate veterans who believe Rahul still underestimates the mechanics of power. It may invite ridicule from the BJP, which will say that moral posturing without numbers is useless. But Rahul's point appears different. He seems to be saying that the Congress cannot keep postponing internal change in the name of immediate survival. Every time the party faces the BJP, it cannot outsource the fight to those who specialise in accommodation. Every difficult election cannot become an argument for returning to the same old managers. There is a hard lesson here for both Rahul and his critics. For Rahul, the lesson is that risk must be backed by rigour. If he wants to field a Meenakshi Natarajan over a Kamal Nath, the nomination must be flawless, the MLAs must be secured, the legal team must be alert, and the party must be ready for every BJP move before it happens.

For the old guard, the lesson is that their indispensability is no longer assumed. Rahul may lose by refusing to compromise, but he seems increasingly willing to accept that loss rather than remain hostage to the politics of yesterday. In Madhya Pradesh, the Congress may have lost more than a nomination paper. It may have lost a Rajya Sabha seat. But Rahul Gandhi has drawn a line that explains his current politics better than many speeches: better to lose a seat fighting the BJP on his own terms than win one by restoring the old Congress bargain. Whether that is courage or folly will depend on what he builds next.

A Fauji's Salute To India's Longest-Serving Prime Minister

The year was 2013. I had just returned to my ooru (village) after serving the Indian Army. Like many young Indians of my generation, I stood at a crossroads. I knew I wanted to continue serving the nation, but I was still searching for the path through which I could do so. The country too stood at a crossroads.

Across India, there was a growing feeling that our nation was capable of much more than what it had settled for. In villages, towns and cities, a different energy was beginning to take shape. People were speaking about aspiration, confidence and possibility. At the centre of that conversation stood Narendra Modi, then the Chief Minister of Gujarat, whose message resonated with millions of Indians who wanted to see a stronger, more self-confident Bharat.

And in June 2013, I was given the responsibility of the District General Secretary of the Bharatiya Janata Yuva Morcha in Dakshina Kannada. The uniform changed, but the mission remained the same - Nation First. We campaigned not merely for a party, but for an idea. An idea that India could be stronger, more confident, more self-reliant and more respected in the world. A decade later, I had the privilege of tak-

ing oath as a Member of Parliament in the team led by the very leader who had inspired millions of young Indians to dream bigger. As Prime Minister Narendra Modi becomes India's longest-serving PM, I find myself reflecting not only on the transformation of the nation, but also on the extraordinary opportunities this period has created for ordinary Indians like me. The last two years have been among the most consequential years in recent global history. The world continues to grapple with geopolitical conflicts, energy security concerns, economic uncertainty and the persistent threat of terrorism. As a Member of Parliament associated with discussions relating to energy and defence, I have had the opportunity to observe many of these developments from close quarters. But what taught me a lot about India's place in the world were the two international assignments entrusted to me during my maiden term in Parliament. The first came in May 2025. In the aftermath of 'Operation Sindoor', I was chosen as part of an all-party delegation tasked with carrying India's message of zero tolerance against terrorism to the world. Our engagements took us across Moscow, Madrid, Athens, Ljubljana, Riga. As a fauji, this assignment carried special

significance. For decades, India was often compelled to explain the reality of terrorism that it faced. During our interactions abroad, I witnessed a different reality. India's voice carried weight. India's stand of Zero tolerance against terror found global testimony. More importantly, the delegation demonstrated something that I believe is fundamental to India's strength. Members from different political parties and ideological backgrounds came together to represent a united national position.

Our message was clear. India may debate fiercely within its democratic framework, but when it comes to terrorism, national security and the protection of its citizens, Bharat speaks in one voice. The delegation sent a powerful message to the world. It also sent a message to those who believe India's democratic diversity can somehow be exploited against its national interests. Our diversity is our strength. Our unity in matters of national interest is our greatest force.

For me personally though, the assignment meant much more. For it reminded me of my early days in the Fauj. It was just my second year as a young officer of the Indian Army's 8 Gorkha Rifles; but my Commanding Officer chose to en-

trust me with leading the Ghatak Platoon during counter-insurgency operations in Manipur. And being chosen by PM Modi to be his voice as part of this delegation, even as a first time MP, I was reminded of that same feeling of trust and responsibility. Leadership leaves a lasting impression when responsibility is entrusted with an assurance that India speaks in silence. A few months later came my second international assignment. In October 2025, I travelled to New York as part of India's parliamentary delegation to the 80th United Nations General Assembly. The delegation was constituted to represent India's democratic values, engage with lawmakers and policymakers from across the world, strengthen diplomatic ties and carry the voice of the world's largest democracy led by PM Modi to one of the world's most important multilateral forums.

For someone whose first foreign trip happened only after 2014, the experience was deeply moving. As I walked through the halls of the United Nations, I often found myself thinking not of New York, but of home. Standing there as part of India's delegation, I realised that the journey was larger than my own. It reflected the possibilities that millions of Indians had

come to believe in over the last decade. What struck me most was the way India was viewed and discussed. Everywhere we went, we encountered members of the Indian diaspora who spoke of Bharat with immense pride. Entrepreneurs, students, professionals, doctors, engineers and community leaders spoke not only about their own journeys, but also about India's growing stature in the world.

Today, the Indian diaspora, numbering more than 35 million people, is the largest diaspora community in the world. Their contributions extend far beyond remittances and economic engagement. They have become storytellers of modern India. For decades, embassies told India's story to the world. Today, millions of Indians living abroad tell that story every day. Prime Minister Modi recognised the strength of this community long before many others did. Wherever he travels, one witnesses an extraordinary connection between India and its diaspora. They see themselves not as distant observers, but as active participants in India's growth story. Many of them spoke about the transformation they had witnessed in how India is perceived globally. They spoke about a country that no longer appeared hesitant on the world stage. They spoke about a nation increasingly seen as a source of solutions, innovation and leadership.

Engineering Works in ITDA Areas to Be Expedited: Tribal Welfare Secretary



Rampachodavaram, June 11: State Tribal Welfare Principal Secretary M. Mallikarjuna Naik directed officials to expedite all engineering and infrastructure works sanctioned under the ITDA limits of Rampachodavaram. During an inspection on Thursday, he reviewed the construction of additional classrooms, toilets, dining halls, teacher quarters, and a bridge being built with Article-275 funds in Rampachodavaram and Maredumilli. He also inspected tribal welfare schools and instructed officials to ensure



quality education, student health, sanitation, and regular attendance of teachers. The Secretary reviewed the proposed Tribal Multi-Market Centre and a rubber smoke room under construction at GM Valasa village. He said steps are being taken to expand rubber plantations over 3,000 acres in the region and provide necessary support to tribal farmers. Officials were also directed to improve drinking water facilities under the Jal Jeevan Mission and complete all sanctioned works within the stipulated time.

Candlelight Rally Held for Visakha Steel Plant Accident Victims



Visakhapatnam, June 11: Members of AIDWA, CITU, and pensioners' associations organized a candlelight rally at Seethammadhara on Thursday evening to pay tribute

to workers who lost their lives in the recent Visakha Steel Plant accident and to express solidarity with the affected families. Speakers demanded a high-level independent inquiry into the incident, strict action against those responsible, and measures to prevent similar accidents in the future. They sought compensation of Rs.1 crore and a permanent job for a family member of each deceased worker, while demanding Rs.50 lakh compensation, employment assistance, and full medical support for the injured workers. The leaders also called for strengthening safety measures, filling vacant posts, reinstating contract workers, and withdrawing the proposed privatization of the Visakha Steel Plant.

Aditya University Faculty Member Awarded Ph.D. in English

Gandepalli, June 11: Dr. A. Swathi, Assistant Professor in the Department of English at Aditya University, has been awarded a Ph.D. in English by . She completed her doctoral research titled "Navigating the Structural Inequalities in Realizing the Self: A Study of Select Novels of Indian Women Writers" under the guidance of Professor D. Jyothirmayi. The study examines the social, cultural, and structural challenges



faced by women in achieving self-identity and self-realization, contributing significantly to gender studies and Indian English literature. Aditya University officials, including Pro-Chancellor Dr. N. Satish Reddy, congratulated Dr. Swathi on her academic achievement and wished her continued success in research and higher education.

Bapatla SP Warns of Strict Action Against Ganja Smugglers

Bapatla, June 11: Bapatla District SP B. Umamaheshwar warned that strict action will be taken against anyone involved in ganja smuggling and sale. As part of efforts to make the district drug-free, police invoked the PIT NDPS Act against Marri @ Itta Parameswari (36) of Perala, Chirala, a habitual ganja offender with five NDPS cases registered against her. Despite repeated arrests and warnings, she allegedly continued procuring ganja from tribal areas of Visakhapatnam



and selling it to students, youth, and labourers in and around Chirala. Based on the SP's report, the Andhra Pradesh Government issued detention orders, following which Chirala II Town Police shifted her to Rajahmundry Central Jail. The SP said police are conducting awareness programmes on the harmful effects of narcotics and maintaining strict surveillance on known offenders. He appealed to the public to share information about drug-related activities through Dial 112 or 1972, assuring confidentiality of informants.

Rights Pattas for Those Cultivating Inam Lands: Collector

Bapatla, June 11: District Collector Dr. V. Vinod Kumar said that rights pattas would be issued to farmers who have been cultivating Inam lands in Parichur after a detailed inquiry. During his visit to Chennubotlavariapalem village on Thursday, the Collector reviewed land records and interacted with farmers regarding the long-pending issue. The Collector stated that around 687 acres of Inam land, currently cultivated by 518 farmers, would be examined thoroughly and steps would be taken to provide legal rights with government approval. Villagers informed him that the lands were originally granted centuries ago and have been under cultivation by local farmers for generations. Farmers highlighted that due to legal and technical issues, land transactions have been halted since 2009, preventing them from accessing government schemes and bank loans. The Collector assured them that the decades-



old issue would be resolved after a comprehensive review of records and surveys.

Strict Safety Norms Must Be Enforced at Fireworks Units: Kakinada Collector



Kakinada, June 11: District Collector M.N. Harendhira Prasad directed officials to strictly enforce safety regula-

tions at fireworks manufacturing units, sales outlets, and sulphur storage facilities across Kakinada district. Chairing a review meeting on Thursday, the Collector instructed all concerned departments to conduct special inspections and submit comprehensive reports within seven days on safety violations and regulatory compliance. The meeting reviewed preventive measures and implementation of National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) guidelines in the wake of the recent fire accident at a fireworks unit in Vetlapalem village of Samarlakota mandal. The Collector warned that strict action would be taken against units violating safety norms and directed officials to reconstitute the District Fireworks Safety Committee with participation from PESO, Fire Services, Police, Labour, and Pollution Control Board officials.

Collector Directs Officials to Accelerate Housing Construction Works

Kakinada, June 11: District Collector M.N. Harendhira Prasad directed officials to expedite housing construction works and complete them within the timelines set by the government. Reviewing the progress of TIDCO and Housing Department projects on Thursday, he stressed the need to achieve stage conversion targets and monitor progress on a weekly basis. The Collector said that 62,478 houses have been sanctioned in the district under PMAY-Gramin 1.0 and 2.0 schemes, of which 47,651 houses were approved under Options 1 and 2. So far, 30,935 houses have been completed. He instructed officials to focus on achieving the target of 7,898 houses set for completion by August. He also directed officials to facilitate Rs.50,000 loans through Stree Nidhi for eligible women beneficiaries and ensure the completion of individual household toilets along with all finished houses. Adequate availability of



sand, cement, and other construction materials has been ensured, he added.

Munikoodali to Be Developed as a Model Pushkar Village: Collector Keerthi

Rajahmendravaram, June 11: District Collector Keerthi directed officials to prepare a comprehensive plan to develop Munikoodali village in Seethanagaram mandal into a "Rural Model Pushkar Village" and a model for the entire country. At a review meeting held on Thursday, the Collector instructed various departments to work



in coordination on village development, modernization of Pushkar ghats, sanitation initiatives, and infrastructure creation. She emphasized providing better facilities for pilgrims and improving cleanliness, roads, drinking water, and other essential amenities to make the village a model destination ahead of future Pushkar events.

No Errors Should Occur in Land Records Porting Process: Joint Collector



Kakinada, June 11: Joint Collector Apoorva Bharat directed officials to ensure complete accuracy and transparency in the land records porting process across the district. During a review meeting at the Kakinada Collectorate on Thursday, he examined land records related to P. Jagannadhapuram village in Prathipadu mandal and Krishnapuram village in Thondangi mandal. The Joint Collector reviewed 22-A lists, freehold land records, and other land-related data, verifying the accuracy of entries in the presence of revenue and survey officials. He instructed authorities to thoroughly scrutinize all records and ensure that errors are eliminated during the porting process. Emphasizing quality standards, he directed officials to complete the land records updating process swiftly while maintaining transparency and ensuring that Joint LPM discrepancies remain below 2 percent.

65% Voter List Mapping Completed in Bapatla District

Bapatla, June 11: District Collector Dr. V. Vinod Kumar announced that 65.5% of voter list mapping has been completed as part of the Special Summary Revision of Electoral Rolls. Addressing a meeting with representatives of political parties, he said the voter verification process is being carried out transparently by comparing the 2002 and 2025 electoral rolls. The draft electoral roll will be published on July 21, while objections and claims will be accepted until September 18. The final electoral roll is scheduled to be finalized on September 22. Booth Level Officers (BLOs) will conduct door-to-door verification, and political parties have been asked to appoint Booth Level Agents (BLAs) to assist the process. The Collector clarified that Aadhaar is not the only valid document for voter verifica-



tion and that 13 different identity documents are accepted. He said 1,288 complaints were received, of which all but seven have been resolved.

Eluru Range IG Inspects Kakinada District Police Office



Kakinada, June 11: As part of the annual inspections, Eluru Range IG G.V.G. Ashok Kumar visited the Kakinada District Police Office on Thursday and reviewed the func-

tioning of various departments. District SP G. Bindu Madhav welcomed the IG, while Armed Reserve personnel presented a guard of honour. During the inspection, the IG examined records, files, and administrative procedures of different wings of the police department. He expressed satisfaction with office management and directed officials to ensure faster and more transparent public service delivery. The IG also reviewed law and order, crime prevention, women's and child safety, speedy investigation of pending cases, use of modern technology in policing, road safety measures, and efforts to curb narcotics trafficking. Senior police officers and departmental staff participated in the review.

Land Regularisation for Poor to Be Accelerated; Pattas Likely in August



Visakhapatnam, June 11: District Collector M. Abhishikta Kishore said the process of regularising house sites occupied by poor families on government lands is being accelerated, with an aim to distribute pattas through the Chief Minister in August. Reviewing revenue issues with MLAs and MLCs on Thursday, the Collector said special measures are being taken to resolve pending land-related issues across all constituen-

cies. Discussions focused on house-site regularisation, 22-A land disputes, water body issues, and other revenue matters. The Collector directed revenue officials to act promptly on issues raised by public representatives and ensure faster resolution. MLAs also urged the administration to address land ownership disputes, issue land possession certificates, and regularise eligible beneficiaries occupying government lands.

Parents Encouraged to Enroll Children in Government Schools: Collector Dr. G. Lakshmisha

Vijayawada, June 11: NTR District Collector Dr. G. Lakshmisha urged parents to enroll their children in government schools, highlighting the quality education, modern infrastructure, and skill-development programs being provided. He said the district is implementing a special action plan to achieve better academic results this year, building on the success of the previous academic year. The Collector noted that 31 students from government high schools scored above 580 marks in the Class 10 examinations last year. He emphasized that Education Expos are being organized to showcase facilities, academic achievements, and learning opportunities available in government schools. District education officials, teachers, parents, and students participated in the program.



Polavaram District Development Discussed



Rampachodavaram, June 11: State ST Commission Chairman S. Bojji Reddy urged Tribal Welfare Principal

Secretary M.M. Nayak to provide drainage facilities in all villages of Polavaram district and ensure full Rehabilitation and Resettlement (R&R) benefits for Polavaram project-affected families. The issue was discussed during a review meeting held at the Project Monitoring Resource Centre (PMRC) Guest House in Rampachodavaram. Polavaram District Joint Collector Surapati Prashanth Kumar and other officials also participated in the meeting, focusing on tribal welfare and district development initiatives.

Collector Orders Strict Action Against Foetal Sex Determination

Visakhapatnam, June 11: District Collector M. Abhishikta Kishore directed officials to take stringent action against those involved in illegal foetal sex determination and ensure strict implementation of the PCPNDT Act. Chairing a district-level review meeting on Thursday, he instructed authorities to conduct regular inspections of scanning centres and verify doctors' qualifications, licences, and related documents. The Collector ordered that all scanning centres prominently display notices stating that sex determination is a punishable offence. He also directed private scanning centres, clinics, laboratories, and hospitals to provide at least 5% of scans free of cost to pregnant women and submit de-



tails to the District Medical and Health Office. He emphasized the need for awareness campaigns to improve gender balance in society and suggested conducting decoy operations, with police support if necessary, to identify violations of the law.

Inside Indian Navy's High-Risk Mission To Remove Missile Warhead From Tanker

New Delhi: The Indian Navy has successfully recovered and safely disposed of an unexploded missile warhead found onboard the crude oil tanker MT Olympic Life. The Marshall Islands-flagged vessel, which had no Indian nationals on board, was travelling from Fujairah in the UAE to Kochi when it reported an explosion in its hull off the coast of Oman on May 26, 2026. The tanker later informed authorities about the presence of an unexploded object as it continued its journey towards Kochi. After receiving the Information Fusion Centre - Indian Ocean Region (IFC-IOR), the Indian Navy launched a coordinated response. A specialist Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) team from the Southern Naval Command in Kochi was deployed to assess the situation. The team found that a



projectile had pierced the ship's hull, passed through multiple internal sections and become lodged inside a fuel tank. Considering the risks of handling an

unexploded warhead inside a fuel storage area, the Navy team carried out the operation in a carefully planned manner to ensure the safety of the vessel, its crew and nearby port facilities. Following necessary safety procedures, the EOD team used specialised equipment to locate and disable the detonation mechanism before removing the warhead and related debris. The recovered ordnance has now been moved to a secure location for storage and further examination. The Indian Navy said the operation demonstrated its expertise in handling explosive threats at sea and its ability to respond to complex maritime emergencies. The swift action, despite the vessel being foreign-flagged and having no Indian crew members, reflects the Navy's role in supporting maritime safety and security in the region.

Trinamool's Shatrughan Sinha On Why He Wished PM Modi



New Delhi: Trinamool Congress MP and actor Shatrughan Sinha's congratulatory wishes for Prime Minister Narendra Modi on completing 12 years in office came while the Trinamool is trying to stay afloat in West Bengal. Sinha has said he will always be with "Didi" and not abandon her in hard

times, referring to former chief minister Mamata Banerjee who faces an exodus of key leaders and the party's possible breakup in the hands of rebel MLAs and MPs. Sinha sought to calm down the buzz and explained why he wished the prime minister, whose party BJP has been a fierce rival of

the Trinamool and Mamata Banerjee. "You know I am known or notorious for my outspokenness, for calling a spade a spade, and for presenting my views in a simple yet bold and carefree manner. Whatever I say, whatever I do, I do it thoughtfully without any selfish motive," Sinha told. "When

12 years have been completed today by the prime minister - the prime minister who is yours, who is mine and who belongs to the entire country - and a prime minister who has led for the longest tenure, to congratulate him at this moment, I considered it and I understand it as my national duty," he said. "I fulfilled my duty. I wished, greeted, blessed and congratulated the prime minister in a true sportsman spirit," the actor-turned-politician said. There has been a strong buzz that Sinha is one of the Trinamool MPs in the list of Lok Sabha rebels who may join the National Democratic Alliance (NDA). He had joined the BJP in the early 80s when it was a party of just two MPs and served as its star campaigner during the Atal Bihari Vajpayee and LK Advani era.

Violence Continues in Manipur, 2 Dead In Pre-Dawn Attack In Kamjong

Imphal: Violence continued in Manipur on Thursday, with suspected militants launching a pre-dawn attack on Kultuk village in Kamjong district, killing two people and setting six houses ablaze. The incident took place hours after six bodies, believed to be of missing Naga civilians, arrived at the Jawaharlal Nehru Institute of Medical Sciences (JNIMS), Porompat, heightening tensions across the state.

"The attack occurred at around 4:30 am when an armed group, equipped with sophisticated weapons, attacked them. Two villagers were killed in the attack, while two were injured. The injured were rushed to the hospital," said a police official.

Clashes Over Bodies
Large numbers of family members, community leaders, civil society representatives and members of the public had gathered at JNIMS since Wednesday evening, awaiting the arrival of the bodies. According to police, tensions escalated shortly after the remains reached the hospital, prompting security personnel to fire tear gas shells to disperse the crowd and restore order after the situation briefly turned volatile.



Clashes were reported between security personnel and angry mourners, including family members and residents who had gathered to pay their last respects. The bodies were later secured and deposited at the JNIMS mortuary. As the remains arrived well past midnight, post-mortem examinations have yet to be conducted. Senior officials of the National Investigation Agency (NIA) and other security agencies also reached the hospital as authorities closely monitored developments. The six bodies were recovered from Karam Vaiphei village in Kangpokpi district. The news of the recovery triggered widespread anguish and unrest in several parts

of the state. In the Senapati district, goods-laden trucks were reportedly set ablaze in the Karong area by unidentified persons. An office of the Naga People's Front (NPF) came under attack by an angry mob. Similar protests and public demonstrations were reported from Tamei late on Wednesday evening.

Shutdown Announced
In response to the killings, the United Naga Council (UNC) announced a 24-hour total shutdown across Naga-inhabited areas from 6 am on June 11 to 6 am on June 12. Condemning the killings in the strongest terms, the UNC expressed solidarity with the bereaved families, saying that the bodies would not

be received by the community until its charter of demands is addressed by the Government of Manipur and the Government of India. Among its key demands are the revocation of the Suspension of Operations (SoO) agreement with Kuki militant groups, the arrest and prosecution of those allegedly involved in the kidnapping and killings, the declaration of the Kuki National Front-President Group (KNF-P) as a terrorist organisation, and the removal of Deputy Chief Minister Nemcha Kipgen from office. Meanwhile, Chief Minister Yumnam Khemchand Singh expressed deep anguish over the recent incidents of violence and strongly condemned the killing of six persons.

Man Allegedly Earns Rs 1,200 Posing As Ticket Examiner At Patna Junction, Stunt Sparks Outrage

Patna: A social media stunt at Patna Junction has sparked widespread outrage after a young content creator allegedly posed as a Traveling Ticket Examiner (TTE) and collected money from passengers without valid tickets. The individual, identified as Shivam Gupta, reportedly dressed in a convincing TTE uniform that included a white shirt, black coat, trousers, and a fake identification card. According to a video shared on social media, the stunt was designed as an experiment to see how much money could be earned by impersonating a railway official. The footage shows Gupta approaching passengers at the busy railway station and asking to see their tickets. While some travellers were carrying valid tickets, others were not. He then allegedly demanded around Rs 500 from passengers who were unable to produce a valid ticket during the interaction. In the video, Gupta claimed he managed to collect Rs 1,200 within just 30 minutes before ending the experiment. What has particularly alarmed viewers is that the



entire stunt was carried out in one of Bihar's busiest railway stations without any intervention from railway staff or security personnel. "This isn't a prank, it's impersonation of a public servant and a serious security concern. Such stunts can mislead passengers, undermine trust, and create risks at busy railway stations," the video was captioned. The incident has triggered concerns about security and oversight at railway stations, with many social media users ques-

tioning how an individual could impersonate a railway official so easily and interact with passengers unchecked. Many argued that the episode exposed serious vulnerabilities that could potentially be exploited for more harmful purposes. Internet users called for strict action against the content creator, arguing that the stunt went beyond a harmless prank and amounted to impersonation of a public official, while others urged authorities to make an example of the case

to discourage similar attempts for social media attention. One user wrote, "Indian Railways and the Railway Security Department are requested to catch this as soon as possible and take strict action against it. This is very wrong as per the Railway Act." Another said, "This boy has no idea how serious a mistake he's making. If he ends up booked under the Railway Act, he could find himself behind bars for a long time. One reckless act can have consequences far bigger than he imagines."

At Ahmedabad College Where Air India Plane Crashed, Time Still Stopped A Year On

Ahmedabad: The scars left behind by the wreckage of the Air India Boeing 787-8 Dreamliner that crashed seconds after takeoff in Ahmedabad on June 12 last year are yet to be fully healed. The medical college hostel on which the massive aircraft fell after losing thrust stands as a skeletal concrete structure, soot clearly visible on the walls scarred by high-intensity aviation fuel fire. The investigation into the crash is still going on and the final report is awaited, though an initial report has come. It will be a year tomorrow since the plane crash that killed 260, including people on the ground. Questions over pilot action, technical failure and the fuel cutoff switch theory continue to linger as families wait for closure. The efforts for ensuring compensation and fixing liabilities continue. Will the Aircraft Ac-



cident Investigation Bureau (AAIB) release its final report, or will another interim update come first? Twelve months after the aviation accident, NDTV returned to the crash site where memories of that horrific day continue to haunt survivors, families and an entire community. The crash killed 19 students and staff of the medical college hostel. Parts of the kitchen and the dining area still bear signs of the impact - the benches and the dining area where MBBS students

used to come for meals. The Gujarat government has announced reconstruction and redevelopment plans that would demolish the damaged structures and build a new one with all the modern facilities. "A new hostel will be built at the crash site location," state Health Minister Praful Chhaganbhai Pansheriya told. Rushabh Rupani, the son of former chief minister Vijay Rupani, who died in the crash. Rushabh Rupani recalled the tragic day, where he was

and how he came to know about the crash. "People should trust the government and investigative agencies. They will do justice in the matter," he said. A woman and her daughter told how they saw in horror the Air India plane going down near the airport. Her 14-year-old son was killed on the ground. Seetaben and her daughter Kajalben ran a tea shop. She last saw her son, Akash, walking before the plane's debris fell on him. "My son brought afternoon tiffin for me, and I had asked him to rest for sometime. That is when the plane crashed and part of the wing fell on him, killing him," Seetaben, who had been running a tea stall opposite the hostel for 20 years, told. She, too, suffered burn injuries. At the hostel, an eyewitness returns and stares at the wall stained with soot.