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## Trump's "Better Get Serious, No Turning Back" Warning For War-Hit Iran

**Washington:** US President Donald Trump claimed that Iran had been "begging" for a deal but has publicly maintained that they are just "looking at our proposal". In a post on Truth Social, Trump said that Iran has been "militarily obliterated" and that they have "zero chance of a comeback". He called Iranian negotiators "strange" and warned them to start taking things seriously before "it is too late". "The



Iranian negotiators are very different and "strange." They are "begging" us to make a deal, which they should be doing since they have been militarily obliterated, with zero chance of a comeback, and yet they publicly state that they are only "looking at our proposal." WRONG!!! They better get serious soon, before it is too late, because once that happens, there is NO TURNING BACK, and it won't be pretty!

## PM To Speak To Chief Ministers today Amid Middle East Conflict

**New Delhi:** Prime Minister Narendra Modi will chair a meeting with chief ministers on Friday to review the preparedness of states amid the conflict in the Middle East. An all-party meet on the issue had been convened on Wednesday and was chaired by Defence Minister Rajnath Singh. Sources said that with Iran continuing its

chokehold on the vital Strait of Hormuz, affecting global energy flows, the meeting will focus on ensuring a synergy of efforts in the spirit of 'Team India'. The Prime Minister advocated for this approach in his speech in the Rajya Sabha on Tuesday, stating that the effects of the war are likely to linger, and urging everyone to work together.



## Suvendu Adhikari Leads Ram Navami Rally In Mamata Banerjee's Constituency

**Kolkata:** BJP leader Suvendu Adhikari on Thursday participated in a Ram Navami procession in Bhabanipur, a constituency in south Kolkata where the leader of the opposition in the West Bengal assembly is set to take on Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee in the upcoming polls. Tight security arrangements have been made across the state, with special focus on Howrah and Hooghly districts that witnessed unrest in previous years on this occasion.



## Bengal Polls Battle Between Fear Of Trinamool, Trust In BJP: Nitin Nabin

**Kolkata:** As the battle for Bengal heats up, BJP National President Nitin Nabin visited Kolkata to chart out the campaign strategy for the party's biggest challenge -- defeating Trinamool Congress leader Mamata Banerjee, the three-time sitting Chief Minister of West Bengal.

During his two-day visit, Nitin Nabin held back-to-back organisational meetings along with a visit to the sacred Dakshineswar Kali Mandir, where he addressed

the media. On Day 1, he met with leaders from the Howrah, Hooghly, and Medinipur zones, along with the IT team, call centre, media cell, and Central ministers. On Day 2, he visited Dakshineswar Kali Mandir and held an organisational meeting with the Nabadwip zone, various morchas, and the state election coordination team. This is the BJP chief's second visit since his appointment. In an attempt to boost the morale of party leaders who have



taken on the challenge of defeating Mamata Banerjee, Nabin said, "On

4 May, the Bharatiya Janata Party will form the government in West Bengal and a

bhagwa (saffron) Holi will be celebrated, symbolising the party's victory."

## Elephants Roaming Fields Even During Daytime

From Our Staff Reporter  
Amaravati, March, 26:

**Chandragiri (Chittoor) March, 26:** Elephants are now staying in agricultural fields even during the daytime in Eguva Kuchivaripalle village of Chandragiri, causing severe distress to farmers.

For the past few days, a herd of elephants has been entering the village farmlands and creating havoc. While elephants usually come at night, their presence during broad daylight has left farmers terrified for their lives.

### Crop Damage and Losses

On Wednesday, elephants entered the fields of farmers like Surendra Naidu and Munichandra in Eguva Kuchivaripalle village and caused heavy damage:

- Destroyed mango orchards
- Trampled other crops
- Broke tree branches
- Damaged irrigation pipes and motors
- This has resulted in significant financial losses for the farmers.

**Farmers' Demands**  
Villagers are urging forest department officials to respond immediately and take steps to drive the elephants back into the forest. Farmers are also requesting the government to provide compensation for the crop losses they have suffered.

## Legal Status for Amaravati - Key Cabinet Resolution

From Our Staff Reporter  
Amaravati, March, 26:

The state cabinet has taken an important decision to grant legal status to Amaravati as the state capital. This was announced by Information and Public Relations Minister Kolusu Parthasarathi during the cabinet briefing.

### Amaravati as Permanent Capital

The cabinet resolved to amend Section 5 of the Andhra Pradesh Reorganisation Act, 2014 to officially include Amaravati, within the CRDA limits, as the state capital. It was also decided to pass a special resolution in the Assembly to ensure that no future government can change the capital for political reasons.

The minister criticized the previous YSR Congress Party government, stating that Amaravati was weakened under the three-capital proposal. He clarified that the current government's goal is to develop Amaravati as a permanent capital and an economic hub of the state.



### Approval for Job Allocations

To strengthen the judiciary, the cabinet approved the establishment of 96 new courts and allocation of 1,730 jobs as per High Court recommendations. The Chief Minister directed that these recruitments be included in the job calendar.

### Additionally:

15% of quarry leases will be allotted to Vaddera societies

50% concession on seigniorage fees

Approval for staff recruitment at Mahatma Jyotiba Phule Residential School in Kuppam

### One-Time Settlement Scheme

The cabinet approved a

one-time settlement scheme to clear pending urban tax dues.

### For the Polavaram Project:

Compensation increased from Rs.10 lakh to Rs.12 lakh per acre

Land value for rehabilitation also enhanced

Estimated requirement: Rs.565 crore

Approval was also given to continue Polavaram lift scheme works and to fund lift irrigation schemes under the Guru Raghavendra Project in Kurnool district.

### Increase in PNG Connections

The government plans to expand Piped Natural Gas (PNG) connections up to 9 lakh in urban areas. Subsidies

under the Deepam scheme will continue for PNG users.

The cabinet also discussed the rise in bus accidents and instructed strict measures regarding road quality and vehicle permits.

### Probe into Fire Accidents

The government has ordered an investigation into recent fire accidents in Amaravati, suspecting that some incidents may have been intentional.

### Conclusion

Overall, the government has made it clear that its focus is not only on establishing Amaravati as the permanent capital but also on developing it as the central hub for the state's growth and economy.

## Compensation Announced for Markapuram Bus Accident Victims

From Our Staff Reporter  
Amaravati, March, 26:

The Andhra Pradesh cabinet discussed the tragic bus accident that occurred in Markapuram, Prakasam district. The cabinet expressed deep condolences to the families of the deceased.

### The state government has announced compensation for the victims:

- Rs.5 lakh for the families of those who died - Rs.2 lakh for the injured Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu instructed ministers and officials to closely monitor the



medical treatment being provided to the injured. He also ordered a thorough investigation into the accident and directed that strict action be taken against those respon-

sible. The tragic accident occurred early morning near Rayavaram in Markapuram mandal when a private bus collided with a tipper vehicle. 13 people were burned

alive. 22 others were seriously injured. The injured have been shifted to nearby hospitals for treatment. Officials fear that the death toll may rise further.

## Target of 1 Million PNG Connections in Andhra Pradesh: Minister Nadendla



From Our Staff Reporter  
Amaravati, March, 26:

A cabinet meeting of Andhra Pradesh was held under the chairmanship of Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu. Minister Nadendla Manohar briefed the media about the decisions taken.

### Fast Approvals and Targets

The cabinet made key decisions regarding LPG usage. The government plans to encourage people using LPG cylinders to shift to piped natural gas (PNG) in cities like Guntur, Nellore, Kakinada, and Visakhapatnam. PNG ensures continuous gas supply. Apartments and industrial units adopting this system will also receive incentives from the central government.

### Subsidies and Implementation Plan

The minister stated: - Major temples will also be directed to adopt PNG facilities

- Andhra Pradesh has better infrastructure for PNG compared to other states

- Increase in GST from 5% to 25% affected adoption

- The government plans to extend the Deepam subsidy scheme to PNG subscribers as well.

### Currently:

- Free LPG cylinder is provided once every four months under the Deepam scheme

- For PNG users, subsidy will be shared every two months

- An amount of Rs.2,400 (DBT) equivalent to three LPG cylinders will be transferred to those shifting to PNG pipelines.

### Fast Approvals and Targets

Permissions for laying pipelines will be granted within 24 hours or automatically approved. The government has set a target of 10 lakh (1 million) new PNG connections, with plans to provide connections to 1 lakh people within a month.

The minister clarified that social media rumors about shortages are false and confirmed that there is no shortage of petrol, gas, or diesel in the state. Around 2.7 lakh LPG cylinders are being supplied daily. Induction stoves are also being distributed in Anganwadi centers with central government support.

### Discussion on Amaravati Capital

The cabinet also discussed the Amaravati capital issue. CM N. Chandrababu Naidu recalled that in 2014 it was decided to establish the capital between Guntur and Vijayawada. Now, the cabinet has resolved to officially declare Amaravati as the capital within CRDA limits. A resolution will be

passed in the Assembly on March 28 and sent the same day. The Prime Minister's Office has indicated that it may be approved in the Union Cabinet meeting on April 1.

### The CM mentioned that:

- A bill amendment will be introduced in Parliament

- The High Court bench had earlier given a favorable verdict for Amaravati

- Farmers had welcomed the judges with flowers after the verdict

- He also stated that due to delimitation, Assembly seats may increase by 50%, creating more opportunities. A four-hour discussion on Amaravati is scheduled in the Assembly on March 28.

### Power Sector Reforms

The CM gave a PowerPoint presentation in the cabinet on reducing losses in electricity generation, supply, and distribution.

### Key plans include:

- Under the Surya Ghar scheme, 2,000 rooftop solar connections per constituency from April 5 to 14

- Installation of battery storage energy systems at 33/11 KV substations

- CM Chandrababu Naidu stated that electricity charges have not been increased even by a single paise in the past two years under the coalition government.

## EDITORIAL

## Threat of defections in Kerala elections

Kerala, which is gearing up for assembly elections, is facing a number of political problems. While the incumbent Pinarayi Vijayan-led Left Front (LDF) is making strong efforts to come to power for the third time with a growth mark, the Congress-led UDF, which has been out of power for ten years, is fully engaged in wooing the Muslim-Christian voters who are a decisive force in the state. The BJP, which has achieved unexpected victories in the recent local body elections, has gained good momentum in the local leadership. With Prime Minister Modi and other leaders at the Center intensifying their campaign in Kerala, the BJP hopes to make a strong mark in the state. However, now the farce of defections has become a problem for all parties. The BJP has started welcoming defectors to this extent. The joining of Anil Antony and Padmaja Venugopal, the daughters of senior Congress leaders A.K. Antony and K. Karunakar, has caused great inconvenience to the Congress in a way.

At the same time, BJP spokesperson Sandeep Warriar joined the Congress and contested from the Trikkapur assembly constituency as a Congress candidate. The CPM, which was considered the largest party in the state, lost five senior leaders. They joined the rival political camp. Former minister G. Sudhakaran, Aisha Potti, S Rajendran, PK Sasi, Karath Rasak, all former MLAs, left the CPM. Two senior CPM leaders from Kannur, V. Kunju Krishnan and T.K. Govindan, also left the CPM, leaving behind an institutional crisis. As the last date for nominations is approaching, the CPM is not surprised that Smita Sundaresan, a CPM area committee member from Varkala, has decided to join the saffron fold. The BJP immediately welcomed her and fielded her from the Varkala constituency. This constituency is currently represented by CPM leader V. Joy. The CPI too has had its share of defections.

Two former MLAs of the party, K. Ajith and C. S. Mukundan, left the party and joined the BJP after unsuccessfully seeking Congress support. The United Democratic Front (UDF) has been sharply criticizing the sudden departure of the party leaders from the CPM as a strong indication of the changing political climate in the state. These defections pose real challenges to the LDF alliance that has been in power for a decade. Although the CPM has expressed its ideological ideology widely, it can be said that the election result will be decisive for both the party and its dissidents. This may become a new problem for the party. Meanwhile, it is said that the West Asian war will have some impact on the Kerala Assembly elections this time.

In this highly competitive election, every vote counts. Therefore, the parties are planning to use chartered flights if necessary to bring Kerala voters living abroad to vote. The Election Commission has revealed that out of the 2.69 crore voters in the final list of Kerala, 2.23 lakh voters are non-resident voters. They seem to be deciding the winning votes in many constituencies. For example, there are 16,002 non-resident voters in the Kutteyavadi seat in Kozhikode. It is noteworthy that the margin of victory in the last election was only 333 votes. In the neighboring Nadapuram seat, there are 12,424 non-resident voters. The margin of victory here is only 3385 voters. Most of the non-resident voters of the state are from the Malabar region. There are 57,679 in Kozhikode, 52,163 in Kannur, and 39,501 in Malappuram.

It is estimated that if the voters from these Gulf countries do not vote, the results in some constituencies may be affected. The number of Keralites living in the Gulf region is about 22 lakh. It is common for them to return to their home state of Kerala from countries like the UAE, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and others to cast their votes during elections. This time, due to the elections, Easter and other festivals, the number of people who come to their home areas was huge. But now, due to the war, they are not in a position to return home easily. Expatriate groups estimate that the number of people who come will be reduced by half. Usually, they arrange 8 chartered flights from the UAE, but this time, there is no such situation, said Pudur Rahman, President of the UAE Kerala Muslim Cultural Center. This effect will be seen in Malappuram, Kozhikode, Kasaragod, Palakkad, Thrissur, constituencies in North Kerala. In this context, Muslim League General Secretary PMA Salam and senior Congress leader VD Satheesan said that they are considering using chartered flights for non-resident voters to cast their votes in the elections this time.

Talking 'Peace', Moving Troops:  
What Does Trump Really Want From Iran?

US President Donald Trump blinked. Or did he? The peace-making efforts are evidence that the war he launched with Israel against Iran is not going his way. Iran's leaders haven't blinked. They are staring back from the toll booth of Hormuz and dictating who they will talk to from the US side. Vice President JD Vance is acceptable; Trump's all-purpose team of Jared Kushner and Steve Whitkoff is not.

**Iran Hasn't Backed Down**  
Trump's 'war of choice' has met Iran's war of survival. A ferocious air campaign and 10,000 targeted strikes decapitated Iran's top leaders and destroyed much of the military infrastructure. But what they haven't managed to "obliterate" is Tehran's ability to retaliate. That's because Iran is fighting an unconventional war, not the kind the US and Israel anticipated. Dispersal of weapons and delegation of authority to those next and next-to-next in line has allowed Iran to continue and spread the war horizontally. Anyone in the line of Iranian missiles is a target, as Gulf countries have found, with their American security umbrellas blown. The weaponisation of the Strait of Hormuz has also given extraordinary leverage to Iran - and the biggest headache to America. Iran effectively controls 20% of the oil flows, 33-38% of the fertilizer trade and more than one-third of the helium needed for semiconductors, defence and medical uses, all of which used to flow normally through the Strait. Given that it's a lifeline for the world, freeing Hormuz from Iran's grip has become Trump's top objective because of the impact on the global economy.

**Hormuz Really Came To A Halt**

The narrow body of water has long been a point of contention between Iran and the US, with threats flying both ways during past crises. As US sanctions over Iran's nuclear programme increased economic pressure, Tehran periodically threatened a closure of Hormuz but didn't actually do it in practice. It didn't cross the red line even after the US-Israeli attacks on its nuclear sites last June. Iran's strategy to use the Strait as a weapon of last resort may have lulled American and Israeli strategists so much that they didn't anticipate that Iran would ever actually use that card. Or, perhaps, they were confident the war wouldn't last long enough to bring Hormuz into play. While Trump hints at peace, he has ordered the elite 82nd Airborne Division to West Asia to add to thousands of Marines already being sent to the region. Some 50,000 US troops are said to be deployed in the conflict zone. The news of reinforcements came after Trump decided not to bomb Iran's power plants and hinted at talks.

**Symptoms Of War Or Signs Of Peace?**

As Trump concentrates the US military in the region, he has sent a 15-point proposal to Iran via Pakistan. The points include freezing Iran's nuclear programme, placing enriched uranium under international supervision, US assistance for civilian nuclear power and lifting of sanctions. Iran has rejected the list and countered with its own demands, including the closure of US bases in the region, lifting of sanctions, guarantees against future aggression and accepting Tehran's right to collect fees

from ships transiting the Strait of Hormuz, as Egypt does with the Suez Canal. However, the first salvos are always maximalist and hope glimmers in the fact that the two sides are exchanging messages. Even so, amassing troops while offering an olive branch are contradictory realities, emblematic of the Trump method of functioning. A photo of Trump glowering, pasted with the slogan "Peace through Strength", is regularly posted by White House on social media as a reminder to "beware". Over the last three weeks, Trump has declared several times that he has "won" the war since he destroyed Iran's Navy and 80% of its missile launchers. The message is directed at the restive base or the 'Make America Great Again' faithful. They are not enamoured of the Iran war, since the promised "Golden Age" under Trump was supposed to be without wars. But by and large, MAGA elements are supportive, save a few vocal stars such as podcasters Tucker Carlson and Megyn Kelly.

**The Curious 'Peace Proposal'**

The peace proposal for Iran appears aimed at the markets, with Trump timing the announcement with an eye on the price of oil. Petrol and diesel have climbed, as have anxiety levels among consumers. Unfavourable polls have put Trump under pressure to cut costs and wind up the war. The sudden five-day pause announced on March 23, which lowered the price of crude, allowed several well-informed traders to make millions, because for some reason, they happened to bet on prices coming down minutes before



Trump's 7.04 am post on Truth Social. Insider trading is being alleged, but no one is expecting an investigation. Kushner and Whitkoff are known to mix their business (real estate) with political business as they go around meeting sheikhs and sultans to make peace.

**Israel Unhappy**

One party to the war that is not cheering for the pause for peace is Israel. It has different war objectives. The idea has alarmed Israel enough to rush to complete its target list inside Iran and Lebanon. Opening the Strait of Hormuz is not on the list because its dependency on the chokepoint is minimal. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu sees Iran as an existential threat, and Tehran is sworn to the destruction of Israel. He doesn't want to end the war before eliminating Iran's ballistic missile threat, ensuring that its nuclear capability is rendered null and changing the ground reality enough for the Iranian people to take charge of their country. Netanyahu hasn't shared the secret of how he will ensure or ascertain that the conditions have been met.

After all, his intelligence officials assured him, and, in turn, he assured Trump that Iranians would rise and fill the streets once the top leaders were eliminated. But decapitation didn't inspire a new revolution, but only fear and loathing among the people. It's unlikely Iranians would risk their lives anytime soon after the brutal shutdown of protesters in January and the recent public hanging of three men by the regime. As for the Gulf countries, they have criticised the war while also asking the US to "finish the job" and not allow Iran to become a threat again. They have also learned that the risk of hosting US military bases is higher than the protection they received in return. But they are caught between a rock and a hard place. It's one thing to co-exist with Iran's theocracy and its proxies in the region and quite another to live with perpetual war. While they won't cut ties with the US, they will recalculate and might seek security guarantees from others. When the war finally ends, the region and the world may look very different.

## Not China, Not Russia: Why Is Pak Suddenly Everywhere In US-Iran 'Talks'?

It seems nothing can stop Pakistan's power play even as it battles Afghanistan and multiple internal crises. The news that Washington routed the 'peace' deal via Islamabad has most Pakistanis themselves puzzled, and not a little apprehensive. After all, the ebullient Trump may change his mind at any minute, and trifling with Iran, or even reaching out to it, is fraught with danger. But what is clear is that Pakistan is certainly reaching out, and that too publicly. If this succeeds, the key actors will claim a victory in the region and in the Muslim world. In fact, it may be anything but. That's the stuff of details.

**Too Many People Talking**

First, the facts as reported. The Financial Times reported that Field Marshal Asim Munir had reached out to Trump proposing Pakistan as the "venue" for talks. This was on March 23, at about the same time that Trump announced the 'five-day' pause. These two events may not be directly connected, since a number of countries, including Turkey, Egypt, not to mention Russia, have been pressing Washington to end the war. However, none is very keen to get directly involved. Turkey, for instance, has its own Shia population that might get restive if talks are held on its territory. In short, Pakistan may well be the fall guy. At the same time, Pakistan Prime Minister Shahbaz Sharif was talking to Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian. Not surprisingly, the Chinese also reached out to persuade Iran to pitch for peace. On March 25, the Prime Minister was briefing the Saudis, while Pakistan's Foreign Minister, Ishaq Dar, was talking again to his counterparts in Turkey, also reaching out to Iraq recently in an effort to get the Ummah united to end the war.

That's a lot of people talking almost at the same time. The big takeaway for the political leadership was, however, that President Trump 'reposted' Shehbaz Sharif's tweet welcoming and supporting 'ongoing' efforts to end the war. That was when Tehran denied that there was anything at all in the pipeline. But Pakistan has much to gain from peace in the region.

**Riyadh Demands Compliance**

First, there is that troublesome Saudi-Pakistan 'Strategic Mutual Defence Agreement', signed in September last year, which specifically promised that Pakistan would stand by Riyadh if it was attacked. Though labelled 'Mutual', Saudis are hardly capable of standing by Pakistan in a war; but they could certainly provide the money, which made the whole deal attractive to Pakistan - which, in any case, was already providing training and even manning much of the Saudi Armed Forces, besides getting access to the best of US weapons that money could (literally) buy. But with the first drone attacks - either intended or mistaken - that hit the kingdom, the Saudis summoned the Field Marshal, with Defence Minister Prince Khalid posting pointedly that the two had discussed the attacks "and the measures needed to halt them within the framework of our Joint Strategic Defence Agreement". The Field Marshal would have quailed at the thought of standing against a neighbouring Shia power - and Iran is a power, make no mistake. But it seems Munir would have had its answer ready. On March 1, thousands of Shia youth went on a rampage in Karachi, even entering American embassy premises, with this continuing at other locations till the next day. For a country that has been able to stop even its majority



Sunni protests, despite the public decision to deploy to Gaza - and mysteriously then stage massive protests when pressure came to deploy following the peace accord - this violence, particularly the total failure to protect foreign embassies, was inexplicable. At any rate, Shia anger would certainly have crept into the conversation as a highly limiting factor. If Riyadh was displeased, the next best thing would have been to stop the war itself.

**A Crisis Uninterrupted**

Second, an end to the war is entirely in Pakistan's interest. The country imports 99% of its LNG from Qatar. After the Iranian attack on Ras Laffan, and Oman being hit, too, reports indicate serious disruption in the country. Petrol pump owners began rationing as panic buying started, but the government has rather imaginatively instituted an app for a subsidised fuel quota system aimed at providing targeted subsidies to low-income users, primarily two- and three-wheelers. Meanwhile, indigenous gas reserves continue to decline, while a circular debt of PKR \$3.2 trillion has been reported. In other words, there

was already a gas crisis, and the war has made it far worse. Through all this, the smuggling of oil and LNG through the Iran border continues, though at higher prices. Legal trade also continues uninterrupted through Taftan, Mand, Panjgur and elsewhere, according to officials from the Gwadar Chamber of Commerce and Industry (GCCCI). The Iran lifeline, therefore, continues, and it's in Islamabad's vital interest to see that it stays that way. Petrol prices have already risen by 200%. Any bombing or assistance to the US will freeze even this trickle.

**Iran's Defiance**

The key is whether all this is being backed by Iran. The 15-point peace plan, which has not been publicly released, will certainly include a complete cessation of all nuclear activity, removal of fissile material, and, according to reports, the end of all proxies like Hezbollah and Hamas and a missile programme for self-defence. Notably, Washington has offered the lifting of sanctions, assistance in developing Iran's civilian nuclear programme, including at the Bushehr nuclear plant, and entirely removing the

"snapback" mechanism, which automatically reimposes international sanctions on Iran for failing to comply with nuclear commitments. Iran has rejected this, demanding, not unreasonably, a guarantee against further attacks - which raises the question as to who will provide such guarantees against an unpredictable and aggressive US. Iran also demands that attacks against its proxies cease immediately, a demand that is not likely to find much favour in any capital. But its demand that it should be granted the right to levy fees on transit of the Strait of Hormuz, just as Panama does for its eponymous canal, and Egypt does on the Suez, is justifiable. The US, nonetheless, has its own plans for the Hormuz and its control. A 'joint' control is being talked about, but other countries upstream would want a piece of that.

**Growing Chorus For Pakistan**

Recently, Malaysian Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim threw his weight behind Islamabad, describing moves to de-escalate as a "constructive" step toward de-escalating "acute regional danger".

## Fatal Road Accident: 13 Burnt Alive in Bus-Tipper Collision



**Markapuram, March 26:** A tragic road accident near Rayavaram in Markapuram mandal claimed 14 lives on Thursday. A private travels bus collided head-on with a

gravel-loaded tipper, triggering a massive fire after the fuel tank burst. At least 13 passengers were burnt alive on the spot, while one succumbed to injuries in hospital. Around 20 others sustained serious injuries. The bus was carrying 43 passengers at the time of the accident. Both vehicles were completely gutted in the blaze. The injured were shifted to Ongole Government Hospital and Markapuram District Hospital for treatment. Emergency teams reached the spot within minutes and carried out rescue operations. Preliminary reports suggest a possible steering lock failure, as stated by the driver, while officials are investigating all angles. Prime Minister, Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister, Deputy CM, and Telangana CM expressed shock over the incident. Officials, including SP Harshavardhan Raju, inspected the site, and a detailed probe is underway. The government assured full support to the victims' families.

## Collector Conducts Surprise Inspection at Government General Hospital

**Rajamahendravaram, March 26:** District Collector Keerthi Chekuri conducted a surprise inspection at the Government General Hospital (GGH) to review medical services and facilities provided to patients. During the visit, the Collector noted delays in CT scan reports and instructed officials to ensure tests are completed and reports are issued on the same day to avoid inconvenience to patients. The absence of a lift in the casualty building, causing difficulties for elderly and emergency patients, was also brought to her notice. Officials informed that steps would be taken to install a lift through Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) funds. The Collector directed hospital staff to communicate clearly with patients, avoid unnecessary movement within the hospital, and adopt a more humane approach in patient care. She also emphasized strengthening the patient feedback



system and resolving grievances promptly to improve the overall quality of services. Hospital Superintendent Dr. Kennedy, doctors, and staff participated in the inspection.

## Awareness Session on Government Jobs at Aditya University



**Gandepalli, March 26:** An awareness program on "Strategies for Success in Government Exams and Group Services Preparation" was conducted by the Department of

Electronics and Communication Engineering at Aditya University, Surampalem. Alumnus K. Raja Ramesh Babu (2007-2011 batch), who was recently selected as Assistant Commissioner of State Taxes in APPSC Group-1 exams, attended as the chief guest. He guided students on preparing for government jobs, sharing valuable tips on time management, smart study techniques, and exam strategies. University officials, including Pro-Chancellor Dr. N. Satish Reddy, Deputy Pro-Chancellor Dr. M. Srinivasa Reddy, Vice-Chancellor Dr. M. B. Srinivas, and Pro-Vice-Chancellor Dr. A. Ramesh, congratulated him on his achievement. Students actively participated and clarified their doubts. The program was coordinated by Alumni Coordinator Dr. A. R. Vasantha, Associate Professor, and the guest was honored with a shawl and memento.

## Government Will Address Every Tribal Issue: ST Commission Chairman



**Parvathipuram, March 26:** Andhra Pradesh State ST Commission Chairman Sollu Bojji Reddy stated that all issues raised by tribal communities will be brought to the government's attention and resolved to ensure justice for every eligible tribal. During his district visit, he received petitions from tribal representatives at the ITDA Girimitra Hall. He noted that major concerns included drinking wa-

ter, road infrastructure, and land disputes. Assuring prompt action, he said special focus would be given to land rights issues and that the Commission remains committed to tribal welfare and development. Commission members also emphasized resolving issues through constitutional and peaceful means. Officials, public representatives, and tribal leaders participated in the program.

## Nurseries Should Move Towards International Exports: Collector Keerthi Chekuri

**Rajamahendravaram, March 26:** District Collector Keerthi Chekuri urged Kadiyam nursery farmers, known for their ornamental plants and flowers, to explore international export opportunities.

Speaking at a workshop on "Export Opportunities and Strategies for Kadiyam Nurseries," she said that despite having a strong national brand image, there is significant scope for global expansion. She noted that exports from Kadiyam are currently limited due to lack of awareness.

The Collector highlighted that only 10 firms presently hold export licenses and stressed the need to increase this number. She encouraged farmers to adopt a planned approach targeting global markets, assuring government support for export promotion.



Horticulture officials, nursery farmers, and representatives attended the program.

## EVM Warehouse Security Inspected by Collector Keerthi Chekuri

**Rajamahendravaram, March 26:** District Election Officer and Collector Keerthi Chekuri inspected the Electronic Voting Machine (EVM) warehouses in East Godavari district on Thursday. The inspection was conducted as per the guidelines issued by the Election Commission. The Collector reviewed security arrangements, storage systems, CCTV surveillance, and deployment of security personnel. While expressing satisfaction over the existing measures, she stressed the need for tighter monitoring. Officials were instructed to ensure 24/7 CCTV surveillance and adequate security staff, strictly adhering to Election Commission norms. RDO R. Sivaramaiah, Tahsildar Paparao, local leaders, and collectorate staff were present.



## Dr. Raja Avinash Potula Driving Innovation in Dental Education and AI Healthcare

**Visakhapatnam, March 26:** Dr. Raja Avinash Potula, a noted dentist and health informatics expert, is making significant strides in healthcare innovation, dental education, and artificial intelligence. Currently serving as Chairperson of the All-India Dental Students Association (AIDSA) International External Affairs Committee, he is actively connecting dental professionals and students across India and globally. A graduate of Dr. NTR University of Health Sciences and the University of North Texas, Dr. Potula is also pursuing PhD research focused on AI-driven healthcare and dental informatics. During the COVID-19 crisis, he provided critical support to patients by arranging oxygen and medical aid, earning recognition from multiple organizations. As the Founder and CEO of DentixHub, he has built a global platform offering mentorship, academic resources, and career guidance for dental professionals. His research in AI, predictive analytics, and dental informatics continues to contribute to both Indian and international healthcare systems. In



recognition of his contributions, he received the Wake Up Telangana Award in June 2023.

## Mega Free Medical Camp for Journalists Sees 233 Beneficiaries



**Rajamahendravaram, March 26:** A mega free medical camp organized for journalists received an overwhelming

response, with 233 journalists and their family members undergoing health check-ups, said District Collector Keerthi Chekuri. The camp was held at the Arts College premises under the supervision of the Health Department, with support from the Government General Hospital, IMA, and several private hospitals.

Various medical services including BP, sugar, hemoglobin tests, cardiology, gynecology, ENT, orthopedics, eye and dental care were provided. Advanced diagnostics such as mammography, digital X-ray, ECG, and ultrasound were also conducted, along with free distribution of medicines.

A total of 27 patients were referred to the Government General Hospital for further treatment. Officials and public representatives appreciated the initiative aimed at safeguarding the health of journalists.

## Simhachalam Chandanotsavam Arrangements Reviewed

**Visakhapatnam, March 26:** District Collector M.N. Harendra Prasad and City Police Commissioner Dr. Shankhabrata Bagchi reviewed arrangements for the upcoming Chandanotsavam (Nijaroopa Darshan) at Sri Varaha Lakshmi Narasimha Swamy Temple, Simhachalam, scheduled on April 20. Officials inspected queue lines, crowd management routes, and directed clear signboards for ₹1500, ₹1000, and ₹300 ticket queues. Separate arrangements with two special routes are being made for free darshan devotees. Basic amenities like drinking water, washrooms, holding areas, and emergency gates will be provided along queue lines. Security will be strengthened with barricades near the bus complex and installation of CCTV cameras monitored through a control room. Parking on the hill will be limited to 120 cars with QR code-based passes. Authorities emphasized coordinated efforts to



ensure a safe and smooth darshan experience for devotees.

## Collector Inspects Government Lands at Suryalanka, Orders Action on Encroachments



**Bapatla, March 26:** District Collector Dr. V. Vinod Kumar inspected government lands under Suryalanka Adavi Revenue Panchayat on Thursday. Officials explained details of 4.03 acres in Survey No. 547/3A7 using maps. The Collector reviewed existing structures including a Shiva temple, Marine Police Station, Fish Andhra shops, and surrounding areas. He also inspected the cyclone shelter at Suryalanka Beach, examining all rooms and surroundings. The Collector directed officials to prepare estimates for a compound wall around nearly 3 acres of panchayat land and ordered notices to clear encroachments. He also sought details on the temple constructed on government land.

## Healthcare at Doorstep: 'Doctor at Your Home' Ambulance Launched

**Paderu, March 26:** District Collector A.S. Dinesh Kumar inaugurated a new ambulance under the "Doctor at Your Home" initiative to provide medical services to remote and tribal areas. The mobile medical unit will deliver doorstep healthcare, especially for those unable to reach hospitals in emergencies. Equipped with essential medicines, modern equipment, and staffed by doctors and nurses, the ambulance aims to strengthen primary healthcare services. The project, set up at a cost of ₹1.20 crore under the Indian Red Cross Society, is expected to reduce maternal mortality and ease financial burden on the poor. Officials urged the public to make use of this facility.



## SC Commission Member Inspects Lottuvanigunta SC Hostel, Surprise Visit Reveals Inadequacies in Hostel Facilities



**Nayudupeta march 26 Staff Reporter** Nayudupeta Dr. Sripati Babu, Member of the Andhra Pradesh State SC Commission, made a surprise visit to the Lottuvanigunta SC girls' hostel in Naidupeta on Wednesday. He inspected the hostel premises, including the kitchen, toilets, and rooms, and interacted with the students to assess the facilities pro-

vided. During his interaction with the students, Dr. Sripati Babu enquired about the quality of food and other facilities. While the students reported that the food was satisfactory, they highlighted some issues, which were brought to the attention of the hostel authorities. The officials assured that the issues would be resolved within a few days. Dr. Sripati Babu instructed the hostel authorities to provide quality food as per the menu and take steps to address the issues raised by the students. He also directed the officials to submit a comprehensive report on the hostel's facilities and assured that the issues would be taken up with the Collector to secure necessary funds to develop the hostel into a model one.

## Indian skeet shooters set for ISSF Shotgun World Cup season opener in Tangier



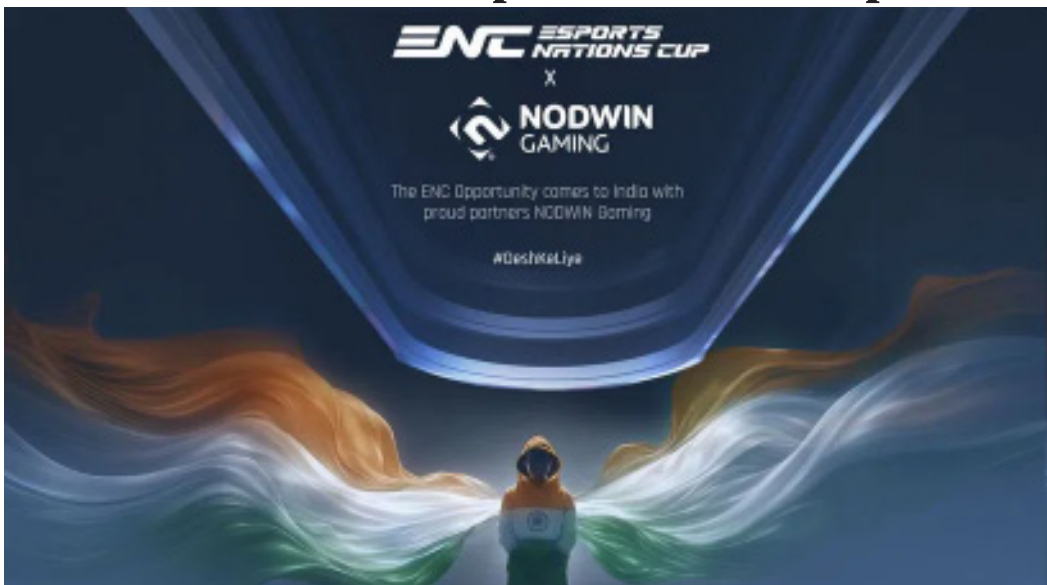
**Tangier, Morocco:** The Indian skeet squad are all set for action as the competition day of ISSF Shotgun World Cup Tangier gets underway here at the Club Tangérois de Tir in Tangier, Morocco. The opening event of the 2026 season will feature some of the world's most accomplished athletes, participating in a strong field. Day one of competition will start with 75 targets for both men and women which will be followed by 50 targets and the finals on Sunday. A highly competitive field consisting of Olympic and World champions have entered the competition. India have entered the maximum quota of six athletes in both men and women along with two shooters each in both men and women who will be competing for ranking points. The women's field is packed with stars with the reigning Olympic champion Francisca Crovetto Chadid of Chile, who is returning to international competition after maternity leave headlining the women's competition along with reigning world champion Samantha Simonton of United States. Diana Bacosi of Italy, a double

Olympic and double world champion also starts while former world champion Dania Jo Vizzi of USA, Kazakhstan's world championship medallist Assem Orynbay among others making it a highly competitive field. The Indian team consists of Olympian Maheshwari Chauhan and siblings Darshana Rathore and Yashasvi Rathore. Yashasvi, the youngest of the two, was placed second in the 68th Nationals and also won silver in the junior category at the Asian Championships in Shymkent last year. Areeba Khan and Mansi Raghuvanshi will also be competing, but only for ranking points. In the men's event, an 82-strong field entered the competition with World Championship 2025 bronze medallist Emil Kjeldgaard Petersen of Denmark headlining the list. Last season's World Cup finals winner Christian Elliot of USA, Italy's double Olympic champion Gabriele Rossetti, Tokyo silver medallist Jesper Hansen also of Denmark and former world champion and Asian Games champion Masoud Saleh Al-Athba of Qatar are among the top names in the

competition.

Also representing Canada for the first time will be Angad Vir Singh Bajwa who was in India colours till last year. India's hopes are set on the experienced Man Singh and Parampal Singh Guron along with Jyotiraditya Singh Sisodiya who is making his senior international debut. Man, a former Asian champion is making a comeback into the team after three years while Parampal last represented India in 2022. Jyotiraditya won a junior bronze in his last international outing at the Shymkent Asian Championships last year and will be raring to go on his senior India debut. Sukhbir Singh Harika and junior national champion Harmehar Singh Lally will be competing for ranking points. With Olympic champions, world champions, experienced finalists and emerging talents all competing, the World Cup promises a compelling start to the season. As athletes begin their journey towards Olympic qualification pathways, all eyes will be on Tangier to see who sets the early benchmark for the year ahead.

## NODWIN Gaming appointed India's National Team Partner for Esports Nations Cup 2026



**Hyderabad:** The Esports Foundation (EF) today appointed NODWIN Gaming, a global leader in gaming, esports and youth entertainment, as India's official National Team Partner for the Esports Nations Cup 2026 (ENC), the global nation-based esports competition set to debut in Riyadh from November 2-29, 2026. The appointment reflects NODWIN Gaming's role in shaping India's esports ecosystem over more than a decade, delivering national competitions, operating publisher-led circuits, and building connections across players, creators and partners. As India's National Team Partner, NODWIN Gaming will spearhead team formation, mobilize grassroots and competitive communities, support coaches across game titles, and coordinate with publishers, Clubs, and

ecosystem stakeholders to establish the pathways needed for Indian players to represent the country on the global stage. Nimish Raut, Global Head of Esports: Partnerships & Special Projects at NODWIN Gaming, commented, "The Esports Nations Cup represents a defining shift in how competitive gaming is structured globally, and for a country like India, this is a truly transformative opportunity. We have one of the largest and most passionate gaming communities in the world, but until now, there hasn't been a unified pathway for players to represent the country on a global stage. As the National Team Partner, our focus will be on building that structure from the ground up, identifying and nurturing talent across titles, and creating a high-

performance environment that enables Indian players to compete at the highest level. We are excited to work closely with the EF to unlock this next phase of growth for Indian esports and establish a sustainable foundation for the future." NODWIN Gaming joins a global roster of National Team Partners appointed across more than 100 nations, as part of the Esports Nations Cup's partnership-led model for national team development. The Esports Foundation received more than 630 applications from 150 countries and territories, reflecting the scale of global interest in nation-based esports. The full list of National Team Partners is available on the ENC website and will be updated as additional appointments are confirmed.

## Operation Sindoor: Netizens Not Happy with Director Choice?

Bollywood, which is riding high on the successes of Dhurandhar and Dhurandhar: The Revenge, is now coming up with yet another film based on nationalism. T-Series' head Bhushan Kumar announced his new project, Operation Sindoor, with director Vivek Ranjan Agnihotri of The Kashmir Files fame. However, despite being made on one of the hot topics, the film's announcement has drawn mixed responses from the audience. Many viewers criticised the move to sign Vivek for the film. They opined that someone like Aditya Dhar would have done justice to such a potential story. Even though Vivek scored a hit with The Kashmir Files, many people felt that the story was

too over-the-top and melodramatic. His next films, The Vaccine War and The Bengal Files, turned out to be box-office duds. They were criticised for poor storytelling and lethargic direction. Thus, many people on social media opined that Vivek would make Operation Sindoor a more melodramatic film rather than a well-made venture like Dhurandhar. Netizens were also upset with the fact that Vivek didn't appreciate Aditya Dhar or Dhurandhar for their success. They lashed out at him for the same. It was announced that the book Operation Sindoor: The Untold Story of India's Deep Strikes Inside Pakistan, which was written by retired Lt Gen KJS 'Tiny' Dhillon, serves as the basis. Operation Sindoor



was an Indian military operation carried out in response to a Pakistani terrorist attack at Pahalgam in 2025.

It remains to be seen if Vivek

gives a befitting reply to all the criticism with this film. More details of the movie are expected to be announced in the coming days.

## Will Anil Ravipudi End Krithi Shetty's Flop Curse?

Krithi Shetty, who shot to fame with Uppena, has been going through a rough phase in her career. It has been quite some time since Krithi delivered a solid hit in the south. In fact, her recent films have not only underperformed but have also struggled to secure proper releases. Her project with Pradeep Ranganathan titled LIK's release remains uncertain, adding to her woes. She also missed out on a key opportunity to play Chiranjeevi's daughter in a film directed by Bobby Kolli and this news made headlines all over. However, things are about to change as reports suggest that Anil Ravipudi has locked Krithi Shetty as the female lead opposite Nandamuri Kalyan Ram in his upcoming film, currently being planned with Venkatesh Daggubati. Known for delivering consistent commercial hits, Anil Ravipudi could be the turning point Krithi needs. If finalized, this project might finally help her break the flop streak and regain her footing in Tollywood. The casting for the film is on as of now and Krithi Shetty has pinned all her hopes on this project. Anil Ravipudi has only delivered hits and all those whom he has worked with have had safe years and can Anil Ravipudi finally end the flop streak of Krithi Shetty? Let's wait and watch.



## Nagabandham locks July 3 release date



Abhishek Nama's ambitious pan-Indian mythological epic "Nagabandham", starring Virat Karrrna, has officially locked its worldwide release date as July 3. The film is produced by Kishore Annapureddy and Nishitha Nagi Reddy under the banners of NIK Studios and Abhishek Pictures, opting for an early monsoon release. The release date poster stands out with a striking concept that blends mythology with a contemporary backdrop. The top half features Virat Karrrna in an intense, Shiva-inspired avatar, holding a massive trishul and exuding divine power. The film has already generated strong buzz. Virat Karrrna is the male lead while Nabha Natesh and Iswarya Menon are the female lead. Daksha Nagarkar, Rishabh Sawhney, Jagapathi Babu, Garuda Ram, Mahesh Manjrekar, Jayaprakash, Murali Sharma and Anasuya Bharadwaj play important roles. With its unique blend of mythology and modern storytelling, grand production scale, and ambitious narrative, "Nagabandham" is shaping up to be a major theatrical attraction when it hits screens worldwide on July 3.

## 'Dhurandhar 2' actor Danish Pandor says he was heartbroken to see less occupancy in theatres on first day due to negative publicity

Aditya Dhar's 'Dhurandhar: The Revenge' isn't just dominating at the box office, but even conversations on the internet ever since it hit theatres on March 19. In just a week, the film smashed multiple box office records and has continued its stellar run. However, just a day before release, it faced an unexpected hurdle when its paid reviews were reportedly cancelled due to "technical issues." This led to many people Actor Danish Pandor who plays Uzair Baloch in the film, opened up about an emotional moment from the film's opening day. He recalled walking into a nearly empty theatre, with an occupancy of 40-50 people, amid what he described as widespread "negative publicity." Reflecting on that phase, Danish said in an interview with ABP live, "It's all about the audience. I remember the film released on Friday after the screening got cancelled on Thursday. I was completely heartbroken. I couldn't understand what was happening. I kept thinking, 'It is such a great film, why is this happening?' And on top of that, there was too much negative publicity around it." He further shared, "When the film finally released on Friday, I went for the 2:30 pm show. There



were barely 40-50 people in the theatre. I kept wondering, we have made such a beautiful film, and there are no viewers. From 8 pm onwards, reviews started pouring in. Suddenly people began watching it and talking about it on social media. It picked up so well that there was no looking back. The reality is, no matter how much negativity surrounds a film, when audiences decide to show their love, nobody can stop them." Despite the shaky begin-

ning, the film still opened to massive numbers at the box office. On day one, 'Dhurandhar: The Revenge' collected Rs 145 crore (including paid previews), marking the biggest opening ever for a Bollywood release. It maintained the momentum with two back-to-back Rs 100 crore days and wrapped up its first week with Rs 643 crore at the domestic box office. Meanwhile, talking about the cancelled shows, Gaiety-Galaxy owner Manoj Desai had lashed out at

'Dhurandhar 2' makers, Jio Studios for giving KDM late. For those not in the know, KDM stands for Key Delivery Message. It is a small, encrypted XML file containing the security key needed to unlock and play an encrypted Digital Cinema Package (DCP). KDMs restrict movies to specific, authorized theater servers and, crucially, to a specific time window, acting as a Digital Rights Management (DRM) tool against piracy.