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India To Join 35 Countries' Effort To Reopen Strait Of Hormuz: Centre



New Delhi: India has been invited by the UK to join a meeting of 35 countries that will explore ways to reopen the vital Strait of Hormuz, whose closure has sent oil prices spiralling, the Ministry of External Affairs said on Thursday. The ministry's spokesperson, Randhir Jaiswal, said the meeting, which will be held on Thursday, will be attended virtually by Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri. "The UK

side has invited several countries, which also include India, for talks on the Strait of Hormuz. From our side, the foreign secretary is attending this evening," Jaiswal said. "We are in touch with Iran and other countries there to see how best we can get unimpeded transit and safe transit for our ships, which are carrying products including LPG, LNG and other products."

"Our Indian Friends In Safe Hands, No Worries": Iran On Hormuz Blockade



New Delhi: Iran has said that its "Indian friends" don't need "to worry" about the Strait of Hormuz, a key shipping route that has been disrupted since Israel and the United States attacked Tehran on February 28. "Our Indian friends are in safe hands, no worries," the Embassy of Iran in India said in a post on X on Thursday. Iran controls the Strait of Hormuz, a shipping route through which 20 per cent of the world's energy is transported. Since the conflict began last month, very few ships have been allowed by Iran to cross it. Iran has said it has permitted "friendly nations", including India, China, Russia, Iraq and Pakistan, passage through Hormuz. The blockade has resulted in severe disruptions in energy supply to many countries, including India. At least eight Indian ships have so far exited the Strait of Hormuz. These include two LPG carriers, BW TYR and BW ELM, carrying a combined LPG cargo of about 94,000 tonnes.

A golden chapter in the reconstruction of Andhra Pradesh: Deputy CM Pawan Kalyan

Mangalagiri, April 2: Deputy Chief Minister Pawan Kalyan expressed happiness over the bill granting legal status to Amaravati as the capital of Andhra Pradesh being approved in the Rajya Sabha as well. He stated that after overcoming conspiracies, misconceptions, and legal hurdles over the past few years regarding the existence of the capital, Amaravati has now emerged as an invincible force with Parliament as witness. He said that with the bill being passed in both the Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha, Amaravati now has

no opposition as the capital, and this is a proud and auspicious development for the five crore people of Andhra Pradesh. Deputy CM Pawan Kalyan said, "With the Lok Sabha approving the bill granting legal status to Amaravati as the capital of Andhra Pradesh, people across the state are filled with joy. These are moments of great pride for all of them. With this legal backing, Amaravati will stand as a permanent capital. I thank all the parties and MPs who supported this bill in the Lok Sabha. Those who are unable to

accept Amaravati gaining legal status and are spreading negativity will be taught a strong lesson by the people in the coming days. Amaravati is now invincible and will move forward on the path of development. I extend special thanks to Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Union Home Minister Amit Shah for strongly supporting Amaravati's development and successfully advancing the legal status bill."

On the occasion of this historic victory, he called upon Jana Sena leaders and workers to participate in celebrations organized



by alliance parties across the state. He urged everyone to light lamps in front of their homes and party offices to celebrate Amaravati's success.

Amaravati as the capital... celebrations soar across Andhra Pradesh



From Our Staff Reporter Amaravati, April 2: April 2, 2026 will remain a historic day in the history of Andhra Pradesh. The Parliament has delivered a final verdict on the uncertainty surrounding the state capital over the past ten years. The bill introduced by the Central Government to legally declare Amaravati as the sole capital of the state was approved by the Lok Sabha on Wednesday, and the Rajya Sabha unanimously passed it on Thursday. With this development, the long-cherished dream of

the people of Andhra Pradesh has been fulfilled. Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu, Deputy CM Pawan Kalyan, along with several ministers and MLAs, expressed happiness, calling it a victory for farmers' sacrifices and women's movements.

As soon as the news of the bill's approval in Parliament spread, a festive atmosphere was seen across Andhra Pradesh. Especially in the Amaravati capital villages, farmers and women came onto the streets, distributed sweets, burst fire-

crackers, and congratulated each other in celebration.

In Vemuru of Bapatla district, celebrations were held under the leadership of MLA Nakka Ananda Babu, who cut a cake. He expressed gratitude to Prime Minister Narendra Modi, CM Chandrababu Naidu, Deputy CM Pawan Kalyan, and Minister Nara Lokesh.

In Visakhapatnam's Gopalapatnam area, West constituency MLA Gana babu organized a bike rally with alliance leaders, holding the national flag and cutting a cake. He said, "From today, the eclipse on Amaravati has been lifted. Amaravati has gained legal status with Parliament as witness. With everyone's cooperation, Amaravati will become a magnificent capital."

In Jagadamba Junction, TDP South constituency in-charge Seethamraju Sudhakar, along with party leaders and workers, celebrated by cutting a cake

and bursting firecrackers.

"No one can move Amaravati even an inch hereafter..."

Senior TDP leader Varla Ramaiah said, "Not only has the bill been passed in both Houses, but once the President signs it and the gazette is issued, no one can question Amaravati's existence. Those who lack understanding of the Constitution and law are speaking irrationally. The decision taken earlier by former Legislative Council Chairman Sharif to send the bill to a select committee is the root of today's happiness."

"Amaravati will be shaped into a city the world will be proud of..."

Former minister Peethala Sujatha said, "Just as N. T. Rama Rao once showcased the self-respect of Telugu people on the Delhi stage, today Chandrababu has made Amaravati a matter of pride for future generations of Andhra people."

'BJP Against Infiltrators, Not Indigenous Muslims'



Guwahati: Ahead of the single-phased Assam polls on April 9, Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Thursday said the BJP is against

illegal infiltration from Bangladesh but not against the indigenous Muslims of Assam, known as Khilongiya muslims. While address-

ing a poll rally in Assam's Kaliabor in Nagaon district, Shah said, "BJP is against the 'ghuspathiyes' (illegal immigrants), not against

Amit Shah In Assam

the indigenous muslim community of Assam. Congress politicised the issue and gave it a communal spin ahead of polls." "Congress encouraged illegal infiltrators to the state, and now the party is giving a Hindu versus Muslim angle ahead of elections to get benefit," he added.

India's Defence Exports Hit Record Rs 38,424 Crore In 2025-26: Rajnath Singh



New Delhi: India's annual defence exports touched an all-time high of Rs 38,424 crore in the financial year 2025-26, marking more than 62 per cent growth over the previous fiscal year, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh said on Thursday. The "big jump" in the defence exports reflected the growing "global trust" in India's indigenous defence capabilities, Singh said in a social media post, adding that the country is "scripting an impressive defence exports success story". "India defence exports have touched a new all-time high with a record Rs 38,424 crore in FY 2025-26. It marks a robust 62.66 per cent growth over the previous fiscal," the defence minister said. "This big jump of Rs 14,802 crore in defence exports reflects the growing global trust in India's indigenous capabilities and advanced manufacturing strength," he said.

YSRCP is the only party that opposed the Amaravati capital: CM

From Our Staff Reporter Amaravati, April, 2:

Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu described the legal validation of the Amaravati capital bill as historic. He made it clear that Amaravati will exist as long as history exists. The AP Reorganization (Amendment) Bill-2026 was unanimously passed in Parliament. On this occasion, celebrations were held on Thursday in Uddandaray unipalem village in the capital region. CM Chandrababu and his wife participated in these celebrations. Speaking on the occasion, he criticized YSRCP chief and former CM Y. S. Jagan Mohan Reddy, alleging that he played a "three-capitals game" regarding the capital issue.

He expressed happiness that Amaravati was achieved despite those conspiracies. CM Chandrababu stated that Amaravati is a symbol of the self-respect of the people. He mentioned that all political parties in the country supported this bill and thanked them. On behalf of the people of Andhra Pradesh,



he also thanked Prime Minister Narendra Modi. CM Chandrababu said that YSRCP is the only party that opposed Amaravati as the capital. He noted that Pawan Kalyan, the chief of Jana Sena Party, showed

solidarity by crossing barricades. He expressed confidence that no one can move Amaravati even an inch hereafter. He affirmed that Amaravati will be developed into the best city and dedicated to the nation.

Thanks to everyone who supported the capital bill: Minister Lokesh

New Delhi April, 2: Minister Nara Lokesh responded to the approval of the bill introduced in the Rajya Sabha declaring Amaravati as the capital of Andhra Pradesh. He expressed his happiness in Delhi.

Minister Lokesh said that after the bifurcation of united Andhra Pradesh, the state was left without a capital. He recalled that Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu had chosen Amaravati as the capital. He noted that everyone supported Amaravati in 2014, and that even Y. S.



Jagan Mohan Reddy had supported it at that time. Lokesh stated that thousands of farmers had given their lands for Andhra Pradesh. He said that people voted for YSRCP in

2019 believing Jagan's promise that the capital would not be changed. However, after coming to power, Jagan allegedly changed his stance, and due to the actions of the

YSRCP chief, farmers suffered greatly. He alleged that farmers were shackled, harassed with false cases, and that even women were mistreated.

EDITORIAL

War is on for Telangana exports

The West Asian war is known to have disrupted international supply chains, preventing anyone from getting oil, gas and other vital necessities. Exports from India to other countries are not what they need, and the disruptions are damaging the economy. In this context, exports from Telangana to the US, UAE, Saudi Arabia, etc. are coming to a standstill. Due to this, exporters are at a loss. The market system linked to other countries is being turned upside down. Five out of the ten major export destinations from Telangana to other countries are currently in turmoil. The US, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Bangladesh and the United Arab Emirates are now experiencing a standstill due to the lack of exports of key equipment from Telangana.

50% of Telangana's export markets are engaged in these foreign markets. The major export countries are the US (23.64%), UAE (11.74%), Saudi Arabia (6.74%) and China (3.69%), France (3.38%), Britain (2.72%), Turkey (2.32%), Czech Republic (1.95%), Bangladesh (1.83%) and Kuwait (1.75%). Now all these countries are facing uncertainty in trade agreements due to the war crisis. Despite the setbacks so far, Telangana's exports have continued to perform strongly. In 2023-24, goods worth Rs. 1,16,182 crore were exported, while in 2024-25, goods worth Rs. 39.3 percent. Exports of aircraft, spacecraft components, pharmaceutical products, organic chemicals, electrical and engineering equipment, etc. were high.

In addition, agricultural products and processed food items are being exported at a significant rate. There are 500 registered exporters of agricultural products in Telangana. However, due to the current crisis, exports to the Gulf countries and other countries are declining. It is noteworthy that the Agricultural Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA) revealed that the main reason is that trade agreements have not yet been finalized. According to the NITI Aayog Export Readiness Index 2024, Telangana ranks eighth among all states in exports. According to the Logistics and Safety 2024 report, Telangana is in the Achievers category. However, exporters say that the skyrocketing transportation costs are leading to severe instability.

However, some say that they are finding it difficult to ship goods to the Gulf countries via Europe due to the heavy load. They say that they will not get any relief unless the situation in West Asia normalizes. They say that they are now receiving more export orders as other exporters are unable to afford the air freight charges. This effect is also visible on other sectors due to the restriction on the movement of ships through the Strait of Hormuz. Some exporters have expressed concern that the burden of transportation charges is increasing due to the lack of ships available to export egg powder and frozen egg liquid to Dubai, Saudi Arabia and Kuwait. Those who transport chocolates based in Hyderabad said that they have received fewer orders than in the past.

Companies that make chemicals and fertilizers from petroleum byproducts are closing down due to lack of production. Manufacturing of products like pharmaceuticals, semiconductors, detergents, dyes, and plastics is also being hampered. Fertilizer production in the country has fallen by a quarter in the last month. Textile manufacturing units in Surat are operating only five days a week due to fuel shortage. In Morji, the ceramic hub of Gujarat, three-fifths of the workers are returning home without completing their work. The reason for this is the shortage of propane, which is used to fire ceramic kilns. LPG gas or big restaurants and hotels are closing down everywhere. No matter how much the government insists that there is no real shortage of gas cylinders and that there is no need to wait in queues unnecessarily, artificial shortages are inevitable. Selling them at three times the original price in the black market is becoming the norm. If the war continues for a few more weeks, the situation will become even worse. Then rationing may be the last resort. If such a catastrophic situation like the Covid pandemic really arises, the countries of the world must cooperate with each other and those with excess reserves must distribute them to their neighbors.

Rs 30 Petrol Hike To Currency Crisis, What Oil At \$150 Can Really Do To The World

In 1979, the Iranian Revolution removed between 2 and 3 million barrels per day from the global oil supply. Prices roughly doubled within a year, from around \$13 per barrel to \$34. The world called it the Second Oil Shock and waited for prices to correct. They did not. They stayed elevated until 1986, when Saudi Arabia, tired of bearing the burden of production cuts alone, flooded the market, crashing prices to below \$10. The recovery from a supply shock, in other words, took seven years. And that was a demand-side solution, one country choosing to overproduce. No one had to rebuild the infrastructure. The taps were simply turned back on.

In the Gulf today, the taps cannot simply be turned back on.

This is the distinction that gets lost in the daily movement of Brent crude prices, and it matters more than almost anything else in this story. A demand shock (the 2008 variety, when booming Chinese and American consumption strained global capacity) corrects when demand falls. A financial crisis, a recession, a change in driving habits, all of these reduce consumption, and prices fall accordingly. A supply shock caused by physical destruction of infrastructure is a different animal. It corrects only when the infrastructure is rebuilt. And infrastructure, unlike demand, does not respond to policy announcements or diplomatic signals.

Calculating The Damage

Rystad Energy's damage assessment, released on March 23, gives some idea. The headline figure is \$25 billion: the minimum cost to repair and rebuild Middle East energy infrastructure damaged in the US-Israel-Iran conflict. Engineering and construction will account for roughly half of that. At least 40 energy-producing assets across nine countries have been "severely or very severely" damaged: oil and gas fields, refineries, pipelines. The International Energy Agency's (IEA) Fatih Birol described the conflict as "worse than the two oil shocks of the 1970s, as well as the impact of the Russia-Ukraine war on gas, put together".

The facility numbers are worth sitting with. Qatar's Ras Laffan complex, the world's largest LNG supplier, lost two trains to missile strikes: a 17% capacity reduction totalling 12.8 million metric tonnes per year. QatarEnergy declared force majeure on March 4 and has extended it to June. A \$4-billion contract awarded to Saipem and China Offshore Oil Engineering for North Field development is now suspended. The Ras Laffan Pearl gas-to-liquids plant, jointly owned by QatarEnergy, Shell, and ExxonMobil, is still assessing its losses. Iran's South Pars offshore gas field has sustained heavy damage. Iraq's Zubair oilfield, operated by Eni, has had output cut by 70,000 barrels per day from its normal 330,000-bpd level, a 21% reduction in a field that accounts for a meaningful share of Iraq's export revenue. Bahrain's BAPCO Sitra Refinery, just commissioned in December after a \$7-billion modernisation programme designed to increase capacity from 2.67 lakh to 4 lakh barrels per day, built under a \$4.2-billion contract by TechnipEnergies, Samsung Engineering, and Ténicas Reunidas, was struck twice. Two crude distillation units and a tank farm are confirmed damaged. The facility had been in commercial operation for approximately three months.

A Long, Long Recovery

Rystad's prognosis for the worst-affected assets: "full recovery could take up to five years". Large-frame gas turbines, the equipment required to power LNG main refrigeration compressors, are manufac-

tured by exactly three original equipment manufacturers globally: GE Vernova (US), Siemens (Germany), and one other. All three began 2026 carrying production backlogs of two to four years, driven by demand from data centre electrification and coal plant retirements. They were already behind before the first missile struck Ras Laffan. Iran, legally excluded from Western supply chains, will have to rely on Chinese and domestic contractors. This will likely be "slower and more expensive". President Trump has said that prices will "rapidly come back down" once the conflict ends. The turbine backlog at GE Vernova does not share this timeline. Now to the price. Brent crude was around \$72 per barrel in January. It has crossed \$116. It has gained 56% in March alone and 85% since the start of the year. The all-time high was \$147.50, set in July 2008. Options traders have already priced a non-trivial probability of surpassing that record. Open interest in \$150 call options has risen tenfold in a matter of weeks, from 3,374 lots to 28,941. Interest in \$160 calls has gone from zero to 14,676 lots. Someone has purchased \$300 June call options. These are not academic exercises. Each lot represents 1,000 barrels of oil. At current prices, the \$150 call positions alone represent nearly \$3 billion in notional exposure.

'Steep Recession'

Oxford Economics has modelled what \$150 oil does to the world. At that level sustained for four months, global inflation reaches 7.7% - roughly where it was at the 2022 peak - and world GDP falls approximately two percentage points against prior forecasts. The Eurozone, the United Kingdom, and Japan contract. The United States comes close. Merchandise trade growth falls to 1.5 to 2.5%. BlackRock's Larry Fink has said years of oil prices nearing \$150 would mean "a probable stark and steep recession". JPMorgan's head of global economics has stated publicly that one further month of Hormuz closure is "consistent with" prices approaching \$150. The Strait of Hormuz



handles 17-20 million barrels per day, one-fifth of all the hydrocarbons that move on this planet. Ship transits have fallen by 95% since February. The 1973 Arab oil embargo, which triggered the First Oil Shock, reduced output by roughly 12 million barrels per day. Even by that arithmetic, the current disruption is larger.

Where India Stands

Let us now come to India. We import more than 85% of our crude oil requirements. Of that, roughly half has historically transited the Strait of Hormuz. The rupee has touched 94 to the dollar and foreign institutional investors have withdrawn \$12 billion from Indian equities in the past month. Earnings growth forecasts for FY26, which opened the year at 12-14%, have already been revised down to 10%. They face further cuts if crude holds above \$100 through two quarters. Elara Capital has done an interesting analysis. At \$125 per barrel, even after an excise duty cut, petrol and diesel retail prices need to rise by Rs 8-14 per litre. At \$150, the required adjustment is Rs 26-30 per litre. Every dollar-per-barrel increase in crude oil prices adds approximately Rs 1 per kilogram to LPG under-recovery. At \$150, the aggregate LPG subsidy burden reaches an estimated Rs 3 trillion. India's oil trade deficit, at that price sustained through FY27, ap-

proaches \$220 billion, pushing the current account deficit past 3% of GDP, a level that, in 2012-13, preceded a currency crisis. The Nifty 50 has shed 8% in March. There can be a further 10-15% correction if prices remain elevated. Sectors directly exposed include refining, aviation, paints, fertilisers, and petrochemicals. Banks and NBFCs catch the ricochet. India is not without cushions. Iranian officials have signalled that Indian-flagged vessels may be granted safe passage. Russian crude, available via non-Gulf routes, has served as an alternative supply source that Washington has not sought to block. These are real buffers. They are not unlimited and operate at others' discretion.

Will Oil Go Back To Previous Levels?

The deeper question - 'what crude oil does once this conflict resolves?' - is where the supply shock diagnosis becomes most consequential. When the 1973 embargo ended in March 1974, prices did not return to pre-embargo levels. They remained elevated for years, reshaping the economics of energy investment globally and eventually catalysing the North Sea development boom. The mechanism, then, was different: political, not infrastructural. And yet, recovery still took years. Today, the mechanism is physical. Forty assets across nine countries, a

\$25-billion repair bill, turbine backlogs running two to four years, international contractors evacuated pending "sufficient conflict stability". The Strait reopening - whenever that happens - will be a necessary condition for oil price recovery. But it will not be sufficient. For India, the structural prescription is not new, only newly urgent. Strategic petroleum reserves sized to actual vulnerability rather than budget convenience. Renewable capacity built as economic defence rather than an environmental signal. And a clear accounting of what absorbing oil shocks through subsidies costs the exchequer over time, which is to say, what it costs the next government - which is a different political calculation from what it costs this one. The Gulf's LNG trains will be rebuilt. The turbines will eventually be manufactured, shipped, and installed. The Ras Laffan complex will return to production, perhaps by 2030, perhaps later. Oil prices will, in some form, come down from wherever they peak. But the Stone Age did not end because the world ran out of stone. It ended because something better arrived. At \$150 a barrel, with a five-year infrastructure recovery timeline and a 95% blockade of the world's most important energy chokepoint, the case for that transition has rarely been made more forcefully, or more expensively.

The Problem With Trump's Fantasy Of A 'Crippled' Iran

On April 1, 2026, President Donald Trump addressed the American nation from the Cross Hall of the White House in what was clearly intended to be a moment of strategic reassurance and political signalling. Nearly five weeks into the ongoing US-Israel military campaign against Iran, codenamed 'Operation Epic Fury', the speech sought to consolidate a narrative of control, success, and inevitability. Yet, beneath the rhetorical certainty lay the familiar tensions that accompany modern warfare: contested outcomes, economic anxieties, and geopolitical unpredictability. In his carefully choreographed address, Trump began with a brief, almost perfunctory, acknowledgement of domestic achievement, the Artemis II launch, before pivoting sharply to the war effort. This transition itself was telling: a juxtaposition of American technological prowess with military dominance, reinforcing a broader message of national supremacy. What followed was a sweeping declaration of battlefield success. Iran, he claimed, had suffered unprecedented losses in a matter of weeks - its navy dismantled, air force crippled, command structures decimated, and weapons infrastructure largely neutralised.

A Maximalist View

Such assertions, while not unusual in wartime rhetoric, reflected Trump's characteristic maximalism. His framing of the conflict as a near-total victory

in progress leaves little room for ambiguity, even as independent verification remains elusive. More importantly, it underscored his longstanding strategic worldview: that overwhelming force, applied decisively, can reshape adversarial behaviour in compressed timeframes. The justifications he offered were equally familiar. Iran's nuclear ambitions, its ideological hostility toward the United States and Israel, and its history of supporting militant proxies were presented not as discrete concerns but as part of a continuous, almost civilizational threat. Trump's reference to past decisions, particularly the killing of Qassem Soleimani and the withdrawal from the 2015 nuclear agreement, served to position the current conflict as the logical culmination of a policy trajectory he had set in motion years ago. Yet, what stood out was not merely the articulation of threats, but the moral clarity with which they were framed. Iran was depicted as both aggressor and destabiliser, leaving little space for nuance or alternative interpretations. This binary framing, good versus evil, order versus chaos, has been a consistent feature of Trump's foreign policy discourse, and it was on full display here.

Behind All That Optimism

On the question of timelines, Trump struck an emphatically optimistic tone. He suggested that core strategic objectives were "nearing completion" and indicated that the most intense

phase of military operations would conclude within two to three weeks. This is a bold claim, particularly in a conflict involving a regional power with asymmetric capabilities and a demonstrated willingness to absorb losses while prolonging engagement. His assertion that "we have all the cards" may resonate politically, but strategically it risks underestimating Iran's capacity for recalibration and indirect retaliation. The economic dimension of the conflict received a more cautious treatment. Rising gas prices - always a politically sensitive issue in the United States - were acknowledged but dismissed as temporary disruptions caused by Iranian actions in the Strait of Hormuz. Trump's emphasis on American energy independence was meant to reassure domestic audiences, yet it glossed over the deeply interconnected nature of global energy markets. Even a relatively insulated US economy cannot entirely escape the ripple effects of sustained disruptions in one of the world's most critical energy corridors.

Reality Check

Indeed, the broader economic implications are unlikely to be as transient as suggested. Higher energy prices, inflationary pressures, and potential slowdowns in global growth are structural consequences of such conflicts, not merely episodic disturbances. For US allies, particularly in Europe and Asia, the costs are likely to be more acute, raising questions about burden-sharing and stra-

tegic alignment. Geopolitically, the conflict appears to be reinforcing existing alignments while simultaneously exposing their fragility. The strengthening of US-Israel-Gulf cooperation is evident, yet the hesitation of some partners to engage fully points to underlying divergences. Iran's regional network may be weakened, but its capacity to generate instability through non-state actors remains intact. Moreover, external powers such as China and Russia are likely to interpret the conflict through the lens of opportunity as much as disruption.

Who Was The Speech For?

Domestically, Trump's speech was as much about political positioning as it was about strategic communication. With public opinion showing signs of fatigue and concern, particularly over economic costs, the emphasis on imminent victory serves a clear purpose. It seeks to preempt criticism, consolidate support, and frame the conflict as both necessary and nearing resolution. Whether this narrative holds will depend less on presidential rhetoric and more on developments on the ground. In essence, the address functioned as a declaration of intent as much as an assessment of reality. It projected confidence, asserted dominance, and promised closure. Yet, as with many such moments in international politics, the gap between projection and outcome remains uncertain.

NTR District Progressing in Key Performance Indicators

Vijayawada, April 2 (Pen Power): NTR District is steadily moving forward in overall development and showing improved performance in Key Performance Indicators (KPI), said District In-charge Minister Satyakumar Yadav. He stated that the State Government's 2026-27 Budget focuses equally on welfare and development, aiming to achieve the goals of Swarna Andhra @2047. The remarks were made during the Budget Outreach (2026-27) meeting held at the Pingali Venkayya Conference Hall in the District Collectorate on Thursday. Public representatives and officials participated in the meeting, while MLAs and other representatives attended virtually. The Minister said that the budget lays a strong foundation for long-term and sustainable development. He noted that ₹2,781 crore has been allocated to NTR District to strengthen infrastructure and accelerate the implementation of welfare schemes. The allocations will support sectors such as agriculture, education, healthcare, industrial growth, and urban and rural infrastructure. District Collector Dr. G. Lakshmisha stated that according to the 2024-25 revised estimates, NTR District stands second in the state in GDDP with a



value of ₹93,112 crore and a 5.9% share. For 2025-26 initial estimates, the district is expected to reach ₹1,05,135 crore, maintaining its second position with a 6% share. He also noted that per capita income has improved to ₹3,91,274, moving the district from fourth to third place in the state. In the services sector, the district stands second with ₹65,292 crore GVA and a 9.32% share. Officials stated that coordinated efforts of public representatives and departments are helping drive the district toward comprehensive development.

Collector Conducts Surprise Inspections at Collectorate



Visakhapatnam, April 02: Newly appointed District Collector M. Abhishek Kishore conducted surprise inspections at the Collectorate on Thursday morning. Soon

after assuming charge, he reviewed the functioning of various departments and personally visited each section. The Collector interacted with officials and staff, inquiring about work progress and public service delivery. He inspected the 24-hour control room, reviewed grievance registration procedures, and examined record maintenance. He also visited the RDO office and suggested installing a larger signboard for public convenience. Inspections were carried out at the DSO office, HUDCO building works, strong room, and Collector's chamber. During the visit, he spoke with elderly citizens in the corridor, reviewed their complaints, and directed officials to take immediate action. Emphasizing prompt service, he instructed that public grievances must be resolved within stipulated timelines and that people should not be made to wait unnecessarily. Joint Collector G. Vidyadhari, DRO M. Visweswara Naidu, RDO Sudha Sagar, and other officials were present.

Tight Security Measures at Visakhapatnam Railway Station, Coordination Meeting to Curb Drug Trafficking

Visakhapatnam, April 2: The city police have initiated strict measures to eliminate the illegal transportation of ganja and other narcotic substances through railway routes in Visakhapatnam. A coordination meeting was held at the CP office under the leadership of Police Commissioner Dr. Shankhabrata Bagchi, IPS, with officials from RPF, GRPF, and city police. Key discussions focused on strengthening security around railway stations, preventing drug trafficking, and curbing thefts and anti-social activities. Authorities decided to implement measures such as installing scanning machines, clearing bushes around station premises, improving lighting, and expanding CCTV surveillance. The Commissioner emphasized that joint efforts by RPF, GRPF, and local police would effectively



control illegal activities and ensure a safe environment for the public.

Rs2,163 Crore Allocated for Welfare Schemes in East Godavari



Rajamahendravaram, April 2: Andhra Pradesh Water Resources Minister Dr. Nimmala Rama Naidu announced

that ₹2,163.30 crore has been allocated for welfare schemes out of the total ₹3,832.08 crore budget for East Godavari district for the financial year 2026-27. After reviewing the Budget Outreach program with district officials at the Collectorate, the minister said the government is focusing on strengthening the state's economy and speeding up development. He added that the Polavaram Project is targeted for completion by 2027, along with efforts to revive industries and create employment opportunities. District Collector Kirthi Chekuri said major allocations include ₹1,423.48 crore for NTR Bharosa, ₹387.61 crore for Thalliki Vandanam, and ₹162.67 crore for Annadata Sukhibhava. She also stressed improving revenue generation and promoting solar power in government offices.

Collector Conducts Surprise Inspections in Gajapathinagaram

Vizianagaram, April 2: District Collector S. Ramsundar Reddy conducted a surprise inspection at Gajapathinagaram Secretariat-2 on Thursday. He expressed displeasure over staff arriving late and directed the MPDO to issue show-cause notices to those who failed to maintain punctuality. The Collector also inspected the premises and voiced dissatisfaction over poor sanitation, instructing officials to maintain cleanliness and ensure timely delivery of public services, warning of strict action against negligence. Later, during a visit to Puritipenta-1 Anganwadi Centre, he found the worker absent and expressed serious concern. He ordered immediate show-cause notices to the concerned CDPO and supervisor, stressing that negligence in childcare and nutrition services would not be tolerated.



Farmers Benefit from Passbooks: Collector Vijaya Sunitha

Podili, April 2: Markapuram District Collector M. Vijaya Sunitha stated that land passbooks greatly benefit farmers by ensuring clear ownership rights. She distributed passbooks to 350 farmers at Juvvaleru village on Thursday. The Collector urged farmers to utilize government schemes effectively for financial growth. Officials including Joint Collector Puli Srinivasulu and Tahsildar M.V. Krishna Reddy attended the event.



Autism Awareness: "Understand, Support, Empower" – Collector Dr. G. Lakshmisha

Vijayawada, April 2: On the occasion of World Autism Awareness Day, District Collector Dr. G. Lakshmisha emphasized the need to understand autism correctly and extend empathy to children with special needs. Speaking at an awareness program held at Cheyutha Mental Disability Training Institute in Ayodhya Nagar, he stated that autism is not a defect but a unique condition, and with proper training and support, children can achieve great success in life. The Collector interacted with the children, enquired about their well-being, and appreciated their talents. He highlighted that every individual has unique abilities, and identifying and nurturing them is key to their development. He also praised the efforts of Dr. T. Krishnakumari, Director of Cheyutha, for her dedicated service over the past 20 years. Dr. Lakshmisha suggested providing special training in skill development, sports, arts & crafts, and swimming for children with autism. He as-



sured full support from the administration for such initiatives and encouraged continued efforts to empower children with special needs.

Stay Alert Against Digital Frauds: Vizianagaram SP A.R. Damodar



Vizianagaram, April 2: District SP A.R. Damodar urged the public to remain vigilant against rising digital frauds. Speaking after inaugurating a newly constructed circle office at Cheepurupalli on Thursday, he said retired employees are increasingly becoming victims of "digital arrest" scams. He advised people not to panic over threatening phone calls claiming arrests and to seek police assistance by dialing 1974. The SP also emphasized the need to eliminate ganja and drug abuse in the district, warning that addiction can destroy en-

tire families, and urged youth to stay away from such substances.

He called on citizens to inform police about suspicious activities in villages. Stressing road safety, he said around 200 deaths occurred due to not wearing helmets and promoted the slogan "Helmet gives rebirth." He reiterated that people should report cybercrime incidents to the nearest police station without fear.

DSP S. Raghavulu, CI G. Shankara Rao, SI Lokesh, and others attended the program.

Blockchain Technology 2026 Workshop Successfully Concludes at Aditya University

Kakinada, April 2: A four-day technical workshop titled "Blockchain Technology 2026" was successfully conducted at from March 30 to April 2 under the Freshman Engineering Department. Deputy Pro-Chancellor Dr. Medapati Srinivasa Reddy stated that the workshop aimed to provide students with comprehensive knowledge of modern blockchain technology. Resource person A.R. Kumar from the Andhra Pradesh State Skill Development Corporation delivered sessions on blockchain fundamentals, decentralized systems, smart contracts, cryptography, and real-time applications.



The workshop featured hands-on sessions, interactive discussions, and practical demonstrations, enabling students to develop blockchain-based mini projects and enhance their technical skills. University officials expressed

that the program would significantly contribute to students' future innovation and career growth.

Land Titles Distributed to Tribal Farmers under "Mee Bhoomi-Mee Hakku"



Rampachodavaram, April 2: Polavaram District Joint Collector Bachu Smaran Raj stated that the Andhra Pradesh government is distributing land title deeds with official seal to farmers whose lands have been resurveyed under the "Mee Bhoomi-Mee Hakku" program. At a distribution program held in Kotha Pakalu village of Boosigudem Panchayat on Thursday, the Joint Collector handed over new land titles to 23 tribal farmers. He said that all resurveyed lands will be updated online and pattas will be issued regularly every month. He also assured that pending land surveys will be expedited and eligible tribal farmers will receive their land titles at the earliest. Tahsildar P. Balaji, VRO S. Venkat Reddy, Sarpanch Pallala Lakshmi and others participated in the program.

Farmers Asked to Report Issues to Collector

Bapatla, April 2: District Collector Dr. V. Vinod Kumar urged farmers to bring any issues directly to his notice. During an inspection of the Balijepalli village secretariat in Vemuru mandal under Repalle revenue division, he directed officials to complete the land resurvey without causing inconvenience to farmers. The Collector reviewed resurvey progress with officials and interacted with farmers, inquiring about passbooks, land details, and any grievances. Farmers expressed satisfaction, stating that boundaries were clearly mapped and no money was paid to officials.

and instructed the digital assistant to process it.



He also addressed a request from an elderly woman for a new Aadhaar card. RDO B. Sridevi, Tahsildar B. Suseela, VROs, and secretariat staff were present.

Percentage System Back Just Before Peddi & Toxic!



A day ahead of the Release of two major releases – Biker and Rakasa, Telangana Exhibitors brought up the issue of Percentage System once again. Twenty Three Single Screen Theaters owners have released a Press Note that they will operate only under Percentage System going forward. The terms would be 60% for first week, 50% for Second Week, and 40% for Third Week with One Show Housefull Gross as Hold Over. They say this system will be followed across the state in Stages.

Big Players – Suniel Narang, Sirish Reddy, and

Bobby (Geetha) have agreed to this but Mythri Sasi did not as the Distribution has some of the Big Budget Films and they will be most impacted if the Percentage System is followed. The Percentage System issue has come last year and it first started in East Godavari. And was spread to other areas. Producers have rejected that outrightly but when Pawan Kalyan thought they were trying to stop his Hari Hara Veeramallu. They issue got mellowed down. It is true the Rental System is making life difficult for the Exhibitors as for most films, the Distribu-

tors are shifting to Percentage System when the movie slows down on First Monday. It is like the Distributors pay Rent when the movie is doing good and give peanuts on Percentage Basis when the movie is not doing good. On the other hand, Producers are not willing to go to Percentage System permanently as their Shares will be severely impacted especially in the First Weekend. They say they can not take the hit with the non-theatrical market already down and audiences not coming to Theaters.

SVC Group which is a

strong advocate of Percentage System opted to push this issue before their Big Release, Toxic to send an indication that they are doing all this for the Good of Theaters. However, it is just before Mythri's Big Release – Peddi. So the battle lines are clearly drawn. Obviously, Distributors of both the film's will suffer due to the Percentage System. But the Hit is like Bigger the film Bigger the Hit. We will have to see if this issue leads to a conclusion or we may see Theaters shutting down again until it is resolved.

Peddi Team Racing Against Time to Meet the Deadline?

The suspense on Ram Charan's long awaited rural entertainer Peddi still continues even as the release date is now less than a month away. Even after Charan himself revealed that the film won't get delayed, there are strong rumours within the industry circles about postponement. Moreover, the latest poster didn't feature the release date, leading to more doubts among trade circles.

Charan revealed that the entire talkie part has been wrapped up barring one item song. But, the re-recording activities and pending post production formalities will need considerable time for completion. Meanwhile, the overseas distributor is confidently promoting the film, hoping that there is no change in the release date. Wrapping up item song and getting the first copy ready in the next few days is going to be a very challenging task for the team given that they have only four weeks time. So, many in industry believe that postponement is inevitable because the team should be able to complete all formalities in the next few days for a smooth release. Sources close to the team informed that both the makers decided to put in all possible efforts and push for April 30 release even though the chances are very slim as of now.



The team has reportedly decided to race against time and complete the shooting of item song and pending patch works. The next few days will decide the fate of the release date. Besides getting the first copy ready, the makers will need to complete theatre agreements

well in advance. Moreover, they have to sorted out the issues relating to latest percentage model of single screens in Nizam. Amid all these issues, Peddi cannot afford to get postponed again as there are strong expectations among moviegoers and trade circles.

So, it is going to be an uphill task for Charan and his team. It will be a big achievement if they manage to meet the crucial deadlines and ensure proper release without postponing the film for the third time. Or else, they have no option but to find another ideal date.

Young Lady Director Eyes Big Break in Tollywood

Manasa Sharma is the latest new director in the tinsel town, trying to test her luck with the film Raakaasaa. The film marks her debut as a director in terms of a theatrical cinema.

Despite not speaking heavily about the film during the promotions, the director is on the spotlight for her introverted and modest nature during public appearances. Telugu cinema rarely witnesses female filmmakers and if Raakaasaa becomes success, it will help Manasa grow big in career.

Ever since the team began promotions and started coming out in public events, Manasa carried the girl next door image and vibe. Her presence and speech during the pre-release event also brought a lot of attention

towards her. Interestingly, she also broke silence on how she is enjoying this attention. Subtly reacting to the newfound attention, Manasa acknowledged all that happening on social media saying, "Telugu Yuvatha chala manchi vullu, Ammailni bage encourage chestharu," which is currently trending on social media.

Manasa Sharma's debut with Raakaasaa will be an important test for her career. Tollywood rarely sees female directors stepping into mainstream theatrical films, and a success here could open new doors for her as well as inspire many aspiring filmmakers.

In recent times, a few talented women directors entered the industry with big dreams but faced setbacks



after one unsuccessful film. So, Raakaasaa becomes a crucial moment for Manasa. If she manages to impress the audience with this comedy-fantasy thriller, she could quickly become one of the most talked-about new

directors in Tollywood. Manasa Sharma earlier created Oka Chinna Family Story and directed Bench Life for OTT. Niharika Konidela is backing Raakaasaa, starring Sangeeth Sobhan and Nayan Sarika in the lead roles..

Neradi Barrage Gets Clearance

Srikakulam, April 2: Union Civil Aviation Minister expressed ??? over the final tribunal verdict and the Union Jal Shakti Ministry's gazette notification clearing the way for the construction of the Neradi Barrage on the. He described it as a historic milestone for the future of agriculture in Srikakulam district. With all obstacles removed, the project and its associated works can now proceed. The

tribunal fixed water availability at 115 TMC at Gotta Barrage, with half allocated for the state's use. Naidu said the project will significantly enhance irrigation potential, expand cultivation, and boost the district's economy. He assured that the project will be completed transparently with public support and thanked Prime Minister and Chief Minister for their support.



Amaravati Capital Approval Celebrated in Polavaram District



Rampachodavaram, April 2: Polavaram District Joint Collector Batchu Smaran Raj said that the Parliament's approval of

Amaravati as the capital of Andhra Pradesh is a proud moment for all Telugu people. Celebrations were held

across schools, colleges, and women's groups in the district. Awareness programs were conducted to spread the message that Amaravati represents self-respect and pride. Students and teachers celebrated by cutting cakes, while women's groups created rangolis in villages. Government offices, including the Collectorate and ITDA buildings, were decorated with colorful lights. The celebrations were organized under the supervision of District Collector K. Dinesh Kumar, with officials and staff actively participating.

Grand Welcome to Governor Abdul Nazeer in Kakinada



Kakinada, April 2: received a grand welcome upon his arrival in Kakinada on Thursday. He traveled from to a helipad set up at the district police parade ground. The Governor is visiting to attend the 12th convocation ceremony at . District officials, including Collector M.N. Harendhira Prasad, SP G. Bindu Madhav, and other dignitaries, extended a warm reception. He later proceeded to the university's Alumni Auditorium to participate in the convocation ceremony.

Maharashtra plans 1 lakh capacity cricket stadium in Mumbai region



Hyderabad: In a significant step towards reinforcing Maharashtra's position as a global sporting destination, a strategic initiative was undertaken under the leadership of Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis to advance the development of a world-class cricket stadium in the Mumbai Metropolitan Region (MMR). As part of this initiative, Mr. Ajinkya Naik, President of the Mumbai Cricket Association (MCA), and Mr. Vijay Singhal, Managing Director of CIDCO, engaged in detailed discussions to chart the roadmap for this landmark infrastructure project. "The proposed stadium, with a planned seating capacity of 100,000 spectators, is envi-

sioned to be among the largest cricket venues globally. Designed as a state-of-the-art facility, the project aims to set new benchmarks in sporting infrastructure, fan experience, and integrated urban development," MCA President Ajinkya Naik said. Mr. Ajinkya Naik, President of MCA stated, "This initiative marks a defining moment for Maharashtra's sporting ecosystem. A 1 lakh capacity stadium in the Mumbai Metropolitan Region will not only elevate Mumbai cricket but also firmly position Maharashtra on the global sporting map. This world-class infrastructure will create unparalleled opportunities for player development, provide critical exposure to

emerging talent, and strengthen the cricketing ecosystem across all levels." "This initiative by the Chief Minister of Maharashtra underscores the state's forward-looking approach to sports-led development and infrastructure innovation. The stadium is expected to serve as a catalyst for sports tourism, attract marquee international events, and enhance the region's global sporting footprint," Ajinkya Naik said. "Positioned as a flagship project for the state, the development aligns with the broader vision of nurturing future talent, strengthening grassroots cricket, and creating world-class platforms for athletes," he said.

Cooper Connolly follows Shaun Marsh's footsteps at Punjab Kings

Hyderabad: Cooper Connolly, who made a brilliant debut for Punjab Kings in the match against Gujarat Titans with an unbeaten half-century, recalled that he "woke up in the morning with a little bit of nerves, which I was really happy about, but yeah, I was really looking forward to getting out there and playing

my part the best I can. Ricky Ponting just kept me calm and collected." "Ponting told me to play my game, go out there and dominate. It was a nice team performance. We were very strong with the ball and made things easier for ourselves. It was a really good day for us," Connolly said on JioHotstar's 'Google Search AI Mode Match Centre Live'.

