

# PEN POWER

POWER OF JOURNALISM

ENGLISH MORNING DAILY

**Sri Geetaansha Digitals**  
Hyderabad | Visakhapatnam | Kakinada | Vijayawada | Ongole

Print  
Compactable Pigment Inks Available at Low Cost  
News Print Rolls Available at Reasonable cost  
For More Details: 93948 55244, 9059465965

Volume : 1 No. 157 VISAKHAPATNAM Sunday, April 5, 2026 Editor: GANTYADA APPARAO Pages : 4 Rs: 5-00

## 'Politics Will Come And Go, My Priority Is Safety Of Keralites': PM Modi



**Thiruvananthapuram:** Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday said that the countdown for removal of the LDF government in Kerala has started, and a BJP-led NDA will come to power in the state. Speaking at a BJP-led NDA rally here in Pathanamthitta district, Modi said that the saffron party workers in the state have signalled a strong

mood to bid farewell to the Left rule. Elections to 140 Assembly seats will be held on April 9 in the state. In his address, the PM said that if the BJP comes to power in the state, it will ensure development in Kerala as it did after coming to power in six out of the seven north-east states and Goa, which have a significant Christian population.

## "Three Allegations. Zero Truth": Raghav Chadha vs AAP Escalates

**New Delhi:** Two days, two video messages. The first was for the "aam aadmi", the second for his Aam Aadmi Party, or AAP. Raghav Chadha, AAP's Punjab MP, was dropped as the party's Deputy Leader in the Rajya Sabha earlier this week. The party also said the Punjab MP should not be allotted time for speaking in the House from the AAP's quota. This has not deterred the 37-year-old leader, who has been using X as his megaphone. And continues to speak, both to his party and people in general. "Since yesterday, a scripted campaign has been waged against me-featuring the same language, the same talking points, and the same allegations. This is no coincidence; rather, it is a coordinated attack. Initially, I thought I should not respond to it; however, I subsequently felt that if a lie is repeated a hundred times, some people might actually come to believe it. Therefore, I decided to offer a response," Chadha said, defending himself. The allegations, he said, have been levelled against him by his own party. AAP's first allegation is that whenever the Opposition stages a walkout from Parliament, or from the House, Raghav Chadha remains seated right there.



## Assam May Gain 63 New Assembly Seats Under Women's Quota: Himanta Sarma



**Dispur:** Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma announced on Saturday that the state's total assembly seats could rise from 126 to 189, a net gain of 63 seats due to the implementation of women's reservation. Himanta Biswa Sarma made the declaration during a poll rally in Nazira, Sivasagar district, while campaigning for BJP candidate Mayur Borgohain, who is taking on sitting Congress MLA and Leader of the Opposition Debabrata Saikia. Sarma linked the future expansion to a promise of reviving the abolished Amguri Assembly constituency. "There is a possibility that 63 more seats will be added due to women's reservations. When that happens, we will revive the abolished Amguri seat again. During delimitation, one part of Amguri went to Sivasagar and one part to Nazira," he told the crowd. Recognising local sentiment, the chief minister assured that no government offices would be shifted from Amguri until the revival, adding that one or two more offices might be set up there. Shifting focus to the ongoing election battle in Nazira, Sarma urged voters to back Borgohain to continue the BJP's governance record. He touted the advantages of a "double-engine government," with the same party ruling both state and Centre, for accelerating development. "The double-engine government has delivered roads, welfare schemes, and transformation across Assam."

## Allies Want To Let Sunetra Pawar Win Baramati Bypoll, Congress Not On Board: Sources

**Mumbai:** The bypoll for the Baramati Assembly seat, necessitated by the death of Ajit Pawar in a plane crash in January, has exposed another faultline in the opposition Maha Vikas Aghadi in Maharashtra. The Sharad Pawar faction of the NCP has already declared it will not field a candidate against Sunetra Pawar, Ajit Pawar's wife, who took over as the president of the NCP and the deputy chief minister after his death. Shiv Sena (Uddhav Balasaheb Thackeray) has also indicated that it is unlikely to field a candidate in the NCP bastion out of respect for Ajit Pawar.



## New Sainik School Reflects Centre's Vision for Nation-Building Through Education: Minister Nara Lokesh



**Raichur:** Sindhanur town in Raichur district witnessed a historic and momentous occasion with the inauguration of the Shri Krishna Devaraya Sainik School, accompanied by a grand roadshow and enthusiastic public participation. The initiative marks a significant step towards strengthening value-based and defence-oriented education in the region.

The programme was attended by Union Minister for Steel and Heavy Industries, H.D. Kumaraswamy, Union Minister of State for Defence, Sanjay Seth, Minister for Information Technology, Government of Andhra Pradesh, Nara Lokesh, Visakhapatnam MP M. Sribharat, former Minister Venkatarao Nadagouda, along with several other dignitaries, members of the Shri Krishna Devaraya Education Society, students, and parents.

Addressing the gathering, Shri Sanjay Seth described the inauguration as a proud and defining moment for the region. Emphasising the importance of education, he referred to knowledge as a guiding force that shapes character and instils a sense of purpose in serving the nation. Highlighting the legacy

of North Karnataka, he spoke about its rich civilisational heritage from the architectural brilliance of the Chalukyas to the glory of the Vijayanagara Empire. He paid tribute to Sri Krishna Devaraya, noting his contributions as a patron of art, literature, and strong governance, which balanced cultural advancement with military strength. Establishing a Sainik School in his name, he said, carries deep symbolic and historical significance.

The Minister underscored the role of Sainik Schools as "institutions that go beyond academics, nurturing discipline, leadership, resilience, and a spirit of national service." He noted that Karnataka continues to play a pivotal role in India's defence ecosystem, contributing significantly to military leadership, defence manufacturing, and innovation. He highlighted institutions such as Hindustan Aeronautics Limited and Bharat Electronics Limited, as well as advancements in indigenous platforms like the Tejas Light Combat Aircraft, as indicators of the state's strategic importance.

He further stated that "under the visionary leadership of Hon'ble Prime Minister Narendra Modi

and the guidance of Raksha Mantri Rajnath Singh, India is witnessing a transformative phase in defence and youth development. The expansion of the Sainik School system, with 86 new schools approved and a target of 100 under the PPP model, reflects the government's commitment to accessible, value-based education."

Providing key data, he noted that over 18,000 cadets are currently enrolled in existing Sainik Schools, with thousands more in newly established institutions, including a growing number of girl cadets. The expansion of the National Cadet Corps (NCC), with its capacity increased to 20 lakh cadets, further strengthens opportunities for youth participation in nation-building. Highlighting India's rising global stature, Shri Sanjay Seth pointed out that "defence exports have reached an all-time high of ₹38,424 crore, marking a growth of over 62 percent." He described this achievement as a reflection of global confidence in India's indigenous capabilities and a strong step forward in the vision of Aatmanirbhar Bharat. The inauguration of the Shri Krishna Devaraya Sainik School is expected to serve

### Historic Occasion Marks Major Boost to Defence-Oriented Education in Karnataka

as a transformative step in shaping disciplined, capable, and nation-oriented youth, while further strengthening the region's contribution to India's defence and educational landscape.

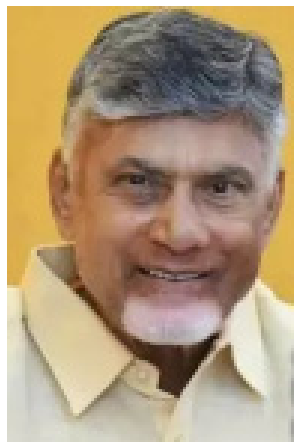
## Ganta slams Jagan over 'Mavigun' capital proposal

**Vijayawada:** Bheemuni patnam MLA Ganta Srinivasa Rao launched a sharp attack on YSR Congress Party (YSRCP) president Y. S. Jagan Mohan Reddy over his recent remarks on Amaravati and his proposal to consider an alternative capital plan in the Machilipatnam Vijayawada Guntur region, which he termed as Mavigun. Addressing the media, Mr. Srinivasa Rao said that such remarks coming from a person who had previously served as Chief Minister were shameful. He alleged that the statements had triggered widespread criticism on social media, with many netizens ridiculing the proposal.

## Amaravati won.. CM Chandrababu thanks BJP chief Nitin Nabin

**Amaravati, April 4:** Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu expressed happiness over the decision taken by the Central Government to provide the highest legal status to Amaravati as the capital of Andhra Pradesh. On Saturday, CM Chandrababu called up BJP National President Nitin Nabeen and expressed special gratitude for playing a key role in this process. He expressed happiness over the approval of the amendment bill introduced in Parliament establishing Amaravati as the sole and permanent capital of the state. He said that Amaravati has received recognition and security across the country today

due to the initiative shown by the Central Government. The CM clarified that with the approval of this bill, the previous ambiguities regarding the capital have been permanently put to rest. Speaking on the occasion, Chandrababu said, "Thank you Nitin Nabin for coordinating all political parties in Parliament to support this bill. The BJP chief's efforts for the passage of the bill are indescribable. The people of Andhra Pradesh will always remember the support provided by the NDA partner parties and the central government in the matter of Amaravati. The long-standing dream of the people of the state has been fulfilled due to



the cooperation of the central leaders and the decisions taken by the NDA government. With this legalization in Parliament, not only will the line be cleared for the development of Amaravati, but the trust in the state among investors will also double."

## Habitual offender arrested in Nandyal, gold and cash seized



**Nandyal:** A 25-year-old man wanted in a series of burglaries reported from the Rayalaseema districts was arrested and recovered gold ornaments weighing 98 grams, about 400 grams of silver items and Rs.54,500 in cash. The accused, identified as Shaik Babavali of YSR

Nagar in Nandyal, was apprehended during a routine vehicle check near Nagulakatta on Nandamuri Nagar Road in the town. Police said Babavali tried to escape on a motorcycle with no number plate, which raised suspicion about his possible involvement in bike thefts. Superintendent of

Police Sunil Shoran said Babavali had been involved in multiple theft and burglary cases since 2025. The offences were reported from Nandyal, Bandi Atmakur, Revanur, Sanjamala, Gadivemula, Bethamcherla and Avuku police station limits, and other parts of Rayalaseema.

## Minister Payyavula Keshav invites Arvind Limited to set up garment units in Anantapur

**From Our Staff Reporter**

**Amaravati, April 4:** Minister for Finance and Planning Payyavula Keshav on Friday invited leading apparel manufacturer Arvind Limited to establish garment units in Anantapur district. After holding a review meeting with the Department of Industries, Revenue and Commercial Taxes officials at the Collectorate, the Minister spoke to the representatives of the textiles giant, emphasising their potential to generate large-scale employment. The Minister and the firm's representatives discussed the investment prospects and industrial opportunities in the region, with a focus on generating employment at an affordable budget.

District Collector O. Anand and other officials participated in the meeting. The Minister informed the company about the investor-friendly policies of the government. The government would readily allocate the required land and extend full support for setting up industries, he said and noted that garment manufacturing units could create jobs for thousands, particularly benefiting rural youth and women.



## EDITORIAL

'Increase in seats'  
strategy for victory

Although the BJP has minimal electoral strength in South India, it is already making new moves to maintain its dominance in the North Indian states and return to power in the 2029 general elections. The BJP believes that it can consolidate its power at the Center by winning huge seats in states like Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Maharashtra, Rajasthan, and Madhya Pradesh. In the South, the BJP has less strength in the states of Tamil Nadu and Kerala. In 2024, the DMK won 39/39 seats in Tamil Nadu. However, the BJP is focused on increasing the vote share in Tamil Nadu and expanding its vote bank in Kerala. Now, it considers the upcoming assembly elections in Tamil Nadu and Kerala by 2029 as a foundation. To this end, it is planning to complete the delimitation of constituencies by 2029. To this end, it is considering increasing the seats in the Lok Sabha and state assemblies by up to 50 percent. It is convincing the public that its goal is to increase the seats without mentioning the delimitation of constituencies. Also Read - Donald Trump gambles again Advertisement If that happens, the Lok Sabha seats will increase from 543 to 816 and the Assembly seats from 4123 to 6385. As a result of population differences, the northern states have more constituencies compared to the south. The southern states have been demanding for some time now to correct these differences. In 1951, the southern states had 26 percent of the country's total population, but by 2022, this had decreased to 19 percent. The secret in the BJP's strategy is that Union Home Minister Amit Shah recently discussed this seat increase strategy with the NDA allies only and did not hold any consultations with other political parties. According to the seat increase formula, the current number of Lok Sabha constituencies will inevitably increase from 543 to 816. The seats in the northern states will increase by 150 to 200. Also Read - 'Pembu' tribals roar over stony hearts Telangana Chief Minister Revanth Reddy has recently expressed concern that this will give an "unfairly strong majority" to the northern states and weaken the southern states politically. For example, the seats in Uttar Pradesh will increase from 80 to 120. At the same time, Telangana seats will increase from 17 to only 26. The Telangana government is worried that the current difference of 63 seats will increase to 94 seats in the future. That is why the Telangana government has passed a resolution opposing the re-division of constituencies based on population. The Centre has asked for this decision only after discussing with all the states. The Andhra Pradesh government is also demanding that the current number of seats for each state be increased according to the population ratio and that the additional seats should be limited so that they do not go to the northern states. The BJP already has a reputation as a party limited to the Hindi heartland. Also Read - Hormuz.. Iran's Trump Card Advertisement While there is already a gap between the North and the South in terms of allocation of funds, approval of projects, appointment of high posts like President and Vice President, there is criticism that the gap will increase further if the seats are increased. It is known that the southern states are complaining that the central government continues to discriminate in the allocation of funds and sanctioning of development projects. The Modi government had previously tried to redistribute constituencies, but it backed down after large-scale protests from the southern states. Now, although the southern seats have not been directly reduced, there is concern that the attempt to increase the seats by 50 percent will be unfair to the south. After independence, the redistribution of constituencies has been done every decade. But due to the uneven population growth, the then Prime Minister Indira Gandhi froze the expansion of Lok Sabha seats for 25 years. Also Read - Naxals are not the end of development After that, Atal Bihari Vajpayee also followed the same method in 2001. In the delimitation of constituencies in 1976 and 2002, the boundaries of the constituencies were changed without increasing the number of seats. Again, after 45 years, the Modi government has started efforts to delimit the constituencies. Although the Center says that no injustice will be done to the southern states, if we look at the ground realities, even if the seats of the southern states do not decrease, the importance of the south will decrease due to the relatively increased seats in the northern Indian states. This inequality will lead to an increase in the legislative dominance of the northern states. Moreover, it will be difficult for the southern states to resist the policies of the ruling classes that are detrimental to secularism, federalism, and the protection of the rights of the oppressed classes. There are already allegations against the BJP that it is using religious and caste differences for political gains. Now, political observers are expressing concern that the delimitation of constituencies risks further deepening regional divisions.

## In Numbers: How Has India Kept Fuel Prices Low Even As Europe Sees 70% Spikes?

Gas prices in Europe have surged by nearly 70% amid the West Asian crisis, intensifying volatility in global energy markets. Compounding this, Russia imposed a gasoline export ban effective April 1. Since the Iran war, energy markets have been acutely destabilised. Eurozone inflation rose to 2.5% from 1.9%, driven largely by energy inflation at 4.9% year-on-year. A 74 surge in crude, a near-blockade of the Strait of Hormuz, and collapsing Gulf LPG flows should have triggered a domestic spiral across many countries. However, India has managed to contain the retail impact so far.

**What's behind this divergence?**

**The Shock Transmission**  
The shock originated at a critical chokepoint: the Strait of Hormuz, through which nearly 25% of global oil flows transit. Disruptions pushed Brent crude from around \$70 to over \$120 per barrel, a rise of roughly 70%. Consequently, European gas prices rose by about 50%, while retail fuel prices increased sharply; Germany saw petrol rise 18%, Spain 34%, and Portugal's diesel rose nearly 17%. In several African economies, fuel costs are estimated to have surged by 30% to 50%.

India's structural exposure was significant. Its crude import dependence stands at 88%, while LPG imports accounted for 60% of consumption, of which roughly 90% transits through Hormuz. With over 100 million households under the Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana reliant on subsidised LPG, this dependence has direct implications.

Early indicators pointed to stress: LPG imports fell from 3,22,000 metric tonnes to 2,65,000 metric tonnes, while the Gulf's share in it dropped from around 60% to 34%. Under standard transmission dynamics, such a shock would have led to a sharp retail price increase.

Yet, unlike most economies, India prevented a full pass-through. Petrol and diesel prices remained largely unchanged, and LPG saw only a limited increase. Moreover, the government claims that it has stabilised LPG prices after having secured an eased supply of it.

The puzzle is, why did such exposure not translate into domestic price instability?

**Where India Is Getting Its**

**Supplies From**

India's first line of response lay in supply-side adaptation specifically: a rapid but structural diversification of import sources. Crucially, this was not an ad hoc adjustment but an extension of pre-existing procurement strategies that provided options under crisis conditions.

The United States emerged as a key marginal supplier of LPG, backed by pre-contracted volumes of approximately 2.2 million tonnes per annum, about 10% of India's import basket. This contractual baseline enabled scaling up without delays owing to renegotiation. Simultaneously, Russia's share in India's crude imports rose to around 45-50 million barrels since the Iran war started, and is expected to be as high as around 2 million bpd. This was sustained through alternative maritime routes, notably the Cape of Good Hope, effectively bypassing Hormuz-related disruptions. African suppliers, particularly Nigeria and Angola, provided additional crude substitution from the Atlantic Basin. Although these flows were costlier due to longer transit routes, they served as critical buffers in maintaining supply continuity. Argentina, though a relatively small player, also emerged as a supplementary LPG source. Its contribution was marginal in volume terms but still significant in a tight market. Even so, constraints persisted. Russia's LPG export infrastructure limited scalability, while suppliers like Norway and Canada faced logistical rigidities and longer lead times. The key insight is that India's resilience did not come from post-crisis improvisation, but from a diversified import portfolio that could be reweighted under stress, including the incorporation of non-traditional suppliers like Argentina.

**Naval And Diplomatic Tools**

This supply diversification was complemented by maritime and strategic interventions. With disruptions extending to both Hormuz and the Red Sea, shipping routes were reconfigured around the Cape of Good Hope. This has historically increased transit times by approximately 30% and freight costs by 40-60%, alongside a spike in insurance premiums. To mitigate these risks, India



deployed naval and diplomatic tools. Under Operation Sankalp, Indian naval escorts ensured safer passage for critical energy shipments. Concurrently, selective access through Hormuz was maintained via diplomatic channels, reducing the probability of extreme supply disruptions. The payoff was clear: while costs increased, physical supply continuity was preserved. Domestic buffers further strengthened this resilience. LPG production increased by 28%, while piped natural gas (PNG) connections expanded by nearly 2.9 lakh, partially substituting LPG demand at the margin. Strategic petroleum reserves, covering roughly 74 days of consumption, provided an additional cushion.

**The Price Containment Plan**

However, even with supply secured, global price escalation remained unavoidable. Herein lay the most decisive intervention. India's second and arguably more consequential policy response was to decouple global price shocks from domestic retail prices through a combination of fiscal absorption and administrative controls. The divergence between input costs and retail prices was stark. Analysts suggest that under full pass-through of global price shocks, the increase could be significantly higher, given the sharp rise in international LPG benchmarks. In reality, prices rose by only about 7% (roughly 7%). This gap was bridged through a layered absorption architecture. Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs) bore under-recoveries estimated at ₹40,000 crore, while the government provided com-

ensation of around ₹30,000 crore. Targeted subsidies under PMUY further insulated vulnerable households. The net effect was that most of the price shock was absorbed upstream by public sector balance sheets rather than being transmitted to consumers. The containment strategy was even more pronounced in petrol and diesel pricing. The government implemented excise duty cuts of ₹10 per litre on both fuels, reduced diesel duties effectively to zero, and imposed export levies to redirect supply towards the domestic market. As a result, retail prices remained largely stable despite elevated global crude prices.

**Diesel As A Special Case**

This prioritisation is grounded in macroeconomic considerations as diesel is not just a fuel but an input into the entire price system. First, diesel plays a central role in inflation transmission. It underpins logistics, agriculture, and supply chains, with direct and second-round effects on both the Wholesale Price Index (WPI) and Consumer Price Index (CPI). Containing diesel prices, therefore, mitigates broader inflationary pressures. Second, macroeconomic stability considerations were paramount. At \$120+ crude, a full pass-through would have significantly raised CPI inflation, eroded real incomes and potentially triggered monetary tightening. Third, diesel's importance for trucks, which account for approximately 70% of India's freight movement, and for powering irrigation via diesel pumps and power backup across MSMEs, implies a significantly higher input-output multiplier compared to LPG.

Stabilising diesel prices, therefore, compresses inflationary effects across logistics, food prices, and core CPI, delivering disproportionately large macro-economic gains. Fourth, excise duty reductions effectively shifted the burden from OMCs to the sovereign balance sheet, preventing financial stress within public sector energy firms.

**Can This Last?**

Finally, political economy constraints cannot be ignored. Petrol and diesel prices are high-frequency, highly visible indicators of economic distress, creating strong incentives for administrative containment. That said, the system is not impermeable. Private sector players, such as Nayara Energy, adjusted prices upward, indicating that administrative control is partial and contingent on public sector dominance. India's response to the 2026 energy shock reflects a coordinated, multi-layered policy framework, where it efficiently re-engineered shock transmission mechanisms. The state intervened at multiple nodes - supply, logistics, pricing, and welfare - to ensure that global volatility was absorbed fiscally rather than passed on to consumers. Whether this constitutes a policy masterstroke depends on its sustainability. The model is contingent on fiscal space, geopolitical positioning, and continued diversification. Structural risks, particularly a high-import dependence and the vulnerability to Hormuz disruptions, remain unresolved. India did not escape the shock; it reconfigured how the shock travels through its economy, demonstrating a form of state capacity that is as much fiscal as it is geopolitical.

India Just Decided To Let Chinese  
Capital In Again. But There's A Catch

In March 2026, India eased regulations that had restricted Chinese capital in local companies, in a development that marks New Delhi's cautious pragmatism towards capital flows from Beijing. Instead, the new rules mandate that decisions on whether or not to allow proposals on capital flows from countries that share a land border with India will be taken within 60 days. Yet, India has not fully opened the sluice gates, and the relaxation is being allowed in sectors such as capital goods, electronic components, polysilicon and ingot wafers. Another caveat is that majority control must stay with an Indian company or entity, but investments from bordering countries that involve 'beneficial ownership' to the limit of 10% are permitted under the automatic route, which does not need government approval.

Economic engagement between India and China nosedived in the wake of the COVID-19 outbreak in 2020, a situation that was compounded by China's military coercion and border clashes that led to deaths of soldiers on both sides. In the wake of the pandemic, when stock

prices plummeted, China's central bank raised its equity stake in India's HDFC from 0.8% to 1.1%, which immediately triggered a political blowback that China was indulging in opportunistic takeovers of India's corporate assets.

This development led to the government promulgating Press Note 3 (PN3), which stated that all investment from bordering countries such as Bangladesh, Nepal, Bhutan, Afghanistan, Myanmar and China will go through deep scrutiny. It reflected New Delhi's effective targeting of Chinese capital and its befitting response to Beijing through economic signalling. Prior to 2020, India's startup ecosystem had a lot of Chinese investors, funding a wide range of technology companies in fintech, e-commerce, and digital services. The restrictions curbed BYD's plan to establish a plant in India and Great Wall Motors' \$1 billion investment, while Ant Group, Shunwei Capital, and Tencent Holdings Group also sold their share to Indian investors.

In October 2024, Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Chinese President Xi Jinping conferred on the sidelines of the

BRICS summit in Russia and decided to defuse the military standoff. By agreeing to patrolling arrangements on the border, the Chinese tacitly admitted to their act of trying to create new facts on the ground. The understanding reached with China in October 2024 met an important aim, which was ensuring that the Indian Army could patrol till relevant points, and the resumption of grazing. With the resumption of patrolling, both sides began to take steps towards normalising relations.

The impetus for economic normalisation has come from both sides, with the 'Economic Survey 2023-24' suggesting that India must open doors to Chinese capital, inviting businesspeople to set up manufacturing units in India to reduce the trade deficit. Following this development, Niti Aayog member Rajiv Gauba suggested a calibrated reopening to economic cooperation with China. Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman disclosed that China Inc had also approached the government through the Ministry of External Affairs to relax curbs, but

added that a "sense of caution" would be built into the re-engagement. Thus, opening its doors to Chinese Foreign Di-



rect Investment (FDI) in select sectors through the automatic route - though with caveats - reflects India's cautious decision-making and economic pragmatism. The recent moves of relaxing the rules demonstrate a pragmatic shift in India's foreign policy to balance national security with economic imperatives.

Economically, the relaxation of foreign direct investment rules could revive India's manufacturing and technology sectors, which are facing technological and capital gaps. Post-

Galwan, Chinese FDI flows declined sharply. From April 2019 to March 2020, Chinese FDI in India was approximately \$163.8 million, but it went down drastically to \$2.7 million in April 2025-March 2025, creating financing challenges for several sectors, including electronics, manufacturing, renewable energy, and startups.

Allowing minority shares 10% beneficial ownership through automatic routes in these sectors, such as capital goods, electronic capital goods, electronic components, and solar manufacturing inputs such as polysilicon - except strategic sectors such as semiconductors - with a scrutiny period of 60 days is a calibrated approach.

This calculated relaxation could also complement New Delhi's broader industrial policy, such as "Make India 3.0" and the production-linked incentive (PLI) scheme, which aims to make India a manufacturing hub for traditional and new developing technology and strengthen manufacturing capacity.

In addition, it could play a role in strengthening India's integration into global supply chains.

# Collector's Surprise Inspection at Anna Canteen

**Vijayawada, April 4:** NTR District Collector and VMC Special Officer Dr. G. Lakshmisha conducted a surprise inspection at the Anna Canteen located near Gandhi Ji Women's College on Saturday morning. The Collector personally stood in the queue, purchased a meal token for Rs.5, interacted with beneficiaries, and gathered feedback on food quality and services. He also had a meal to assess the quality firsthand. Beneficiaries expressed satisfaction, stating that the affordable meals are helping them meet daily needs with dignity. Officials including Zonal Commissioner Ramya Keerthana, Assistant Medical and Health Officer Dr. Annapura, and staff participated in the inspection.



# Students Turn Old Clothes into Eco-Friendly Bags, Earn Praise from Collector



**Vijayawada, April 4:** NTR District Collector Dr. G. Lakshmisha participated in an eco-friendly program at Mahatma Gandhi Municipal School in One Town, where students created bags using old clothes. He appreciated their creativity and awareness about reducing waste and avoiding single-use plastics. Students highlighted the importance of reuse and the harmful effects of plastic on

health and the environment. The Collector encouraged them to promote cloth bags in their homes and communities. Citing, he urged students to act as change-makers. He also announced special awards for those who make the most cloth bags during summer and suggested distributing them in markets to promote plastic-free living.

# Collector Conducts Surprise Inspection of Secretariat



**rikakulam, April 4:** District Collector Swapnil Dinakar conducted a surprise inspection at Patapatnam Secretariat-1 on Saturday, emphasizing that government services must be delivered transparently and within stipulated timelines. During the visit, he verified staff attendance and checked the movement register to confirm field duties, expressing satisfaction over proper maintenance. He also reviewed grievance redressal by randomly contacting applicants whose issues were resolved through PGRS. Beneficiaries reported timely and satisfactory service. The Collector appreciated the staff's performance and instructed them to maintain the same dedication in addressing public issues promptly.

*The government is committed to the holistic development of Guntur district, said District In-charge Minister*



**Guntur, April 4:** Speaking at the "Budget Outreach Event 2026-27" held at the Collectorate, the minister stated that the coalition government aims to ensure planned development across all districts. He emphasized that the vision of Chief Minister is to extend the benefits of the state budget down to every constituency. Durgesh directed officials to prepare detailed

reports on financial and non-financial issues ahead of the district review meeting scheduled on April 11. He also urged authorities to create awareness among the public about budget allocations and development programs. Local MLAs and officials participated in the meeting and raised key regional issues, to which the minister assured necessary action.

# AP women's commission serious on Macherla assault, orders arrest of accused

**From Our Staff Reporter Amaravati, April 4:** A shocking incident involving the alleged rape of a female government employee in Macherla, Palnadu district, has triggered widespread outrage across the Telugu-speaking states. The Andhra Pradesh Women's Commission has

taken serious note of the incident, issuing directives for the immediate arrest of the accused and urging authorities to ensure comprehensive support for the victim. Commission Chairperson Rayapati Sailaja personally spoke with the victim over the phone, expressing her concern and offering

reassurance. She enquired about the victim's health and affirmed that both the Commission and the state government would stand firmly by her during this time. Sailaja instructed police officials to expedite the arrest of the accused and stressed that strict action must be taken without delay.



# District Collector Issues Urgent Orders to Prevent Drinking Water Crisis in Summer

**Markapuram, April 4:** In a strong and urgent move, District Collector M. Vijaya Sunitha has directed RWS (Rural Water Supply) officials to ensure that no drinking water shortage affects the district during the peak summer season. During a special review meeting held at the Collectorate on Saturday, the Collector expressed serious concern over potential water scarcity and instructed officials to identify vulnerable areas immediately. She emphasized the need for proactive measures to tackle any emerging crisis before it escalates. The Collector ordered that villages located near Sagar water sources must be supplied without delay. She also stressed the immediate repair of defunct deep bore wells to restore water availability were warned to respond swiftly to any complaints related to drinking water and ensure uninterrupted supply across all regions. The meeting was attended by RWS

official Suresh Babu, engineering staff, and other concerned. The Collector's stern directives highlight the



administration's alertness as summer intensifies, leaving no room for negligence in addressing public needs.

# Collector Ramsunder Reddy directs officials to achieve revenue targets

**Vizianagaram, April 4:** District Collector S. Ramsunder Reddy has directed officials to ensure that the revenue collection targets set by the government are achieved without fail. He conducted a review meeting on Saturday in the Collector's chamber to assess the progress of revenue collections across various departments in the district. During the meeting, the Collector reviewed department-wise targets, actual collections, progress percentages, and existing gaps with officials from the Registration and Stamps Department, Prohibition and Excise Department, Commercial Taxes Department, Mines and Geology Department, Road Transport Authority, and Forest Department. He instructed departments that are lagging behind to take immediate steps to improve their revenue performance. Departments facing shortfalls were asked to prepare special action plans and ensure that the set targets are met within the remaining months. With regard to the Commercial Taxes Department, the Collector emphasized that industries and business establishments operating in the district should be registered within the district itself. For the Registration and Stamps Department, he ordered strict action against unregistered activities and directed



officials to issue notices to unauthorized layouts. He also sought an inquiry into the decline in registrations at the Kothavalasa and Therlam sub-registrar offices. The Collector further stressed the need for daily monitoring of revenue collections by all departments to ensure consistent progress toward achieving targets.

# Toastmasters District 126 Area G-2 Contests Held at Pragati Engineering College

**Gandepalli, April 4:** Pragati Engineering College, Surampalem, hosted the "Toastmasters District 126, Area G-2" contests on April 4, 2026. The event featured the International Speech Contest and Table Topics Contest, informed College Chairman Dr. Paruchuri Krishnarao. The program was inaugurated by Toastmaster Kumar Varma, Area G-2 Director, in the presence of corporate professionals who served as judges. Judges highlighted that such competitions help students improve speaking skills, build confidence, and enhance quick thinking abilities. Students from various reputed colleges, including SRKR (Bhimavaram), Kakinada Institute of Engineering & Technology (KIET), and KIET Women's College, participated along with host college students. Winners of the event will qualify for the division-level contests, said Club Coordinator Mrs. M. Madhavi. The event was attended by Director (Management) M.V. Haranath Babu, Vice President M. Satish, Director-Academics Dr. K. Satyanarayana,



Principal Dr. G. Naresh, faculty members, and students.

# Voter Mapping Process to Be Accelerated: Collector

**Srikakulam, April 4:** District Collector and District Election Officer Swapnil Dinakar has directed officials to expedite the voter mapping process under the "Special Intensive Revision (SIR)-2026" to improve the quality of the electoral roll. During a review meeting held at the Collectorate on Saturday, the Collector noted that only 54.49% of the mapping has been completed so far and instructed officials to finish the remaining work within the stipulated time. He emphasized accurate verification by comparing 2002 records with current voter data, especially after a long gap of 21 years. Officials were directed to thoroughly identify and remove duplicate entries, deceased voters, and those permanently migrated, ensuring a clean and error-free voter list. Booth Level Officers were asked to conduct field verification diligently. Narasannapeta constituency has achieved the highest



progress with 62.49%, while others with lower performance were asked to improve. The Collector also instructed that all pending applications related to voter list corrections and additions be resolved promptly.

# Rockworth announces Rs 70 cr expansion at Sri City facility

**Sri city:** SriCity-based Rockworth Systems Furniture (India) Pvt Ltd has announced a Rs 70-crore expansion of its manufacturing facility, reinforcing its long-term growth plans and strengthening Sri City's position as a key industrial hub. The proposed investment includes capacity enhancement of the existing plant along with the establishment of a new manufacturing unit over the coming years. The company said the expansion reflects its commitment to sustainable growth by integrating business development with social responsibility. Highlighting the initiatives of the Meena Devi Memorial Foundation, Rockworth MD and CEO Shailesh Kumar Singh reaffirmed the company's commitment to community development, describing education as a key driver of empowerment. The Foundation continues to support children from economically weaker sections through sustained educational assistance. Welcoming the expansion, Sri City Managing Director Dr Ravindra Sannareddy noted



that the investment would further strengthen the region's industrial ecosystem, adding that Rockworth's educational initiatives exemplify responsible corporate citizenship. On the occasion, Singh and his spouse handed over educational support documents to beneficiary families for the academic year 2026-27.

# RCB environment helped me reset mentally, says Jitesh Sharma

**Hyderabad:** Royal Challengers Bengaluru wicketkeeper-batter Jitesh Sharma says last season's title has only strengthened the team's hunger to build something lasting at the franchise. "This is not a one-year thing. We are here to dominate. I want to prove that what happened last season was not a one-off." Reflecting on RCB's title-winning run in the RCB podcast, Jitesh said contributing to the campaign remained a deeply fulfilling feeling. "Winning the first trophy for RCB was a magical feeling. The biggest satisfaction was knowing that I had contributed to it. That is a moment I will always be proud of." On the loss of his father, Jitesh said it was something he continues to carry with him. "When you lose your father, that void never really goes away. I am not trying to forget it. I want to carry that emotion with me and keep moving forward." He also spoke about what it meant that his father had seen him represent India and lift the trophy for RCB. "I am proud that my father saw me wear the India jersey and saw me lift the trophy for RCB. That means ev-

erything to me." On returning to the RCB setup after a difficult phase, Jitesh said the environment helped him reset. "When I walked back into Chinnaswamy and saw the red and blue again, I felt reborn. Being back in that environment made me feel like myself again." Jitesh credited Dinesh Karthik for helping shape his growth over the past year. "A lot of the credit for my growth goes to DK 'anna'. He helped me understand my game better, use my strengths properly and improve mentally." He added that Karthik also encouraged him to step away briefly and recover emotionally. "DK asked me to take a break, put the bat away for a while and spend time with my family and friends. That helped me reset." On his batting approach, Jitesh said he has simplified everything to one core thought. "For me, it comes down to one thing: watch the ball. If you are present and watching the ball well, everything else takes care of itself." Speaking about his role as a cricketer, Jitesh said he now sees himself in broader terms. "I do not see myself only as



a wicketkeeper now. I see myself as a finisher and a fielder as well. My job is to find a way into the team, whatever role that requires." On missing out on India selection, he said the larger ambition remains unchanged. "Playing for India is still the ultimate goal. I felt I did my part, so I have no regrets. Now it is about staying ready and finding the next opportunity." He also spoke about how leadership brings the best out of him. "I have always enjoyed leadership. When you lead, you stop thinking only about yourself and start thinking about how to bring the best out of others. That has always helped me grow." On his crucial 24 off 10 in last year's final,

Jitesh said his focus was on making a decisive impact. "My only thought in the final was to make a difference. I did not want to just survive the situation; I wanted to change the game." On the closing moments of the title win, he admitted those were the most tense of the season. "The last over of the final felt like the longest six balls of my life. We wanted that moment so badly." With RCB entering the new season as defending champions, Jitesh said he is ready for the challenge ahead. "Teams will come harder at us this season, and that excites me. I enjoy that challenge. I want people to come hard at me, because I will come hard at them too."

# Nagarjuna & Nag Ashwin Laud Biker as Must Watch



Charming Star Sharwanand starrer Biker released yesterday to good reception. Many industry bigwigs are praising the film for its technical brilliance and superlative story. Mainly, the bike racing sequences and emotions have been talking point. King Nagarjuna and Nag Ashwin shared their delight after watching the film. Nag said "#Biker is a film that beautifully celebrates family emotions and relationships! Watch out for the

racing sequences and the climax! The film is so technically sound!! So proud of the director @abhilashkankara student of Annapurna College of film and media @acfmofficial in handling the subject with such maturity. Congratulations to the entire team of Biker!" Nag Ashwin watched the premiere and stated that Biker is one of a kind film in Indian Cinema with great human values. He praised the bike racing sequences as the

best ever shot on Indian and Telugu Screens. He recommended the movie to family audiences calling it a wholesome entertainer. Biker bookings are tremendous and it is trending on BMS app per hour. Sharwanand is receiving praises for his performance along with Rajasekhar and director Abhilash Reddy, producer UV Creations are being praised for their penchant to deliver such a unique, technically superlative film.

# Ousmane Dembele Leads PSG To Victory Ahead Of Liverpool Tie

Ousmane Dembele scored twice, including a stunning opening goal on the volley, as Paris Saint-Germain warmed up for their Champions League quarter-final showdown with Liverpool by beating Toulouse 3-1 on Friday to cement their place at the top of Ligue 1. Last year's Ballon d'Or winner smashed in a superb strike to give PSG the lead and then got the second from close range just after the half-hour mark, but in between Toulouse were gifted an equaliser after calamitous goalkeeping from home shot-stopper Matvey Safonov. Substitute Goncalo Ramos wrapped up the win at the death, and the result ensures that Luis Enrique's side will finish the weekend on top of the French table. Their advantage is now four points from second-placed Lens, who play Lille away on Saturday. PSG came into the weekend with a game in hand and their scheduled trip to title rivals Lens next weekend has been controversially postponed until May to allow them extra rest in between the two legs of the Liverpool Champions League tie. The reigning European champions host Liverpool in the first leg of their quarter-final clash next Wednesday before going to Anfield for the return on Tuesday, April 14 in a tie that is a repeat of the last-16 encounter last season which PSG won on penalties. Retaining the Champions League crown is the absolute priority for PSG, but they remain well on course to claim a fifth consecutive Ligue 1 title, and a 12th in the last 14 years. Toulouse, meanwhile, are in



mid-table and their season will now be defined by the outcome of their French Cup semi-final tie away to Lens, set for April 21. Luis Enrique gave a rest at kick-off to several players who had just returned from long trips away on international duty, including captain Marquinhos and the Portugal trio of Nuno Mendes, Vitorino and Joao Neves. **Safonov howler** Among the players coming into the line-up was Brazilian centre-back Lucas Beraldo, who was surprisingly selected in central midfield. Dembele, who starred in the France side that beat Brazil in the United States last week, started a Ligue 1 game for just the eighth time

this season. He marked it in style with his strike to give PSG the lead midway through the first half, nonchalantly swinging out his left leg on the edge of the box to meet a Mark McKenzie clearance and send the ball soaring into the top corner. Toulouse nevertheless drew level only four minutes later after a disastrous sequence of play by Safonov. The Russian initially came racing out of his box to attempt a headed clearance, only to be completely caught out by the bounce of the ball. He was saved by his defence who conceded a corner, but Safonov then failed to hold onto the resulting delivery and Danish defender Nicolaisen gratefully

headed in for Toulouse. However, Safonov's blushes were soon saved by Dembele, who was left with an easy close-range finish on 33 minutes after Khvicha Kvaratskhelia nodded down a corner. Dembele is now on his own as PSG's leading scorer this season on 14 goals in all competitions, with 10 coming in Ligue 1 including four against Toulouse. The second half was almost entirely devoid of interest until Ramos swept in his team's third goal in injury time with a low shot from outside the area. The Portuguese striker has now scored 12 goals in all competitions for his club this season, despite having started only 12 times.

# Adivi Sesh's Smart Reply To Counter Dhurandhar Hype



In a recent interaction, Adivi Sesh addressed a question about whether Dhurandhar 2 would impact his upcoming film Dacoit. His response stood out for its clarity and strategic balance. Instead of dismissing the competition, Sesh acknowledged the strong run of Dhurandhar 2, stating that it could continue successfully for another three to four months, comparing its momentum to the popularity and endurance of the IPL. This com-

parison was both relatable and smart, especially for audiences in the North, where large-scale entertainment events often draw massive attention. By recognizing the strength of Dhurandhar 2, Sesh avoided sounding defensive while also positioning his own film positively. He added that viewers who are unable to secure tickets for Dhurandhar 2 might turn to Dacoit, subtly presenting his film as an appealing alternative. This balanced approach plays

a crucial role in building buzz. If Sesh had spoken only from Dacoit's perspective, it might not have generated the same level of interest. Instead, by including both films in the conversation, he widened the appeal and tapped into an existing audience base. Overall, his response reflects a thoughtful promotional strategy that could help Dacoit gain attention, especially among audiences already engaged with Dhurandhar 2.

# Nikhat, Priya, Preeti assure India three medals at Asian Boxing Championships

**Ulaanbaatar:** India confirmed three medals at the Asian Boxing Championships 2026 as Nikhat Zareen, Priya, and Preeti Pawar registered impressive victories to advance to the semifinals in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia. Leading the charge, Nikhat Zareen was in complete control in the women's 51kg quarterfinal, sealing a first-round RSC victory over Xian Baguhin (PHI) in a dominant outing. She now faces her toughest test yet against China's Wu Yu, the Paris 2024 Olympic gold medallist, in the

semifinals. In the women's 60kg category, Priya showed composure and tactical maturity to defeat China's Chengyu Yang by 4-1, continuing her impressive run in the tournament. She will next take on Mongolia's Namuun Monkhor for a place in the final. Meanwhile, in the women's 54kg category, Preeti Pawar, the gold medallist at the World Boxing Cup Finals, delivered one of the most clinical performances of the day, outclassing Munguntsetseng (MGL) with a 5-0 unanimous decision victory.



# LIK Failing To Cash In On Pradeep's Telugu Image?

With just days left for the release of Love Insurance Kompany, concerns are growing over its lack of promotions in the Telugu market. Headlined by Pradeep Ranganathan, the film is set to hit screens soon, but there is barely any buzz in Andhra and Telangana. Pradeep, who gained decent recognition among Telugu audiences with films like Dragon and Dude, has built a small but promising market here. Adding to that, Krithi Shetty, a familiar face in Tollywood, plays the female lead, which should ideally boost visibility. However, surprisingly, the team has not initiated any solid promotional activities in Telugu so far. With Dacoit starring Adivi Sesh gear-



ing up for an April 10 release, competition is only going to get tougher. Trade experts feel the makers need to act fast with interviews, events, and localized promotions to create awareness. Without that push, Love Insurance Kompany risks missing out on a key market despite having the right ingredients to connect with Telugu audiences.