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"My Duty To Take Everyone Along"

: PM To Samajwadi Party MP On OBC Remark



New Delhi: Responding to Samajwadi Party MP Dharmendra Yadav's accusation that the Prime Minister is from the Other Backward Classes (OBC) but does not keep the interests of OBCs in mind, PM Narendra Modi said on Thursday that he believes in taking everyone along. Yadav made the accusation during the discussion on the Women's

Reservation Bill in the Lok Sabha, and the Prime Minister took a jab at him, saying, "I am grateful that you have identified me. I am very grateful to you... Akhilesh ji (Samajwadi Party chief Akhilesh Yadav) is my friend and he helps me out sometimes. It is true that I belong to the OBC community, but it is my duty to take everyone along. The Constitution

also says the same thing, and the Constitution is paramount for me." "It is the Constitution's strength that someone like me, from a backward caste, has been entrusted with such a big duty by the country. I am indebted to the people of the country and the framers of the Constitution because of whom I am here," he asserted. Speaking earlier in the

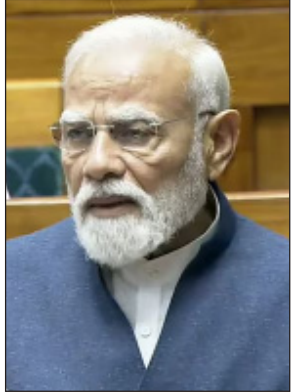
day, Dharmendra Yadav said the party opposes the Women's Reservation Bill, Delimitation Bill and Union Territories Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2026, on constitutional grounds. He alleged that the measures, which will grant 33% reservation to women in the Lok Sabha and state assemblies and increase the seats in the Lok Sabha to 850, attempt to "distort" the Constitution by separating the delimitation exercise from the Census process. Yadav said the Samajwadi Party would not support the Women's Reservation Bill unless it includes provisions for OBC and Muslim women. He also urged the government to withdraw the proposed bills and implement the law passed in 2023. Akhilesh Yadav also argued that the Census should be held before the delimitation is done.

PM Modi's "No Discrimination Guarantee" To South States On Delimitation

New Delhi: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday offered guarantees and rebukes to the opposition - with a jibe for the Congress, though he didn't name the party - as they protested against three contentious bills tabled in Parliament. "We look at India as one... not in parts," he declared. On the delimitation bill - the redrawing of parliamentary and constituency boundaries - he said: "I give my guarantee... no injustice will be done to any state, from east to west, north to south." The guarantee followed repeated agitations by southern states who fear redrawing constituency boundaries will translate into losing parliamentary seats (and

heft at the centre) to northern, Hindi-speaking states - like Uttar Pradesh - that are seen as BJP strongholds. "The Opposition is spreading confusion regarding women's reservation. The number of seats in the Lok Sabha and State Legislative Assemblies will increase by 50 per cent. The states' proportional representation in the Lok Sabha will remain at its current level," top government sources told NDTV. And responding to criticism of the bill to give women 33 per cent reservation in the expanded (by nearly 50 per cent) Lok Sabha, he said: Those who opposed this in the past... they were not forgiven by women of the country and they ended up badly in elec-

tions that followed." "Let all of us not miss this important opportunity to give reservation to women," he said, "I have come to appeal to you - do not see this from a political lens, this is in national interest." Mocking opposition parties who, in the past, accused him of taking credit for welfare schemes introduced by earlier governments, he laughed: "You can take credit. I am willing to give ads with photos of whoever... giving a 'blank cheque' to take the credit for the women's quota." Reservation for women lawmakers, he said, was something that should have been enforced 25-30 years ago. "Had we implemented it then, today we would have been a mature



country." A fiercely critical opposition has said proposals to redraw constituency boundaries and increase Lok Sabha seats are "flawed" - Congress chief Mallikarjun Kharge called it "an assault on our democracy" - and had been bundled with the women's bill to force it through parliament.

Delimitation Disguised As Women's Quota? Why Opposition Is Up In Arms

New Delhi: Mallikarjun Kharge raged Thursday as three bills - one on delimitation, a second on increasing Lok Sabha seats, and a third to reserve 33 per cent of parliamentary, state assembly seats for women - were tabled in a special session of parliament. The Congress chief accused the BJP of trying to sneak through a 'flawed' delimitation bill - which will redraw parliamentary and assembly constituencies

- under the guise of reserving seats for women. "The opposition will not allow parliament to be hijacked by flawed delimitation bills disguised as 'women's reservation'," he said, "We will fight this assault on democracy..." The Opposition will not allow Parliament to be hijacked by flawed delimitation bills disguised as Women's Reservation. The issue was perhaps best explained by the opposition

party's Shashi Tharoor, who said, "The government has a plan to re-delimit constituencies and increase seats in areas where the ruling party is strong." "And they are using women's reservation as an excuse to bring about that change... by trying to amend the constitutional amendments that they had already brought in 2023," the Lok Sabha MP from Kerala's Thiruvananthapuram said.

The government has said it is necessary to link the two, i.e., delimitation and reservation of seats for women, to operationalise the 33 per cent quota plan by 2029, when the next Lok Sabha election will be held. Hitting out at the opposition, Parliamentary Affairs Minister Kiren Rijiju said they should stop criticising the move and support women's empowerment.

Entrust infrastructure works in schools to SMCs: Minister Lokesh

From Our Staff Reporter Amaravati, April, 16: Minister Nara Lokesh held a review meeting with officials of the School and Intermediate Education Department at his residence in Undavalli on Thursday. He instructed the officials to hand over the infrastructure work in schools to SMCs. He said that steps should be taken to bring all government schools to 3 stars. He said that a door-to-door campaign should be organized to increase admissions in government schools. Minister Nara Lokesh instructed the officials to publicize the best marks in government colleges. He said that face-based attendance will be useful for quality education.



Minister Nara Lokesh has issued instructions to the officials to take strict steps regarding face recognition attendance, which will be implemented from the next academic year for more transparency in higher educational institu-

tions. The minister inquired about the details of government, aided, private unaided degree, engineering and other higher educational institutions as well as the steps taken so far for face-based identification of staff and students.

Are you ready for an inquiry into the Juvvaladinne Harbor works? MLC challenges Jagan

From Our Staff Reporter Nellore, April, 16: MLC Beeda Ravichandra expressed his anger that the YSRCP is creating misconceptions about the Sagar Defense Academy. Speaking to the media on Thursday, he questioned whether there was anything missing in the call data shown by Jagan and whether it was wrong to talk about calls for Sankranti and January. He said that the YSRCP is involved in betting in Iskapalli Pallipalem and that BMR spoke to the senior Kapu Thotayya at the request of the police. He said that it was wrong to talk about betting in villages. They clarified that Jagan's wife received the first call after killing former minister YS

Vivekananda Reddy. They did not talk about such calls. They were furious that Jagan was a villain who spread bad news about his mother and sister Sheela on his own social media. They said that Jagan cannot lower his status by talking about culture. Alleging that the fishing harbor contractor is YSRCP MP Meda Raghunath Reddy, MLC Beda Ravichandra challenged Jagan whether he is ready for a vigilance inquiry into the harbor works.

Yesterday (Wednesday), TDP state spokesperson Kotamreddy Giridhar Reddy criticized Jagan for speaking out of his mouth. He questioned whether Jagan had the level to give a warning to Chandrababu. He

said that YSRCP was limited to 11 seats because of such language. He said that Jagan was touring to create conflicts. He accused him of using buses to transport common people from constituencies and promoting the arrival of fishermen. Kotamreddy Giridhar Reddy questioned whether they could not speak again if MPs and ministers were addressed as 'this and that'. Maritime Board Chairman Satya said that it was the TDP that did justice to the fishermen. He said that they were giving Rs. 20 thousand during the hunting ban. He criticized Jagan for his words to scare those who want to set up industries and provide employment. He accused Jagan of laying the founda-



tion stones for industries just for the sake of commissions. He clarified that the Sagar Defense Organization was established in Juvvaladinne on the instructions of the Prime Minister. Satya commented that Jagan is criticizing him only to create conflicts among the fishermen.

Transfers of Municipal Commissioners in AP.

From Our Staff Reporter Amaravati, April, 16: The AP government has issued orders transferring several municipal commissioners in the state. It has been clarified that these transfers and appointments will come into effect immediately.

Vijayawada Zonal Commissioner Ramya Keerthana - Transferred as Narasaraopet Municipal Commissioner

Vinukonda Manager Arjuna Rao - Darshi appointed as Municipal Commissioner

Pulivendula In-Charge Commissioner Munikumar - Promoted to Regular Commissioner

Subhash Chandra Bose from Vijayawada - posting as Vuyyuru Municipal Commissioner

Vuyyuru Commissioner J. Rama Rao - Transferred as Assistant Commissioner of Tenali

PVVD Prasad Rao appointed as Zonal Commissioner for Visakhapatnam GMC South Zone

Mallaiah Naidu - Transferred as Additional Commissioner of Guntur Corporation

Guntur Additional Commissioner Obulesu - Appointed as Kurnool Commissioner

Kurnool Commissioner Vishwanath - Ordered to report to CDMA, Rayapudi for next posting

Tirupati Revenue Officers Lokeshwara Verma, Chittibabu - Key postings in UADA

Promotions and new responsibilities for Guntur and Kurnool sanitary inspectors

Srinivas appointed as Puttaparthi Municipal Commissioner

Puttaparthi Commissioner Kanti Kumar - Transferred as Assistant Commissioner of Hindupur

Adoni Revenue Officer Baby - Posting as Commissioner of Atmakur (K)

Also, several officers awaiting posting have been given key appointments. All these transfers and appointments will come into effect immediately, the government said in the order.

Road accidents are worrying: AP Medical and Health Department Secretary

From Our Staff Reporter Vijayawada, April 16: Saurabh Gaur, Secretary, Medical and Health Department, has expressed concern that road accidents in the state are at an alarming level. He explained, along with statistics, that about 18,380 road accidents were registered in 2025. Saurabh Gaur was speaking at the state-level PM RAHAT (PM RAHAT) responsible meeting organized in Vijayawada on Thursday. He said that these accidents are mostly happening on major corridors like National Highway, State Highway, District Roads, and Kolkata-Chennai National Highway. Saurabh Gaur said that 16,000 cameras are being used for accident monitoring in the state. He said that this will enable immediate response in the

event of an accident. He announced on this occasion that those who respond to an accident will be rewarded. He suggested that the victim's family can be informed through the vehicle details along with the vehicle number. He said that there is no need to come after informing the police. The Commissioner of Medical and Health Department explained that there will be cashless medical facilities under PM RAHAT. He said that no hospital should reject accident cases by saying that they should inform the police. He reminded that the golden hour is very important at the time of an accident. Those who caused the accident do not need to run away. The Secretary of Medical and Health Department advised the people to stay there and



help the victims. He said that those who do so will be identified and rewarded, even if they are the ones who caused the accident.

Saurabh Gaur said that black spots, blind turns, as well as areas with poor lighting have been identified. He said that there will also be monitoring at toll plazas. He clarified that high security

number plates should be mandatory for vehicles. He said that they are coordinating the services of 108 and 112 numbers. He said that even if you call 112, the call is being made to 108. Saurabh Gaur said that the main reason for road accidents is 79 percent speeding. He also said that 3 percent wrong-way driving, one percent drunk driving and use of mobile phones lead to accidents. He said that the majority of accidents involve two-wheelers, light motor vehicles, lorries and buses. The Commissioner of Medical and Health Department said that on an average, 8 thousand people lose their lives due to these road accidents every year. He explained that more than 20 thousand people are injured.

Money was diverted by calling it Fish Andhra: Minister Kollu Ravindra

From Our Staff Reporter Amaravati, April, 16: Minister Kollu Ravindra has severely criticized YS Jagan. He has strongly commented that Jagan has no sense of responsibility or devotion towards his mother, sister, state and country. He expressed anger that Jagan is also talking about scrapping the upcoming Sagar Defense Project to strengthen coastal security. He said that this project is necessary to face threats from enemy countries in the future. He said that Tamil Nadu fishermen entering Andhra Pradesh waters and creating problems in the coastal area has become a big problem. He said that the

patrolling of the Marine Police has been weakened during Jagan's tenure. He criticized that attempts are



also being made to use the village head meetings of 144 villages for political purposes. He said that fishing harbors are already operational in Visakhapatnam, Kakinada

and Juvvaladinne and jetties have been built keeping in mind the future. He accused the fishermen of being harassed by YSR to Jagan. He recalled the incident of firing on fishermen in Sompet.

He said that the compensation given to fishermen during the fishing ban period has been increased from Rs. 4 thousand to Rs. 20 thousand. He alleged that the previous government did not properly utilize the funds given by the Center for the welfare of fishermen and diverted the funds in the name of Fish Andhra. He clarified that they are committed to the development of fishermen under the Prime Minister's Fisheries Scheme.

EDITORIAL

'Re-partition'
stir in the South

The issue of delimitation of constituencies has come to the fore again and is creating a political stir. This will not only reduce the representation of the southern states in the Lok Sabha, but also create differences in the allocation of funds. In this context, Telangana Chief Minister Revanth Reddy and Tamil Nadu Chief Minister Stalin have issued strong warnings to the central government. They have written letters to Prime Minister Modi promising to stir up a national controversy if their states are harmed in this matter. In this regard, Revanth Reddy has written letters to the chief ministers of other southern states proposing a hybrid model. He proposed that factors such as development, tax share and good governance should be taken into account, not just on the basis of population, and that half of the proposed increase in seats should be decided proportionally, and the remaining half of the seats should be allocated according to economic growth, funds received by the states from the center, GDP and other development indicators. Last year, Tamil Nadu Chief Minister Stalin held an all-party meeting on the same issue and called for a united movement in all southern states on this issue. Even now, the southern states are clearly expressing their stance to the center. In the south, these five states - Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala, and Telangana - account for 20 percent of the country's total population of 1.4 billion. They are also better than the rest of the country in terms of health, education, and economic aspects. There is criticism that this re-division is being pursued as a punishment for implementing progressive policies such as family planning and creating more wealth in line with the national policy, and that it will reduce representation in Parliament in the future. According to the Indian Constitution, each state should be allotted seats with constituencies of approximately equal size based on its population. Also, the number of seats should be revised after each census to reflect the updated population figures. Therefore, the number of parliamentary seats was revised three times in the country in 1951, 1961, and 1971 based on the population censuses conducted every ten years. Since then, all state governments have stopped this process, fearing that it would lead to imbalance in representation due to different fertility rates across states. In 1971, the number of Lok Sabha seats was increased from 494 to 543.

Since then, that number has remained constant. Even though the country's population has increased since 1971, the number of Lok Sabha seats in each state has not changed. Nor have any new seats been added. In 1951, each MP represented more than 7 lakh people, but today that number has increased to an average of 25 lakh per candidate. In this situation, the Center is bringing the Delimitation Bill. Arrangements are being made to pass the Delimitation Bill in an attempt to increase the number of Lok Sabha constituencies from 543 to 850 to implement 33% reservation for women in the Lok Sabha and Legislative Assemblies. There is nothing wrong with increasing it in this way. But the opposition is protesting why these bills are being brought in such a hurry without any clarity when the Tamil Nadu and West Bengal assembly elections are due in a few days. There is criticism that the BJP at the Center is making these moves not only to benefit from the election campaign by promoting reservation for women, but also with the prospect of winning the 2029 elections. The opposition is saying that while the focus is on providing 33% reservation for women, reservation can be provided to women in the existing 543 seats. The Center has introduced the 106th Constitutional Amendment Bill 334A. According to this, the Modi government has decided to bring amendments to the Women's Reservation Act, which will come into effect after 2026, after the census and delimitation of constituencies are completed. However, it is not saying what amendments will be made. It is not even seeking the consensus of the partners and the opposition on this. Therefore, there is no trust in these efforts being made by the Center. All this is suspected to be a strategy designed to damage the respective governments in the Tamil Nadu and West Bengal elections. Moreover, why are these bills being brought in the special sessions of Parliament on the 16th, 17th, and 18th of this month? Can these bills be brought after the elections? Questions are arising. The Center is showing a very positive attitude and announcing that the number of Lok Sabha seats in each state will be increased. In this sequence, it seems that the number of seats in Uttar Pradesh, which has 80 seats, will increase to 120, and in Tamil Nadu, which has 39 seats, it will increase to only 59 seats. In North India, the BJP won only 127 seats out of 238 seats in the last election. In South India, it won only 29 seats out of 130 seats. Therefore, if the re-division of constituencies is carried out, the number of seats in the North will increase immensely and the BJP will be able to form a government without the need for the South.

Amid Trump's War On The World, How
Effective Really Is India's Strategic Autonomy?

In a recent op-ed in February, India's External Affairs Minister assessed, "The world has entered a volatile and uncertain era, possibly the most turbulent in living memory". In a subsequent public comment on April 4, he went on to say that "everything today is being leveraged, if not actually weaponised", and that "arriving at an optimal mix of equities, exposure and risks is a far more complex calculus".

The Challenge With Staying Neutral

India's striving for an assertion of the strategic autonomy of its decision-making has thus become even more an imperative, and also challenging at the same time. Since 2000, India has built a deepening economic, technological, political and defence partnership with the US, with the latter declaring India as a Major Defence partner and describing the relationship as a defining feature for the 21st century. US leaders also repeatedly said that they saw the rise of India to be in the US's interest. Contrast this with President Trump's comment in July 2025 that he did not want US companies to hire in India, and that of US Deputy Secretary of State Landau at the Raisina dialogue in March this year, that the US would not make the same mistake with India that it did with China. The Quad also does not appear to be getting the same summit-level traction in Trump 2.0 as it did in the preceding Biden administration. Trump's 50% tariffs on Indian products levied last year were seen as a vindictive measure driven by his personal pique at India not cred-

iting him with a role in the ceasefire following Operation Sindoor in May 2025. Before US-Israel, There Was Russia.

Yet, India avoided direct criticism of the US and Israel for initiating the conflict with Iran, while asserting in its February 28 statement that "sovereignty and territorial integrity of all states must be respected", and expressing only deep "concern at the recent developments". By contrast, in a conversation with the President of the UAE on March 1, the Indian Prime Minister "strongly condemned the attacks on the UAE" and "expressed that he stands in solidarity with the UAE in these difficult times". The Indian Prime Minister's visit to Israel, just two days before the start of the US and Israeli actions, has also raised questions about the appropriateness of the timing and appearance of partisanship, when the outbreak of conflict was expected. Similarly, India had refrained from direct criticism of Russia when it violated the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine in February 2022, with the Indian Prime Minister diplomatically telling Russian President Vladimir Putin in September 2022 at the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) summit in Samarkand, that this was "not an era of war". Russia's deep and longstanding defence cooperation partnership with India, and political support over decades in international fora, no doubt influenced the nuance of India's position. What Strategic Autonomy Really Means - In The Real World

All these legitimately raise questions about what strategic autonomy entails. Clearly, it cannot imply that India mechanically base its positions and articulations on certain widely articulated, heretofore, positions of preferred international norms, unmindful of its own direct economic, technological, defence and political interests. No major power does that. China had in 2016 rejected the ruling of an international arbitration tribunal on the South China Sea, calling it "not worth the paper it was written on", and proceeded to militarise several islands and features in violation of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS). The 2026 US National Defence Strategy asserts that the US would no longer support "cloud-castle abstractions like the rules-based international order". In the immediate aftermath of independence, India had adopted non-alignment as a strategy to avoid subservience to decisions made elsewhere in the two competing superpower-led military alliances. In the post-1990 unipolar phase in global affairs, the assertion of its strategic autonomy enabled India to ward off US-led attempts to universalise norms based on American preferences. These had included the indefinite extension of the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) in 1995 and attempts to bring into force the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) in 1996. 'Hedging', Not Isolation

In the current context of India striving for productive relations with different poles in



the international system, along with the growing weaponisation of dependencies by all major players, strategic autonomy can be sustained only if India builds up further its own economic, technological and military strengths. Given the competitive advantages that can be derived from cooperation and partnerships, isolation is not a viable strategy. But hedging certainly is. Each of our partners needs to be aware that India has other options, too. In the current situation, the effective multiplicity of options is under strain. Russia has been preoccupied with the Ukraine conflict for more than four years, straining its ability to provide supplies in time or be impactful in other international contexts. Russia was not able to do much to deter a US-driven "regime change" action in Venezuela, or the enhanced embargoes in Cuba. Europe and Japan caved in to maximalist US trade demands in 2025 because they continue to be security-dependent on it, through NATO or through bilateral alliances in the Indo-Pacific. There

are security-related limits to India's options for exploring the economic and technological options with China, despite its now-established strengths in manufacturing and many frontier technologies. However, the US's re-assertion of "America first" in Trump 2.0 and its denigration of allies and partners has prompted a search for independent capabilities. If this endures, it will certainly enhance options for India. The concern and hand-wringing in some public commentary in India over Pakistan's role as a facilitator in the recent US-Iran discussions can only be attributed to the unease about the current geopolitical flux. Established utility in a specific context can only be transitory, as Pakistan has found in its perennial waxing and waning relationship with the US. However, the enduring influence of a country will depend on its own economic, technological and military strengths. India's actions and words should derive from that, and in the consolidation of its strategic autonomy.

In Stalin's Tamil Nadu vs Delhi Pitch, Flashbacks
From A 2014 Jayalalithaa Episode

MK Stalin did the unthinkable while addressing a public meeting in Ranipet on Monday. He invoked the DMK's rival - former chief minister Jayalalithaa's name - to say that if she were alive, the former AIADMK supremo would have spoken against the delimitation exercise being planned by the NDA government, just like she had criticised GST and NEET. Of course, the Tamil Nadu Chief Minister used this comparison to emphasise that the present AIADMK chief, Edappadi Palaniswami, is subservient to the BJP and never speaks against any of the alleged "anti-Tamil Nadu policies" of the Union government. While in the context of the 2026 assembly election, Stalin was looking to de-hyphenate EPS from Jayalalithaa's legacy, he was also taking a leaf out of the 'Puratchi Thalaivi' ('Revolutionary Leader' as Jayalalithaa was referred to) book, which she used twelve years ago.

In the 2014 Lok Sabha elections, contrary to expectations that she would support Narendra Modi's candidature for Prime Minister, Jayalalithaa threw her own hat into the ring. She framed herself as a direct competitor to Modi for the top job, reeling out data on various parameters to buttress her stand that Tamil Nadu was ahead of Gujarat. She posed the question to the Tamil Nadu electorate, "Gujarat Modiyaa Tamil Nadu odu intha ladyaa" (Gujarat's Modi or this lady of Tamil Nadu), and lasted electoral success, winning 37 of the 39 seats in the state.

In 2026, Stalin is putting a similar question before the people of Tamil Nadu, making the election one between Tamil Nadu and Delhi. The Centre's proposal to increase the Lok Sabha seats to 850 has given ammunition to the DMK, which claims such a move will go against the interests of better-performing states in South India. Stalin argues that states in South India will be penalised for controlling their populations better, while those in the North will be rewarded with more Lok Sabha seats. This would make states like Uttar Pradesh and Bihar more politically powerful and render the South rudderless, politically. The BJP's move has, therefore, lent a shrill edge to the DMK's slogan of "Stalin Thodaratum, Tamil Nadu Vellattam" (Let Stalin continue, let Tamil Nadu win). In the last week before polling on April 23, expect this to morph into a Jayalalithaa-esque choice: 'Modi ya Stalin aa?' (Modi or Stalin). This does not mean Stalin has Prime Ministerial ambitions. As one of the senior-most regional leaders, the DMK chief is positioning himself as the spokesperson of the concerns of the South Indian states, one who can prevent Delhi from running roughshod. Aware of the fact that anti-incumbency against his government - or at least specific ministers and sitting MLAs - would make a dent in the DMK tally in the assembly elections on April 23, Stalin is making the election a referendum



on federalism instead of a vote on the performance of his government. Not that the 'Gujarat vs Tamil Nadu' comparison is new. Stalin's IT minister, P Thiagarajan, has often asked why Tamil Nadu should adopt the Gujarat model when its own human development indices on education, health, and women workforce participation are already closer to middle-income European countries. Similarly, he has cited Tamil Nadu's manufacturing muscle power to argue that the state model of social justice and industrialisation is superior to the capital expenditure-led growth of other states in the north. So, while Jayalalithaa asked, "Who is the better administrator?", Stalin is asking, "Who will ensure that the interests of Tamil Nadu remain protected after 2026?" This makes it a more high-stakes version of the 2014 face-off. While Jayalalithaa projected herself as an alternative to the BJP and Modi, Stalin is positioning himself as the vanguard of South India,

having also organised a national conclave on delimitation last March. As he cautions against diluting the South's interests and diminishing its political voice, it is an echo of Jayalalithaa's 'Tamil Nadu First' stance. His warning about Tamil Nadu going back into the agitation mode of the 1950s and 1960s underscores a possible return to Tamil sub-nationalism as a counterpoint to the BJP's move. How does the stand-off impact the elections? By invoking the spirit of the anti-Hindi agitation of the 1960s, Stalin is trying to get back the raw, angry mass energy of the educated electorate behind the DMK by making the Union government the villain of the piece. Self-respect has been a winning slogan in elections in South India in the past, the 1983 election in Andhra Pradesh, when the late NT Rama Rao raised the 'Telugu atma gauravam' (Telugu self-pride) pitch, being the most famous example. By highlighting the 'threat from Delhi', Stalin is also pushing

his rivals for the top job in the state - Palaniswami and Vijay - into a corner. By releasing the video on Ambedkar Jayanti on April 14, Stalin wanted to convey that the proposed form of delimitation was an "anti-Constitutional" act. Politically, Stalin was also subtly trying to consolidate the Dalit and minority vote that the Tamilaga Vettri Kazhagam (TVK) of Vijay is targeting. This would make Edappadi Palaniswami's position in particular difficult because he cannot be seen advocating the Centre's position even as Stalin argues Tamil Nadu's case. The DMK chief underlining the difference between Jayalalithaa and EPS is also to say that this isn't Amma's AIADMK but Edappadi's AIADMK. Stalin's sharp position could even expose the faultlines within the NDA. Expect the 39 Lok Sabha MPs from Tamil Nadu - all of them from the DMK-led alliance - to deliver speeches with one eye on the EVM as the debate around delimitation resets the election rhetoric in the last lap of the campaign.

Minister Subhash Promotes Self-Enumeration for Accurate Census



Amalapuram, Pen Power, April 16: State Labour Minister Vasamsetti Subhash completed his family details through the self-enumeration portal as part of the national census program. He urged citizens to make use of the digital self-enumeration system for accurate and comprehensive data collection. The Minister stated that public participation in the census is crucial for national development and effective implementation of welfare schemes. He also appealed to people to cooperate with census officials and provide timely and accurate information. Municipal Commissioner K.V.R.R. Raju, Foundation Chairman Vasamsetti Satyam, and census staff were present on the occasion.

Palnadu to Be Developed as a Tourism Hub: Collector Krithika Shukla



Narasaraopet, April 16: District Collector Krithika Shukla directed officials to develop tourism destinations in Palnadu to gain national recognition. Reviewing tourism development works at the Collectorate on Thursday, she asked officials to speed up projects at key locations like Nagarjuna Sagar, Kondaveedu, Amaravati, and Kotappakonda. She instructed the restoration of Haritha Resorts at Nagarjuna Sagar and early resumption of boating services at Srisailem. Repairs to the sound and light show at the Amaravati

Dhyana Buddha site and mobilization of funds for the Kalachakra Museum were also emphasized. The Collector called for improved tourist facilities at Kondaveedu Ghat Road, continuation of night tent operations, and timely completion of the zipline project at Ettipotala. Stressing cleanliness, she ordered construction of sanitary complexes at tourist spots and promotion of homestays to generate local employment. RDO Balakrishna, Tourism Officer Nayudamma, APTDC officials, and others attended the meeting.

Review Meeting on Vijayawada City Development Works



Vijayawada, April 16: District Collector and Vijayawada Municipal Corporation Special Officer Dr. G. Lakshmi conducted a review meeting with department heads at the municipal corporation headquarters on Thursday. He reviewed the progress of various development works across the city, focusing on mini STPs, expansion of divisions, and census training programs. The Collector also directed officials to organize sports events for VMC staff to promote team spirit, scheduled for April 25 and 26. Senior officials, including Additional Commissioners, Chief City Planner, Health Officer, and Engineering staff, attended the meeting.

Speed Up Distribution of House Site Pattas: Minister Atchannaidu



Srikakulam, April 16: State Agriculture Minister Kinjarapu Atchannaidu directed revenue officials to accelerate the distribution of house site pattas, stating that providing a house to every family is a key goal of the coalition government. During a review meeting at his camp office in Nimmada, he stressed achieving the target by 2029 and distributed pattas to beneficiaries from Bhavanipuram village. He said housing plays a vital role in ensuring stability in the lives of the poor and assured that all pending dues of around ₹900 crore would be cleared. The Minister also emphasized transparent and planned implementation of housing schemes to avoid allotment in uninhabitable areas and reiterated the government's commitment to improving living standards of the poor.

Minister Registers for Self-Enumeration

As part of Census-2027, Atchannaidu completed his self-enumeration through the official portal at his Nimmada camp office. He urged citizens to participate in the digital census process and make use of the facility to submit their details from home.

Minister Kandula Durgesh Registers Details for Census 2027, Urges Public Participation



Rajamahendravaram, April 16: Minister Kandula Durgesh personally registered his details for the Census 2027 through self-enumeration at his residence in the city. He described the census as a guiding tool for the nation's progress and called upon citizens to actively participate. He emphasized that welfare schemes in a democracy are designed based on population data. The Minister stated that the self-enumeration process has begun and will continue until April 30. From May 1, enumerators will visit households to collect details. He urged people to cooperate with officials for the successful completion of the census.

Modern Fire Engine Launched in Narsipatnam



Anakapalli, April 16: A state-of-the-art fire engine equipped with advanced technology was inaugurated at the Narsipatnam Fire Station by Speaker Chintakayala Ayyannapatrudu, along with his wife Padmavathi and DCCB Chairman Kona Tatar Rao. Speaking on the occasion, the Speaker highlighted that the Narsipatnam agency area covers a vast region of about 71 km, making fire services challenging with outdated vehicles. He expressed over the government sanctioning a modern fire engine and assured that efforts are underway to bring another vehicle soon. He noted that with two fire engines and adequate staff, emergency response would improve significantly, reducing loss of life and property, especially during crop harvesting seasons. He also thanked Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu and the Home Minister for approving the vehicle.

Collector Calls for Successful Implementation of 100-Day Jaladhara-Jalaharathi Programme in Bapatla

Bapatla, April 16: District Collector Dr. V. Vinod Kumar urged officials and the public to ensure the success of the 100-day Jaladhara-Jalaharathi programme. Addressing a press meet at the Collectorate on Thursday, he said arrangements are being made to release irrigation water in the district by May 15. He warned that temperatures are exceeding 40°C due to El Niño conditions and advised people to step out only when necessary. Parents were asked to allow children outdoors only after 4 PM. ORS and zinc packets are available at hospitals, Anganwadi centres, and secretariats. The Collector said the programme, initiated by Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu, will begin with plantation drives and Gram Sabhas in each constituency. Special focus is being given to water security in delta and riverbank villages facing drinking water issues. Village and ward meetings will be held to discuss water-related problems, and a "Jal Chitrapatam" (water map) will be prepared for every area. Works will be tracked



through the Jaladhara-Jalaharathi app. He added that individuals contributing to water conservation will be recognised at the district level after 100 days. Citizens were urged to conserve water and avoid wastage.

Three-Day FDP on Next-Gen Access Networks Held at Vignan Duvvada

Visakhapatnam, April 16: The Department of Electronics and Communication Engineering at Vignan Institute of Information Technology (Autonomous), Duvvada, is conducting a three-day Faculty Development Programme (FDP) from April 16 to 18 on "Next-Gen Access Networks with Emerging Industry 4.0 Challenges and Solutions - Level 1," in collaboration with BSNL Research, Innovation and Incubation Centre. The centre was inaugurated by BSNL Deputy General Manager Dr. M. Satya Prasad, who highlighted the importance of next-generation communication technologies. The programme focuses on IoT, 5G/6G networks, and smart infrastructure, aiming to enhance faculty technical skills and promote industry-academia collaboration. Experts are delivering sessions on modern access network technologies, challenges, and innovative solutions. Faculty members

are actively participating to upgrade their knowledge and skills. Principal Dr. J. Sudhakar, Rector Dr. V. Madhusudana



Rao, and ECE Heads Dr. R. Uma Maheshwari and Dr. P. Santosh were present and expressed gratitude to the chief guest while wishing success for the programme.

PM Rahat Scheme a Boon for Road Accident Victims: Minister Y. Satya Kumar Yadav



Vijayawada, April 16: State Health Minister Y. Satya Kumar Yadav said timely medical care can save lives of road accident victims, highlighting the importance of the PM Rahat (Pradhan Mantri Road Accident Hospitalisation and Assured Treatment) scheme. Speaking at a state-level stakeholders' meeting held at Dr. NTR Health University, he stated that the scheme provides cashless treatment up to Rs.1.5 lakh for accident victims, ensuring immediate care without financial burden. The minister stressed coordinated efforts among hospitals, ambulance services, po-

lice, and other departments for effective implementation. He also emphasized the "Golden Hour" concept through 108 ambulance services, which has significantly improved survival rates. Officials noted that in 2025, Andhra Pradesh recorded around 18,380 road accidents, with overspeeding being the major cause. Measures like trauma care centers every 100 km and identification of accident-prone black spots are being implemented. The government aims to reduce accidents and fatalities while ensuring quick, quality healthcare access to victims across the state.

Collector Reviews Census Training, Assures Support to Polavaram Project-Affected Families



Rampachodavaram, April 16: District Collector K. Dinesh Kumar directed officials to ensure full awareness and effective implementation of the Self-Enumeration Census 2026-27, scheduled from April 16 to April 30. He reviewed a training program for secretariat staff at the Chinturu Tahsildar office along with ITDA Project Officer Shubham Nokwal. The Collector stated that people can submit their family details through the government's digital self-enumeration portal using mobile phones or computers. Officials were instructed to create awareness among villagers in all mandals. During his visit, he inter-

acted with residents in Malli Thota, Pattipaka, and Narsinga R&R Colony to understand their issues. He also attended a gram sabha in Kunavaram with Polavaram project-affected families, assuring that justice would be provided as per government norms. He inspected the cotton training center at Paidigudem and emphasized that proper training would ensure better livelihood opportunities for women. The Collector reiterated that land-for-land benefits for tribal families and R&R packages for others will be implemented as per rules. Officials from various departments accompanied him during the visit.

Collector Launches Poster for Mega Job Mela in Markapuram

Markapuram, April 16: District Collector M. Vijaya Sunitha unveiled the poster for the Mega Job Mela scheduled to be held on April 20 at B Convention Hall in Markapuram. She urged unemployed youth to make the best use of such job fairs, stating that the government is taking special measures to create employment and job opportunities. District Skill Development Officer M. Kanchibabu and others were present at the event.



120 Kg Ganja Worth Rs.60 Lakh Seized; Five Arrested in Gangavaram



Gangavaram, April 16: Police seized 120 kg of ganja worth around 760 lakh and arrested five persons during a vehicle check in Gangavaram. Acting on a tip-off, SI Venkayya, under the supervision of Addateegala Circle Inspector B. Narasimhammurthy, conducted vehicle inspections on Thursday. The accused attempted to flee on seeing the police but were apprehended. During the search, ganja packed in five bags was found in two vehicles. Four of the accused are from Maharashtra, while one is from Andhra Pradesh. Police also seized five mobile phones and two cars. A case has been registered, and the accused are being produced before the court. Police warned that strict action will be taken against those involved in illegal drug trafficking.

Self-Enumeration for Digital Census Begins: Joint Collector Ilakkiya Urges Public Participation



Vijayawada, April 16: As part of the country's first digital Census initiative, Joint Collector S. Ilakkiya urged citizens to actively participate in the Self-Enumeration (SE) process by registering their household details from home. The self-enumeration drive will be conducted from April 16 to 30. A special awareness stall was inaugurated at the Collectorate to guide the public on the process. Citizens can submit their details through the official Census portal. Ilakkiya stated that the process helps save time and ensures accurate data collection. After entering information across 34 parameters, users can preview and submit their data, upon which an 11-digit unique SE ID will be generated for verification by enumerators later.

A 15-day outreach campaign is also being conducted, targeting different groups each day to promote participation. Officials urged all citizens to take part and help the district achieve top performance in the Census drive.

Ensure Transparent Sand Supply, Warns Collector Mahesh Kumar



Amalapuram, April 16: District Collector R. Mahesh Kumar directed officials to ensure transparent and demand-

Collector Vijaya Sunitha Calls for Grand Success of 'Nari Shakti' Programme

Markapuram, April 16: District Collector M. Vijaya Sunitha directed officials to ensure the successful conduct of the Nari Shakti programme, to be held as per government instructions ahead of the expected passage of the 33% women's reservation bill in Parliament. During a Google Meet with RDOs, Municipal Commissioners, MPDOs, Tahsildars, ICDS, and DWAMA officials on Thursday, she instructed that the programme be organized grandly across all constituencies with active participation of women. She emphasized making arrangements for 1,000 to 2,000 attendees per constituency and suggested organizing special cultural events as part of the celebrations.



Collector Conducts Surprise Inspection in Markapuram Town



Markapuram, Pen Power, April 16: District Collector M. Vijaya Sunitha conducted surprise inspections in Markapuram town on Thursday. She inspected the municipal office, council chamber, and official records, expressing serious displeasure over poor tax collection performance compared to last year. The Collector reprimanded municipal staff for negligence and directed the Commissioner to set monthly targets for secretariat staff and submit regular reports. Later, she inspected the 16th Secretariat office and reviewed records, instructing staff to improve tax collection efforts. She also examined the roadside plantation from SVKP College to Market Yard and ordered officials to ensure proper maintenance and replacement of dried plants. The Collector further inspected the water tank, purification units, and filter beds on Tarlupadu Road. She reviewed water pumping and quality testing procedures and instructed officials to ensure uninterrupted supply of clean drinking water during summer without leakage issues. Municipal Commissioner Narayanarao, AE Bhupal Reddy, Surveyor Sanjeevaiah, and other municipal staff accompanied her.

Awareness programme on safety standards in electrical power systems for TTD Staff held



Tirumala, 16 April: An awareness programme on safety standards in electrical power systems and fire awareness was organized for the staff of the TTD Electrical Department on Thursday at the SV Museum Auditorium in Tirumala. On this occasion, former CMD of APSPDCL, Sri J. Padma Janardhan Reddy, provided awareness to the staff on several technical aspects, including electrical installations, maintenance practices, and preventive safety measures. Subsequently, TTD ADFO P. Anil Kumar conducted an awareness session on



fire accident prevention. TTD DE Chandra Sekhar, Deputy Executive Engineer Vani and other officials participated in the programme.

Mekapati Couple Congratulates Nara Lokesh on Appointment as TDP National Working President

Nellore April 16: Nellore: Former Udayagiri MLA Mekapati Chandrasekhar Reddy and Nellore District Library Organisation Chairperson Srimathi Mekapati Santhi Kumari extended heartfelt congratulations to IT and Education Minister Nara Lokesh on being appointed as the Telugu Desam Party National Working President.



ICDS CDPO Shanti Durga Educates Women on Health and Balanced Diet

Srikalahasti- 16 April : Nutrition Awareness Program Conducted in Srikalahasti Mandal A nutrition awareness program was organized at the Anganwadi Centre in Thondamanpuram village of Srikalahasti mandal under the leadership of ICDS CDPO Shanti Durga. During the program, breastfeeding mothers were educated on infant nutrition and the precautions required for complete health care. Women were provided with detailed awareness on ensuring proper nutrition for infants and maintaining overall health. Addressing the gathering, CDPO Shanti Durga stated that only by providing a balanced and nutritious diet to women, pregnant mothers, adolescent girls, and children can future diseases be prevented. She also explained the importance of adopting proper health care practices for overall well-being. The program focused



on creating awareness about nutrition and promoting better health standards among women and children.

Mattam Sravani Reddy Appointed TDP State Secretary

Gudur April 16: Gudur: Senior TDP leader from Chennai in Gudur mandal, Mattam Sravani Reddy, has been appointed as the Telugu Desam Party State Secretary by the party high command. Sravani Reddy, who currently serves as TDP Tirupati Parliament vice president, has risen to the state post from the level of a party worker. Speaking on the occasion, Mattam Sravani Reddy said she joined TDP inspired by the ideals and vision of MLA Dr. Pasim Sunil Kumar and has been working for the party alongside him since then. She thanked MLA Dr. Pasim Sunil Kumar and party elders for their encouragement and support in securing the state secretary post. Her husband Murali also



extended thanks to the MLA. Sravani Reddy was earlier elected as TDP MPTC and served as Gudur Mandal vice MPP, during which she took up several development works. At present, she has been focusing on cement roads, drinking water facilities and sanitation improvements in Chennai. Party workers in Gudur mandal say that any issue brought to Sravani Reddy is addressed without fail and she responds to calls at any time. She recently received the Best Activist award from Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu. Several elders and well wishers congratulated her on the appointment. Sravani Reddy said the appointment proves that hard work in TDP is always recognized and reiterated her commitment to work tirelessly for the party.

Grand Book Launch Event Held at SKIIMS College

Srikalahasti: "College to Corporate" Career Guidance Book Unveiled in Srikalahasti A grand book launch event was at Sri Kalahasteswara Institute of Information and Management Sciences (SKIIMS) College, located near Kapu Gunneri village in Srikalahasti mandal, on April 16, 2026. The career guidance book titled "College to Corporate", authored by Dr. Dorai Raj, Senior General Manager (ECL), was formally unveiled by the college correspondent, Sri Middela Hari. The event was attended by Principal Dr. Geetha Devi, Retired ASP P. Abhishekam, Retired Government Degree College Principal Dr. Raghurama Reddy, Heads of Departments, teaching and non-teaching staff, along with a large number of students.

Reorganization Bill will not cause injustice to southern states: MP Purandeshwari

New Delhi, April 16: Rajahmundry BJP MP Daggubati Purandeshwari spoke during the debate on the Delimitation Bill 2026 and the 131st Constitutional Amendment Bills introduced in the Lok Sabha. She expressed full support for these historic bills and criticized the failures of previous governments in implementing women's reservations. At the beginning of her speech, she recalled the efforts of her father, the late Chief Minister Nandamuri Taraka Rama Rao (NTR), for women's empowerment. She said that NTR was credited with providing equal rights to daughters in property four decades ago. She

explained to the gathering that he had taken revolutionary decisions like reservation for women in local bodies, establishment of women's universities and women's police stations. She responded to concerns that southern states would lose Lok Sabha seats due to the delimitation of constituencies. She assured that the plan proposed by the central government, which increases the number of Lok Sabha seats by 50 percent, will not reduce the existing seats of any state.

He clarified that the increase in seats according to the 2011 census will not upset the political balance and



Dr. D. Purandeshwari, BJP, Rajahmundry (Andhra Pradesh)

that the voice of the southern states will remain strong in Parliament. Purandeshwari criticized the Congress-led UPA government for its previous delay in

implementing the Women's Reservation Bill. Eddeva alleged that although the Rajya Sabha passed this bill, which has been pending since 1996, in 2010, the Congress did not feel

like introducing it in the Lok Sabha. He said that now that Prime Minister Modi is implementing this bill on a war footing, it is not right for the opposition to try to block it for

unnecessary political reasons. She expressed confidence that the implementation of women's reservations will make women not only partners in the development of the country, but also decision makers. She said that this bill will provide political justice to women in line with the aspirations of Babasaheb Ambedkar. She said that the voice of every state will be heard in the reorganisation process and the views of the people will be taken through public hearings. She concluded her speech by saying that she was proud to be a part of this historic event.