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Mallikarjun Kharge Calls PM Modi "A Terrorist", Then Clarifies



New Delhi: Congress chief Mallikarjun Kharge, at a press conference on Tuesday, called Prime Minister Narendra Modi a "terrorist". When a reporter asked for context behind the assessment, the Congress chief clarified that what he meant is that "PM Modi is terrorising people and political parties", adding he never called the Prime Minister a terrorist. The condemnation from the BJP was swift and sharp, calling the Congress an "Urban Naxal Party". Kharge was questioning the AIADMK's choice of BJP as an alliance partner for the Tamil Nadu polls when he used the

word terrorist for the PM. "How these AIADMK people, who themselves put the photo of Annadurai, how can they join Modi? He is a terrorist. His party won't believe in equality and justice. These people are joining with them; it means they are weakening democracy, they are weakening the philosophy of Annadurai, Kamaraj, Periyar, Kaliagnar, Baba Saheb Ambedkar," M Kharge said. "The Congress-DMK alliance will continue to deliver welfare, inclusive growth, quality, education, accessible healthcare," he underlined. The Congress leader's comments came two days after PM Modi, in an address to the nation, accused the Congress and other opposition parties of committing "foeticide" for defeating a bill on women's reservation in Parliament and state assemblies. "Can you please put the statement in a context," M Kharge was asked at the same press conference. "No, no," Kharge began clarifying his statement. "He (PM Modi) is terrorising people and political parties. I never said he is a terrorist... What I mean, I want to clarify, is that Modi always threatens. The institutions like ED, I-T and CBI are in his hands. He wants to take delimitation also into his hands.



After the terror attack in Pahalgam last year, the Jammu and Kashmir Police and other security forces returned to the jungles. From training personnel in jungle warfare to establishing temporary operating bases in the upper reaches at altitudes up to 7,000 feet, the J&K police and Central security forces reoriented their approach to track down terrorist modules, a senior government official told. The ghastly terror attack on April 22, 2025, at Baisaran meadow, which left 26 people dead, mostly tourists, led to a complete overhaul of the security grid in the Kashmir Valley as well as the Jammu region. The Valley had not seen an attack of this scale on tourists in nearly a decade.

'Women's Political Careers Start In Men's Rooms': Pappu Yadav Sparks Row



New Delhi: Independent MP Pappu Yadav has ignited a firestorm after he remarked that most women cannot be in politics without spending some time in the room of a male politician. Speaking on the Women's Reservation Bill - amendments to which failed to clear the Lok Sabha last week because the Opposition was against them being linked to delimitation - Yadav described most male politicians as "vultures". "Who is committing domestic violence? Who keeps an evil eye on women? From America to India, it is the politicians. Without a politician's room, 90% of women cannot even be in politics. This is happening daily. CCTV footage of politicians comes to the fore every day. Exploiting women has now become a culture," he said.

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ALLAHABAD HIGH COURT JUDGE RECUSES FROM RAHUL GANDHI DUAL CITIZENSHIP CASE

JUDGE STEPS ASIDE
Justice Subhash Vidyarthi recuses from hearing the case.

THE CASE
Petitioner seeks legal action against Rahul Gandhi over alleged dual citizenship (India & UK).

WHY THE RECUSAL?
- Petitioner's social media posts with "traditional" and "strong opinions" on the petition.
- Undermined dignity of the court.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?
The case will be reassigned to another bench.

A HIGH-PROFILE CASE
The case has already won an order to register an FIR and a stay on that order.

New Delhi: Allahabad High Court judge Justice Subhash Vidyarthi on Monday recused himself from hearing criminal proceedings against Congress leader Rahul Gandhi, who has been accused of holding dual citizenship - India and the United Kingdom - in violation of Indian laws. According to legal news website Bar and Bench, Justice Vidyarthi referred to social media posts by the petitioner as having persuaded him to stand down. The posts remarked on the judge's decision last week to delay the filing of a FIR, or first information report, against Gandhi. In his recusal statement the judge said: "Messages by petitioner on social media indicate that he is casting aspersions against this court... that petitioner has lost faith in this court. In these circumstances... this court does not deem it appropriate to hear this matter any further." The judge said the petitioner, instead of "admitting the mistake in placing the correct position before the court" had "blamed the court for not uploading the order dictated in open court". The petitioner in this case is a Karnataka-based BJP worker, S Vignesh Shishir.

AP tourism gets major emphasis in NITI Aayog report



From Our Staff Reporter Amaravati, April, 21: In its "Divya Bharat" report, NITI Aayog has given significant importance to Andhra Pradesh tourism. The state's tourism sector has received rare recognition at the national level. NITI Aayog has suggested to both domestic and international tourists that Andhra Pradesh is a must-visit destination to experience natural beauty. The report is expected to serve as a milestone for the coalition government aiming to develop AP into a tourism hub. Along with a comprehensive 13-page report, NITI Aayog has also introduced AP's tourist destinations to the world through a special 1-minute-20-second video. The report has boosted the enthusiasm of Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu, Deputy Chief Minister Pawan Kalyan, and Tourism Minister Kandula Durgesh. It also mentions that the best time to visit Andhra Pradesh is from October to February. The report highlights the state's natural landscapes, historical monuments, ancient forts, natural caves, long coastline, spiritual destinations, famous local cuisine, traditional textiles, handicrafts, Buddhist sites, tourism festivals, and rich heritage. It

describes Andhra Pradesh as a hub for classical arts like Kuchipudi and Vilasini Natyam, noting that the state's warm hospitality captivates tourists. **Among natural destinations, it includes:** Araku Valley, Lambasingi, Maredumilli, Papi Hills, Nallamala Forest, Horsley Hills, Kolleru Lake, Pulicat Lake, Konaseema. Waterfalls and reservoirs mentioned include Kothapalli, Rampa, Talakona, Ethipothala waterfalls, along with Kambham tank, Konam, and Tatipudi reservoirs. Wildlife

and bird sanctuaries include Kambalakonda, Coringa mangrove forests, Nelapattu, and Uppalapadu bird sanctuaries. **For historical exploration, the report suggests:** Borra Caves, Belum Caves, Undavalli, Mogalrajapuram, and Udayagiri caves. **Forts and landmarks include:** Gandikota, Konda palli Fort, Chandragiri Fort, and Gooty Fort **Beach destinations include:** Rushikonda Beach, Suryalanka and Kothapatnam beaches. It also highlights unique attractions like the Guinness-

record-holding 500-year-old Thimmamma Marrimanu and Kakinada Hope Island. **Spiritual destinations listed include:** Tirumala Venkateswara Temple, Srisailem Temple, Kanaka Durga Temple, Annavaram, Simhachalam, Srialahasti, Kanipakam, Appikonda Someswara Temple, Pala kollaru Ksheerarama, Mahanandi, Yaganti, Paritala Anjaneya Swamy, and Ramatheertham temples. Other cultural and heritage sites include Amaravati Mahachaitya, Bavikonda Buddhist sites, Kadapa Pedda Dargah, Nellore Bara Shahid Dargah, Guntur JM Baptist Church, and Chebrolu churches. **The report also recommends visiting:** Rajah mundry Railway Bridge, Dindi in Konaseema, Krishna River in Vijayawada, Venkateswara National Park in Tirupati, Orvakal Rock Garden, Kadiri and Srimukha Lingam

Students fall ill... Minister Sandhya Rani issues key instructions to officials

From Our Staff Reporter Alluri Sitarama Raju District, April 21: Students at the Pedabayalu Ekalavya School in Alluri Sitarama Raju district fell ill today (Tuesday). Andhra Pradesh Minister Gummidu Sandhya Rani immediately responded to the incident and spoke with the District Collector over the phone to gather details.



Officials informed the minister that the students' illness was not due to food poisoning. Doctors have preliminarily identified that the fatigue and illness were caused by the intense heat currently prevailing. Regarding this incident, Minister Sandhya Rani spoke over the phone with district officials and the Pedabayalu Medical Officer to inquire about the full details. The minister instructed officials to pay special attention to the health condition of the students. Officials also informed her that the children are being given ORS (oral rehydration solutions) and necessary medical treatment. Around ten students who were shifted to the hospital have recovered after treatment and are now healthy in the hostel. Minister Gummidu Sandhya Rani directed officials to keep the students under doctors' observation in the hostel for another 48 hours.

Key instructions from Edu Dept. on student safety during summer holidays

From Our Staff Reporter Amaravati, April, 21: In view of the summer holidays, the Education Department has issued important instructions giving top priority to student safety. It directed that special measures be taken to prevent accidents near water bodies and made it mandatory to conduct counseling sessions in all schools. Students have been warned not to visit water bodies such as canals, ponds, and rivers without adult supervision. They were also advised not to swim in unfamiliar water areas. In case of dangerous situations, students should not attempt rescues on their own but should immediately inform elders. **Avoid going out in the afternoon**

Considering the intense summer heat, students are advised not to go outdoors between 12 PM and 4 PM. Schools have been instructed to create awareness among students about health precautions such as drinking sufficient water and wearing light clothing. They were also directed to conduct special awareness programs on heatstroke symptoms and prevention. **Encouraging useful activities** The department emphasized creating awareness among students about strictly following road safety rules. It also suggested reducing screen time and encouraging participation in useful activities like sports and reading. Schools have been instructed to inform parents about safety guidelines and to clearly display safety instructions on notice boards. Schools located near canals and ponds have been asked to be extra cautious. **Strict action for negligence** The department ordered strict monitoring through District Education Officers (DEOs) and Mandal Education Officers (MEOs), ensuring full implementation of all guidelines. It also directed that 100% of students must complete counseling sessions before the summer holidays. The Education Department warned that strict action will be taken in case of any negligence in implementation.

YSRCP leaders behind Pedda Dastagiri murder: Minister Kolusu Parthasarathy

From Our Staff Reporter Amaravati, April, 21: Andhra Pradesh Information Minister Kolusu Parthasarathy made sensational remarks, stating that the YSR Congress Party is not a political party but has turned into a den of murder politics. He criticized that the party is unfit to function as a political organization and said the Election Commission of India should even reconsider its recognition. He alleged that senior leaders of the YSRCP were behind the murder of



party worker Pedda Dastagiri. He further accused that during its five-year rule, the party focused on looting and hoarding wealth. The minister addressed the media in Amaravati on Tuesday, mocking that YSRCP leaders have made it a habit to "kill in the dark and visit victims in daylight." **Valuable documents found in Dastagiri's house** Parthasarathy stated that documents worth hundreds of crores were found in Dastagiri's house. He questioned how property documents belonging to the family of Ravindranath Reddy, uncle of Y. S. Jagan

Mohan Reddy, were found there. He added that Dastagiri was a key associate of Y. S. Avinash Reddy and former MLA Ravindranath Reddy. **YSRCP leaders can stoop to any level** The minister alleged that YSRCP leaders can stoop to any level for power and wealth. He compared the case to the murder of Y. S. Vivekananda Reddy, claiming a similar pattern of events. He accused those responsible for Dastagiri's murder of now shedding "crocodile tears."

EDITORIAL

'Uranium' an
obstacle to talks

Another round of talks between Iran and the US may not happen anytime soon. The current global crisis will not end unless the US and Iran make progress in the talks. It is important to mention that Iranian Foreign Minister Esmail Bagheri clarified on Monday that no decision has been taken on the second round of talks due to contradictory actions from Washington. The US, Israel and the rest of the world are experiencing the disastrous consequences of the Israeli-US coalition launching a war without any prior warning. International oil transport has come to a standstill after Iran closed the Strait of Hormuz. Oil tankers from Greece and Liberia were forced to turn back. Crude oil prices hit \$119 per barrel. Global oil supplies are under threat. Crude oil prices rose 8% intraday to around \$97.81. This has led to a global energy crisis. For the past 50 days, oil and gas have been smuggled out of the Gulf through the Strait of Hormuz. Gulf countries have reduced their oil and gas products. According to an estimate, 500 million barrels of oil worth \$50 billion is enough for the US for a month. In addition, there is a severe shortage of fertilizers, aluminum, helium and sulfur. As a result, this has affected the production of copper and nickel. If this situation continues, the global growth rate will inevitably face a recession of up to 2 percent. After the ceasefire in Israel and Lebanon, talks between the US and Iran began smoothly last week, allowing Iran to open the Strait of Hormuz. However, the story came to a head again when Trump announced that the US naval blockade would continue and sanctions would be imposed on Iranian ships until a full deal was reached with Iran. Iran closed the Strait of Hormuz again in a single day in protest against the US blockade. It is noteworthy that even Pakistani Field Marshal Asim Munir, a great favorite of Trump, has commented that the US blockade of Iranian ports is the main obstacle to the second round of talks. As evidence of this, the US Navy fired on and seized an Iranian-flagged merchant ship named Tauska in order to provoke Iran. In retaliation, Iran launched drone attacks. Iran has many gunboats that can cause damage. Iran's firing on two Indian-flagged ships last Saturday has now become highly controversial. Due to military action or pressure, the supply of fuel may not resume immediately. The situation may continue like this for another month or six months. But in any case, everyone is of the opinion that tensions will ease and a positive situation will emerge through talks. But tensions continue to mount with Iranian boat gun attacks. While there is hope from both the US and Iranian sides that the ceasefire will end on Wednesday and progress will be made in the talks, it is unclear how much progress will be made. Iran's uranium reserves have become the main obstacle in the talks. Trump announced that Iran may have up to 440 kilograms of enriched uranium stored under the nuclear sites destroyed by the US military last year, and that the US would go to seize all of those reserves, but Iran rejected that statement. Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister Saeed Khatibzadeh made it clear that Iran will not hand over its enriched uranium reserves to the US under any circumstances. It is true that the world is concerned about Iran's 450 kilograms of 60 percent enriched uranium reserves. There are fears that these stocks could easily be converted to 90 percent weapons-grade, and that Iran could build nuclear weapons and thus endanger global security. The US-Israeli alliance has been monitoring Iran's nuclear facilities amid estimates that Iran has enough uranium for 11 nuclear bombs. Will the US play a key role if Iran backs down on Friday? The question is. Constantly insulting its adversary is hardly the way to seal the deal. The US should not forget that normal traffic through the Strait of Hormuz is crucial in its efforts to obtain Iranian uranium. Until then, the Gulf countries will not be able to produce oil at the old rates. The reserves of aluminum, surf, and other necessities will not be available. In mid-May, US President Trump will meet with Chinese President Jinping. Trump is confident that he will receive a warm welcome from China. The blockade of the Strait of Hormuz will be a major topic in their discussions. China is also an ally of Iran. Therefore, there are hopes that the Strait of Hormuz shipping crisis will be resolved.

Trump Has Found His Iran 'Scapegoat'.
The Scapegoat Doesn't Know It Yet

If one were to locate the Trump-Vance equation within the broader grammar of contemporary American politics, it would appear less as a partnership and more as a hierarchy sustained by performative loyalty and strategic expendability. Donald Trump continues to rely on JD Vance as both amplifier and absorber: a political instrument who articulates Trumpism with youthful aggression while simultaneously insulating the principal from the consequences of his own risk-taking. In public, Vance performs the role with near-textbook precision. He is combative, ideologically aligned, and unflinchingly deferential - whether defending escalation in the Iran theatre or engaging in cultural skirmishes, including those involving figures like Pope Leo XIV. Trump, in turn, signals approval by projecting Vance as a future standard-bearer for 2028. Yet, beneath this carefully curated symmetry lies an unmistakable asymmetry of power. Trump's occasional barbs about Vance's earlier hesitation on Iran are not incidental; they are reminders of hierarchy, deployed to keep ambition tethered to obedience.

Ambition vs Obedience

The recent Iran episode underscores this dynamic with unusual clarity. Vance's assignment for high-stakes negotiations in Islamabad was less an opportunity than a calibrated risk. The outcome, predictably inconclusive, allowed Trump to externalise failure while reserving success for himself. His remark about "blaming JD Vance" if talks faltered was not merely flippant; it was emblematic of a governing style that thrives on plausible deniability. Vance, meanwhile, is left to internalise the political costs: declining approval, economic anxieties tied to the conflict, and the broader perception of drift within the administration. This

pattern is not without precedent. Mike Pence occupied a very different ideological space - rooted in evangelical conservatism and institutional restraint - but ultimately encountered a similar constraint. Pence's break with Trump during the certification of the 2020 election was driven by constitutional obligation, and it effectively ended his relevance within Trump's political universe. Vance, by contrast, has pre-empted such a rupture by collapsing any visible distance between himself and Trump. If Pence's trajectory was defined by a late assertion of principle, Vance's is marked by an early and total submission to political necessity. Yet, this strategy carries its own risks. By over-identifying with 'Trumpism', Vance has limited his manoeuvrability. His earlier scepticism of foreign entanglements now sits uneasily alongside his defence of the Iran campaign, reinforcing perceptions of opportunism rather than conviction. The more he is deployed as a political shield, whether in foreign policy misadventures or symbolic culture wars, the more his own political capital is eroded.

Has JD Vance Walked Into A Trap?

The critical question, therefore, is not whether Vance can endure this role in the immediate term - he almost certainly can - but whether such endurance is strategically sustainable. In the short run, loyalty remains his only viable currency within the MAGA ecosystem. In the longer run, however, the very attributes that make him valuable to Trump may render him dispensable. Trump's political method has consistently prioritised utility over continuity; allies are rarely permanent, and succession is never guaranteed. For JD Vance, time is both a strategic resource and a structural limi-



At 41, he enjoys the rare advantage of generational elasticity in American politics - a capacity to absorb setbacks, recalibrate his image, and potentially re-emerge stronger. Unlike many of his contemporaries, Vance is not bound by the immediacy of a single electoral cycle; his ambitions can stretch across a longer horizon. Yet, this very advantage is weakened by the intensity of his current political exposure, which risks hardening perceptions before he has the opportunity to reshape them. Recalibration, however, is not a neutral act within the ecosystem he inhabits. Any attempt by Vance to subtly distance himself from Donald Trump would not be interpreted as routine political repositioning but as a breach of loyalty. Trump's political style leaves little room for ambiguity: allegiance must be total, visible, and continuous. In such a

framework, even minor deviations are amplified and often punished, making strategic adjustment a perilous undertaking rather than a prudent necessity.

Iran As A Test Case

The Iran episode, in this context, assumes the character of a potential inflexion point. It is not merely a foreign policy challenge but a test case for how far Vance can stretch the boundaries of subordination without eroding his own political identity. Being tasked with high-risk negotiations - and then implicitly burdened with the consequences of their failure - places him in a structurally vulnerable position. The episode crystallises a deeper tension: whether a political actor can simultaneously embody ambition and function as an expendable instrument. This is a delicate balancing act. Vance must continue to perform loyalty to retain credibility within the

MAGA base, while also preserving enough independent political capital to remain viable beyond the immediate orbit of Trump. This dual imperative is inherently unstable. The more effectively he serves as a defender and proxy, the more he risks being defined entirely by that role, reducing his ability to later claim autonomy or leadership in his own right. For now, the equilibrium holds, sustained by mutual utility rather than genuine trust. Donald Trump benefits from Vance's willingness to absorb political shock, while Vance gains proximity to power and the promise, however uncertain, of future succession. Yet, this is an equilibrium characteristic of Trumpian politics: transactional, asymmetric, and ultimately fragile. In the longer arc, such arrangements have rarely endured, often collapsing under the weight of competing ambitions and the absence of durable institutional bonds.

Rahul-Stalin Aren't On The Same Stage. Are
Congress-DMK On The Same Page?

When Rahul Gandhi landed in Chennai on Saturday morning, to campaign for the Congress candidates for the first time in the April 23 Tamil Nadu election, all eyes were on whether he and Stalin would make a joint appearance. Much like 2024, when Gandhi and Stalin had campaigned together, referring to each other as "brother". In Coimbatore, after one such joint meeting, Gandhi had even walked into a sweet shop to buy a packet of Mysore Pak, a popular South Indian sweet, for Stalin. The Tamil Nadu Chief Minister, quoting a couplet from Thirukkural, had said he was touched and overwhelmed by the 'sweet gesture' from "brother Rahul Gandhi".

This time, the family soap opera has been replaced by a comic tale with the erroneous translation of Rahul-speak, providing fodder for meme creators and ammunition to the opposition to ridicule the Congress. "They told the nation a lie," said Rahul Gandhi at an election public meeting in Tamil Nadu on Saturday.

"They said that the nation is alive," said his translator.

"You saw the face of the Prime Minister, completely lacking in confidence," said Gandhi.

"The Prime Minister's face was full of confidence," said the translator.

"The PM is controlled by the United States," said Gandhi.

"We see India as a united force," said the translator.

The translator's gaffes, in a nutshell, encapsulate all that has been wrong with the Congress in the run-up to the Tamil Nadu election. It initially sulked, reportedly unhappy about how the DMK second-rung leaders

in the districts treated its representatives, asked for a share in power if the DMK-led alliance returned to power, demanded 41 assembly seats to contest, with a few Congress leaders suggesting a tie-up with Vijay's Tamilaga Vettri Kazhagam (TVK) if the DMK refused to play ball. Finally, under instructions from the Congress old guard, the deal with the DMK was struck at 28 seats, an increase of three seats over 2021.

Truth be told, the arithmetic was partially settled, but the chemistry wasn't. After all, it cannot be the most difficult thing to arrange a campaign meeting with both Stalin and Gandhi in attendance. The fact that it has not been done gives rise to doubt whether both sides are simply not interested. On April 18, Gandhi campaigned in Chennai and Tiruchy while Stalin was out of the state capital. On April 20, Gandhi campaigned in southern Tamil Nadu while Stalin canvassed in Chennai. Stalin did share the stage with Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge in Hosur, but then, Kharge is not Rahul. Though Stalin and Rahul still refer to each other as "brother", the optics point to a coldness in the relationship, and the "logistics" excuse provided by DMK leader RS Bharathi appears to be just a smokescreen.

Talking of optics, the man visible with Gandhi and sharing the stage with him in Tamil Nadu on Saturday was Praveen Chakravarty, Chairman of the Data Analytics wing of the Congress. Chakravarty was the person who held confabulations with the TVK, leading to speculation that the Congress



was exploring a non-DMK option with Vijay. Given that Chakravarty is seen as close to Gandhi, everyone assumed it was being done on instructions from the Leader of the Opposition. Chakravarty's presence and Stalin's absence, will make anyone with a basic understanding of Tamil Nadu politics connect the dots.

Contrast this with the NDA, where Prime Minister Narendra Modi, on every campaign visit to Tamil Nadu, has been seen with NDA's CM face Edappadi Palaniswami as the AIADMK by his side. With all senior leaders of the NDA in attendance, the alliance has put up a united face, unlike the Secular Progressive Alliance - as the INDIA bloc is called in Tamil Nadu - which conveys the impression of an alliance coming unstuck.

BJP leader K Annamalai referred to the no-show as a sign of alliance fragility.

It is important to note that Stalin has shared the stage with the leaders of all other parties in the SPA, be it Premalatha of the DMK, Thirumavalavan of VCK or Kamal Haasan of MNM. In fact, he was seen even with RJD leader Tejeswi Yadav and campaigned alongside AAP leader Arvind Kejriwal as well. So what does the no-show by Stalin and Gandhi indicate?

There is a section within the DMK that suspects that Congress party's continuance with the party can no longer be taken for granted. A joint appearance with Rahul will be seen as an endorsement for a partner who is also suspected of flirting with rival Vijay. There

is a school of thought that also believes that the Congress cadre transfer of vote to the DMK, DMDK or VCK candidates in all the constituencies cannot be taken for granted this time. Should that lead to defeats by very narrow margins, the knives would be out for the Congress. Likewise, if the DMK cadre takes the cue from its top leadership and does not vote enthusiastically for the 28 Congress candidates, it would jeopardise the winning chances of the national party.

The TVK, too, has been fanning trouble in the SPA from time to time. In one of his campaign speeches, Vijay alleged that the Congress had been "purchased" by the DMK while the "real Congress" was with the people - and potentially with the TVK.

Collector Conducts Surprise Inspection atwithou



Vijayanagaram, April 21: District Collector S. Ramsundar Reddy conducted a surprise inspection at the Community Health Centre (CHC) in Badangi mandal on Tuesday. He reviewed various departments, interacted with patients, and assessed the quality of services being provided. The Collector expressed serious concern over poor sanitation in the hospital premises and warned officials that unhygienic conditions should not lead to further health issues for patients. He directed the contractor responsible for maintenance to improve cleanliness within a week, failing which the contract would be cancelled immediately. Emphasizing that a clean hospital environment is essential for better healthcare, he instructed officials to ensure strict maintenance of hygiene standards without any compromise.

Boost Allied Agriculture Sectors: Collector Harendhira Prasad

Kakinada, April 21: District Collector M.N. Harendhira Prasad directed officials to work comprehensively to enhance progress in allied agriculture sectors, including fisheries, animal husbandry, horticulture, natural farming, and sericulture. Reviewing departmental performance, he stressed effective implementation of central and state schemes, promotion of deep-sea fishing, and strengthening fishermen cooperative societies. In animal husbandry, he reviewed distribution of livestock credit cards and vaccination drives, and called for measures to prevent water scarcity for cattle during summer. He noted that natural farming is being practiced on over 43,000 acres and urged expansion through awareness programs. In horticulture, he highlighted increased cultivation area and directed full utilization of government schemes. Officials were also in-



structed to expand mulberry cultivation in the sericulture sector in line with targets.

Women's Leadership Key to India's Future: P.T. Usha

Vijayawada, April 21: Rajya Sabha MP and former athlete Dr. P.T. Usha emphasized that women's leadership is crucial for India's future, from sports arenas to Parliament. She highlighted that the Women's Reservation Bill (Nari Shakti Vandan Adhiniyam) is a significant step toward ensuring one-third representation for women in legislatures, leading to stronger democracy and better governance.

Drawing from her experience, Usha noted that increased opportunities and representation have already transformed women's participation in sports and other fields. She stressed that empowering women in policymaking would improve focus on key issues like health, education, and safety.

Calling for immediate implementation of the law, she said greater representation of women is essential for inclusive growth, economic progress, and a truly democratic India.



Collector Stresses Transparency and Speed in Public Services



Vizianagaram, April 21: District Collector S. Ramsundar Reddy conducted surprise inspections in Therlam mandal on Tuesday, reviewing several government offices and training programs. He inspected the Sub-Registrar's office, reviewed records, and expressed dissatisfaction over low revenue, directing officials to take planned steps to improve it. Interacting with citizens, he emphasized the need for fast and transparent public services. The Collector also attended a census training session, instructing staff to ensure accurate data collection and promote self-enumeration through digital means. During a surprise check at an MLS point, he verified weighing procedures and expressed satisfaction after personally checking the weight of three bags. Officials were directed to prevent any discrepancies or wastage.

Grand Arrangements Planned for Sri Modakondamma Festival

Paderu, April 21: District Collector T. Nishanthi directed officials to conduct the Sri Modakondamma temple festival on a grand scale, following its declaration as a state festival.

At a review meeting, former MLA Giddi Eswari was unanimously elected as the festival committee chairperson. The Collector instructed all departments to work in coordination and ensure proper arrangements for devotees, including drinking water, queue lines, traffic control, and parking. The government has released ₹10 lakh for initial arrangements. Donations were also announced, with Giddi Eswari contributing ₹1 lakh, the Collector ₹50,000, and the Joint Collector ₹10,000. Officials



and committee members were urged to ensure smooth and successful conduct of the festival.

Timely Disposal of PGRS Petitions Stressed



Kakinada, April 21: District Collector M.N. Harendhira Prasad directed officials to ensure timely and effective resolution of petitions filed under the PGRS system. Reviewing petitions received from the Chief Minister's Office, he emphasized that the government is giving high priority to grievance redressal. Officials were instructed to resolve complaints transparently and efficiently to build public trust in the system.

Bus Yatra Launched to Curb Road Accidents in Tirupati

Tirupati, April 21: District Collector Dr. S. Venkateswar announced a special bus yatra to identify and address accident-prone areas in the district. A total of 48 black spots have been identified, with corrective measures to be implemented within 60 days under the state's zero-death policy. Officials from police, transport, R&B, and national highways departments are jointly inspecting these locations, analyzing causes such as overspeeding, poor road conditions, and lack of safety measures. The Collector said steps like installing blinkers, rumble strips, warning boards, and improving traffic regulation will be taken. Measures to control drunk driving and overspeeding are also being intensified. SP L. Subbarayudu stated that along with strict enforcement, public awareness is key to reducing accidents and urged motorists to follow traffic rules.



Eminent Alumnus Award to Dr. T.V. Narayana



Rajahmundry, April 21: Dr. T.V. Narayana was honored with the Eminent Alumnus Award during the Andhra University centenary celebrations for his 35 years of service to the pharmacy profession and education. An alumnus of Andhra University (B.Pharmacy 1979-83, M.Pharmacy 1985-87), he is the founder of Vikas Institute of Pharmaceutical Sciences near Rajahmundry airport. On the occasion, Principal Dr. G. Sumalata received the Long Serving Principal Award, Associate Professor B. Ramya was honored as Distinguished Teacher, and Kimidi Danny was honored as Outstanding Alumnus. The awardees were felicitated by Chairman Tanneeru China Subbarao, Secretary Dr. T. Bharat Vikas, Vice Principals, and faculty members.

Focus on All-Round Development of Giddalur Constituency

Markapuram, April 21: District Collector M. Vijaya Sunitha directed officials to work towards comprehensive development of Giddalur constituency across all sectors. At a review meeting, she stressed speeding up works under the "Jala Dhara-Jala Harathi" program and completing restoration of 176 tanks before the monsoon. She also highlighted the need to resolve pending revenue issues and improve mutation processes. Officials were asked to ensure effective implementation of central and state schemes, including PM Suryaghar. MLA Muttumula Ashok Reddy emphasized providing irrigation to the entire ayacut and said the Velugonda project will benefit around 60,000 acres. He also noted plans to strengthen power infrastructure and address local land distribution issues.



Focus on Water Conservation: Collector Vijaya Sunitha



Markapuram, April 21: District Collector M. Vijaya Sunitha directed officials to work towards improving water resources under the "Jala Dhara-Jala Harathi" program. She instructed departments to restore 102 tanks in the constituency and ensure they are filled during the upcoming monsoon. Emphasizing coordination among irrigation and rural development departments, she called for efforts to enhance groundwater levels by conserving every drop of water. MLA Kandula Narayana Reddy stressed the need for effective implementation to prevent future water scarcity. Officials were also asked to clear weeds in canals and supply channels with public and donor support.

Officials Must Taste School Meals Daily: Minister Gottipati

Ongole, April 21: State Energy Minister Gottipati Ravi Kumar directed officials to eat mid-day meals in schools daily to ensure quality, stating that no compromise will be tolerated. During his visit to Addanki constituency, he distributed free bicycles to students and said a total of 11,044 cycles have been provided so far with donor support. He also assured infrastructure upgrades, including a dining hall and compound wall for a school in Koppuram. The minister emphasized delivering quality education on par with private institutions and highlighted ongoing reforms, including large-scale teacher recruitment. He also inaugurated a Kapu community hall in Kommalapadu and announced further development works in the constituency.



Fill AP Human Rights Commission Vacancies: HRW

Rampachodavaram, April 21: Human Rights Watch Director Balu Akkisa has urged the Andhra Pradesh government to immediately fill the vacant posts of Chairperson and members in the State Human Rights Commission. In an email to the Chief Secretary and Principal Secretary (Home), he stated that the commission has been functioning without key appointments for a long time, affecting its ability to discharge duties under the Protection of Human Rights Act, 1993. He noted that several cases are pending and victims are facing delays in justice. He also recalled that the Supreme Court had earlier directed governments to fill such vacancies. Akkisa appealed to the state to expedite appointments and ensure the commission functions effectively to protect human rights.



Virat is a friend, someone I respect & admire; he is the reason I started following cricket: Djokovic



New Delhi: Serbian tennis great Novak Djokovic opened up on his friendship with Indian cricket stalwart Virat Kohli and revealed that it was Kohli because of whom he started watching cricket and expressed a desire to crossover between tennis and cricket involving the two legends when he visits India. Last year at Wimbledon

2025 on July 7, alongside his wife, Bollywood actress Anushka Sharma, Kohli witnessed Djokovic's thrilling round of 16 win against Australia's Alex de Minaur and later took to Instagram to share his excitement, posting a heart-felt story for the Serb. "What a match. It was business as usual for the gladiator, @djokernole,"

Kohli had shared on X. "Virat is a friend and someone I, of course, respect and admire. He is actually, to be honest, the reason why I started following cricket. When I come to India, hopefully he can join, and then we could do a little bit of tennis, a little bit of cricket, and have fun and just spread positive, good vibes with people and celebrate sport," Djokovic was quoted as saying by Times Now on the sidelines of the Laureus World Sports Awards. Last year in May, when Kohli announced his retirement from Test cricket, the 24-time Grand Slam winner spared a moment to pay his respects to the batting stalwart. He took to his Instagram and reshared the Indian batter's Instagram post regarding his retirement, adding a tag that reads, "Incredible innings @virat.kohli."

Djokovic also shared a heart-felt message for his Indian fans, expressing deep gratitude for the "love, respect, and appreciation" he has received from tennis and fans across the globe. "My message is always love, respect, and appreciation for, first of all, all the support over the years that I personally have been receiving from all the Indian tennis fans and Indian sports fans around the world. There are so many that I've been meeting all this time. "And my message would also be 'See you very soon in India because I need to go to India' I've been feeling a calling to come for the last couple of years. So I really hope that I'll be able to come to India and do an event, play a match, or whatever it is. I really wish for that because I feel very close to Indian people," Djokovic added.

TG20 is not a financially viable event, says Arshad Ayub



Hyderabad: Former India cricketer and ex-president of Hyderabad Cricket Association, Arshad Ayub, said that the Governing Council for the TG20 being organised by the HCA should have its members elected at the Annual General Meeting and anyone else should not be appointed. Arshad, addressing the media here on Monday along

with former HCA Secretaries K John Manoj and T Seshnarayan, said that even if this norm were to be flouted, the Governing Council should at least have two members elected by the general body. "And, the TG20 is not a financially viable project. Most State Associations have incurred losses in trying to set up their own T20 League. So,

why is the HCA going for this league now and, instead of using in-house expertise, why are the administrators appointing outside consultants for the conduct of the league," Arshad said. Arshad appealed to the HCA Secretary Jeevan Reddy to convene the AGM at the earliest so that a proper system of administration can be restored. Speaking under the banner of 'Cricket First', Arshad said cricket had become the least priority for the administrators and that it was painful to see norms being repeatedly violated. "In fact, violating the HCA bye-laws which have been approved by the Supreme Court is a violation of the orders of the highest court of India itself," he said. The former India off-spinner also questioned the logic in starting the leagues

during peak summer without the appointment of selectors. T Seshnarayan said that the clubs, which are the stakeholders in the HCA, should be given the development fund. He said that the Supreme Court had approved the expansion of the Apex Council but unfortunately it had not been implemented by the HCA, thereby denying the formation of a more meaningful body. For his part, John Manoj felt that there were more experienced people in the HCA whose expertise could have been utilised for the proper conduct of the league matches. "There are many former international and first-class cricketers who are ready to serve the game without seeking any monetary benefits in the interest of the game and welfare of the players," he said.

Sunrisers Hyderabad look to use home advantage against inconsistent Delhi Capitals

Hyderabad: Sunrisers Hyderabad will look to make home advantage count when they take on inconsistent Delhi Capitals in a mid-table clash of the Indian Premier League here on Tuesday. Both teams sit on six points, though fourth-placed Sunrisers Hyderabad are marginally ahead, having played a game more and boasting a superior net run rate. For SRH, the narrative has been one of gradual correction. In the absence of skipper Pat Cummins, who has linked up with the squad but remains unavailable for this game, their bowling unit initially looked thin. But over the last two games, a relatively unheralded group has stepped up. Names like Praful Hinge, Sakib Husain and Shivang Kumar have seized their opportunity, injecting both energy and control into the attack. Hinge's standout performance against Rajasthan Royals was followed by a collective bowling

effort, led by Eshan Malinga, against Chennai Super Kings, where SRH delivered a clinical exhibition of death bowling, helping them secure back-to-back wins at home. That resurgence with the ball has been central to their recent momentum. However, the same cannot be said of their batting. SRH's approach remains aggressively high-risk, but the returns have been inconsistent. Openers Travis Head and Abhishek Sharma, along with stand-in captain Ishan Kishan, have not quite clicked together. The lack of collective starts has repeatedly exposed the middle order. As a result, the burden has largely fallen on Heinrich Klaasen. The South African has often walked in after the fall of quick wickets, forcing him to rebuild before launching. While capable of devastating acceleration, Klaasen has had to curb his natural instincts early, making his job significantly harder. Delhi Capitals, mean-



while, have inconsistency issues of their own. Their experienced players like KL Rahul, Pathum Nissanka and Tristan Stubbs have been among the runs, but the team needs bigger contributions from them, especially on batting-friendly surfaces. Sameer Rizvi, after starring in DC's opening two matches, has slipped into a lean patch with single-digit scores in the last three games. Their bowling attack, however, is built on variety and flexibility. In the absence of Mitchell

Starc, who was the team's standout performer last season, South African pacer Lungi Ngidi has led the attack well, combining economy with wicket-taking ability, claiming seven wickets in five games. Skipper Axar Patel has also been economical, providing control through the middle overs. However, left-arm wrist spinner Kuldeep Yadav is yet to deliver as per expectations, while pacers Mukesh Kumar and T Natarajan have shown promise in patches.

Danish Malewar emerges as rising star in Indian domestic cricket

Hyderabad: Danish Malewar is a 21-year-old right-handed top-order batter and right-arm leg-break bowler from Nagpur, Vidarbha, widely regarded as a rising talent in Indian domestic cricket. Known for his consistency in red-ball cricket and attacking intent in shorter formats, he was bought at Rs 30 lakh (base price) by Mumbai Indians for IPL 2026. Malewar began his cricketing journey at the City Gymkhana Academy under coaches

Swaroopraj Shrivastava and Nitin Gawande, who quickly recognised his discipline and determination. Joining at just seven years old, he progressed rapidly and represented the Vidarbha Under-14 side by age 12. His strong work ethic became evident early. Once returning from a tour at 2 am, he insisted on playing an Under-14 final the next morning and scored a century despite minimal rest. A key contributor to Vidarbha's title-winning Ranji Trophy

campaign, Malewar scored 783 runs in nine matches during the 2024-25 season at an average of 52, including two centuries and six half-centuries, finishing as the team's third-highest run-scorer. Comfortable at No. 3, he embraces the responsibility of building innings, focusing on seeing off the new ball and batting deep into matches. His approach reflects patience and clarity, having faced 100 or more deliveries in half of his innings so far.



Collectors Felicitate Pamuru KGBV Students



Ongole, April 21: Students of Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya (KGBV), Pamuru, secured outstanding results in the recently announced Intermediate examinations, achieving first and third ranks in the district in the MPC stream. District Collectors M. Vijaya Sunitha and P. Rajababu felicitated the meritorious students, K. Bhavani and B. Venkata Shirisha, at the camp office. The collectors also appreciated the teaching staff of the institution. Education department officials, KGBV Principal Katakam Sajana, parents, and others were present at the event.

Iran Keeps FIFA World Cup 2026 Participation Under Review Amid Security Concerns



Iran's participation in the upcoming FIFA World Cup 2026 remains uncertain, with the country's Sports Minister Ahmad Donyamali confirming that a final decision will depend on evolving security and political conditions in the ongoing tensions between US and Iran as per Iranian media. Addressing mediapersons on Tuesday, Donyamali said, "We had a discussion about the national team itself, the conditions of the national team, and we also formed a committee. Today we also have a meeting in the framework of this discussion, and we are fulfilling our legal duty. We must be prepared. In any case, it might be decided not to go. And if it is decided to go, we should be prepared anyway, so that our presence, if it is to be, is a strong presence. But again, I

emphasise, in this area, the decision-making is anyway based on the conditions that exist today, with the government and probably the National Security Council." His remarks come amid growing uncertainty over Iran's participation in the tournament, which is set to be co-hosted by the United States, Canada, and Mexico from June 11 to July 19 this year. Despite the concerns, FIFA president Gianni Infantino has publicly backed Iran's involvement, reiterating that the team remains part of the competition. Infantino recently met the Iranian squad in Turkey and praised their determination to compete on the global stage. Iran has qualified for the expanded 48-team tournament and is placed in Group G, alongside Belgium, New Zealand, and Egypt. As per the current

schedule, their matches are slated to be held in Los Angeles and Seattle. However, geopolitical tensions have cast doubt over their participation on US soil. Comments from former US President Donald Trump intensified the situation after he expressed reservations about the team's safety, suggesting it might not be appropriate for Iran to play in the United States. In response, Mehdi Taj, president of Iran's football federation, indicated that discussions with FIFA are ongoing, including the possibility of relocating matches to Mexico if security guarantees are not met. The 2026 edition of the FIFA World Cup will be the largest in history, featuring 48 teams and 104 matches, with the opening game scheduled in Mexico City and the final to be held in New Jersey.

"Step Ahead Of Vaibhav Sooryavanshi, Ayush Mhatre": R Ashwin Predicts The Next Big Thing In Indian Cricket

Punjab Kings (PBKS) batter Priyansh Arya lit up the Indian Premier League (IPL) with a blistering 37-ball 93 against Lucknow Super Giants (LSG) last week. The 24-year-old announced his arrival in the IPL last season, scoring 475 runs for PBKS in his debut season in the cash-rich league. Following his knock against LSG on Sunday, Ravichandran Ashwin praised Priyansh's ability to play impactful knocks, which puts him slightly ahead of the likes of teenagers Ayush Mhatre and Vaibhav Sooryavanshi. "Kisiko upar-neeche laane ka nahi hai, magar ye jo Priyansh Arya hai na. Jitna Ayush Mhatre, jitna Vaibhav Sooryavanshi hain, usse bhi thora ek kadam mujhe lag raha hain aage hain. Compare nahi kar raha hu. Kyunki yeh bada run bana leta hain, inke paas range of shots zyada hain ("I am not trying to put anyone above or below anyone, but Priyansh Arya, to me, looks a step ahead even of Ayush Mhatre and Vaibhav Sooryavanshi. I am not comparing them, because he goes on to make big scores and he has a wider range of shots.")," Ashwin said on his YouTube channel. After an 11-ball 39, 20-ball 57, and 37-ball 93 in the current campaign, Priyansh has proved that he isn't a flash in the pan and doesn't carry the proverbial 'headweight' after one good season. In five matches so far, Priyansh has scored 211 runs at an average of 42.2, striking at over 248. Meanwhile, Mhatre has been ruled out for the remainder of IPL 2026 owing to a hamstring injury. He has been CSK's leading run-scorer this year, with 201 runs in six innings at an average of 33.50 and a strike rate of 177.87, including two fifties and a best of 73. Sooryavanshi, on the other hand, remains one of the top performers of the tournament, amassing 246 runs in six matches to date.