

IN BRIEF

Army Welfare placement celebrates Intl Women's Day

Hyderabad, Mar 8 (UNI) : A Placement Drive For Widows, Widow Wards and Dependents of Armed Forces was organised to Celebrate International Women's Day by the Army Welfare Placement Organisation (AWPO), Secunderabad here on Saturday in collaboration with Magic Bus (India), FACTSET Research, Wipro Hyderabad & Element Brand under the aegis of HQ Telangana & Andhra Sub Area (TASA).

The Placement Drive was organised at the Golden Palm Sainik Bhavan in Secunderabad.

The event was graced by Station Commander & Deputy GOC TASA, Brigadier Nanjundeswara, who delivered an inspiring pep talk to engage with widows and dependent graduates.

Furthermore, Colonel B G Budhori (retired), Director AWPO (AP & Telangana), provided an event overview to the Station Commander.

A total of 10 MNCs and other companies actively participated, conducting interviews for 87 Widows & Dependents candidates.

Poultry India, IPEMA celebrate Intl Women's Day

Hyderabad, Mar 8 (UNI) : On the occasion of International Women's Day, Poultry India/IPEMA organized a special event here on Saturday to celebrate and recognize the contributions of women in the poultry sector.

The programme brought together IPEMA members and women entrepreneurs from across the industry to honor their achievements and discuss ways to foster greater participation of women in poultry.

During the program, speakers highlighted the challenges faced by women in the industry and praised their resilience, courage, and determination in overcoming obstacles.

Emphasizing the need for greater inclusivity, they encouraged women to seize emerging opportunities in the poultry sector and take on leadership roles.

The event also showcased Poultry India/IPEMA's ongoing efforts to empower women and promote their active participation in the industry.

Strengthening women's self help groups key to Telangana's economic progress: CM

(Standard Post Bureau) Hyderabad, Mar 8 : Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy on Saturday said that the state's economic progress depends on strengthening women's self-help groups (SHGs).

Speaking at the Indira Mahila Shakti programme organised by the Women and Child Welfare Department at Parade Ground here on the occasion of International Women's Day, he reiterated the government's commitment to women's empowerment and entrepreneurship development.

The Chief Minister praised the resilience and determination of women in Telangana, stating that they continue to draw inspiration from historical icons like Rani

Rudrama Devi and Chakali Ailamma. He highlighted that empowering one crore women as entrepreneurs could help Telangana achieve a one-trillion-dollar economy. Reddy also stressed the importance of self-reliance among women and encouraged them to take leadership roles in various sectors. To achieve these goals, the government has entrusted the management of government schools to women's groups to enhance their standards.

Additionally, 1.3 crore school uniforms are being stitched by women's groups, providing employment and income opportunities. The state has also allocated Rs 25 crore for the construction of Indira Mahila Shakti buildings.

Furthermore, women-led solar power generation plants are being established, enabling women to become entrepreneurs in the renewable energy sector, the CM said.

Reddy announced that the government is helping women to become RTC bus owners, with 1,000 electric buses set to be handed over to them in the coming days.

He emphasised that women should compete with major corporate players like Adani and Ambani, underscoring the need for business opportunities that allow them to enter traditionally male-dominated industries. The government is also taking steps to help women establish rice mills and godowns in every mandal

by providing land and loans to promote self-sufficiency. The Chief Minister assured that full government support would be extended to women entrepreneurs under the Indira Mahila Shakti initiative.

During the event, Reddy presented a Rs 22,794.22 crore cheque to 2,82,552 women self-help groups in Telangana under the Indira Mahila Shakti programme.

Additionally, Rs 44.80 crore was provided through loan insurance and accident insurance schemes to support SHG members. He also virtually laid the foundation stone for solar power plants under SHG leadership and unveiled the Indira Mahila Shakti Mission-2025 policy,

outlining a comprehensive plan for women's economic empowerment in Telangana.

Encouraging women to enter politics and leadership roles, the Chief Minister emphasised that they should follow in the footsteps of Indira Gandhi and NTR's strategic vision. He also criticised opposition leaders for politicising crisis such as droughts and infrastructure failures, urging them to prioritise constructive governance over negativity. The event was attended by Deputy Chief Minister Bhatti Vikramarka, Ministers, Government Advisors, MPs, MLAs, MLCs, Corporation Chairpersons, and senior officials. Thousands of women SHG members from across Telangana participated in the programme.

Ashwini Vaishnav lays foundation stone for 4 manufacturing units at Divitipally



(Standard Post Bureau) Hyderabad, Mar 8 : Union Minister for Railways, Electronics and IT, Ashwini Vaishnav laid the foundation stone for four manufacturing units at the Electronics Manufacturing Cluster at Divitipally, in Mahabubnagar district on Saturday. The Electronics Manufacturing Cluster in Divitipally was set up by the Telangana government under the EMC-2.0 Scheme to promote electronics manufacturing in the state.

On the occasion, Amara Raja laid the foundation

stone for its upcoming 'Giga Factory-1, Loham unit held its ground-breaking ceremony for its critical minerals refining and battery recycling while Scell Energy unit held its ground-breaking ceremony for its cell casing manufacturing and Altmin unit laid the foundation stone for its first LFP-CAM Giga Factory.

The foundation stone laying ceremony was graced by Telangana Minister for IT and Industries D. Sridhar Babu, Member of Parliament from Mahbubnagar Constituency Aruna D K, Senior officials from the

state government and industry representatives along with Mr. Jayadev Galla, Chairman & Managing Director, Amara Raja Energy and Mobility Ltd.

It may be mentioned here that the ARACT had signed an MOU with the Telangana Government in 2022 to set up Amara Raja Giga Corridor where the company will set up Lithium Cell and Battery Pack Manufacturing facilities with capacities of up to 16 GWh and 5GWh respectively for Indian and International markets.

Once operational, the project is expected to create

direct employment for 4,500 people and a similar number of indirect jobs in the state, making significant contributions to the socio-economic development of the region.

Praising the development work at Divitipally, the Union Minister said, "The battery technology is as essential for India's economy as steel and chemical, and it is heartening to see Amara Raja taking a lead in this space. The Union government is committed to the all-round growth of the sector and Divitipally region and will contribute further through modernization of railway station and establishing allied infrastructure. The Centre has committed over Rs 5,000 crore for State's railway development."

Sridhar Babu, said, "Telangana is committed to be the Industrial hub and has been a leader in adopting sustainability. The state government is committed to extending support to manufacturing initiatives such as these and we look forward to Giga Factory's inauguration.

33 pc reservation for women to be provided in elections soon: CM

Hyderabad, Mar 8 (UNI) : Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy on Saturday said that the state will provide a 33 percent reservation for women in elections soon.

Laying the foundation stone for Veerani Chakali Iamma Women's University here the CM hoped that the students of the University would utilise the reservation and represent people.

He said Women have leadership capabilities and can prove their sincerity by standing as a role model.

Naming a Women's University after Veerani Chakali Iamma is a big tribute to Telangana, he said.

The women's university should compete with reputed Universities at the international level, he appealed to students of women university to excel in all fields and fulfill former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi's dream. The CM said the government is implementing free bus travel for women. Women self help groups have been given the responsibility of management of the government schools.



Women's empowerment lies at the core of India's

Highlighting the transformative role of women in advancing India's growth, Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla on Saturday stated that women are not just participants in development but are taking the lead across various fields, including governance, science, defence, education, and entrepreneurship. On the occasion of International Women's Day, Om Birla reiterated that India is witnessing a new era where women are assuming leadership roles at every level—from grassroots democracy to the highest positions of power, a statement by Lok Sabha Secretariat said.

(See on page 2)

Nothing concrete done for women empowerment before ...



Chief Minister Nitish Kumar on Saturday came down heavily on previous regime for doing nothing concrete to empower women, saying only his government had taken a number of steps for women empowerment after coming to power in 2005 in Bihar.

(See on page 2)

India, Australia to focus on strategic partnership on



India and Australia agreed to strengthen their partnership under the Comprehensive Strategic Partnership, focusing on mutual dedication to regional security and defence cooperation.

(See on page 5)

Advanced Robotic Technology deployed for rescue operations at SLBC Tunnel

Hyderabad, Mar 8 (UNI) Telangana Irrigation & Civil Supplies Minister Capt N Uttam Kumar Reddy announced that advanced robotic technology has been deployed to expedite the ongoing rescue operations at the SLBC tunnel near Domalapenta in Nagarkurnool district, where eight workers remain trapped since February 22.

Describing the incident as a national disaster, he emphasised that the State Government is leveraging cutting-edge global technology to navigate the challenges in the final stretch of the 14-kilometer-long tunnel.

Accompanied by Achampet MLA Dr.

Chikkudu Vamsi Krishna on Saturday, the Minister conducted a site inspection and held a review meeting with officials from multiple national agencies. The meeting was attended by State Disaster Management Secretary Arvind Kumar, Army Commandant Parikshit Mehra, District Collector Badavath Santosh, SP Vaibhav Gaikwad Raghunath, Military Engineer Vikas Singh, NDRF Commandant Prasanna Kumar, SDRF Commandant Prabhakar, and senior officials from Singareni, Railways, NGRI, and HYDRAA.

Addressing the media, Uttam stated that such a critical tunnel accident is

unprecedented in the country. He explained that rescue teams have advanced up to 13.95 kilometers inside the tunnel, but the final 50 meters remain extremely unstable due to oxygen depletion, excessive water seepage, and metal debris from the collapsed Tunnel Boring Machine (TBM).

Given these hazardous conditions, robotic systems equipped with high-resolution cameras, infrared sensors, and robotic arms have been deployed to assess the situation and assist in the extraction process.

Reddy also revealed that cadaver dogs from Kerala detected a strong odour at a specific location, indicating

the presence of three individuals. He assured that the government would extend full support to the families of the missing workers. The Minister reviewed ongoing dewatering and desilting efforts and confirmed that further updates would be provided after a review meeting on March 11.

Despite relentless efforts by 11 national-level rescue teams over the past two weeks, locating and retrieving the trapped workers remains an arduous challenge. The government is consulting tunnel construction and rescue experts from around the world to determine the safest course of action. On

Saturday, 525 personnel were actively engaged in the rescue operations.

Providing further details, the Minister explained that while the Compressed Air System (CAS) is operational, the conveyor belt had collapsed during the accident. Although it has been largely restored, the final 50-100 meters remain non-functional. Despite the complexities of the situation, he reaffirmed that the government is fully committed to completing the mission, with no financial constraints affecting the operation. He announced an immediate allocation of Rs 4 crore for robotic rescue systems and directed officials to deploy them without delay.

New Zealand ready to have a second go against India: Santner



New Zealand captain Mitchell Santner concedes while the ICC Champions Trophy 2025 Final is not just any game - his team will prepare for facing India in the showdown in just the same way as they have done before all their other matches. (See on page 8)

All Women crew special trains flagged off on International Women's Day



(Standard Post Bureau)

Varanasi, March 8 : To celebrate International Women's Day (IWD), an all-women crew special train was flagged off from Visakhapatnam to Srikakulam Road by Smt. Jyotsna Bohra, President of the East Coast Railway Women's Welfare Organization (ECoRWWO), Waltair Division at Visakhapatnam station. The event was graced by Divisional Railway Manager Shri Lalit Bohra and executive members of ECoRWWO. Later, the Swachh Sewaks were felicitated by President Smt Jyotsna at the Visakhapatnam Station.

Waltair Division has consistently been at the forefront of promoting women's empowerment, actively engaging women in various roles such as track maintenance, train operations, and other key areas. Women have played vital roles in Route Relay Interlocking, train management, loco operations, ticket checking, and office duties. The Division has also established all-women teams at Loco Sheds, responsible for maintaining crucial parts of locomotives, and operates dedicated women's security teams, Meri Saheli and Subhadra Vahini, to ensure the safety and well-being of women passengers both on trains and at stations.



As part of the International Women's Day celebrations, Waltair Division organized a series of events at the Subham Sports Complex, where DRM Shri Lalit Bohra was the chief guest. The events included a seminar on Work-Life Balance, delivered by Mrs. Keerthi Aduri, Senior Executive (HR), Gitam University, and a workshop on Psychology and Stress Management by Dr. Ramya Spandana, Associate Professor, Psychiatry, Gitam University. Additionally, an awareness program on Women's Health & Nutrition was conducted by Divisional Medical Officer Dr. Bhashini Priyanka and Sr. DMO Dr. Tarun. A session

on women's rights with insights on the protection of women from domestic violence was delivered by Mrs. Anuradha Pappu, Senior Advocate and President of WAWA, Visakhapatnam. To conclude, fun games were organized to engage participants and offer some entertainment. The guest speakers were felicitated for their insightful guidance and awareness lectures. In his address, DRM Mr Lalit Bohra emphasized that International Women's Day is a time to reflect on the progress made in women's empowerment and to continue accelerating efforts to overcome gender inequality.

In-depth discussion in Jagriti Sammelan organized by Rajasthani Mahila Mandal on Women Empowerment



Various guests are seen on the stage of Jagriti Sammelan organised by Rajasthani Mahila Mandal in Mumbai on the occasion of International Women's Day.

(Standard Post Bureau)
Mumbai, March 8 : On the occasion of International Women's Day, Rajasthani Mahila Mandal successfully organized Jagriti Sammelan in Mumbai. The theme of this conference was - "How much women empowerment."

This thought-provoking event took place on the evening of Friday, 7th March, 2025 at Tejpal Hall, Gowalia Tank, Mumbai, in which eminent guest speakers discussed in depth the rights of women and their empowerment. As the chief guest of the conference, former Union Minister Smt. Smriti Irani mesmerized everyone with her speech. She gave useful information about various important efforts being made by the government in

the interest of women.

The conference was effectively conducted by Dr. Manju Mangal Prabhat Lodha, Chairperson of Lodha Foundation and Vice-President of Maharashtra State Hindi Sahitya Academy, who conducted the entire conference efficiently and shared her elegant views on various aspects of women empowerment. Renowned advocate Mrs. Mrinalini Deshmukh highlighted the difficulties faced by women in getting justice and the laws made in the interest of women. On this occasion, during the "Mahila Pratibha Samman Program", IAS officer Ms. Sarika Jain was honored with "Mahila Pratibha Samman", who cleared the UPSC examination on the strength of her self-confidence and

hard work even in adverse circumstances. Currently, she is working as a senior officer in the Income Tax Department. She was honored with a trophy, shawl and a bouquet. On this occasion, an inspirational video of Ms. Sarika Jain was also presented, which inspired everyone immensely.

Her story of struggle and success taught everyone that we should maintain patience and courage even in difficult times. Under the cultural presentation, famous artist of Bangalore, Anjana Chandak gave a solo play named 'Sita' regarding Sita's patience and self-confidence. In this play, she presented the self-confidence, tolerance and patience of Mother Sita in a lively form, which emotionally moved all the audience. At the beginning

of the conference, the welcome speech was given by Mrs. Rajshree Birla, Senior Trustee of Rajasthani Mahila Mandal, who warmly welcomed all the guests. In the end, the President of the Mandal, Mrs. Lata Rungta thanked everyone.

The concept of this conference was ensured by Urmila Rungta and Madhuri Nevatia. Lekha Rungta and the entire executive committee had a special contribution in making the conference successful. This Jagriti Sammelan established a meaningful dialogue on the real situation of women empowerment and underlined the collective responsibility of the society to move forward in this direction. A large number of women participated in the conference.

Grand ceremony organized at Banaras Locomotive Works on International Women's Day



(Standard Post Bureau)
Mumbai, March 8 : A grand ceremony was organized today on the occasion of International Women's Day in the Cinema Hall of Banaras Locomotive Works (BLW). Various activities were organized in this program to promote women empowerment, equality and self-reliance.

The program was inaugurated by lighting the lamp by the Chief Guest,

Special Guest and members of BLW Women Welfare Organization. Thereafter, the Chief Guest and Special Guests were welcomed by Mrs. Chitra Singh by giving planters. In her inaugural address, Chief Guest Mrs. Madhu Shukla appreciated the contribution of women employees and said that women are setting new dimensions of success in every field with their hard work and skill. Expressing

happiness over the increasing participation of women in BLW, she said that this institute is committed to giving equal opportunities to women and their development.

On this occasion, various inspirational speakers highlighted the achievements of women and the challenges they face. Expressing her views, renowned social worker and member of BLW Sexual

Harassment Committee, Mrs. Jagriti Rahi, invited as a guest speaker, said that the vision of self-reliant India cannot be fulfilled until women come into leadership roles in every field.

She believes that women have contributed as much to the freedom struggle as men. She inspired everyone and said that with the participation of women, both society and

Nothing concrete done for women empowerment before 2005 in Bihar: Nitish

Patna, Mar 8 (UNI) Chief Minister Nitish Kumar on Saturday came down heavily on previous regime for doing nothing concrete to empower women, saying only his government had taken a number of steps for women empowerment after coming to power in 2005 in Bihar.

Kumar while addressing a function organised to mark international women's day at his party office here said that no previous regime before 2005 had done something concrete for women empowerment in Bihar. His government had taken a number of steps for women empowerment after coming to power in Bihar in 2005, he pointed out.

"Women are making progress in all sectors including health, education, and other government services, due to opportunities given to them by our government", Chief Minister said adding that women were given 35 percent reservation in government services including police recruitment. Bihar was the first state in the country to give 50 percent reservation to women in Panchayati Raj institutions and local bodies, he pointed out.

On the eve of International Women's Day-2025

Indian Railway Catering and Tourism (West Zone) Mumbai Organized Entertainment and Health Awareness Programme for Women



(Standard Post Bureau)

Mumbai, March 8 : On the eve of International Women's Day-2025, seminars and entertainment programmes on mental health of women were organized in IRCTC, West Zone, Mumbai, in which women

employees of Human Resource Department, Finance, Catering and Tourism Departments were enthusiastically Participated.

On this occasion, all the women employees of the office were also honoured by giving them gifts.

JK Budget is 'anti-people and hollow': AIP

Srinagar, Mar 8 (UNI) : Awami Ittehad Party (AIP) headed by jailed Member Parliament Engineer Rashid termed the Budget presented by Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Omar Abdullah in the Assembly on Friday as "anti-people and hollow."

This was informed by State Secretary of AIP Sheikh Ashiq here on Saturday.

He said the budget offers nothing substantial for the common masses, industries, commerce, traders or transporters.

Addressing a press conference in Srinagar, Ashiq warned that any

move to increase petrol, diesel prices, or impose a 5% hike in taxes on Aviation Turbine Fuel (ATF) would be met with strong political resistance, as it will have a cascading effect on all sectors and burden every citizen. "We have pursued extensively to ensure a decrease in ATF taxes. It was the Lieutenant Governor of J&K who, on our request, slashed ATF tax in 2021. Now, the Omar-led government is set to increase it substantially. This is unacceptable. Such moves will not only burden the people but will also trigger a hike in the prices of essential goods and

services, affecting every household and business. AIP will fight tooth and nail against any such hikes," he said. The AIP State Secretary said that despite tall claims, the budget failed to address key concerns.

"There is no mention of welfare measures for industries and commerce. It is an empty budget. The promise of 200 free electricity units and 12 LPG cylinders has been completely ignored. Even the Antyodaya Anna Yojana (AAY) beneficiaries, who are very few in number, will see limited benefit that too with condition," he said.

Equality is the core of Women's Day, says Minister, Seethakka



(Standard Post Bureau)

Hyderabad, Mar 8 : Panchayat Raj, Women and Child Welfare Minister Dr Danasari Anasuya Seethakka emphasised that equality is the fundamental purpose of International Women's Day.

Speaking as the chief guest at the "Run for Action 2025" event, organised by the Hyderabad City Police at People's Plaza on Saturday morning to mark the occasion, Seethakka highlighted the importance of women's empowerment and the need for gender equality in all aspects of life. She congratulated the organizers for holding the event and extended her best wishes to everyone on International Women's Day.

Seethakka stressed that every individual must be mentally and physically strong. She recalled how

women, who were once marginalized in society, have fought tirelessly for their rightful place. International Women's Day originated from a movement demanding equal pay for equal work, and today, the occasion serves as a reminder that there is no difference between men and women. She reiterated that the event was being celebrated with the intent of promoting equality for all.

Commending the efforts of the police in ensuring women's safety, she noted that Hyderabad has become a secure environment for those coming to the city for jobs, employment, and business opportunities.

However, she emphasised that responsibility does not lie solely with the police. Society as a whole must work towards making women feel safe, and men

should respect and treat women as they do their own family members. If such a mindset prevails, women will be able to move around freely and return home safely.

She also raised concerns about the growing menace of drug addiction, which she said is destroying lives and eroding dignity. She called for collective efforts to create a society that is conscious of the dangers of substance abuse. Urging everyone to work towards the protection and development of women, she concluded with an inspiring message: "Let's empower women, respect women, and help them walk with self-respect."

Hyderabad Police Commissioner CV Anand also addressed the gathering, expressing his pride in the increasing

representation of women in the police force. He praised Seethakka as a symbol of perseverance and an inspiration to many. Highlighting the progress of women in law enforcement, he stated that 8 out of 20 DCPs in Hyderabad are women, and recently, women SHOs have been appointed in both Law and Order and Traffic Police Stations.

Anand further noted that out of 18,000 police personnel in the Commissionerate, 30 per cent are women, underscoring the strides women have made in the field. He commended their contributions and reaffirmed the commitment to fostering gender equality and ensuring women's safety. The event concluded on a high note, celebrating the spirit of women's empowerment and reinforcing the collective responsibility towards a more inclusive society.

The run commenced from People's Plaza under the auspices of the Hyderabad Police, attracting a large number of young men and women.

Participants took part in both the 5K and 2K run competitions, showcasing enthusiasm and determination. The event concluded with the distribution of prizes to the winners, celebrating their achievements.

ED seizes private jet related to Rs 850 cr Falcon scam accused at RGIA

Hyderabad, Mar 8 (UNI) : The Enforcement Directorate (ED) has seized a private jet, worth about Rs 14 crore at Rajiv Gandhi International Airport (RGIA) in Shamshabad near here, owned by Amardeep Kumar, the prime accused in the Rs 850 crore Falcon Scam.

The ED officials seized the 8-seater business jet 'N935H Hawker 800A' at RGIA on Friday as part of a money laundering investigation against a Hyderabad-based company and its promoters who allegedly duped numerous investors of crores of rupees in a 'Ponzi Scheme "scam", official sources said here on Saturday.

The ED had registered a case after the scam was unearthed last month.

ED sources said that Kumar purchased the jet in 2024 for \$1.6 million (Rs 14 crore) via Prestige Jets Inc.

The ED claims that proceeds from the Falcon Group's Ponzi scheme were diverted to purchase the jet.

After the scam broke out the prime suspect used the aircraft to flee to Dubai on January 22 along with an accomplice.

After it returned to RGI Airport, the ED team seized the jet and the crew members were questioned, and a close associate's statement was recorded.

The Cyberabad police initially registered a case against the Falcon Group for allegedly collected Rs 1,700 crore from investors, promising high returns through a fraudulent invoice discounting investment scheme.

Out of the total funds collected, ₹850 crore was repaid, but 6,979 investors were left unpaid.

On February 15, the Cyberabad police arrested Pavan Kumar Odela (Vice President) and Kavaya Nalluri (Director of Falcon Capital Ventures) in connection with the scam but its Chairman & MD, Amardeep Kumar, and other senior officials are absconding.

Peon at Land Records office trapped in ACB

Nashik, Mar 8 (UNI) : A peon at Land Records office here has been arrested by the Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB) while allegedly accepting a bribe of Rs 3.5 lakh for himself and the Superintendent of Land Records from a complainant in Niphad tehsil of the district. Accused Nitendra Kashinath Gadhe, who was working as a peon at the Land Records Office, Niphad, had demanded a bribe of Rs four lakh for himself and Deputy Superintendent of Land Records, Bhabad from complainant in return for marking the boundary of the land in Niphad tehsil of the district, sources in ACB said on Saturday. However, after bargaining, the bribe amount was reduced to Rs 3.5 lakh.

Large Consignment of Yanam Liquor Seized in West Godavari



(Standard Post Bureau)

Vijayawada, March 8 : In a major crackdown on illegal liquor transportation, the Prohibition and Excise Department of West Godavari, under the supervision of District Prohibition and Excise Officer Dr. R.S. Kumareshwaran, seized a large quantity of Yanam liquor. Acting on credible information, Assistant Excise Superintendent R. Prasad Reddy instructed Tanuku Prohibition and Excise Inspector Y. Manikantha Reddy and his team to conduct vehicle inspections in Kantheru village, Iragavaram Mandal.

During the inspection, officials intercepted a Hyundai Creta car transporting 219 liquor bottles (209 liquor bottles and 10 tins of beer) from Yanam to Kantheru village. A total of 43.1 liters of illicit

liquor was seized, with an estimated black-market value of around ₹1 lakh. The car used for transportation is valued at approximately ₹5 lakh.

The primary accused, Kovvuri Venkata Srinivasa Reddy, was arrested at the scene. He has a history of involvement in illegal liquor trafficking and has been absconding in multiple excise cases across Tadepalligudem, Bhimadolu, and Devarapalli stations. He was also previously engaged in supplying Goa liquor.

Additionally, Konaala Venkata Satyanarayana Reddy, alias Bharat Reddy alias Chinni, has been identified as a co-accused in this case. Another suspect, Baadarla Prem Kumar, has been identified as the supplier of Yanam liquor. Authorities have intensified search

operations to apprehend the absconding accused and assured that they will be arrested soon.

"The enforcement Director of Excise Rahuldev Sharma and Commissioner of Prohibition and Excise Nishanth have emphasized their commitment to preventing revenue leakage by bringing such unscrupulous activities to light. Meanwhile, Principal Secretary Mukesh Kumar Meena expressed satisfaction over the successful detection of this illegal operation.

The raids were conducted following the directives of Deputy Commissioner of Prohibition and Excise (Eluru) B. Srilatha and Assistant Commissioner of Prohibition and Excise Prabhu Kumar, officials confirmed.

Congress leader Sami assures displaced teachers association to resolve their problems

Hyderabad, Mar 8 (UNI) Senior Congress leader and contested MLA Syed Abdul Sami Athar on Saturday assured the Telangana teachers and employees affected and displaced by GO 317, to resolve their problems as per the Congress manifesto; This was announced by Abdul Sami during a meeting organized by Ajay, President of the 317 Dislocated Employees and Teachers Association.

During the meeting, the Congress leader carefully listened to the issues faced by the affected employees and assured them that efforts would be made to resolve these problems as per the Congress manifesto. Abdul Sami also stated that a detailed report on this meeting would be submitted to AICC Telangana In-Charge Meenakshi Natarajan and the Cabinet Sub-Committee Ministers—D Sridhar Babu (IT Minister), Damodar Raj Narasimha (Health Minister), and Ponnamp Prabhakar (Transport Minister). The affected teachers, employees, and their family members expressed their heartfelt gratitude to Abdul Sami for his support and assurance.

TPCC president and MLC B Mahesh Kumar Goud and Ponnamp Prabhakar had earlier also assured justice to those affected by GO 317, which was issued by the previous BRS government to introduce a zonal system in the allocation of jobs and transfers.

Ministers seek sanction of new railway lines, Kazipet Division from Railway Minister

Hyderabad, Mar 8 (UNI) A delegation of Telangana ministers and MPs, led by State Roads, Buildings, and Cinematography Minister Komatireddy Venkat Reddy, met Union Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw at Shamshabad Airport on Saturday morning.

The delegation, comprising Ministers Konda Surekha, Dhanasari Anasuya (Seethakka), Bhuvanagiri MP Chamala Kiran Kumar Reddy, and Warangal MP Kadiyam Kavaya, sought the Union Government's support for sanctioning new railway lines in Telangana and establishing the Kazipet Railway Division.

Addressing the media after the meeting, Minister Komatireddy Venkat Reddy stated that the delegation met the Union Minister following the instructions of Chief Minister Enumula Revanth Reddy.

They urged the Centre to fully fund the construction of new railway lines, establish a new railway division in Kazipet, and expedite the completion of the railway coach manufacturing unit in Kazipet. Highlighting the significance of the Kazipet railway division, he emphasized its crucial role in Warangal's development, the second-largest city in Telangana.

He also pointed out that under the South Central Railway, there are currently only three zones—Secunderabad, Hyderabad, and Nanded—necessitating the formation of a new division in Kazipet to enhance operational

efficiency.

The minister argued that Kazipet, which handles high passenger and freight traffic, would generate more revenue than the Guntur and Hyderabad divisions if made a separate railway division.

He also expressed optimism about constructing a ring rail around Warangal to complement the Regional Ring Road (RRR) project.

Additionally, the delegation discussed the Vikarabad-Krishna railway line, which would connect backward towns like Parigi, Kodangal, Tekal Kode, Narayanpet, and Maktal in southern Telangana. The proposed line would support cement industries near Tandur and aid future industrial expansion.

Given its freight transport potential, they urged the inclusion of this railway line in the Prime Minister's National Master Plan for Gati Shakti, highlighting its benefits for both the Railways and Telangana's economy.

Concerns regarding the final location survey of the Gadwal-Dornakal railway line were also brought to the Union Minister's attention. Farmers from Khammam Parliamentary Constituency expressed distress over the proposed route passing through Kusumanchi, a densely populated area with a significant number of SC, ST, BC, and minority farmers.

The route also intersects a region under the Sthambhadri Urban Development Authority

(SUDA), home to India's largest Buddha stupa, a migratory bird habitat, and the Paleru reservoir.

Given the financial burden of land acquisition, the minister urged consideration of an alternative route through Vennaram, Mannegudem, Abhipalem, Maripeda, and Mothe instead of Kusumanchi.

Furthermore, the Telangana government is developing a 370-km-long Regional Ring Road (RRR) around Hyderabad to create a semi-urban belt. Minister Komatireddy Venkat Reddy proposed constructing a Regional Ring Rail alongside the RRR to enhance connectivity between urban and rural areas, boost employment, alleviate rural poverty, and stimulate industrial growth.

Other key requests included the sanctioning of new railway lines: Kalvakurthi to Macherla (120 km), Dornakal to Miryalaguda (97 km), a proposed greenfield dry port at Medak to Bandar Port in Andhra Pradesh (approximately 461 km), and Pandurangapuram to Bhadrachalam (16 km). These projects, he emphasized, would significantly contribute to the socio-economic development of backward and remote areas in Telangana. Minister Komatireddy Venkat Reddy also raised concerns about multiple railway-level crossings in the erstwhile Nalgonda district, which have been causing traffic congestion and accidents.

Two-day R&D Showcase with theme Tech for sustainable futures begins

Hyderabad, Mar 8 (UNI) : A two-day R&D Showcase, showcasing Research Projects with a theme Tech for sustainable futures, began at IIIT Hyderabad here on Saturday.

This year's Showcase, which will conclude on Sunday, was themed Tech for Sustainable Futures.

Over 300 research posters, demos and models from IIIT's 28 research centres, roundtable discussions on AI on the Edge, Green AI, and Leveraging Emerging Technologies for Social Good and a research startup showcase by Center for Innovation and Entrepreneurship (CIE), being showcased during the two-day event.

The R&D Showcase formally kicked off with a keynote address on Challenges Toward the next Generation of AI Systems by Prof Martial Hebert, Dean and School of Computer Science, Carnegie Mellon University.

Giving his introductory remarks, IIIT Hyderabad Prof and Director P J Narayanan said, "As a research-focussed institution, the enthusiasm of the students and the results of their research are what we cherish most and present to the world. The Showcase celebrates the spirit of Research & Development where faculty and students share their work with the public in keeping with our endeavour to promote applied research that benefits society."

This was followed by an inaugural panel discussion on Net-Zero Software: Rethinking Tech's Role in Climate Action by Dr Karthik Vaidyanathan from IIIT's Software Engineering Research Centre; Naveen Balani, Global Managing Director and Chief Technologist - Tech sustainability innovation, Accenture, and Co-founding member of Green software foundation; Srinivasan Rakhunathan, cloud supply chain & sustainability, senior program manager, Microsoft, and Professor Sridhar Chimalakonda, Associate Prof and Head of CSE Department, IIT Tirupati.

The panelists felt that Green Software Engineering is a growing and evolving domain. More awareness is needed to help people become sensitised about it and the discipline to become more known.

The moderator talked about a social media post that highlighted the impact of ChatGPT on the Environment.

ChatGPT with over 175 billion parameters, consumes a substantial amount of energy, as mentioned in the social media post.

Some of the exhibits include, among many, the Autonomous Wheelchair, designed to enhance mobility and independence for individuals with disabilities.

Some of the other exhibits include DriveSim, which is the driving simulator platform for the Indian environment and to model driver behaviour in Indian conditions.

The others include Tree Insights and Advanced Multimodel Research Vehicle. The R & D Showcase 2025 provided a unique opportunity for viewers to interact with faculty and students to understand their work in more tangible forms through demos, prototypes and presentations in keeping with the institute's endeavour to promote applied research that benefits society.

Telangana officials meet Union Minister, Seek Support for Animal Husbandry, Fisheries & Dairy Sectors

Hyderabad, Mar 8 (UNI) Sabyasachi Ghosh, Special Chief Secretary to the Government of Telangana, along with the Director of Animal Husbandry, Director of Fisheries, and MD of Vijaya Dairy, met Union Minister for Animal Husbandry, Fisheries, Dairy Development, and Panchayati

Raj, Rajiv Ranjan Singh, here on Saturday to discuss the ongoing activities of the department and seek central assistance.

During the meeting, Sabyasachi Ghosh urged the Union Minister to extend full support from the Central Government to enhance the welfare of farmers in Telangana.

A special request was made for the sanction of 100 mobile veterinary clinics to strengthen animal healthcare services in the state.

The Union Minister acknowledged the state's efforts and suggested the adoption of advanced technologies to increase the productivity of fish ponds.

He also emphasized the need to integrate the workforce in the dairy and fisheries sectors into the organized sector to improve their welfare and ensure better working conditions.

Additionally, he lauded Telangana for securing two national awards in recognition of its achievements in the sector, according to an official statement.

STANDARD POST

DMK calls for nationwide opposition to delimitation exercise

The Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK) has decided to mobilise political parties across India to oppose the Union government's proposed delimitation exercise.

The decision was taken during a meeting of DMK Parliamentarians at the party headquarters, 'Anna Arivalayam', under the leadership of Tamil Nadu Chief Minister and DMK president M. K. Stalin.

According to sources within the party, CM Stalin assigned key ministers to visit different states and engage with regional political parties, urging them to join a joint action committee that will scrutinise the implications of the delimitation proposal.

State IT Minister Palanivel Thiaga Rajan has been tasked with reaching out to Kerala, while Ministers EV Velu, Kanimozhi Karunanidhi, and TRB Rajaa will travel to Andhra Pradesh, West Bengal, and Odisha, respectively. Additionally, DMK MPs have been directed to collaborate with other opposition MPs in Delhi to mount a strong challenge against the delimitation exercise in Parliament.

The party has consistently voiced concerns about the issue, alongside its opposition to the Union government's three-language policy.

The DMK plans to raise multiple issues in the upcoming parliamentary session. Apart from delimitation and the three-language policy, the party will focus on the delay in the allocation of Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) funds, the denial of flood relief assistance, and the non-disbursement of funds under the Samagra Shiksha scheme due to Tamil Nadu's rejection of the National Education Policy (NEP).

The decision to aggressively push these issues comes amid criticism from opposition parties, including the newly formed Tamizhaga Vetri Kazhagam (TVK), led by actor Vijay, regarding the DMK MPs' performance in Parliament.

By taking a proactive stance, the DMK aims to counter these criticisms effectively. Chief Minister Stalin has also criticised what he describes as the Union government's discriminatory allocation of funds for language development.

He highlighted that while Tamil is spoken by approximately eight crore people, only Rs 74 crore has been allocated for its development.

In contrast, Sanskrit, which has a significantly smaller number of speakers, has received Rs 1,488 crore. CM Stalin has been vocal about the BJP-led government's alleged attempts to impose Hindi on Tamil Nadu through the NEP's three-language policy. His opposition extends beyond India, as he recently supported a protest by the Tamil diaspora in the United States against the policy.

Tamil Diaspora Protests in the US A group of Tamil protesters in Dallas, US, recently demonstrated against the Union government's language policy, accusing it of undermining Tamil Nadu's long-standing two-language system. CM Stalin expressed solidarity with the demonstrators by sharing a news report and a video of the protest, using the hashtag #VazhgaTamil.

The DMK's firm stand against both the three-language policy and the proposed delimitation exercise signals its continued resistance to what it perceives as attempts to diminish Tamil Nadu's linguistic and political influence.

Ajit Pawar to present first MahaYuti govt budget amid financial constraints

Amid financial constraints to continue freebies and simultaneously carry out capital expenditure despite rising public debt, the fiscal and revenue deficits, Maharashtra Deputy Chief Minister and Finance and Planning Minister Ajit Pawar will present the state budget for the year 2025-26 on Monday.

It will be the first budget of the newly-elected MahaYuti government but it will be Ajit Pawar's 12th budget as Finance Minister. He will become the second Finance Minister after Sheshrao Wankhede (who had presented a record 13 times) to present the state budget more than 10 times not necessarily in succession. Former finance minister Jayant Patil had presented the budget 10 times and Sushilkumar Shinde nine times.

Ajit Pawar faces the major challenge of bridging the gap between receipts and expenditures while laying a much-needed emphasis on financial discipline in a bid to chase the state government's much more ambitious target of a \$1 trillion economy by 2027-28. Ahead of the presentation of the



budget for 2025-26, the state government has initiated a 30 per cent spending cut in revenue and capital expenditure from annual allocation in various degrees across departments.

The state finance department has estimated that the fiscal deficit has already crossed Rs 2 lakh crore against the budget estimate of Rs 1.10 lakh crore by the end of 2024-25 due to a slew of welfare and development schemes of Rs 96,000 crore including Ladki Bahin Yojana launched in the July last year.

However, the experts believe that the fiscal deficit may widen to 4.8 per cent of gross state domestic product (GSDP), significantly higher than earlier estimates of 2.6 per

cent if the state government continues to implement various welfare and development schemes unabatedly. Fiscal deficit is projected to be lowered to 2.3 per cent of GSDP by 2026-27. The populist schemes were amounting to 2.2 per cent of GSDP and 19 per cent of revenue receipts. A state finance department officer said with committed expenditures (salaries, pension, and interest payments) already accounting for 55 per cent of revenue, only 26 per cent of revenue is available for discretionary spending, including capex. Despite being India's largest state by economic size, Maharashtra's capex-to-GSDP ratio averaged just 1.5 per cent from fiscal

2019 to 2024, placing it at 16th out of 19 large states.

The state government has budgeted a revenue deficit of Rs 20,500 crore, which is 0.5 per cent of GSDP for FY25. With additional funds earmarked for women welfare schemes such as Rs 25,000 crore for the Majhi Ladki Bahin Yojana, Rs 6,056 towards skill development, Rs 4,317 crore towards social justice, Rs 4,185 crore towards public health and allocation towards other welfare measures, the revenue deficit would be 1.3 per cent of GSDP in FY25. However, the state government faces an acid test to fulfil its poll promise of increasing monthly aid to Rs 2,100 from Rs 1,500 to women beneficiaries under the

Ladki Bahin Yojana.

"This change is likely to increase the budget allocation by 40 per cent, from Rs 46,000 crore (1.1 per cent of the GSDP) to Rs 64,400 crore (1.5 per cent of the GSDP)," according to the finance department sources.

Another challenge the government faces is rapidly rising public debt even though it has proposed to maintain the tax revenue of 11.70 per cent of GSDP in 2024-25, 2025-26 and 2026-27. The total debt stock, which was Rs 7.11 lakh crore in 2023-24 and expected to increase to Rs 7.82 lakh crore in 2024-25 will be 17.59 per cent and 18.35 per cent respectively.

However, the government has estimated total debt of 18.61 per cent and 18.91 per cent in 2025-26 and 2026-27 respectively in the wake of its focus on generating productive assets. However, the government claims that the total debt will be maintained within the permissible limit of 25 per cent of the GSDP.

Incidentally, NITI Aayog in its report on the Fiscal Health Index released in January has cautioned the Maharashtra government about the surge in the debt. "Debt has grown at

an average rate of 9.92 per cent annually between 2018-19 to 2022-23. The majority of the borrowing was used to repay older borrowing in the current period. While the Debt to GSDP ratio went down marginally to 18.1 per cent in the current year from 19.3 per cent in 2021-22, it stood at 17.27 per cent in 2018-19. The ratio of interest payment to Revenue Receipts has also declined from 12.2 per cent in 2018-19 to 10.3 per cent in 2022-23," reads the report.

However, the finance department sources said that Ajit Pawar in his budget will give the government's road map to increase own tax and non-tax revenue by tapping the loopholes and curbing tax evasion. He will also provide a government blueprint to regain Maharashtra's revenue surplus state position. Further, Ajit Pawar is expected to release an action plan to higher growth of the state economy than that of the country's economy. The Medium Term Fiscal Policy Statement has clearly indicated that its successful implementation will take the state's economy to \$1 trillion by 2028 and \$3.5 trillion by the nation's centennial year.

Complex surgery successfully performed at KIMS Saveera ; Surgeons remove all stones



(Standard Post Bureau) A 23-year-old student from Hindupur had been suffering from severe abdominal pain for the past six months. After seeking treatment elsewhere, he was diagnosed with chronic calcific pancreatitis (pancreas filled with stones). Despite undergoing medication, he found no relief and approached KIMS Saveera Hospital.

At KIMS Saveera, Consultant Surgical Gastroenterologist Dr. N. Mahammad Shahid performed a highly complex surgery and successfully removed all the stones. Due to the pancreas' location and its delicate structure, such procedures are extremely challenging. Suturing the pancreas is also a difficult task, as any leakage can pose a significant risk to other organs. If left untreated, this condition could have been life-threatening.

Understanding Chronic

Calcific Pancreatitis. Dr. Shahid explained that this condition is more commonly seen in men aged 30-40 and is found in 50% of such cases. Among those diagnosed, 25-80% develop Type 3c diabetes, which affects blood sugar regulation and digestive enzyme production. Stones in the pancreas form over time within pancreatic tissues and obstruct pancreatic ducts, leading to severe pain and improper digestion. As time passes, the condition worsens, impairing pancreatic function. Since the pancreas plays a crucial role in digestion and blood sugar regulation, its dysfunction results in severe nutritional deficiencies and other complications.

Causes of Pancreatic Stones: Excessive alcohol consumption, Cancer, stones, or traumatic injuries, Genetic factors, Chemotherapy, Autoimmune diseases like

lupus, High calcium levels in the blood, High blood lipid levels

Symptoms: Pancreatic stones lead to various symptoms, affecting both digestive functions and metabolism. Patients may experience fatty stools, significant weight loss, and, in severe cases, complete pancreatic dysfunction. In 85% of cases, the pancreas loses more than 90% of its function. Additionally, the inability to produce insulin results in Type 3c diabetes.

Treatment Approaches: The primary approach includes lifestyle modifications, pain management, pancreatic enzyme supplements, and insulin therapy when necessary. In some cases, endoscopic procedures are used to remove stones or insert stents. However, when stones are large or numerous, surgery becomes essential. Since pancreatic surgery is highly complex, it is performed only when necessary.

Women's empowerment lies at the core of India's development journey: Om Birla

New Delhi, Mar 8 (UNI) Highlighting the transformative role of women in advancing India's growth, Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla on Saturday stated that women are not just participants in development but are taking the lead across various fields, including governance, science, defence, education, and entrepreneurship.

On the occasion of International Women's Day, Om Birla reiterated that India is witnessing a new era where women are assuming leadership roles at every level—from grassroots democracy to the highest positions of power, a statement by Lok Sabha Secretariat said.

He paid tribute to the inspiring vision of the 15 Women Members of the Constituent Assembly stating that their contributions continue to energize the nation and serve as a guiding force for future generations.

"Our past shows the way forward, and these pioneering women laid the foundation for gender equality, inclusive governance, and women's empowerment in India," the Lok Sabha Speaker stressed.

Emphasising that women's empowerment lies at the core of India's development journey, Om Birla highlighted that as the nation celebrates 75 years of the Indian Constitution,

it is essential to recognize the immense contributions of the 15 women members of the Constituent Assembly, whose vision and dedication helped shape India's democratic framework.

He also reflected on India's deep-rooted tradition of reverence for women, where motherhood, strength, sacrifice, and resilience are celebrated as integral values of society.

The Lok Sabha Speaker applauded their growing presence in defence, where they are now flying fighter jets, serving in combat roles, and commanding naval expeditions.

He noted that women's leadership in governance is stronger than ever, with majority of elected representatives in rural local bodies being women. This, Om Birla said, is a testament to the growing strength of women-led development in the country.

The Speaker expressed confidence that a day would come when women would hold a majority in elected bodies even without reservations, solely on merit and capability.

Highlighting the historic Nari Shakti Vandan Act, Om Birla described it as a transformative reform in India's democratic landscape. As the first law passed in the new Parliament building, this Act symbolizes India's unwavering commitment to gender equality and

ensures that women have a greater role in shaping policies and decision-making at the highest levels.

Recognising the economic contributions of women, he praised their role in entrepreneurship, self-help groups, and micro-enterprises, which are transforming rural economies and driving financial independence for countless families. The Speaker also reiterated the urgent need to achieve 100 per cent female literacy, emphasizing that education is the cornerstone of women's empowerment.

Om Birla called for 2025 to be a landmark year for women's self-reliance and leadership, ensuring that Nari Shakti continues to drive India's future. He urged all sectors of society to work together in creating an inclusive environment where every woman receives equal opportunities, respect, and the freedom to excel.

The Speaker emphasized that International Women's Day should not just be a celebration but a commitment to advancing women's leadership across all fields. He called upon every individual to contribute towards building a society where women are at the forefront of innovation, governance, and nation-building.

PM Modi's Mauritius visit is timely, will provide orientation to future engagement: FS Misri

New Delhi, Mar 8 (UNI) : Prime Minister Narendra Modi's March 11-12 visit to Mauritius to attend the National Day celebrations as the Chief Guest is a very timely visit and will enable both sides to take stock of bilateral ties and provide orientation to engagement in the coming months and years, Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri said today.

Addressing a special media briefing ahead of the PM's visit, the FS said that during the visit, Prime Minister Modi and Prime Minister Navinchandra Ramgoolam will together inaugurate some projects that have been implemented with Indian assistance and will also witness the signing of several MOUs on cooperation in the field of capacity building, bilateral trade, tackling of cross-border financial crimes and promoting small and medium enterprises.

The PM will also interact with members of the Indian community, friends of India and socio-cultural organizations in Mauritius during the visit.

An Indian naval ship will be present in Mauritius for the March 12 occasion and in addition, the Indian Air Force's Aakash Ganga skydiving team will also participate in the

ceremonies, the FS informed. The PM will arrive in Port Louis very early in the morning of March 11 and will be accorded a ceremonial welcome on his arrival. He will visit the Sir Seewoosagur Ramgoolam Botanical Garden to pay homage to Sir Seewoosagur Ramgoolam, the former Prime Minister and the founding father of Mauritius, and Sir Anerood Jugnauth, former President and former PM of Mauritius.

Prime Minister Modi will call on the new President of Mauritius, Dharambeer Gokhool, which will be followed by bilateral meetings with Prime Minister Ramgoolam, and also meetings with other political leaders during the visit.

To a question on the Agaléga island, the FS said that during the previous visit of PM Modi in 2015 the two sides had inked an MOU on the improvement of facilities on Agaléga Island for sea and air connectivity.

In February last year, the facilities were jointly inaugurated by the Prime Ministers of the two countries. "The facilities have contributed to enhancing connectivity between the island and mainland Mauritius," the FS

said, adding that during his visit last year he was told how a very devastating cyclone had torn through Mauritius and had particularly affected Agaléga quite badly.

"We had managed to mobilize our assets very quickly and utilizing and leveraging the facilities that had been created in Agaléga were able to deliver much needed assistance and relief material to the people in need on the island. There were sorties also that were conducted between Agaléga and the mainland to undertake additional relief operations. So, during my visit there, my interlocutors were extremely appreciative of the fact that it is the creation of these facilities that has allowed this kind of early and very quick response to take place, and to bring real relief to people who were affected by this disaster," the FS said.

The Mauritius Prime Minister Navin Ramgoolam told parliament last week that PM Modi's upcoming state visit "is a singular privilege" which the Indian PM is undertaking "despite his extremely busy agenda". "It is a testament to the close relations of our two nations," the Mauritius PM said. PM Modi will be

the Guest of Honour at the flag raising ceremony on March 12, which will be held at noon at Champ-de-Mars, Port-Louis. The ceremony will be followed by a traditional cultural program at which Mauritian artists will be on stage to highlight the cultural diversity in Mauritius.

PM Modi had last visited Port Louis on March 11 and 12, 2015, when the two sides signed several agreements, including one related to the facilities in Agaléga island. The visit is PM Modi's second State Visit as the Chief Guest at Mauritius's National Day Celebrations after 2015.

In March 2024, President Droupadi Murmu visited Mauritius from March 11 to 13 to attend the National Day celebrations on March 12 as the chief guest. In November last year, PM Modi had congratulated Mauritius Prime Minister Navin Ramgoolam on his election victory in Mauritius.

The PM's visit reaffirms the enduring commitment of both countries to further deepen, enhance, and consolidate their unique and special relationship.

Indian-origin people comprise nearly 70% of the island's population of 1.3 million. The Mahatma Gandhi Institute (MGI) was

established in 1976 as a joint venture between India and Mauritius for promoting Indian culture.

Mauritius also hosts the World Hindi Secretariat, an India-Mauritius bilateral organization to promote Hindi globally, which was constructed with Indian funding and inaugurated during the visit of President Kovind in March 2018.

India is amongst the largest trading partners of Mauritius.

Mauritius is the second largest source of FDI into India for the FY 2023-24, after Singapore. The two countries signed the Comprehensive Economic Cooperation and Partnership Agreement (CECPA) on 22 February 2021, during the visit of EAM S. Jaishankar after nearly 15 years of negotiations. It is the first trade agreement signed by India with an African country.

At present, 11 Indian PSUs are in Mauritius, including Bank of Baroda, Life Insurance Corporation, New India Assurance Corporation, Telecommunications Consultant India Ltd, Indian Oil (Mauritius) Limited, Mahanagar Telephone (Mauritius) Ltd., State Bank of India (Mauritius), among others.



Two girls in front of a sanitary pad dispenser in Majhaul in Bihar's Begusarai.

India, Australia to focus on strategic partnership on regional security, defence cooperation

New Delhi, Mar 8 (UNI) : India and Australia agreed to strengthen their partnership under the Comprehensive Strategic Partnership, focusing on mutual dedication to regional security and defence cooperation.

During his visit to Australia from March 4 to 7, Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) General Anil Chauhan held deliberations focusing on strengthening military cooperation, with key emphasis on maritime security in the Indo-Pacific region, joint exercises, capacity building, defence technology exchange and new bilateral defence initiatives.

Gen Chauhan held high-level discussions with Admiral David Johnston, Australia's Chief of Defence Force, and with the Chiefs of Staff Committee at the Russell Offices of the Australian Defence Force, a Defence Ministry statement said.

The CDS also visited Headquarters Joint Operations Command (HQJOC), gaining insights into Australia's operational command structure and exploring avenues for

enhanced joint operations.

His other engagements include visits to Forces Command Headquarters, Australian Army and Fleet Headquarters Royal Australian Navy, fostering deeper coordination in maritime security and strategic operations.

In alignment with India's commitment to professional military training and education, Gen Chauhan also visited the Australian Defence College, where he held discussions of enhancing professional military education with Rear Admiral James Lybrand, Commandant of the ADC. He addressed senior officers undergoing the Defence and Strategic Studies Course on strategic challenges in the Indo-Pacific region and interacted with Indian student officers undergoing training at the ADC, acknowledging their role in fostering bilateral military understanding and professional exchanges.

Furthering intellectual and policy exchanges, CDS chaired a round-table discussion at the Lowy Institute, Australia's premier think tank and

engaged with Air Chief Marshal (retired) Sir Angus Houston and renowned strategic experts Dr Michael Fullilove and Sam Roggeveen, exchanging valuable perspectives on India-Australia defence cooperation, multilateral security frameworks, and strategic convergence in the Indo-Pacific.

Moreover, CDS received a detailed briefing on Advanced Navigation Systems, showcasing cutting-edge technologies that enhance battlefield awareness, precision targeting, and situational awareness in complex operational environments.

He also visited leading Australian Defence Industry facilities, gaining first-hand insights into Australia's advanced defence manufacturing, Research & Development and technological innovations.

This visit further solidified the India-Australia defence partnership, enhancing mutual trust and understanding while reinforcing the growing convergence of strategic interests between the two nations in the Indo-Pacific region.

Wanted terrorist arrested by UPATS from Moradabad

Lucknow, Mar 8 (UNI) : A Hizbul Mujahideen (HM) terrorist, who was absconding for the last 18 years, has been arrested in a joint operation by the Uttar Pradesh Anti-Terror Squad (ATS) and Moradabad police, an ATS spokesman said here on Saturday.

The spokesman said during the Saharanpur unit of ATS got a tip-off that Hizbul Mujahideen terrorist Ulfat Hussain alias Mohd Saiful Islam alias Afzal, a resident of Fazalabad village, Surankote in Poonch district of Jammu and Kashmir, was residing in Moradabad. "Acting on the information, the ATS and Moradabad police arrested Ulfat on Friday," he said. He said that Ulfat was involved in anti-national activities and was wanted by Katghar police in Moradabad district under various sections of the Indian Penal Code (IPC), CLAA Act, POTA, and the Arms Act.

He said, "Earlier, the absconding terrorist was arrested on July 9, 2001, during which 1 AK-47, 1 AK-56, 2 pistols, 12 hand grenades, 39 timers, 50 detonators, 37 batteries, 29 kg of explosive substance, 560 live cartridges, and 8 magazines were recovered from his possession."

The spokesman said that the Additional Chief Judicial Magistrate (14) in Moradabad district had issued a permanent warrant against the accused on January 7, 2015, and March 5, 2025, in this case. "The Moradabad police have also announced a reward of Rs 25,000 on his arrest," he said.

Women's Day observed in Manipur

(Standard Post Bureau) Imphal, Mar 8: International Women's Day 2025 on the theme "Accelerate Action" was organized by Manipur State Commission for Women (MSCW) here on Saturday.

Speaking at the function Director IPR Ngangom Uttam Singh appealed to the women to act speedily and rapidly towards achieving the goal of equal rights. Giving equal rights, gender equality and honouring women are the main areas that should be implemented rapidly.

He opined that it may take two generations to fully implement these women's rights. The first one has already conceded, where equality has been almost achieved and lets us pledge to arrange a path where our children can achieve and enjoy the rights that 100 percent, he stated.

Singh applauded the entire team of MSCW for

their dedication and hard-works in spite of several drawbacks regarding budgetary, lack of vehicles, manpower, but assured that with few supportive suggestions they will surely overcome many obstacles and become more stronger than before, he added. The Director highlighted the distinctive importance of One Stop Centre (OSC). In case of any emergencies, difficulties, unsafe or causalities every woman can seek medical, police, legal aid support and other available services by dialling 181 of OSC.

Impressed to witness the diversified attendance of today's celebration, Uttam Singh cited that, previously the North Eastern States were known as Seven Sisters, however with the inclusion of Sikkim it is now compiled of eight States, henceforth, by latest it is called Astha Lakshmi, the eighth incarnations of Goddess of Wealth, Lakshmi. It is

considered lucky to be born as a woman in a state like Manipur, where they receive high-level status and honours while compared to other mainland states of India. He appealed to all the women of the state, to be the torch-bearers of women empowerment, in addition, they should display and inspire all the women of the nation, about the privilege, rights and freedom being enjoyed by the women of North East States.

Among others Thumlip Tiningpham Monsang, Chairperson, MSCW; Lourembam Dayabati Devi, Member MSCW graced the celebration as President and guests of honour respectively. Felicitation of women achievers from different fields namely Rev. Apila Thangal, Sorokhaibam Bidiyaran Devi, Anwari Noorjahan, Seram Nirupama Devi and Sr. Maria Dilibung was the main highpoints of celebration on Saturday.

Olive Ridley Sea Turtles return to Ekakula Nasi beach for Mass Nesting after 33 years

Kendrapara (Odisha), Mar 8 (UNI) : The endangered Olive Ridley sea turtles have returned to Ekakula Nasi in large numbers for mass nesting after a gap of 33 years.

According to Manas Kumar Das, Assistant Conservator of Forests (ACF) in charge of Gahirmatha Marine Sanctuary, the last recorded mass nesting at Ekakula Nasi occurred during the 1992-93 turtle season. In the past 48 hours alone, approximately 1,69,348 female Olive Ridley turtles have laid eggs at Ekakula Nasi.

On March 6, around 3,000 Olive Ridges arrived at Ekakula Nasi for nesting, while on March 7, the number surged to 1,66,348 female turtles.

During the ongoing turtle season, a total of 4.34 lakh female Olive Ridley turtles have laid eggs at Nasi-2 and Ekakula Nasi beaches within the Gahirmatha Marine Sanctuary over the last three days (March 5-7), according to forest officials. While 2,64,657 turtles nested at Nasi-2 beach, 1,69,348 turtles nested at Ekakula Nasi.

Although Ekakula Nasi beach stretches for 8 kilometers, the turtles have utilized only 3 kilometers of the beach for nesting. Experts predict a record number of turtles may arrive this season, as mass nesting is expected to continue for another three to four days. The previous record was set in 2023 when an estimated 5,12,175 Olive Ridley turtles came ashore at Nasi-2 beach within the Gahirmatha Marine Sanctuary, laying eggs over four days from March 9 to March 13, 2023, Das added.

However, forest officials express concerns that Olive Ridges may skip mass nesting at Gahirmatha in the future due to the shrinking Nasi-2 beach, which is gradually eroding due to constant sea action. The return of Olive Ridges to Ekakula Nasi after three decades indicates that these turtles prefer to lay eggs at the same beaches where they nested in the past. Favorable environmental conditions and suitable beach structures play a crucial role in their nesting behavior.

Tripura's unemployment stands at half of national average: CM

Agartala, March 8 (UNI) : Tripura Chief Minister Dr Manik Saha on Saturday claimed that unemployment rate of the state has significantly dropped in the last quarter and data showed Tripura's unemployment is half of the national average. While addressing the celebration of 2nd anniversary of the second BJP government in Tripura, Dr Saha stated that the law and order situation of the state has improved impressively. Crime rate of the state has stood third from the bottom of the list among 28 states.

PM Modi always says that without developing the Northeast, the development of India is not possible, and for this he introduced the Act East Policy and offered HIRA model for Tripura. As a result, Northeast has experienced massive development in last decade," Dr Saha underscored.

"My government has been working in a mission mode to make Ek Tripura Shrestha Tripura pursue an inclusive growth model," he said and claimed that in terms of GDP, Tripura has achieved a milestone, besides significant improvement in infrastructure development, law and order and per capita income. "Development does not only mean building or construction but also includes the development of communication, human life, the economy, education, and peace. We are working in the direction of Vikshit Bharat," the Chief Minister pointed out.

Subhadra Yojana has become a revolution in Odisha: CM Majhi

Bhubaneswar, Mar 8 (UNI) : The Subhadra Yojana has become a revolution in Odisha today which will empower and uplift women of all ages while instilling new hope and confidence in their minds, Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi said. The Subhadra Yojana is set to transform into a massive statewide campaign, Majhi said while distributing the second installment of the scheme to 1,00,64,000 women at Ambapua in Berhampur town, in Ganjam district, on the occasion of the 51st International Women's Day. He emphasized that the new government, in just nine months, has paved the way for financial freedom for over one crore women in the state. "All mothers have received Rs.10,000 in two installments," he said, describing the day as the happiest and most glorious in his tenure as Chief Minister.

Majhi criticized the previous BJD government for merely raising slogans about women's empowerment over the past 24 years, asserting that women's empowerment remained nothing more than a slogan during that period.

"We decided to implement the historic Subhadra Yojana within 24 minutes of coming to power. The good news is that it started working within three months, and today, in just nine months, more than one crore women have received the second installment," the Chief Minister said. Lashing out at the BJD for criticizing his government, Majhi remarked, "What you could not achieve in 24 years, we have accomplished in just nine months."

He further stated, "Our detractors forget that even a child must spend nine months in the mother's womb before being born. There are still four days left for our government to complete nine months in office."

Sending a strong message to those who commit violence and misconduct against women, the Chief Minister asserted that such criminals have no place in a civilized society and belong within the four walls of a jail. "I have already issued strict instructions to departmental officers to ensure this is enforced," he said. The Chief Minister also highlighted the 'Lakshapati Didi' scheme, which aims to make women financially independent, stating that the target is to create three crore 'lakhpati didis' (women earning at least one lakh rupees) across the country.

CM lays foundation stone of development projects worth Rs 30.9 cr in Shahpur

Kangra, Mar 8 (UNI) : Chief Minister Sukhwinder Singh Sukhu on Saturday laid the foundation stone of various development projects worth Rs 30.9 crore in Shahpur assembly constituency of Kangra district.

These include construction of Laleta-Banu Mahadev link road at a cost of Rs 11 crore, construction of link road from National Highway 154 to Dhanotu via Bad Basti at a cost of Rs 4.41 crore and upgradation of Bhanala-Rulahad road at a cost of Rs 19.86 crore.

Apart from this, the Rikdmar-Kutharna road will be upgraded at Rs 5.47 crore and the pavilion block of Rait (Chambi) stadium will be constructed with Rs 1.16 crore.

CM Sukhu also performed puja-archana at Maharana Pratap Bhawan being constructed by Rajput Sabha.

Home & Garden



A fresh flower arrangement never fails to lift your spirits. It adds colour to your house, filling it with positivity and energy. But what measures can one take to make all this last longer?

As laymen, we are aware of certain measures such as adding a spoonful of sugar or an aspirin for the nourishment of the flowers or using a water spray to keep them looking bright. But, the process of making fresh flowers stay fresh starts right from its selection process.

Be careful while taking your pick as these flowers are expensive compared to their artificial counterparts.

Ideally, one should look for the ones that look youthful and not matured. The tell-tale signs of the latter would be drooping petals with a yellowish or brownish tinge at the corners. Fresh ones shall always have petals that are

firm and are just beginning to bloom. The vase or the container in which the flowers are to be kept should be clean. They should be free from any leftover mucous from the earlier arrangements. Light is the source of life. Hence, it is advisable to keep flowers in a place where there is enough light coming in. This surely does not mean that you expose them to direct sunlight, as that

will only make them shrink. Just make sure they aren't put away in some dark corner of a room, and expose air them once in a while.

An important thing to remember is that one should not keep flower arrangements atop devices that heat up such as a television, a refrigerator or an oven. This can cause the flowers to lose excess water and wither away quickly.

Sharing some tips, florist Munira Taherbhoy says, "It is important to keep a constant watch that the stems do not catch any fungus. The trick to achieve that is by removing the leaves that are below the waterline.

They are the main cause of promoting the growth of fungi-causing bacteria. It also helps to retain the freshness of these flowers, as the leaves soak up a lot of water

Let the Flower Bloom indoors

resulting in less water being transported to the other parts." Taherbhoy also suggests a daily change of water in the container. Some other tried and tested ways are adding a mixture of a pinch of salt and baking soda or adding a copper element to the water. Also, ready pouches of medicine are available in the market. They keep these colourful creations of nature smiling.

Be it family heirlooms or household antiques, brass needs fairly regular cleaning in order to look its best.

Unlacquered brass tarnishes when exposed to air. A weekly wiping with a little liquid ammonia on a soft cloth will help keep unlacquered brass shiny. Experts at the Michigan University researched this subject and their studies resulted in a definitive version of caring for your precious brass items. In simple language, here are some ways to go about it.

Use a commercial cleaner or a homemade cleaner to remove tarnish. On antique brass, test the cleaning product to be sure of obtaining the desired effect. Some methods not only clean tarnish but also remove the mellow coloring of age that is desirable on old drawer pulls and other accessories.

To polish antique brass pieces:

wash in hot, soapy water to remove grime, wax, etc. Rinse and dry.

Care for your brassware

Moisten a soft cloth with boiled linseed oil and rub on the brass surface until all the dirt and grease have been removed. Polish with a soft cloth. Very old brass items, especially if in poor condition, require special care, in which case you can consult museum experts for advice.

To polish for a soft finish:

wash in hot, soapy water, rinse and dry. Make a paste of whiting and boiled linseed oil. Apply with a soft cloth and rub to remove tarnish. Wipe off excess paste and

polish with a clean cloth. To remove heavy tarnish, difficult stains and corrosion: wash in hot, soapy water or a weak ammonia and water solution and rinse. Dampen a soft cloth in hot vinegar, then dip in table salt and rub the brass, or make a paste of flour, salt and vinegar. You may need several applications. When the item is clean, wash in hot, soapy water, rinse and dry thoroughly, then polish with a cloth moistened with lemon oil. If preferred, dip a slice of fresh lemon into table salt and rub over the corroded area. Wash, rinse and dry carefully.

Brass andirons and fire sets that have been neglected require special treatment. They can be rubbed with extra-fine steel wool; however, this requires much time and work. Very fine emery cloth will give quicker results, but the metal must be rubbed in only one direction, do not use a circular motion. When clean, polish with a brass polish. Some commercial polishes do not require rinsing, so follow label directions.



Use wall Clocks to enhance home decor



Wall clocks may sound boring as decorative pieces but if selected with care they can add more meaning and character to the decor of your house. There are people who are passionate about this and take real pains to search for the perfect clock to match the interior of a home and most of the times, when used intelligently, they add an attractive touch to your house.

"I love collecting clocks of different kinds. They fascinate me. Every room in my house has a different kind of clock on its walls," says singer, Abhijeet Bhattacharya. Though there are

some that have been gifted to him by his admirers and friends, most of them have been personally picked. They are indeed truly intriguing. "Whenever I go abroad I pick up ones that look interesting," he elaborates. Clocks that have a period look and those that are contemporary have both found a place in his house.

Decorative wall clocks come in many varieties and are easily available says interior designer Sheetal. Some are handcrafted and made of wood; there are others that are made up of metal, or plastic and acrylic. Precious metals like silver are also used.

"The most important thing to remember when decorating with wall-clocks is to choose something that you feel represents you and in some way enhances the decor of your room," says Hitesh Somaiya, who has used clocks in interesting patterns to decorate walls.

Hanging a wall-clock is pretty much like hanging a picture or a painting in a room. It is part of the overall decor. Since wall-clocks are generally inexpensive, you could actually have a collection of them. One of the ways to decorate with wall-clocks is to hang several similar ones in a row, as if they were an art gallery. You can set the clock to display real-time of some popular city in another part of the world. "My sons live abroad and I have placed three

Sengupta, an artist who has herself designed her Bandra home.

Placing a dark colored wall-clock on a pristine white or light coloured wall is an eye-catching option.

One of the oldest types of wall clocks are the cuckoo clocks and their timeless will never go out of style. Even today, think wall-clocks and somewhere the thought of a cuckoo clock is bound to cross your mind. Most of these clocks are made either in the shape of a birdhouse or chalet. They have a small mechanical cuckoo bird pop out of a door on the hour to accompany the chirping noises.

A cuckoo clock is among the most unusual type of clocks. A majority of them are pendulum clocks that give the time by striking the hour, using whistles that often sound exactly like the call of the cuckoo bird. Another kind of wall-clock that you can consider are those that come equipped with front-opening beveled glass doors, polished brass lyre pendulums, and are quartz-driven. These clocks are generally key-wound with chime silence options. Some of the many finishes available are cherry, oak, mahogany, and even leather.

However, for a more stylish touch, go in for antique wall clocks. Many antique wall clocks are pendulum operated and some are set in picture frames.

Of late, even eclectic art deco with motifs of the sun, moon, stars, and other new age designs are becoming popular. While we are at interesting ideas for the home, why should the kitchen be left behind? So, try out kitchen wall clocks as well! There's again a large variety of designs to choose from — fresh fruits, roosters, etc. Your kitchen clock will be a great addition to your kitchen and will help to enhance an inviting, relaxing atmosphere. For the kids room especially, you can opt for neon wall clocks. Not only are they a great way to add extra light, they are also fun and funky.



clocks showing the time of Chicago, London and India in one single row," says Chandana

New Zealand ready to have a second go against India: Santner

Dubai, Mar 8 (UNI) : New Zealand captain Mitchell Santner concedes while the ICC Champions Trophy 2025 Final is not just any game - his team will prepare for facing India in the showdown in just the same way as they have done before all their other matches.

"It's easy to say it's just another game, it's obviously not, but I think the way you approach it has to be the same," he told reporters on the eve of the summit clash here.

"We've done a lot of good stuff this tournament, we're just trying to progress and build on the things we've been doing as a team, and keep trying to take this team forward," Santner said.

"It's on the biggest stage tomorrow. The guys will go out with confidence, try and keep it a pretty relaxed environment, let the guys go out there and have some freedom and enjoy it," he said. The finalists have already played each other this tournament, facing off in the final Group A match to decide who would top it, and Santner thought that knowing the conditions in Dubai could give his team some added impetus, an ICC report said.

"The mix of experience and a few younger boys in this group, what we asked them at the start was to buy into a way we want to approach cricket on and off the field," he said.

"We've been playing some good cricket, long may it continue. You have to treat it as another chance

against a very good opposition," Santner said.

"You get to the business ends of these tournaments. Your first goal is to make play-offs [semi-finals] but going into a final it's whoever can stand up on the day. The way we go about it is to not get overawed by the occasion...trying to keep it pretty relaxed but also know we have to put in a good shift tomorrow," he said.

Asked whether the tournament's leading wicket-taker Matt Henry would be fit to play after hurting his shoulder in the field during the semi-final against South Africa, he replied: "We'll be going across the road and training after this. Matt's going to have a bowl and see how he is, and we'll make a call after that."

Santner also assessed the India bowling attack, with some particular words on Varun Chakaravathy, an opponent he knows well from their shared time in the IPL, describing him as 'a world-class bowler' with a 'little bit of mystery'.

Chakaravathy took five wickets against New Zealand in their group match as India put on a convincing display, but Santner is confident his players have learnt from that experience.

"If the pitch plays a similar way, he'll be a challenge, along with all three of their other spinners," he said.

"The boys will be ready for tomorrow, we've looked at a little bit more footage.



India's Virat Kohli, Rishabh Pant and other players during a practice session ahead of the ICC Champions Trophy 2025 final cricket match between India and New Zealand, in Dubai, UAE, Saturday.

Chennaiyin FC aim for strong finish in last game of season

Chennai, Mar 8 (UNI) Chennaiyin FC will host Jamshedpur FC at the Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium here in the Indian Super League (ISL) match on Sunday at 7:30 PM IST.

This is the last league stage match for both teams this season. The Red Miners have qualified for the playoffs and are placed fourth in the table with 38 points from 23 games. The Marina Machans are positioned 11th with 24 points from 23 encounters.

Chennaiyin FC had won the reserve fixture by 5-1, their goal-scoring struggles are concerning, having failed to find the back of the net in their last two ISL matches. Jamshedpur FC are one win away from levelling their best-ever season tally of 13 victories, but have won just once in

their last five outings.

Chennaiyin FC have been triumphant in just two of their 11 home games this season (D4 L5), their second-worst such record in ISL after 2018-19 (one win). The Marina Machans have not scored in 10 matches this season, their joint-highest in a single ISL campaign (2020-21). Wilmar Jordan Gil has been effective with 10 strikes, but the next best after him has been Daniel Chima Chukwu with four goals.

Jamshedpur FC have banked on their international trio of Javi Hernandez (7), Jordan Murray (6), and Javi Siverio (6) for goals, with the three of them netting 19 out of their 35 strikes thus far. Hernandez is suspended for this match though.

Jamshedpur FC have

also been adept at breaking opposition's offences, since Muhammad Uvais (33), Nikhil Barla (24), Sourav Das (24) lead the tackling charts for them.

In 15 fixtures between these two teams, Chennaiyin FC have won seven games and Jamshedpur FC have been triumphant thrice.

Chennaiyin FC head coach Owen Coyle maintained that there's a significant lot to play for in this match for his team.

"We are playing against a very good opponent. So there's a lot to play for, both individually and also at a collective level," he said.

Jamshedpur FC head coach Khalid Jamil insisted that his side is placing adequate importance on the coming encounter.

"We need to prepare

like we have been doing so far in the last game and look to win the match," he said.

Jamshedpur FC's Albino Gomes has made 88 saves, stopped four penalties, rounded off 171 recoveries, alongside punching nine times in 23 games this season.

Chennaiyin FC's Irfan Yadwad has made four assists in 2024-25 and is one away from equalling the club record for most assists in a single season by an Indian player (Anirudh Thapa and Aakash Sangwan - 5).

Chennaiyin FC's Pachua Laldinpuia has made 34 interceptions this season and is five away from setting a new season record for an Indian player at the club. The 28-year-old has also won 27 tackles, 29 aerial duels, and 91 duels too.

NorthEast United FC defeat East Bengal FC 4-0 in ISL

Shillong, Mar 8 (UNI) : NorthEast United FC defeated East Bengal FC by 4-0 at the Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium here in the Indian Super League (ISL) match on Saturday evening.

The Highlanders thus bagged their 10th win of the league season, wrapping up their 24 games and earning 38 points before embarking on their playoffs journey. This was the eighth match where NorthEast United FC scored three or more goals this season, and also got their first-ever ISL win in Shillong.

East Bengal FC had limited chances coming their way in the first half, but Cleiton Silva did give NorthEast United FC a moment of scare through a probing free-kick in the 22nd minute. With the team earning a chance at a

promising spot on the left flank, Silva swerved in a telling delivery that resulted in the ball landing over the crossbar.

NorthEast United FC retaliated by moving gradually up the left wing through Alaaeddine Ajaraie, who lobbed in a cross for Nestor Albiach in the 32nd minute. Nestor made a robust effort at hitting the target with an aerial effort, but the shot was kept off limits by East Bengal FC goalkeeper Debjit Majumder.

Ajaraie back-heeled a pass for the onrushing Tondonba Singh on the left flank, followed by the latter drilling in a cross for Nestor at the centre of the 18-yard box. Nestor met the lateral ball with thorough finesse and slotted it into the bottom right corner with his left foot to break the

deadlock in the 59th minute.

The Highlanders rode on this brief wave in their favour as Nestor played a key role in shaping up a dynamic offensive sequence from a corner kick. Guillermo Fernandez curled in a right-footed inward curling cross for Macarton Nickson that was hammered on target. Debjit made a quick first save, before Ajaraie lapped upon the rebound and nestled it into the bottom left corner amid a crowded box to double the lead in the 66th minute. Ajaraie took over a dazzling role thereafter with East Bengal FC conceding him plenty of space to work his footwork around in the defensive third.

The free-flowing forward looked to breach into the opposition's box from the left side and sprinted near the six-yard box.

South African team from 2017-2019, and has since held several coaching positions across the T20 franchise circuit.

Ottis joins a strong support staff unit at KKR, comprising mentor Dwayne Bravo, head coach Chandrakant Pandit, bowling coach Bharat Arun, spin-bowling coach Carl Crowe and others.

Chirag-Amar pair defeat Deepak - Pradeep in J&K UT doubles lawn tennis final

Jammu, Mar 8 (UNI) : A pair of Chirag Dogra and Amar Jyoti Sharma have defeated Deepak Chib and Col S Pradeep in a well contested match to win UT Men's Doubles Lawn Tennis final title of Jammu and Kashmir UT Lawn Tennis Open Championship played at the lawns of Maulana Azad Stadium here.

Jammu and Kashmir Sports Minister Satish Sharma was the Chief Guest on the occasion.

As per the results, in the UT Open Men's Doubles Final, Chirag Dogra and Amar Jyoti Sharma defeated Deepak Chib and Col S Pradeep 7-6, (7-5), 3-6, 6-4.

Earlier in the semifinals, Chirag Dogra and Amar Sharma defeated Sojanya Thappa and Kuljeet Singh 8-4 while Deepak Chib and Col S Pradeep defeated Vikram Gupta and Raghav Sabharwal 8-6.

However, in the men's singles final, Vikram Gupta defeated Shaurya Pratap Singh 6-3, 6-2.

Earlier Vikram Gupta defeated Chirag Dogra 8-7 (7-5) in tie break and Shaurya Pratap Singh defeated Gurleen Singh 8-

2 to enter into the final round.

Sports Minister Satish Sharma while interacting with the players boosted them stating that the Jammu and Kashmir government is very keen to make this region a hub of sports and lot many things are in the pipeline to promote this sector.

He however, wished them for their future endeavours.

Players in various age groups from across the Jammu and Kashmir participated in the event.

President, Jammu and Kashmir Lawn Tennis Association, Murti Gupta was also present on the occasion while General Secretary, B S Jaggi along with Hanumant Singh supervised the tournament.

The Tournament was organized by the Jammu and Kashmir Lawn Tennis Association (JKLTA) under the aegis of J&K Sports Council.

The tournament, as per the officials, is specifically designed for all age groups providing them with an opportunity to showcase their skills.

Gill on India's mindset for Champions Trophy Final

Dubai, Mar 8 (UNI) : India vice-captain Shubman Gill says that their ICC Men's T20 World Cup triumph in 2024 stands them in good stead for their Champions Trophy 2025 final showdown with New Zealand.

"Once you get one title, that breaks the jinx and it gives you the momentum and you are not very desperate about getting the title," he told reporters on the eve of the summit clash in Dubai.

"It is not good when desperation kicks in, it's hard to put the occasion out of the equation," Gill said.

"In all these big matches, the players and teams that can put aside the pressure and the occasion out of the game has a better chance of winning it," he said.

"I think winning the title in 2024 doesn't mean we are less hungry but I think it makes us more balanced - yes, we have won an ICC title and we will do our best to win this one," Gill said.

What bolsters India's push for winning their third Champions Trophy title, Gill reckons, is their power-packed batting.

Describing it as the best India batting line-up he has ever been part of, powered by seasoned campaigners in Virat Kohli and Rohit Sharma, Gill broke down why India's batting has been well rounded of late,

Skiing event for foreign visitors held ahead of Khelo India Winter Games

Srinagar, Mar 8 (UNI) Jammu and Kashmir Youth Services and Sports Department organised a special skiing event for foreign visitors and skiers today in the run-up to the Khelo India Winter Games scheduled to be held in Gulmarg from March 9-12.

The initiative was conducted as per the directions of the Divisional Commissioner Kashmir to provide an engaging pre-event experience for international participants, an official spokesman said.

The event witnessed enthusiastic participation from foreign skiers, who expressed their appreciation for the world-class skiing slopes of Gulmarg and shared their views on the upcoming Khelo India Winter Games.

They commended the efforts of the administration

in promoting winter sports and fostering international participation in Gulmarg's snow-clad arenas.

With the official commencement of the Khelo India Winter Games 2025 set for tomorrow, this pre-event activity served as a curtain-raiser, highlighting the growing global interest in winter sports in Jammu & Kashmir.

An official spokesman said the Department of Youth Services and Sports J&K remains committed to ensuring a grand and seamless sporting spectacle, reinforcing Gulmarg's stature as a premier winter sports destination.

The athletes are gearing up for intense snow sports events including - ski mountaineering, alpine skiing, snowboard, and Nordic skiing

Boca Juniors extends winning run in Argentine top flight

Buenos Aires, Mar 7 (UNI) Boca Juniors continued its resurgent form in Argentina's Primera Division Apertura tournament with a 3-0 away win over Central Cordoba.

Milton Gimenez put the visitors ahead with a 16th-minute strike before Jose Florentin inadvertently turned the ball into his own net on Friday.

The host was reduced to 10 men on the stroke of halftime when Jonathan Galvan was shown a straight red card for violent conduct. Miguel Merentiel put the result beyond doubt with a composed finish after combining with Luis Advinula. Boca, which has won each of its past three league matches, is now second in the 15-team Group A standings, a point behind leader Argentinos Juniors. Central Cordoba is seventh, six points further back.

Kolkata Knight Riders appoint Ottis Gibson as Assistant Coach

Kolkata, Mar 8 (UNI) Kolkata Knight Riders announced Ottis Gibson as assistant coach ahead of the 2025 TATA Indian Premier League. A former fast bowler from Barbados himself, with over 650 first-class wickets to his name, Ottis represented West Indies in both Tests and ODIs from 1995-1999 before embarking on his journey

as a coach. He comes with extensive experience, having had two stints as bowling coach of the England Cricket Team - from 2007-10 and again from 2015-17. He served as Head coach of the West Indies from 2010-14. During his tenure, the team won its first ICC World T20 title, in 2012 in Sri Lanka. He went on to become Head coach of the

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International Women's Day 2025 Western Railway celebrates International Women Day 2025



(Standard Post Bureau)
Mumbai, March 8 : On the occasion of International Women's Day 2025, Western Railway organized a series of impactful and inspiring initiatives to honor the remarkable contribution of its women employees across various operational and technical fields.

The celebrations were aimed at promoting gender inclusivity, recognizing the dedication

and competency of women railway employees in ensuring seamless operations.

The successful operation of this train stood as a powerful symbol of women's empowerment in the railway sector, setting an inspiring precedent for future endeavors.

Mr Vineet further added that, a significant highlight of the

and inspire more women to pursue careers in technical roles within the railway sector.

Similarly, Western Railway also felicitated the all-women operated Matunga Road Railway Station, recognizing their commendable service in managing railway operations.

The station is entirely operated by women employees, including station masters, booking

dedication and exceptional service of its women employees. The video captures inspiring stories of women employees who work relentlessly to ensure a safe and comfortable travel experience for railway commuters. In addition to this, a special podcast featuring Smt. Preeti Kumari, Senior Motorman from Western Railway, was also released, highlighting her inspiring journey, challenges, and achievements.

This podcast has been officially published on Western Railway's official YouTube channel, allowing a larger audience to witness and appreciate the contribution of women in technical and operational fields.

In another significant step towards creating a more inclusive and supportive work environment, Mumbai Central Division of Western Railway released the Guidelines for Gender Inclusive Systems at railway stations and workplaces.

The objective of these guidelines is to promote gender equality, ensure a safe and inclusive work culture, and enhance the participation of women employees across all domains of railway operations. This initiative is expected to foster an environment where women can thrive, grow, and contribute significantly to the railway sector.

clerks, ticket checking staff, RPF personnel, and housekeeping staff, who collectively ensure the smooth and efficient functioning of the station. This station has become a symbol of women empowerment, showcasing the strength, capability, and commitment of women in the railway sector. The felicitation by PCPO Smt. Manjula Saxena was a gesture to appreciate their consistent efforts in serving railway passengers with utmost dedication.

To make the day even more special, Western Railway, in collaboration with Radio Channel Fever 104 FM, launched an exclusive collaboration video titled "Nothing is Impossible" to honor the

celebrations was the felicitation of the all-women maintenance team at Mahalaxmi Traction Substation (TRD) by Smt. Manjula Saxena, Principal Chief Personnel Officer (PCPO) of Western Railway. This pioneering team has been actively engaged in maintaining 25kV and 110kV traction power supply equipment, ensuring the seamless operation of suburban train services.

The formation of this exclusive all-women maintenance team is a remarkable example of Western Railway's commitment to fostering inclusivity and breaking gender barriers in technical fields. The felicitation aimed to recognize their exceptional contribution

of women employees, and encouraging equal opportunities for women in the railway sector.

According to a press release issued by Chief Public Relations Officer of Western Railway, Shri Vineet Abhishek, as part of the celebrations, Western Railway operated a Container goods train from Vasai Road station with an all-women crew, comprising Smt. Meera Bai Meena – Locopilot (Goods), Smt. Utkarsha Sharma – Sr. Assistant Locopilot and Smt. Carol D'Souza – Train Manager. This unique run on Women's Day is a commendable step towards promoting gender inclusivity in core operational roles, showcasing the

ECoR to introduce three important trains from Bhubaneswar New Station

(Standard Post Bureau)
Bhubaneswar, Mar 8 :The East Coast Railway (ECoR) has planned to introduce the originating and terminating of three important trains from Bhubaneswar New Station. These trains include the Bhubaneswar-Mumbai Konark Express, Bhubaneswar-Secunderabad Visakha Express, and Bhubaneswar-Visakhapatnam Intercity Express.

The date of implementation for these changes will be announced shortly, ECoR sources said.

The introduction of these originating trains from Bhubaneswar New Station will provide immense benefits to passengers from the northern parts of Bhubaneswar and adjacent areas.

These trains will also have a two-minute

stoppage at Mancheswar Railway Station. According to ECoR sources, the station will serve as a convenient hub for students studying in the numerous engineering, medical, and other educational institutions located in North Bhubaneswar.

Passengers traveling for medical purposes will also benefit greatly, as many hospitals are situated in this part of the city.

With these trains originating from Bhubaneswar New Station, residents will experience enhanced travel convenience and reduced congestion at Bhubaneswar Main Station.

The redevelopment of Bhubaneswar New Station is also proposed under the Amrit Station Scheme, with a primary focus on

enhancing passenger amenities.

The major planned works include the expansion and improvement of the circulating area, the provision of an additional Foot Over Bridge (FOB), modern waiting rooms, and upgraded toilets for enhanced passenger comfort. The existing platforms will also be improved with better illumination.

Additionally, the installation of Coach Watering Facilities, lifts on all platforms, and the upgradation of the existing station building are also in the pipeline. With these developments, Bhubaneswar New Station is set to become a crucial hub catering to the travel needs of students, travelers, and residents of North Bhubaneswar and nearby areas.

Central Railway celebrates International Women's Day with a Historic First

Operates prestigious Vande Bharat Express with an All-Women Crew"Operates Special Goods Train with an All-Women Crew

(Standard Post Bureau)
Mumbai, March 8 : Central Railway, as part of its International Women's Day celebrations operated the prestigious Vande Bharat Express Train with an All-Women Crew on 08.03.2025.

Train No. 22223, the CSMT-Sainagar Shirdi Vande Bharat Express, was helmed & managed by an all-women crew making it a historic and inspiring journey. The train was steered by Smt. Surekha Yadav, Asia's First Woman Loco Pilot, along with Ms. Sangeeta Kumari as the Assistant Loco Pilot.

Smt. Shweta Ghone served as the Train Manager, ensuring smooth operations throughout the journey.

A dedicated team of Women Travelling Ticket Examiners were deployed to guide passengers and ensure their comfortable travel. The team comprised of: Head Ticket Examiners: - Ms Anushka K. P & Ms. M. J. Rajput Senior Ticket Examiners: Ms. Sarika Ojha, Ms. Suvarna Pashte, Ms. Kavita Maral & Ms Manisha Ram.

The All-Women crew included a team of On-Board Train Hostess ready to serve the passengers. This comprised of: Ms. Monica, Ms. Rubina, Ms. Pooja, Ms. Namrata & Ms. Uma.

The Vande Bharat Express with special All-Women Crew departed from CSMT at 06.20 hrs marking a significant milestone in Indian Railways' commitment to women's empowerment.

It was a heartwarming sight as the All-Women Operated Vande Bharat Express passed through Matunga station, India's first All-Women managed station and the entire team of Matunga station exchanged signals with the Train Manager and cheered in celebration.

A Special Goods Train with an All-Women Crew was also operated on 08.03.2025 as part of the International Women's Day celebrations on Mumbai



Division, showcasing the strength and capability of Women in Indian Railways.

"The Special Goods train operated from Kalyan to Trombay comprising of 43 wagons with a load of 1150 tons was helmed by Ms Sangeeta Sarkar as Loco Pilot alongwith Ms Tejaswi Walke as Assistant Loco Pilot and Ms Rohini Jadhav as Train Manager.

This historic initiative is a tribute to the dedication and excellence of Women in Indian Railways and aims to promote gender inclusivity in railway operations.

International Women's Day was also celebrated on Nagpur, Bhusaval, Pune & Solapur divisions of Central Railway.

On Nagpur Division various events were held where a large number of women employees participated.

69 outstanding Women employees from different departments were felicitated for their remarkable contributions in

cultural, social, literary, and sports fields. Nagpur Division has 1,579 women employees with Ajni station entirely managed by 22 women handling train operations, booking, ticket checking, security, and signal & telecommunication functions.

On Bhusaval Division a Special Goods Train managed entirely by an all-women crew, was operated marking a momentous occasion highlighting the skills and dedication of women employees.

The train was steered by Smt. Jyoti Singh, Loco Pilot along with Ms. Shivani, Assistant Loco Pilot, and Smt. Bhagyashree Pimple, Train Manager.

On Pune Division, the First Women's Barracks for Women RPF personnel was inaugurated. These barracks are extremely useful for rest to the women RPF staff working in Pune suburban area, women personnel posted in other

places of the division like Kolhapur, Satara, Sangli, Daund, Ahmednagar (Ahilyanagar) who come to Pune for official work and women personnel working in Mumbai division and Solapur division who come to Pune for train escorting duty. On Solapur Division, a women led ticket checking team was deployed on Solapur – CSMT Mumbai – Solapur Vande Bharat Express (train nos 22226/22225). The women's team efficiently managed the ticket-checking duties on the train service, reflecting their competence and commitment to passenger service and railway operations. This initiative highlights the division's commitment to promoting women empowerment and recognising the invaluable contribution of women in the railway workforce. These were indeed proud moments, celebrating the strength, dedication, expertise and leadership of Women in Indian Railways.

Solapur Division of Central Railway Celebrates International Women's Day 2025

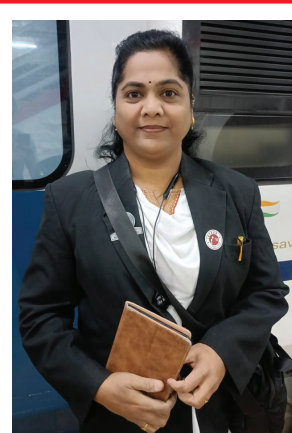
Led by Women Ticket Checking Team on Vande Bharat Express



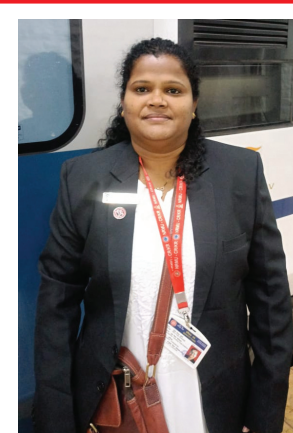
Laxmi Fulari



Lourdes D Conlon



Shilpa Bhalekar



Priti Dhavane



Ahilya Rathod

(Standard Post Bureau)
Solapur, March 8 :The Solapur Division of Central Railway, on the occasion of International Women's Day 2025 (8th March) deployed a women led ticket checking team on Solapur – CSMT Mumbai – Solapur Vande Bharat Express (train nos 22226/22225). This initiative

highlights the division's commitment to promoting women empowerment and recognising the invaluable contribution of women in the railway workforce.

The following women ticket checking staff were deputed to perform duty on this special occasion:

- Shilpa C. Bhalekar,

Chief Ticket Inspector - Priti V. Dhavane, Chief Ticket Inspector - Ahilya V. Rathod, Travelling Ticket Inspector - Lourdes D. Conlon, Travelling Ticket Inspector - Laxmi R. Fulari, Senior Ticket Examiner"

The initiative aims to recognise and celebrate the

dedication and professionalism of women railway staff while fostering an inclusive and diverse working environment.

The women's team efficiently managed the ticket-checking duties on the train service, reflecting their competence and

commitment to passenger service and railway operations.

The Solapur Division of Central Railway remains dedicated to creating opportunities for women and encouraging their active participation across all spheres of railway operations.