

IN BRIEF

Hindustan Shipyard celebrates

International Women's Day

(Standard Post Bureau)

Visakhapatnam, Mar 8 : Hindustan Shipyard Ltd (HSL) celebrated International Women's Day 2025 here on Saturday with all its women employees.

HSL Chairman and Managing Director Cmde Hemant Khatri, while extending warm greetings on the occasion, emphasized the importance of work-life balance and the pivotal role women play in their families, society, organization, and nation.

Cmde Khatri commended the performance of HSL's women employees, encouraging them to prioritize their work, accept challenges, and strive for board-level positions.

He also urged them to maintain a healthy work-life balance, ensuring that family responsibilities do not hinder their professional growth. The celebration featured Vandana Khatri, President of Samrakshan (HSL Ladies Club), as the Chief Guest.

A special interactive training session, 'Empowerment of Women,' was conducted by renowned corporate trainer Neelima Kumari, focusing on inclusivity and professional aspirations. The event concluded with a vibrant cultural program, showcasing the talents of HSL's women employees.

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 Veeranari Chakali Ilamma 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 Veeranari Chakali Ilamma is a big tribute to Telangana, he said.

NDA Govt taking all possible steps for women empowerment: CM

(Standard Post Bureau)

Ongole, Mar 8 : Chief Minister, Chandrababu Naidu, on Saturday made it clear that his Government's objective is to create one lakh women entrepreneurs for which it will provide a 45 per cent subsidy for women investors.

Sending a strong warning to those who resort to teasing women, the Chief Minister said that if any person makes any attempt to create any kind of problem to women it will be the last

day in their life for such persons. Sakthi app has been launched keeping only the safety and security of women, Mr Chandrababu said during an interaction with women here on the occasion of Women's Day.

Stating that agreements have been signed with 24 organisations only to promote women in business, the Chief Minister promised to provide marketing facilities for the products manufactured by women.

Promising to initiate

steps for enhancing the respect of women in society, Naidu said that Talliki Vandanam will be implemented for all irrespective of the number of children.

Showering several sops on women, the Chief Minister declared that the women government employees will get maternity leave regardless of the number of child deliveries. He said that after the TDP-led NDA came to power using highly objectionable

language has been controlled and there is no such practice now in TV debates and social media.

If people use such objectionable language, stringent action will be taken against such persons, the Chief Minister declared. "We need to follow certain ethical values in society," he said and observed that there is no ganja cultivation in the State now. Regretting that several people have got addicted to ganja, the Chief

Minister said the ganja cultivation is checked through the Eagle system.

Maintaining that the work-from-home system is now introduced to enable women who get some free time at home to earn money, the Chief Minister said workstations will be set up in rural areas too

Mentioning the increasing number of cancer patients in Punjab, Naidu felt that everyone should now focus on the quality of food that they are consuming.

'Parents should regularly interact with children to ensure their safety'

(Standard Post Bureau)

Visakhapatnam, Mar 8 : Special Judge for Trial of Offences under the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act (POCSO) Court, Visakhapatnam, Justice G.Anandi on Saturday said that parents should regularly interact with children to ensure their safety and well being.

In her address at a session on the "Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act and Child Rights, focusing on legal frameworks and the roles of educators and institutions in child safety" organized by WIPS (Forum of Women in Public Sector) at Rashtriya Ispat Nigam Limited (RINL), as part of the International women's day celebrations, here, Anandi clearly explained about POCSO Act Overview, Juvenile Justice System and other important points. She also sensitized children and their parents in specific, to safeguard children against sexual abuse, sexual harassment, and pornography.

Stating that the women are the backbone of any family, Justice Anandi advised the women to pay attention to their health and wellbeing.

The Special Judge urged both the children and the parents to freely communicate with each other every day on any issue which will ensure the safety of the children.

The event concluded with an engaging Q&A session, where she answered questions from students, offering practical guidance on identifying, preventing, and responding to cases of child abuse.

Her responses provided a deeper understanding of the legal mechanisms and proactive steps individuals and institutions can take. Justice Anandi was felicitated by the WIPS- Committee on the occasion. Earlier in her welcome address, N. Bhanu, GM(HR) & President- WIPS-RINL, expressed gratitude to the eminent guest speaker, and all the attendees for gathering to support this vital cause. Dr. G Seshamma, DGM (QATD) & Coordinator- WIPS-RINL highlighted various activities that were organized by WIPS-RINL for the welfare of the working women and housewives.

One woman from each family to be made entrepreneur: Minister

Kakinada, Mar 8 (UNI)

:Minister for Municipal Administration and Kakinada district in charge Ponguru Narayana said that the government aimed to develop one woman from each family as an entrepreneur enabling them to become an industrialists and doing everything in that direction. Participating as the chief guest at the international women's day celebration function held here on Saturday, Narayana said women should be respected giving them the honour as Mother, sister and wife.

He said the state government's aim was women empowerment providing them all facilities equal to men.

Explaining at length the facilities extended to womenfolk for their self reliance under various schemes, the Minister said under the DRDA through bank linkage, Rs.100 Crores loans provided to 558 women self help groups this year. Three women entrepreneurs were provided Rs. 1 Crore aid under PMEGP scheme. 78,000 women folk were extended benefit to the extent of Rs.39 lakhs each under Open network digital commerce mission.

For starting food processings units Rs.2.36 Crores aid was provided to 20 women. Under Unnathi scheme Rs.13.22 Crores aid was provided to SC ST women' he added.

Minister dismisses concerns of Hindi imposition, emphasises India's linguistic diversity



Vijayawada/New Delhi, Mar 8 (UNI) Andhra Pradesh Minister for IT, Electronics, Education and Human Resources Nara Lokesh, on Saturday dismissed concerns of Hindi imposition, emphasising India's linguistic diversity and felt that every state is unique and should have the freedom to promote its local language.

Speaking at India Today Conclave 2025 held in New Delhi, Lokesh felt the need to go beyond three-language policy and learn global languages like German and Japanese.

"Many job opportunities are opening up in Germany and Japan, especially for nurses and homecare professionals. We have agreements to teach German and Japanese to

nurses, ensuring mobility and employment opportunities abroad," he said.

The Minister revealed that his father and Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu is a 'taskmaster' who expects everyone to function at the same pace as he is. Asked how a Carnegie Mellon and Stanford graduate transformed into a son-of-the-soil politician, Lokesh said, "Carnegie Mellon and Stanford are good for business. Pada yatra is very important for politics."

"I don't believe impositions will happen in India. I believe every state is unique. When I met the Education Minister, he was more focused on promoting Telugu as the medium of instruction in the state," he

said, adding that the NDA Government had shown trust in strengthening mother tongues.

The Minister credited Chandrababu Naidu, for leading efforts to boost regional languages.

Lokesh asked as to why Telugu cannot be taught in Northern States. "Give kids the opportunity to learn what they want. I am reasonably fluent in Hindi, Hyderabad se hoon na, Hindi acchi hail (I am from Hyderabad, my Hindi is good)," he remarked, stressing that learning multiple languages is essential in the modern world. "Karnataka has Bangalore, Tamil Nadu has Chennai, Telangana has Hyderabad. Andhra Pradesh has Chandrababu Naidu. He is our competitive advantage," he stated.

"We are going to build a new Data City in Visakhapatnam and no second thoughts about it," said the Minister, responding to what his contribution to the state would be. His father, he said a four-time Chief Minister, has been heralded as the builder of modern-day Hyderabad using digital technology.

PM Modi committed to provide 33 pc reservation for women: Bhupathiraju

Bhimavaram, Mar 8 (UNI) Union Minister of State for Steel and Heavy Industries Bhupathiraju Srinivasa Varma lauded Prime Minister Narendra Modi for his commitment to provide 33 percent reservation for women.

The Union Minister, flanked by Legislative Assembly Deputy Speaker K Raghurama Krishnam Raju, Collector Chadalavada Nagarani and Superintendent of Police Adnan Nayeem Ashmi, flagged off a rally to mark the International Women's day at Prakash Chowk here on Saturday.

Large number of women and girl students participated in the rally raising slogans and holding placards emphasizing women should play a lead role in all sectors. The rally concluded at Alluri Sitarama Raju memorial.

Addressing the gathering on the occasion, Srinivasa Varma highlighted that women are respected highly in India which does not exist anywhere in the world.

"Prime Minister Narendra Modi is committed to provide 33 percent reservation for women in the Lok Sabha and State Assemblies. The Government is of the view that women should be given equal share in all sectors and they play a key role. Women play a vital role in leading the family and making it financially bolster," he asserted.



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)

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. T. 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.

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.

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

organization become more capable and empowered.

Dr. Preksha Pandey, Gynecologist at BLW Central Hospital, said in her statement that today's women are not behind in any field.

They also have the ability to do whatever they decide. She said that in the present perspective, it is necessary to have equality in women's education, behavior and thoughts.

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.

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.

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

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

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.