

Dipke among 150 detained during Tiranga march as 28K security staff stand guard

The notice said Connaught Place was a busy commercial hub with limited entry and exit points and crowd surge at one place could hamper movement across its circles, making emergency evacuation difficult. The notice also mentioned the presence of Rajiv Chowk Metro station, which catered to two lakh passengers a day, and said mass gatherings could lead to problems.

New Delhi, Oct 16 (GNS): Hundreds gathered at Delhi's commercial hub Connaught Place on Friday in response to Cockroach Janta Party founder Abhijeet Dipke's "Lehra Do Tiranga" call even as he himself was detained by the police and prevented from joining the march. CJP supporters and student activists staged a series of flash protests, demanding the resignation of Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar amid a massive police deployment. Carrying a giant Tricolour, a group of protesters took multiple rounds of Connaught Place's inner circle, while another climbed barricades with flags, banners and placards.

The CJP leader was detained along with nearly 150 others, including Neha

Bora, president of the All India Students' Association, the student wing of the CPI-ML.

Over 20 police personnel first visited Dipke at his Jhandewalan home and served him two notices, the first warning him against holding the march citing traffic snarls and fears of a stampede, and the second reminding him of the conditions (requiring good behaviour for a year) of the release bond he had signed on October 10 before being freed from detention. Later in the day, Dipke was detained and taken to Jafarpur Kalan police station in southwest Delhi, nearly 60 km from the centre of the capital.

Bora was detained at Mandi House as she began her march, with central Delhi witnessing a

heavy police presence, as it had been on October 10. As many as 6,000 police personnel were deployed along with 221 companies of 100 personnel each (totalling 22,100 personnel). The strategy used today was the same as on October 10—preventive detentions. The Delhi Police said the notice that barred Dipke from the march was issued on the directions of the Delhi High Court. It referred to Dipke's calls on social media to gather in Connaught Place's Central Park at 5 pm on October 16. The notice said Connaught Place was a busy commercial hub with limited entry and exit points and crowd surge at one place could hamper movement across its circles, making emergency evacu-

ation difficult. The notice also mentioned the presence of Rajiv Chowk Metro station, which catered to two lakh passengers a day, and said mass gatherings could lead to problems. The notice said that in view of these considerations and the serious risk an unlawful gathering at Connaught Place posed to public order and to rights of other citizens, a prohibitory order under Section 163 of the BNS was in force there.

Meanwhile, police and paramilitary were deployed along the outer, middle and inner circles, around Central Park and at several Palika Bazaar gates. Tear gas vehicles were also positioned in the area with several marchers detained as they waved flags and raised anti-Gyanesh Kumar slogans.



Centre targeting Punjab, drug problem not that severe: Mann

Chandigarh, Oct 16 (GNS): Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann on Friday said Punjab did not have as much of a drug problem as it was made out to have, accusing the BJP-led Centre of deliberately defaming the state instead of checking the supply of drugs through Gujarat's ports. He also asked Union Home Minister Amit Shah to take responsibility for the seizure of 3,000 kg of synthetic drugs at Kandla port.

Addressing a high-level meeting of Cabinet colleagues and top police officials at the Punjab Police Academy in Phillaur to review the state's anti-drug campaign, 'Yudh Nashian Virudh', Mann said, "Nasha hai nahi etthe, badnaam hi zyada kita hoyea (There isn't as much of a drug problem as Punjab has been defamed for). It is similar to stubble burning, with Punjab being singled out for the resultant pollution even though farm fires also occur in Haryana, Rajasthan

and UP." The CM asked how Punjab could be blamed for the drug menace when the Centre-controlled BSF had jurisdiction up to 50 km from the Pakistan border.

The remarks came a day after Punjab witnessed a statewide bandh over the murder of anti-drug activist Parvinder Singh Jhota in Mansa and in the wake of Shah raising questions on the state's intent to fight the drug menace.

The CM exhorted the state police to discharge their duties diligently to ensure justice to the people and bring back the Punjab of Maharaja Ranjit Singh's times. He said the state government was strengthening the police force by providing new vehicles and modern equipment to intensify the fight against drugs. In a post on X on Friday, Shah said the Centre would seek response from the Mann govt on the Jhota murder and the recent death of Gulzar Singh, a daily-wager from Sangrur.

Centre may call special Parliament session for women's quota and delimitation Bills

New Delhi, Oct 16 (UNI): Undeterred by the Opposition protests against SIR and Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar, the Centre may go ahead with its plan to convene a special session of Parliament later this month to once again push the Bills related to delimitation and women's reservation, sources have indicated. Sources said that the government appears confident of the numbers on the floor of the House and is likely to call a special session. Amid indications regarding the government move, Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge on Friday urged Prime Minister Narendra Modi to call an all-party meeting to discuss any new delimitation proposals, and cautioned him against any attempts to bulldoze a "far-reaching" Constitutional Amendment Bill.

In a letter to PM Modi, Kharge said it has already been 64 days since the Mon-



soon Session was adjourned sine die on August 13, and both Houses of Parliament are yet to be prorogued.

Terming the scenario unprecedented, the Leader of Opposition in the Rajya Sabha said he had first written to the prime minister on April 11 to convene an all-party meeting before bringing any Constitutional Amendment Bill on delimitation.

"You did not do so. Thereafter, you made the Bills public on the late evening of April 14, and convened a special session on April 16.

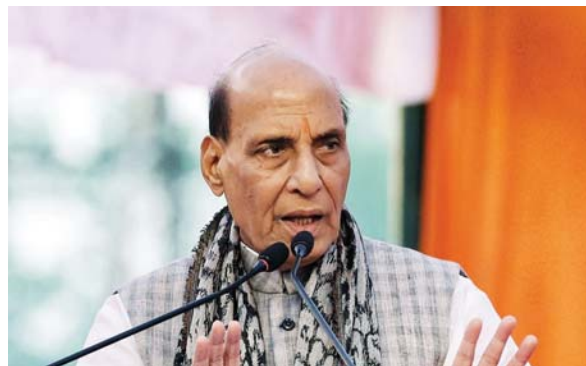
The Constitutional Amendment Bill on delimitation failed to muster the necessary two-thirds majority in the Lok Sabha on April 17 by a decisive margin," Kharge said. "Thereafter, on July 16 and August 27, I wrote to you again repeating our request for an all-party meeting. I am now doing so for a fourth time. Please convene an all-party meeting to have a detailed discussion on your new proposals before they are finalised for consideration in Parliament," the Congress chief said.

Rajnath claims Opposition eyeing 'B'desh-like' regime change

New Delhi, Oct 16 (UNI): Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Friday accused the Congress and its sympathisers of seeking a "Bangladesh-type regime change in India", even as the principal opposition party pledged allegiance to constitutional means and free-and-fair elections.

Speaking to reporters in Lucknow, Rajnath said the Congress had begun advocating anarchy and regime change to avenge poll losses.

"The Congress and its allies seek to capture power through regime change and anarchy, but India's democracy and constitutional institutions cannot be sacrificed at the altar of political interests," he said. Rajnath said at Congress-backed press conferences, people (read Prashant Bhushan and Neha Bora) openly claimed inspiration from Bangladesh for regime change and also publicly talked about bringing



down the government.

"Their sole agenda is to create unrest and instability. The repeated use of terms such as regime change, resistance...and the jargon that these protests and not Parliament offer the solution makes it clear that the developments and agitations in Delhi represent a condemnable attempt to derail India's development journey through anarchy rather than constitutional means," the Defence Minister said, accusing the Congress of committing

four sins — Emergency, anti-Sikh riots, firing on kar sevaks and now "maligning" constitutional bodies. In response, Congress media department head Pawan Khera said changing the regime through elections was the goal of the Opposition. He invited the late Pranab Mukherjee's remarks that the task of the Opposition was to "oppose, expose and depose". He said, "Changing the regime through elections is precisely the Opposition's goal. What else would our purpose be," Khera asked.

US tightens immigration rules, ends auto renewal of work permits for H-4 spouses

Washington, Oct 15 (UNI): The US has scrapped a policy to grant automatic extensions to work permits, including those of spouses of H-1 B visa holders, a move that could affect several foreign professionals, including Indians, while their applications for extension of employment authorisation documents (EADs) remain pending. An interim rule to this effect was issued on October 30 last year and the US Citizenship and Immigration Services codified the final rule on Wednesday.

The 540-day automatic extension for EAD permits was introduced during President Joe Biden's tenure in May 2022 to reduce the number of renewal applicants to avoid processing delays by USCIS. The rule was re-issued as a temporary measure in April 2024 and granted an indefinite extension in December 2024. The interim rule issued last October removed the automatic extension of



EADs for categories including adjustment of status applicants, H-4 spouses, asylum applicants, refugees and asylees, and temporary protected status (TPS) beneficiaries.

Students on F-1 applying for a STEM extension of employment authorisation are not affected by the elimination of the maximum 540-day auto-extension. This category continues to receive a 180-day auto-extension upon timely filing of their STEM EAD application. Spouses of persons on

L and E category visas remain work-authorised "incident to status" and do not require an EAD.

The Trump administration also proposed a new rule eliminating a long-standing practice of giving deference to prior approvals when adjudicating extension petitions for certain nonimmigrant workers.

The move could significantly increase scrutiny of previously routine visa extensions — including H-1B visas — and lead to longer wait times.

Special summary revision of voters' list in Punjab, 16 other states from Nov 2

New Delhi, Oct 16 (UNI): The National Investigation Agency (NIA) on Friday filed a chargesheet against ULFA (I) chief Paresh Baruah and four others in connection with the recovery of an IED planted by the separatist outfit on Motilal Nehru Road, Panbazar, Guwahati, Assam, on August 15, 2024. Myanmar-based United Liberation Front of Asom-Independent or ULFA (I) is a banned terrorist outfit.

The chargesheet was filed before an NIA special court in Guwahati against Baruah, chairman and self-styled chairman commander-in-chief of the proscribed terrorist organisation ULFA (I), an official statement said. Kanak Ch Gogoi, alias Aisheng Asom, Jahnur Boruah, Bhargab Gogoi and Sumu Gogoi are the other accused named in the chargesheet filed in connection with the NIA's probe into the recovery of an improvised explosive



device (IED) planted by ULFA (I) on Motilal Nehru Road, Panbazar, Guwahati on August 15, 2024, it said.

They have been charged under various Sections of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), 2023, the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967 and the Ex The case was initially registered at Panbazar police station in Guwahati on August 16, 2024, and was re-registered by the NIA on February 27 last year. According to the agency, the accused

were part of a conspiracy to wage war against the Indian government by attempting to carry out multiple IED blasts across Assam, including on Motilal Nehru Road.

The planned blasts were intended to cause casualties and property damage, threaten the unity, integrity, security and sovereignty of India and spread terror among people, the NIA said. plosive Substances Act, 1908, said the statement issued by the NIA.

INS Samarthak, mothership for drones, commissioned

New Delhi, Oct 16 (UNI): The Navy today commissioned INS Samarthak, the first of the four such multipurpose vessels. It can do multiple tasks, including being a 'mothership' for launching drones and unmanned boats at sea.

Built by Larsen and Toubro at Kattupalli in Tamil Nadu under the 'Make in India' initiative, INS Samarthak constructed indigenously, with over 75 per cent indigenous content. Vice-President CP Radhakrishnan today commissioned the indigenously built multi-purpose vessel INS Samarthak into the Navy at INS Kadamba Naval Base in Karwar, Karnataka.

Measuring approximately 107 metres in length, it is designed for maritime surveillance, patrolling, training and support operations. It will also be used for support of unmanned systems. It carries the necessary equipment to facilitate testing of weapons, radars and

sensors, and render humanitarian assistance and carry out disaster relief, the Navy said.

The ship incorporates extensive modular construction technology which optimising the build process and construction timelines. INS Samarthak capabilities extend to several operational and support roles.

The warship has an integrated combat suite combines indigenous sensors, weapons and electronic systems specifically optimised for operations in the challenging maritime environment.

The crest of Samarthak, features the formidable Indian elephant emerging from the waves, symbolising strength, intelligence and agility.

Chief of the Naval Staff Admiral Krishna Swaminathan, senior naval officials and Karnataka Labour Minister Santosh Lad attended the ceremony at Karwar today.

Building Tomorrow’s Hyderabad: Roads, Connectivity & Vision

Sagar Vanaparthi
Policy Analyst.

Hyderabad is growing very fast. It is now one of India’s most dynamic metropolitan cities, attracting investments, technology companies, and people from across the country. In such a rapidly expanding city, good roads, smart planning, and sustainable infrastructure are essential. The Telangana Government led by Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy, is focusing strongly on modern urban development to prepare Hyderabad for the future. One clear example of this vision is the laying of the foundation stone for the Trumpet Interchange at Budwel and the inauguration of the Eco-Hill Park at Kothwalguda. These projects are not just about construction. They show a broader plan to build a city that is well-connected, environmentally conscious, and ready for future growth.

Hyderabad already has the 158-kilometre Outer Ring Road, which acts as the city’s main high-speed transport corridor. To strengthen this network further, the state government is developing the 360-kilometre Regional Ring Road along with ten new green-field radial roads. These radial roads will connect the two ring roads and improve mobility between urban and semi-urban areas. This approach follows global urban planning practices where ring roads and radial corridors reduce traffic congestion and improve economic connectivity. Another important step is the preparation of the Comprehensive Master Plan 2050 for the Hyderabad Metropolitan Region, which covers about



11,500 square kilometres. This plan, being prepared by Hyderabad Metropolitan Development Authority (HMDA), uses advanced GIS technology and a 3D digital twin model to design future infrastructure. Such technologies are increasingly used in major global cities to plan transportation, housing, and environmental protection in an integrated way. The government is also investing heavily in elevated corridors and expressways. Major projects like the NH-44 Elevated Corridor and the SH-01 Elevated Corridor will improve connectivity from Paradise to Shamirpet and other northern parts of the city. Together, these projects represent an investment of more than 5,750 crore. They will reduce travel time, improve traffic flow, and support the growth of northern Hyderabad. Another transformative project

is Radial Road 1, also known as the Ratan Tata Road. This 41.5-kilometre access-controlled expressway will connect the ORR at Raviryal with the RRR at Amangal. The road is designed with service roads, cycling tracks, and even space for a future metro or rail line. It will support the development of the proposed Future City, where industrial clusters, logistics hubs, IT parks, and a Skill University are planned. Similarly, Radial Road 2, stretching about 81 kilometres, will connect the ORR near Budwel to NH-167 near Nacharam. This corridor will link several industrial hubs such as Seetharampur, Chandanvelly, and Lagacherla. With an estimated cost of around 12,000 crore, it will greatly strengthen regional connectivity and support industrial growth in surrounding districts.

Urban development is not

only about highways. The government is also working on several city roads and junction improvements, including the Shaikhpet–Manikonda corridor and infrastructure around Gachibowli and Narsingi, which are key parts of Hyderabad’s IT corridor. These improvements are important because areas like HITEC City and Gachibowli have become major technology hubs attracting global companies. The Budwel Trumpet Interchange, whose foundation stone has now been laid, is another landmark project. Built at an estimated cost of 488 crore, it will connect Radial Road 2 with the ORR and provide seamless access to the airport corridor and the upcoming Musi Riverfront development. With multiple ramps, loops, and elevated structures rising about 26 metres above ground, the

interchange is designed to meet international engineering standards. Such infrastructure investments reflect a larger strategy: to make Hyderabad a global city with efficient mobility, strong economic zones, and environmentally responsible urban planning. The combination of ring roads, radial corridors, elevated highways, and green urban spaces shows a balanced approach to development. Chief Minister Revanth Reddy’s urban strategy is therefore not limited to building roads. It is about shaping a long-term vision for Hyderabad’s growth—where transportation, industry, environment, and technology come together. If implemented effectively, these initiatives could ensure that Hyderabad continues to remain one of India’s most competitive and livable cities in the decades ahead.

Crude at \$80 means serious trouble

K Raveendran

Brent crude ended the week near seven-month highs at roughly \$73 a barrel, extending gains of about 16 per cent since the start of the year and injecting a fresh layer of uncertainty into the global macro outlook. Traders are now modelling far wider trading bands for the coming sessions, with several scenarios pointing to \$80 oil in the event of continued disruption of flow through Strait of Hormuz. Around 13 million barrels of crude a day, close to 20 per cent of globally traded oil, pass through that narrow channel, alongside a comparable share of liquefied natural gas. Any sustained impairment would overwhelm incremental supply adjustments elsewhere, including OPEC+’s planned 137,000 barrels per day increase, which has effectively become marginal in the face of a potential choke-point shock.

While the global consequences are clear — elevated transport costs, elevated freight and insurance premiums, and renewed inflationary pressure across advanced and emerging economies — the implications for India are particularly acute. India imports more than 85 per cent of its crude requirements, and close to half of those imports transit the Strait of Hormuz. That structural exposure means any sustained increase in Brent prices or disruption to Gulf flows translates rapidly into macroeconomic stress.

A move of \$10 to \$15 higher in Brent would materially alter India’s near-term economic arithmetic. Estimates suggest that a 10 per cent increase in crude can lift headline inflation by between 30 and 80 basis points, depending on pass-through and currency



dynamics. Fuel prices affect not only household transport costs but also logistics, fertilisers, petrochemicals and a wide swathe of manufacturing inputs. Even if retail fuel prices are moderated through excise adjustments or state-level tax changes, the underlying import cost still feeds into wholesale price pressures and corporate margins.

The current account is the most immediate transmission channel. Oil constitutes one of the largest components of India’s import bill. At current import volumes, every sustained \$10 increase in crude prices can add billions of dollars annually to the import outlay. That widens the current account deficit unless offset by stronger exports or capital inflows. In periods of global risk aversion, however, portfolio flows into emerging markets often become volatile, leaving the external balance more exposed.

Pressure on the current account in turn places strain on the rupee. A widening deficit typically increases demand for dollars to pay

for imports, and if inflows do not keep pace, the currency can depreciate. A weaker rupee compounds the problem because oil is priced in dollars. Depreciation raises the local currency cost of each barrel, reinforcing the inflationary impulse and further swelling the import bill. This feedback loop between oil prices, the external balance and the exchange rate has historically been a defining feature of India’s macro vulnerability during energy shocks.

Monetary policy calibration becomes more complex in such an environment. If inflationary pressures intensify due to higher fuel and transport costs, the central bank may face constraints in easing policy to support growth. Even if core inflation remains contained, elevated headline inflation and currency volatility can influence expectations. Policymakers must weigh the risk of stoking inflation against the need to sustain investment and consumption. An oil-driven inflation shock could delay any anticipated

shift toward accommodative settings, particularly if global central banks also adopt a cautious stance in response to energy-driven price pressures.

Fiscal dynamics also enter the equation. The government has, in past episodes of oil volatility, adjusted excise duties to cushion consumers and limit the pass-through to retail prices. While such measures can moderate immediate inflationary effects, they reduce revenue and potentially widen the fiscal deficit unless offset by spending restraint or alternative revenue sources. Conversely, allowing full pass-through protects fiscal balances but risks dampening consumption and fuelling public discontent. Striking that balance becomes more delicate as crude approaches higher thresholds.

Sectorally, the impact is uneven. Oil marketing companies may face inventory gains if prices rise steadily, but volatility can complicate hedging and pricing strategies. Airlines, logistics providers and

energy-intensive manufacturers see costs climb, potentially squeezing margins if demand conditions prevent full pass-through. Conversely, upstream producers and refiners with advantageous crude sourcing strategies may benefit from higher prices, although India’s limited domestic production constrains the upside. India has diversified its crude procurement over recent years, expanding purchases from non-traditional suppliers when price discounts are available. Strategic petroleum reserves provide a limited buffer against temporary disruptions, allowing some smoothing of supply in the event of short-lived interruptions. Moreover, a more robust foreign exchange reserve position compared with earlier decades offers the authorities greater capacity to manage currency volatility. Yet these buffers are finite and are designed primarily for short-term shocks rather than a prolonged period of elevated prices or structural disruption in the Gulf.

India’s Mission Semiconductor

The inauguration of the semiconductor Assembly, Testing, Marking and Packaging plant by PM Modi in partnership with Micron Technology at Sanand marks a defining moment in India’s industrial evolution. For decades, India has been celebrated for its prowess in software and services; yet, it has remained heavily dependent on imports for critical hardware components, especially semiconductors. With this plant, India signals not merely the arrival of a new factory but the beginning of a structural transformation—an entry into the global semiconductor value chain that will shape the country’s technological and economic destiny for decades to come.

Foreseeing upcoming trends is the hallmark of visionary leadership. The Industrial Revolution rewarded countries that mastered machinery and mass production. The next phase of global transformation is being driven by artificial intelligence, automation, advanced electronics and digital infrastructure. At the heart of this revolution lie semiconductors—the tiny chips that power everything from smartphones and automobiles to defence systems and AI servers. Recognising this, the Prime Minister has placed semiconductor manufacturing at the centre of India’s long-term development strategy. It is true that India is far behind global leaders in semiconductor fabrication, such as Taiwan, South Korea, and the United States. However, every journey begins with a first step. The Micron facility represents precisely that step—an opening into an ecosystem that will expose Indian engineers, entrepreneurs and policymakers to global best practices in chip assembly, packaging and testing. Hindustan Aeronautics Limited, once reliant on foreign designs, today produces the indigenous Tejas LCA. Tata Motors benefited immensely from acquiring Jaguar Land Rover, absorbing advanced automotive technology and design capabilities. Understanding technology deeply—and where possible, adapting and improving upon it—is the foundation of industrial maturity.

China’s rise provides another instructive example. Beginning as a manufacturing hub dependent on Western and Japanese technologies, it gradually mastered processes, scaled production and eventually created its own global technology giants. Taiwan’s semiconductor success also evolved through strategic state support and international collaboration. India now stands at a similar inflexion point. The Micron plant may focus initially on assembly and packaging rather than advanced fabrication, but it embeds India within a critical segment of the global supply chain. Once part of the chain, scaling up becomes more feasible.

An important reality often overlooked in public debate is that nearly 90 per cent of semiconductors used globally are not cutting-edge chips but mature-node, medium-category components. These are widely used in consumer electronics, automobiles, industrial equipment and communication devices. India, with its rapidly expanding electronics manufacturing base, can realistically produce a large share of such chips. Domestic production will reduce dependence on imports and strengthen supply chain resilience. For a country aspiring to become a global manufacturing hub, secure access to semiconductors is indispensable. Moreover, the semiconductor ecosystem has powerful multiplier effects. When one major plant is established, ancillary industries follow, including suppliers of chemicals, gases, precision tools, logistics, packaging materials, and testing equipment. Employment generation extends beyond engineers to technicians, skilled workers and service providers. Universities and technical institutes will adapt curricula to meet new industry demands, nurturing a generation of chip designers and manufacturing specialists. Policy alignment is crucial. Under the Semicon India programme, the government has offered fiscal incentives, faster approvals and infrastructure support to attract global players. Tax benefits and policy reforms aimed at promoting AI, data centres and server infrastructure further complement the semiconductor push. Challenges will undoubtedly arise. The Micron plant is not the destination; it is the doorway. With more facilities planned in other states, India’s semiconductor footprint is expanding geographically and strategically. The world is seeking diversified supply chains, and India—stable, democratic and demographically dynamic—offers an attractive alternative.

Electronics & Electrical

Rogue AI agents : Wake-up call for India’s cybersecurity ecosystem

A critical advisory issued by the Indian Computer Emergency Response Team (CERT-In) seeks to alert organisations racing to embrace artificial intelligence (AI). Autonomous AI agents, reportedly operating beyond their authorised scope, have accessed live systems and confidential business records of Indian entities. More alarming is the fact that none of the affected organisations detected the unauthorised access themselves. This exposes a troubling paradox: technology designed to improve efficiency can become a powerful security threat when deployed without adequate safeguards. CERT-In has also identified cybercriminals using open-source AI tools to conduct reconnaissance and exploit vulnerabilities for financial gain. Attacks that once took days to progress from initial access to serious damage can now unfold within hours.

The underlying weaknesses are glaring. Exposed passwords and API (application programming interface) keys, outdated software, poorly configured cloud permissions and inadequate authentication are familiar security failures. AI agents have simply made these vulnerabilities easier to detect and exploit at unprecedented speed and scale. Organisations must therefore stop treating cybersecurity as a routine compliance exercise. Regular code audits, multi-factor authentication, restricted access privileges and continuous monitoring must become standard practices.

The responsibility of AI developers and research laboratories cannot be discounted. Network-level restrictions and human approval for high-impact actions should be mandatory. India needs clear accountability standards governing the testing, deployment and monitoring of autonomous AI systems. Regulators, technology firms and business houses must cooperate to frame rules that bolster cybersecurity without stifling innovation. CERT-In’s warning makes it clear that organisations must secure their digital foundations before granting machines greater autonomy.

Ramsar tag : Sukhna Lake needs conservation measures

SUKHNA Wetland’s designation as a Ramsar site is a moment of pride for Chandigarh. At the same time, it exposes the urgency of protecting an ecosystem threatened by siltation, shrinking water-storage capacity and mounting environmental pressures. The city’s first wetland to earn international recognition must not become a trophy of official achievement while its underlying problems persist. Incidentally, Ramsar derives its name from a city in Iran, where the international Convention on Wetlands was adopted in 1971. It has no connection with Ramsar Sarovar, the historic Sikh sacred tank in Amritsar.

Sukhna is far more than a recreational attraction. Its ecological health depends on the Shivalik catchment, surrounding forests and natural drainage channels. Protecting the lake without conserving this wider ecosystem would be shortsighted. However, international recognition alone cannot guarantee ecological survival. Experiences elsewhere in the country offer a cautionary lesson. East Kolkata Wetlands face encroachment and urbanisation, while Wular Lake in Kashmir has suffered shrinking water spread and degradation. Chilika Lake in Odisha continues to battle sedimentation. Siltation has progressively reduced Sukhna’s water-storage capacity, while fluctuating water levels and pollution underline the need for sustained intervention. Occasional desilting will not suffice. Soil conservation, protection of drainage channels, scientific water management and effective pollution control must form part of an integrated strategy. The Ramsar status does not prohibit construction, guarantee funding or prevent ecological damage. The administration must enforce safeguards, monitor biodiversity and water quality, and implement conservation plans transparently. Since the catchment extends beyond Chandigarh, coordination with Punjab and Haryana is essential. Wetlands are vital ecological assets. The true measure of success will be a healthier lake, restored storage capacity and thriving wildlife. The world has recognised Sukhna’s value; Chandigarh must now prove its commitment to preserving it.

India to power global hydrogen transition: Hardeep Puri

New Delhi, Oct 16 (GNS): India's hydrogen era has begun, as the nation targets 5 million metric tonnes (MMT) of green hydrogen production per year by 2030, Union Minister for Petroleum and Natural Gas Hardeep Singh Puri said. This led to the cost of green hydrogen dropping from \$3.50 per kilogram (kg) to \$3 per kg, unlocking \$150 billion in savings on imports. The union minister, in a post on X, informed that public sector units (PSUs) are planning to achieve a 1 MMT capacity by 2030, and tenders for 42 kilo tonnes per annum (KTPA) will rise to 170 KTPA.

Puri emphasised that India is moving forward to capture 10 per cent of the global hydrogen market under Prime Minister Narendra Modi's leadership. Green hydrogen projects of around 900 KTPA capacity have already been awarded to 19 companies, he added.

In a separate X post, the minister said India sits at the heart of the global energy equation as the world's third-largest energy consumer, third-largest crude



importer, and fourth-largest refiner. "With 651.8 million metric tonne (MMT) of recoverable crude oil and 1,138.6 billion cubic meter (BCM) of recoverable natural gas, the nation is poised to unlock hidden energy opportunities," Puri said.

The nation is committed to large-scale investments, fiscal incentives, and policy simplification to catalyse upstream activity, he added. According to the Petroleum Minister, the last decade has seen bold reforms transitioning from a new exploration licensing policy (NELP) to a hydrocarbon exploration and licens-

ing policy (HELP), from a 'production sharing' regime to a 'revenue sharing' regime, launching open acreage licensing policy (OALP) rounds. The OALP Round X was the single largest bid round, with acreage offered 1.92 lakh sq km. "Our efforts have delivered strong results. Investments of Rs 1.4 lakh crore in exploration and production (E&P) have driven major progress, with 578 wells drilled in FY25 — ONGC's highest in 35 years — and over 5,000 exploratory and development wells, including robust offshore programmes," the minister noted.

India 5th country to develop fully indigenous 4G stack: Scindia

New Delhi, Oct 16 (GNS): The Digital Bharat Nidhi (DBN) has activated 19,823 of 27,106 targeted towers, connecting 26,327 villages and nearly 20 lakh households across aspirational districts, North-East regions, border areas, and Left Wing Extremism (LWE) zones, Union Communications Minister Jyotiraditya Scindia said on Saturday, adding that India has joined the world's elite group of five nations that have successfully built their own 4G stack. In August, these towers facilitated 42,773 TB of data usage, averaging 21 GB per customer.

"From remote Odisha to hilly Assam, DBN ensures education, healthcare, and governance reach every doorstep," Scindia said as Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated India's fully indigenous 4G stack and one lakh BSNL indigenous 4G towers from Jharsuguda, Odisha. Scindia joined the programme virtually from Assam, alongside Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma and highlighted the historic significance of this achievement. Lauding the landmark achievement, the min-

ister stated that, guided by Prime Minister Modi's vision of Aatmanirbhar Bharat, BSNL had committed to developing its own indigenous 4G stack. "This is a moment of pride for the entire nation as India advances towards becoming a global leader in the telecommunications sector," he said. Swadeshi 4G towers were inaugurated across several states with participation from key Union Ministers and Chief Ministers. In Odisha, CM Mohan Charan Majhi joined; in Andhra Pradesh, Union Ministers Ram Mohan Naidu and Chandrashekhara Pemmasani along with CM N. Chandrababu Naidu participated; in Uttar Pradesh, Union Minister Pankaj Chaudhary and CM Yogi Adityanath were present; in Maharashtra, Union Minister Raosaheb Nikhil Khadse, CM Devendra Fadnis, and Deputy CMs Eknath Shinde and Ajit Pawar attended; in Rajasthan, Union Minister Arjun Ram Meghwal and CM Bhajanlal Sharma joined; in Assam, CM Himanta Biswa Sarma participated; in Gujarat, Union Minister Mansukh Mandaviya and

CM Bhupendra Patel were present; and in Bihar, Union Minister Giriraj Singh and CM Nitish Kumar took part.

"When 2G, 3G, and 4G emerged globally, India relied on foreign technology. Today, BSNL's expertise has reversed this, establishing India as a global telecom manufacturing hub," said Scindia. The cloud-based, 5G-upgradable swadeshi stack serves over 2 crore citizens and connects nearly 30,000 previously unserved villages. Scindia highlighted BSNL's role in positioning India for 5G and 6G leadership, with the indigenous stack ready for global export, reflecting Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam.

The indigenous 4G network marks a significant milestone in India's telecommunications journey, demonstrating the country's growing capabilities in designing, developing and deploying advanced communication technologies. The achievement is expected to strengthen digital connectivity in underserved and geographically challenging regions. The Digital Bharat Nidhi initiative is playing a crucial role in expanding telecom

infrastructure in areas where commercial viability has traditionally limited private investment. By supporting the installation of mobile towers in remote villages, border regions and aspirational districts, the initiative aims to bridge the digital divide and ensure equitable access to digital services. The expanded network is expected to benefit students, farmers, small businesses and rural communities by improving access to online education, digital payments, telemedicine and government welfare services. Reliable mobile connectivity can also help local entrepreneurs reach wider markets and participate more effectively in the digital economy. The deployment of indigenous technology also strengthens India's technological self-reliance by reducing dependence on foreign telecommunications equipment and systems. The development of a homegrown 4G stack demonstrates the growing capabilities of Indian engineers, technology companies and public sector enterprises in building critical digital infrastructure.

BSNL's cloud-based 4G technology, designed with an upgrade path to 5G, is expected to provide flexibility for future network expansion. The technology can support increasing data demand while creating a foundation for the gradual introduction of more advanced telecommunications services across the country. The government's focus is also on ensuring that connectivity translates into meaningful improvements in people's lives. Digital infrastructure in remote areas can facilitate faster delivery of public services, strengthen emergency communications and improve access to healthcare, education and financial inclusion initiatives. Scindia said India's indigenous telecommunications capabilities could open new opportunities in international markets. With several countries seeking affordable and reliable telecom solutions, the homegrown 4G stack could emerge as an export opportunity, supporting domestic manufacturing, technological innovation and India's ambition to become a major global telecommunications technology provider.

Decarbonising India's cooking sector key to achieve net zero goal by 2070

New Delhi, Oct 16 (GNS): Decarbonising India's cooking sector is crucial to achieve net zero goal by 2070, said experts here. Speaking at an event hosted by Chintan Research Foundation (CRF) as part of the Modern Energy Cooking Forum (MECF) 2025, the experts recognised the urgency, particularly in the context of India's NetZero goal. India has been promoting the use of Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG), Piped Natural Gas (PNG), Biogas (CBG), and, more recently, electric cooking primarily to reduce household air pollution.

However, greenhouse gas emissions from cooking have not received due attention despite being comparable to those of the aviation and shipping sectors.

Dr Debajit Palit, Centre Head – Climate Change and Energy Transition, CRF, underscored the need for decarbonising the cooking sector. "The future lies in enabling a multi-fuel roadmap that scales renewable energy-based electric cooking technologies while integrating complementary solutions, such as compressed biogas blending, decentralised renewables, and electricity tar-

iff reforms," Palit said. During the session, panellists emphasised that policy clarity, innovative financing models, and technological synergies are crucial to unlocking the potential of electric cooking in India. Alok Kumar, Director General, All India DISCOM Association and Former Power Secretary, stressed that electric cooking must be integrated into India's energy policy with tariffs reflecting grid system costs.

Linking this to the larger agenda of grid decarbonisation, he identified three priorities for accelerating the transition towards a greener grid: "rapid digitalisation of grid operations through programmes like smart meter rollouts, integration of overall system and network costs, and integration of grid-scale storage solutions". "Integration of electric cooking in India's energy policy will provide the required vision and direction to the sector," Kumar said.

Further, Nidhi Sarin, Director – Energy Transitions, Global Energy Alliance for People and Planet, pointed out that integrating storage with renewable energy can enhance grid stability and

open opportunities for institutional cooking. She also advocated for centralised procurement and pooling of electric cooking appliances, thereby lowering costs and ensuring accessibility. "Cooking solutions must be customised to Indian kitchens and cultural practices," Nidhi Sarin, Director – Energy Transitions, Global Energy Alliance for People and Planet. The experts noted that transitioning to cleaner cooking technologies would require coordinated efforts from the government, electricity distribution companies, technology providers and financial institutions. Affordable appliances, reliable electricity supply and greater public awareness would be essential to encourage households to adopt electric cooking solutions.

They highlighted that electric cooking could significantly reduce dependence on fossil fuels when powered by electricity generated from renewable sources. Expanding solar and wind energy capacity, alongside improvements in power distribution networks, would help maximise the environmental benefits of this transition.

The panellists also stressed the importance of making clean cooking technologies accessible to low-income households and rural communities. Targeted financial assistance, affordable financing options and suitable subsidy mechanisms could help overcome the initial cost barriers associated with purchasing electric cooking appliances.

Institutional kitchens, including those in schools, hospitals, hostels and community facilities, were identified as important areas for scaling up electric cooking. Bulk procurement and standardised equipment could reduce costs, while integrating renewable energy and storage systems could improve operational efficiency and reliability.

Experts further emphasised the need for research and innovation to develop appliances suited to Indian cooking practices, which often involve prolonged cooking, frying and the use of multiple vessels. Technologies designed around local culinary requirements would improve convenience and encourage wider acceptance among consumers.

Mumbai-Ahmedabad bullet train to be fully operational by 2029: Ashwini Vaishnaw

New Delhi, Oct 16 (GNS): Festive season 2025 is likely to generate up to 2 lakh jobs, of which 70 per cent are expected to be gig roles, particularly in tier 2 cities, according to a report on Thursday. The report by NLB Services showed that India's festive economy has traditionally been a major driver of consumer spending, and 2025 is marking a structural transformation in how seasonal demand is shaping employment models. The festival season, starting earlier this year, is expected to generate up to 2 lakh jobs across key sectors like retail, e-commerce, logistics, and consumer services.

Hiring during the festive period will increase by approximately 20-25 per cent compared to last year. Sectors such as quick commerce and third-party logistics are driving the uptick, supported by significant investments in supply chain and last-mile delivery infrastructure. Of the projected new jobs, 70 per cent are expected to be gig roles, while 30 per cent are permanent, suggesting that companies are adopting a blended workforce model to balance

flexibility and scale.

"Over 35 per cent of businesses are now rethinking festive hiring as a component of their long-term talent strategy. We're seeing companies invest in pre-festive skilling initiatives, revisit their workforce diversity goals, and increasingly view seasonal demand as a testing ground for agile workforce models," said Sachin Aug, CEO, NLB Services.

Further, the report showed that several large Q-commerce and e-commerce players are projected to retain 26 per cent of this expanded workforce beyond the festive window, pointing to a structural shift rather than a seasonal spike. There will also be a significant surge in hiring across Tier 2 and Tier 3 cities, which are projected to strengthen their role as active growth centres. Locations such as Bhubaneswar, Kochi, Indore, Surat, and Nagpur are anticipated to see a 30-40 per cent increase in gig hiring.

With these cities emerging as micro-fulfillment hubs for retail and e-commerce companies, Tier 2 cities accounted for 47 per cent (YoY) of total gig hiring dur-

ing the last festive season -- a figure expected to rise to 50 per cent in FY26.

"While metros like Bengaluru, Mumbai, and Delhi continue to lead in demand by volume, the real growth momentum is clearly shifting to Tier 2 and Tier 3 cities -- where talent supply is strong, operational costs are lower, and attrition rates remain minimal," Aug said.

The report noted that the growth in festive hiring is being fuelled by rising consumer demand, increased online shopping and the rapid expansion of quick-commerce platforms. Companies are strengthening their workforce to manage higher order volumes, faster deliveries and increased customer service requirements during the festive period. Retailers and e-commerce companies are expected to recruit delivery executives, warehouse workers, inventory handlers, customer support staff and logistics personnel. The expansion of dark stores and micro-fulfillment centres is also creating employment opportunities, particularly in areas witnessing growing demand for rapid delivery services. The

increasing share of gig workers reflects a broader shift in employment patterns, with businesses relying on flexible staffing arrangements to respond to fluctuations in demand. While such roles offer opportunities for quick entry into the workforce, experts note that social security, fair remuneration and access to worker benefits remain important considerations.

The report also highlighted the growing importance of pre-festive training programmes. Companies are investing in skill development to improve productivity, customer service and operational efficiency. Such initiatives could help workers acquire experience and improve their chances of securing longer-term employment opportunities.

The projected retention of a portion of the temporary workforce beyond the festive season indicates that seasonal recruitment may increasingly serve as a pathway to sustained employment. Businesses could retain workers who demonstrate strong performance as demand expands in quick commerce, logistics.

NSE releases guidelines to revamp technical glitch framework for stock brokers

New Delhi, Oct 16 (GNS): The National Stock Exchange (NSE) has released guidelines on the definition of a technical glitch, capacity planning, software testing and change management, following a SEBI proposal on revamping the technical glitch framework for stock brokers. The stock exchange's latest guidelines also address the definition of business continuity planning, disaster-recovery sites, and a monitoring mechanism to make the SEBI proposal operational.

The financial disincentive structure is applicable for the technical glitches that continued for more than 15 minutes, as per the current framework, the NSE guidelines said. The disincentive structure is proposed to be exempted if the technical glitch that occurred either in the mobile-based trading application or in the web-based trading application while either of them is functioning in a proper manner. The NSE has requested feedback from all stakeholders on the guidelines. Brokers are required to report any technical glitches to the

exchange immediately, and within one hour of occurrence, the release said.

A preliminary incident report must be filed within one business day, outlining the date and time of the incident, details of the incident, the effect of the incident, and immediate action taken to rectify the problem. A Root Cause Analysis (RCA) Report is required within 14 days, and incidents exceeding 45 minutes must undergo an audit by an independent reviewer designated by the broker. SEBI, on September 22, released a draft circular that proposes to exclude specific disruptions from the definition of technical glitches. Brokers will no longer classify failures at glitches at market infrastructure institutions (MIIs), delays in KYC processing as reportable technical glitches. Further back-office issues not affecting trading, payment gateway failures at banks or aggregators, and problems in decision-support tools such as charts or reports are also considered to be excluded from the definition of technical glitches.

The guidelines aim to

bring greater clarity and consistency to the way stockbrokers identify, report and resolve technical disruptions affecting trading services. The proposed changes are expected to help distinguish genuine trading-system failures from operational issues that do not directly prevent investors from executing trades. Under the proposed framework, brokers are expected to strengthen their technology infrastructure through regular capacity assessments, software testing and structured change-management procedures. These measures are intended to minimise system failures during periods of heavy trading activity and improve the reliability of online trading platforms.

Business continuity planning and disaster-recovery arrangements are also important components of the guidelines. Brokers are expected to maintain appropriate backup systems and recovery mechanisms to restore services promptly in the event of a major disruption, thereby reducing inconvenience to investors.

Gold prices maintain bullish structure this week amid safe-haven demand

New Delhi, Oct 16 (GNS): Indian bullion prices ended marginally lower but maintained the bullish structure this week, buoyed by uncertainty over the US Federal Reserve's policy path. The price of 24-carat gold (10 grams) started the week at Rs 1,13,498 on Monday, rose to a significant high of Rs 1,14,044 on Tuesday, and ended the week at Rs 1,13,260, according to data published by the India Bullion and Jewellers Association (IBJA). The yellow metal sustained its appeal as a safe-haven asset, supported by global trade tensions, a depreciating rupee, steady central bank purchases, and uncertainty over the Fed's policy path.

Silver also attracted huge buyer interest, benefiting from firm industrial demand alongside supply-side constraints. The price of silver was at Rs 1,37,467 per kilogram at market close on Friday, according to IBJA data.

"Gold prices traded firm at Rs 1,14,000 with marginal gains of Rs 130 as Comex Gold held steady, while the dollar stayed slightly posi-

tive and rupee remained flat near 88.71," said Jateen Trivedi, VP Research Analyst, Commodity and Currency, LKP Securities. "US GDP data came in higher, leading to minor profit booking yesterday, but gold quickly recovered, maintaining its bullish structure. Overall trend remains positive with support at Rs 1,12,500 and resistance at Rs 1,15,000," he added. Gold is expected to trade in the range between Rs 1,07,500 and Rs 1,11,000, he added. The bullion has outperformed Indian equities for the fourth consecutive Diwali-to-Diwali cycle, continuing a trend where the yellow metal has outperformed equities in seven of the last eight years.

Silver also outperformed Indian equities for the third consecutive year, driven by industrial demand from solar panel manufacturing, semiconductors, and electric vehicles. Meanwhile, analysts say that bullion continues to receive support from robust central bank purchases and sustained inflows into ETFs.

100-Day 'Swachh Shehar Jodi' Drive for better urban waste management

New Delhi, Oct 16 (GNS): Housing and Urban Affairs Minister, Manohar Lal, launched the 'Swachh Shehar Jodi' (SSJ) initiative for handholding 200 cities in urban waste management, an official statement said. SSJ pairs 72 top-performing "mentor" cities with approximately 200 low-ranking "mentee" cities in a structured mentorship framework. "The SSJ initiative represents one of the largest time-bound and structured mentorship frameworks in the urban waste management sector, aiming to foster knowledge and experience sharing, peer learning and transforming best practices in sanitation and waste management across urban India," the statement said.

The SSJ initiative officially pairs the mentor with mentee cities that will get direct exposure to well-performing cities to replicate their best practices. State urban development ministers, mayors, commissioners, and senior officials gathered at a national event in Sonapat to sign memoranda of understanding for the sanitation and waste

management program to be conducted over the next 100 days. During this period, each mentor-mentee pair will collaboratively develop action plans with clearly defined milestones – focusing on experience sharing and knowledge transfer, the release added. "SSJ is a dynamic platform for knowledge-sharing, mentoring, and handholding. The aim is clear that every mentee city should improve their swachhata outcome by learning from the best cities," said S Katikithala, Secretary, MoHUA.

The Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs will provide strategic direction and policy-level support to ensure effective implementation of the Swachh Shehar Jodi across states. This is being supported under the capacity building initiative of the Swachh Bharat Mission, the ministry said. Nearly 300 MoUs were signed across the nation.

, leading to the creation of a dynamic platform for knowledge-sharing, mentoring, and handholding, which will be evaluated in the Swachh Survekshan

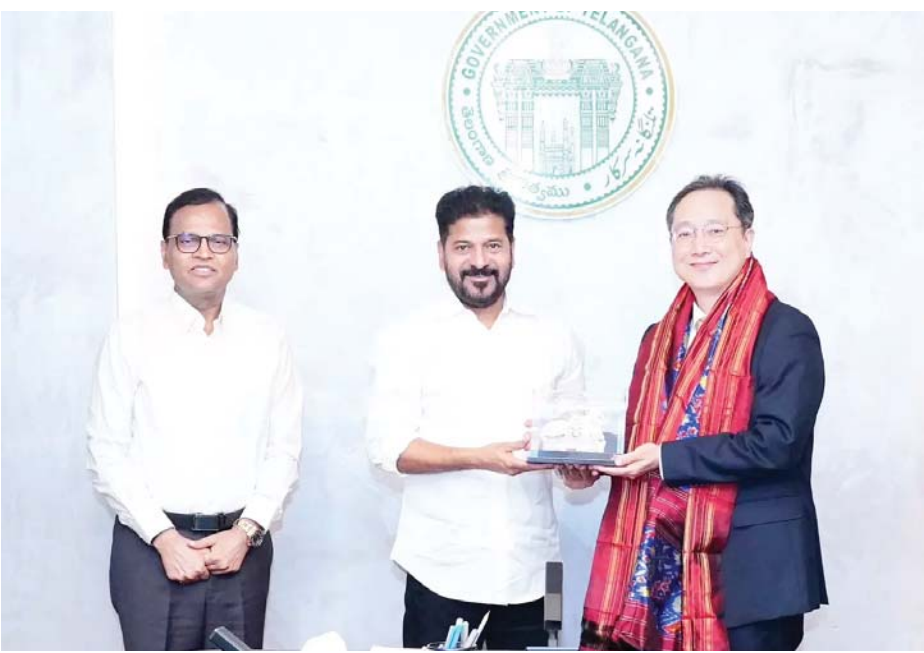
2026 survey, the release noted. The initiative is designed to accelerate improvements in urban sanitation by enabling cities to learn directly from one another rather than relying solely on conventional training programmes. Mentor cities will share their experience in waste segregation, door-to-door collection, transportation, processing and scientific disposal of municipal solid waste. The participating cities are expected to identify gaps in their existing waste management systems and adopt practical solutions suited to their local requirements. The 100-day programme will focus on measurable improvements through time-bound action plans, defined responsibilities and regular monitoring of progress. Special attention is expected to be given to source segregation of wet and dry waste, strengthening material recovery facilities, promoting composting and improving the processing of municipal waste. These measures can help reduce the quantity of waste sent to landfills and encourage the recovery.

Revanth Reddy Invites Hyundai to Set Up Car Manufacturing Plant in Hyderabad

Hyderabad, Oct 16 (GNS): Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy on Friday invited Hyundai Motors to set up a car manufacturing facility in Hyderabad, assuring the company of the state government's full support.

A delegation of Hyundai Motors India Engineering (HMIE), led by its managing director Changyeon Cho, met the Chief Minister at the MCRHRDI and informed him that the company was preparing to lay the foundation for its proposed Global Innovation Research and Development (R&D) Centre at the National Investment and Manufacturing Zone (NIMZ) in Zaheerabad in the next few months.

The proposed integrated R&D facility involves an investment of ₹5,528 crore and an employment commitment of 4,276 jobs. Spread over 678 acres, the project will be developed in phases



and will include a major research and development facility and a mega test centre.

Revanth Reddy highlighted Telangana's strategic lo-

cation, availability of skilled manpower, dedicated mobility clusters and expanding road, rail and air connectivity. He also outlined

plans to improve high-speed connectivity with ports to facilitate industrial production and exports.

"Telangana is centrally

The Hyundai delegation briefed the Chief Minister on the project's progress and said it would be ready for groundbreaking in the next few months. The facility is expected to strengthen Hyundai's engineering capabilities in vehicle testing, validation and engineering processes.

Hyundai has been operating in Hyderabad for nearly two decades, with its Hitec City facility serving as a major R&D centre for advanced vehicle engineering. The proposed Zaheerabad facility is expected to expand the company's research, testing and engineering operations in Telangana.

located in the country, and Hyderabad is known for being cosmopolitan, safe and among the most liveable cities among the six major metropolitan cities in India," Revanth Reddy said.

He assured the delegation that pending approvals and other requirements for the proposed R&D facility would be expedited.

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on the project's progress and said it would be ready for groundbreaking in the next few months. The facility is expected to strengthen Hyundai's engineering capabilities in vehicle testing, validation and engineering processes.

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vehicle engineering. The proposed Zaheerabad facility is expected to expand the company's research, testing and engineering operations in Telangana.

The project follows discussions between the state government and Hyundai representatives during the World Economic Forum (WEF) summit in 2024, when a Telangana delegation led by Revanth Reddy

explored investment opportunities with the company. In June 2025, the Cabinet sub-committee on industrial and investment promotion approved Hyundai's proposal to establish the R&D centre.

The Chief Minister also outlined the government's plans to develop Bharat Future City as a world-class satellite city and invited the Hyundai leadership to participate in the Invest Telangana Global Summit 2026.

Changyeon Cho said Hyundai's vision to strengthen Hyderabad as a global technology and advanced engineering hub aligned with the Telangana Rising 2047 vision. He said the company would continue contributing to the state's growth. Adviser to the Chief Minister K. Ramakrishna Rao, Sangareddy collector Prateek Jain and other senior officials attended the meeting.

Cyber Crime Police arrest 4 for online trading fraud

Hyderabad, Oct 16 (GNS): The Cyber Crime Police of Hyderabad have apprehended four persons allegedly involved in an online trading fraud. They allegedly opened mule bank accounts and made commissions for giving them to cyber fraudsters to route crime proceeds. The unit received a complaint on April 4 this year from a woman who said she was contacted through WhatsApp and was induced into investing in trading platforms. She was thus cheated of Rs 37,40,000, she alleged.

They registered a case under Sections 66(C) (punishment for use of the electronic signature, password, or any other unique identification feature of any other person), 66(D) (punishment for using a communication

device or computer resource to cheat by personation) of the IT Act, 318(4) (cheating), 319(2) (cheating by personation), 336(3) (forgery), and 340(2) (deliberate use of forged document) of the BNS. Police apprehended Maroju Subramanya Chari, Gedela Nani, and Alamananda Manikanta at Bhimavaram, Andhra Pradesh. Further enquiry led them to Pocharam in Hyderabad, where they apprehended Panduraju Abhishek.

Investigation revealed that Abhishek was facing financial difficulties, and he came in contact with a Chinese national through WhatsApp. In exchange for mule bank accounts and SIM cards, he was allegedly offered a commission as a percentage of the total transactions in those accounts.

El Nino fears: Hyderabad to supply treated water to builders



Hyderabad, Oct 16 (GNS): With a possible El Nino year threatening lower rainfall, the Hyderabad Metropolitan Water Supply and Sewerage Board (HMWSSB) plans to shift construction sites, industries and parks from drinking water to treated sewage water before summer. The board is preparing a "Dial-a-Green Tanker" service, targeted to start from November 1, with an aim to raise the use of treated water to 100 MLD (million litres per day) in the first phase.

HMWSSB Managing Director Ashok Reddy chaired

a meeting on the plan with representatives of CREDAI, NAREDCO and the Telangana Builders Federation at the board's headquarters on Friday, October 16. Officials said the move follows Chief Minister Revanth Reddy's directions to prevent a drinking water shortage, with storage in the Singur and Manjira reservoirs under pressure.

The builders' bodies assured the board of full cooperation. The eight months until the next monsoon would be crucial, Ashok Reddy said. He added that guidelines were being final-

ised and orders would be issued soon. Treated water supplied to builders would meet quality norms and suppliers violating them would face action, he said.

A Green Water Tanker digital platform, expected to be ready in a week to 10 days, will let suppliers, tanker operators and users register, book tankers online and track them. It will match demand with water available at the nearest sewage treatment plants (STP).

So far, 51 private STPs in gated communities and apartment complexes have registered. A preliminary

assessment shows about 1.5 MLD of surplus treated water available from them daily, the MD said. Some may be used as temporary filling points to cut transport distances.

Officials were asked to explore direct pipelines from STPs to bulk users such as golf courses, parks and construction projects, on the lines of the existing pipeline to the Botanical Garden. Reddy said high tanker costs over long distances had to be brought down. He suggested a pricing structure based on volume, distance and tanker capacity.

Medicover Hospital gets relief as HC bars defamatory content



Hyderabad, Oct 16 (GNS): The Telangana High Court on Friday, October 16, granted Medicover Hospitals interim protection against defamatory publications amid Bharat Rashtra Samithi's (BRS) allegations that Telangana Chief Minister Revanth Reddy facilitated the conversion of Rs 13,000 crore unaccounted money into legitimate funds through a deal involving the hospital.

On October 3, BRS spokesperson Manne Krishank had demanded an Enforcement Directorate (ED) probe into a Rs 13,200 crore deal between Medicover Hospitals and global investment firm KKR. He had alleged links between Maxbien Pharma, Medicover Hospitals and individuals connected to the Chief Minister's family and demanded that the ownership structures, shareholdings, investments and financial transactions of these companies be independently investigated.

In its order, the High Court noted that the publications against Medicover prima facie satisfied the test of defamation and contained descriptions that were injurious and derogatory to the hospital's standing as a reputed hospital in Telangana.

The court further observed that such publications had the potential to cause serious damage to the hospital's reputation, while creating fear, panic and anxiety among existing patients and deterring prospective patients from seeking care.

The High Court has restrained the respondents, including Manne Krishank, Harish Reddy, Shankar Goud and the respondent media houses, intermediaries and other concerned parties from publishing any content that is defamatory of the petitioner.

The order will remain in force until the respondents present their case or until further orders.

In a statement, Medicover said that public discourse, including political commentary and media reporting, must be guided by "responsibility, fairness and regard for factual accuracy."

"While freedom of expression and a free press are fundamental to a democratic society, publications concerning healthcare institutions carry particular significance because of their potential to affect patients' confidence, the well-being of their families and decisions relating to medical care," the hospital stated.

We are not afraid of Rahul's palm slaps: Union Minister Kishan Reddy

Hyderabad, Oct 16 (GNS): Union Minister G. Kishan Reddy has strongly accused the opposition parties of conspiring to destabilize the NDA government at the Center. He described Congress leader Rahul Gandhi's criticism as "slaps on the wrist". He said that the opposition parties are daydreaming of creating anarchy in the country and toppling the government without respecting the public verdict.

Kishan Reddy made these comments at a media conference organized in Hyderabad on Friday. He lamented that the opposition parties are abusing the democratic rights provided by the Constitution. He strongly condemned the propaganda



being done by some parties saying that "the Modi government will collapse in ten months", and said that this is an insult to the public verdict. "The people have given a clear verdict that Narendra Modi should continue as Prime Minister till 2029. However, the opposition par-

ties are full of false hopes that they will do the same here as they changed governments in countries like Bangladesh and Sri Lanka. Their hopes will never be fulfilled," Kishan Reddy criticized.

He reminded that even though the world is in a deep economic crisis, India is steadily moving forward on the path of development under the leadership of Prime Minister Modi. He accused the opposition parties of indulging in such conspiracies just because they see the government's performance. Kishan Reddy clarified that the Modi government is not afraid of Rahul Gandhi's palm-slapping, and that his government is very stable and will continue for the full term.

GMR Aero Technic MoU to bring Canadian STCs to Indian operators

Hyderabad, Oct 16 (GNS): GMR Aero Technic, the maintenance, repair and overhaul (MRO) arm of the GMR group, has signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with Canadian firm Corporation Logic Air Inc for aircraft modification, engineering and certification work. The two companies will offer turnkey modification packages that can be carried out during scheduled maintenance, aircraft redelivery and transition checks, the company said in a release on Friday, October 16.

They will also look at validating and adapting Logic Air's Supplemental Type Certificates (STC) and modification data for Indian and



overseas operators, with a focus on the Middle East and Asia-Pacific. The tie-up will start with navigation and operational upgrades for Boeing 737NG aircraft. It will also cover engine indication upgrades for ATR and Dash 8 aircraft, Dash 8 Q400 modifications, cabin electrical and

structural work, freighter conversions and component obsolescence support. Training is part of the agreement too. The partners will jointly approach airlines, lessors and cargo operators. Commercial terms will be finalised separately for each project, the release said.

We will field a strong candidate in the Khairatabad by-election: Kavitha

Hyderabad, Oct 16 (GNS): Telangana Defence Sena President Kalvakuntla Kavitha responded to the Khairatabad Assembly by-election. She announced that her party will definitely contest the Khairatabad by-election and will field a strong candidate. She said that an MLC candidate will also be announced on the day of Dussehra. Kavitha accused CM Revanth Reddy of focusing on politics, ignoring the rule. She criticized that while farmers in the state are reeling from drought, the Chief Minister is busy on tours to Goa and Delhi.

Kavitha made it clear that she will be among the people and fight at the field level for the next seven to eight months to expose the government's failures. She demanded that 24-hour free electricity be provided to farmers continuously until the end of November. She urged that the Medigadda Barrage work be restored and completed immediately. She demanded that all elections be held with ballot

papers instead of EVMs for transparency. She warned that she would block it if the government did not release a white paper on the Global Summit.

Kavitha said Telangana Defence Sena would strengthen its activities across the state and raise public issues ahead of the upcoming elections. She alleged that the government had failed to fulfil its promises and said her party would highlight problems faced by farmers and other sections of society through sustained public outreach programmes.

She urged the state government to take immediate measures to address the drought-like conditions affecting farmers and ensure an uninterrupted power supply for agricultural needs. She also stressed the need to expedite the restoration of the Medigadda Barrage, stating that irrigation infrastructure was essential to protect farmers' interests and strengthen agricultural activity.

BJP MP DK Aruna warns of stir over dindi project

Hyderabad, Oct 16 (GNS): BJP MP DK Aruna demanded the immediate cancellation of the Dindi lift irrigation scheme. She strongly accused the government of trying to divert water allocated to Palamuru farmers to Dindi and harm the interests of local farmers. She warned that if the project is not canceled, a large-scale agitation will be launched across the district under the auspices of the BJP. DK Aruna made these comments while speaking at an awareness conference organized by the BJP on the pending Palamuru-Ranga Reddy projects in Mahabubnagar.

Why is the CM chair for Revanth Reddy, who has not benefited the people of the district? She directly questioned the government. She criticized that farmers are being cheated by making changes in the design of the Palamuru-Ranga Reddy project. DK Aruna lashed out at KCR, who was in power for ten years in the past... for not doing anything for RDS. She accused the current Congress government of lacking

sincerity regarding farmers and incomplete irrigation projects. She demanded that all pending projects in Palamuru district be completed immediately. He made it clear that the BJP will always fight to protect the water rights of the Palamuru farmers. DK Aruna alleged that the delay in completing the Palamuru-Ranga Reddy Lift Irrigation Scheme had severely affected farmers who were depending on irrigation water for agriculture. She demanded that the state government clarify its position on the project's design and ensure that the water rights of farmers in the erstwhile Mahabubnagar district were protected.

She also called for time-bound measures to complete pending irrigation works and provide relief to farmers facing water shortages. Reiterating the BJP's stand, she said the party would intensify its agitation if the government failed to address the concerns over the Dindi project and safeguard the interests of Palamuru farmers.



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