



**HYDERABAD | PAGE 02**  
**Teachers tackle screen addiction via digital detox**



**WORLD | PAGE 09**  
**Israel okays more Jewish settlements in West Bank**  
While it withdrew such a plan in 2005, many in government called for re-establishment



**SPORT | PAGE 10**  
**RCB race to first IPL final since 2016, beat Punjab**

## In a nutshell

### SC to regain full working strength

**NEW DELHI:** CJI BR Gavai is scheduled to administer the oath of office to three new judges of the Supreme Court on Friday. Three judges — Karnataka High Court Chief Justice NV Anjaria, Gauhati High Court Chief Justice Vijay Bishnoi and Bombay High Court judge Justice AS Chandurkar — were appointed to the SC on Thursday. Once they take oath, the SC will regain its full working strength of 34 judges, including the CJI. PTI

### 17 women cadets pass out of NDA

**PUNE:** Marking a historic moment for women in Indian armed forces, the first batch of 17 women cadets graduated from the National Defence Academy (NDA) here on Thursday and were conferred degrees along with more than 300 male cadets. The convocation ceremony of 148th NDA course was held at the academy, widely known as the “cradle of leadership”, which provides officers to the Army, Navy and Air Force. NATION PAGE 7

### E-rupee in circulation grows

**MUMBAI:** The value of central bank digital currency (CBDC) or e-rupee in circulation jumped to Rs 1,016 crore at the end of March 2025 from Rs 234 crore in the year-ago period, the Reserve Bank said on Thursday. RBI is exploring the commencement of CBDC pilots on cross-border payments, it said in the annual report without giving a timeline. The CBDC was first introduced in Nov 2022 initially with a wholesale pilot. BUSINESS PAGE 8



## Gaddar film awards: Kalki on top

Allu Arjun bags best actor, Nivetha Thomas best actress

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# Medigadda: Congress govt to constitute another panel

**New committee to be chaired by former CWC chairman AB Pandya**

**STATE BUREAU**  
HYDERABAD

The State government is all set to constitute yet another expert committee to study the current status of the Kaleshwaram barrages — Medigadda, Annaram and Sundilla and oversee its rehabilitation works.

The new panel will be chaired by former Central Water Commission (CWC) chairman AB Pandya.

The slow-paced approach to the rehabilitation of the project has ignited fresh concerns among farmers. With structural damage to the Medigadda barrage first reported in October 2023, the prolonged delays in restoring these critical irrigation structures have left thousands of farmers in Telangana's northern districts without reliable water supply, threatening their livelihoods for yet another crop season.

The Medigadda barrage, a key component of the ambitious Kaleshwaram Lift Irrigation Project, suffered distress in Block-7, including sinking piers and cracking. The Congress government,



The prolonged delays in restoring the critical irrigation structures have left thousands of farmers in Telangana's northern districts without reliable water supply.

terming it non-functional, blamed the previous BRS regime. Similar issues, such as seepage and piping distress, were claimed to have been identified at the Annaram and Sundilla barrages. The National Dam Safety Authority (NDSA), in its April 2025 report, attributed the damage to design, inadequate maintenance, and water storage practices. It recommended demolishing and reconstructing Block-7, after conducting

comprehensive geotechnical and structural assessments for all three barrages. However, the government's slow response has drawn sharp criticism.

Farmers in Jayashankar Bhupalpally and Mulugu districts, who rely on the KLIP for irrigation, are growing increasingly frustrated. “We've lost three crop seasons already, and now they're saying repairs won't start until November 2025. How are we supposed

to survive?” asked Venkatesh Rao, a farmer from Mahabubabad district.

The delays have forced many to depend on erratic rainfall or costly borewells, pushing small farmers into debt. Peasant bodies have estimated that over 50,000 farmers have been affected, with agricultural losses running into crores. The newly constituted committee, tasked with charting a rehabilitation plan, is expected to take months to finalise its

## Phone-tapping: SC interim relief for ex-SIB chief

**NEW DELHI**

The Supreme Court on Thursday granted interim protection from coercive action to former Special Intelligence Bureau (SIB) chief in Telangana T Prabhakar Rao, an accused in the phone-tapping case.

A Bench comprising Justices BV Nagarathna and Satish Chandra Sharma directed Rao, who is believed to be in the United States, to appear before the investigating officer and said his passport be made available to him.

“Pending consideration of this special leave petition, we direct the petitioner to appear before the concerned investigating authority/officer. For that purpose, the passport/travel document(s) for travel only to India shall be made available to the petitioner by the chief passport officer/competent authority so that he could appear before the concerned investigating authority/officer within a period of three days on receipt of the passport/travel document(s) to India. Till the

**Directs T Prabhakar Rao, believed to be in the US, to appear before investigating officer within 3 days of receiving passport**

next date of hearing, no coercive steps shall be taken as against the petitioner,” the Bench said.

The court also directed the investigating officer to submit a status report before the next date of hearing on August 5. “The petitioner shall also file an affidavit of undertaking within a week before this court that within three days from the date of receipt of the passport/travel document(s) only to India, he would return to India and appear before the concerned investigating authority/officer shall investigate into the offences alleged against the petitioner. The petitioner shall cooperate,” it said. PTI

## Congress leader booked for BRS worker's suicide

**CITY BUREAU**  
Hyderabad

Following the suicide of a BRS party worker, the Borabanda police booked former Deputy Mayor and Congress leader Baba Fasiuddin for alleged abetment to suicide.

He is alleged to have demanded money for allowing building construction activity and harassed the victim. Based on the complaint from the family of Mohd Sardar (35), a resident of SRT Nagar in Borabanda, the police booked a case under Section 108 of the BNS.

According to Sardar's family, a few months ago, he had constructed a house and it was demolished by the GHMC citing certain violations. Fasiuddin had been regularly harassing Sardar. (SEE PAGE 2)

## Musk quits Trump administration

**WASHINGTON**

Elon Musk is leaving his government role as a top advisor to US President Donald Trump after spearheading efforts to reduce and

overhaul the federal bureaucracy. His departure, announced on Wednesday evening, marks the end of a turbulent chapter that included thousands of layoffs, the evisceration of govern-

ment agencies and reams of litigation. Musk announced his decision a day after CBS released part of an interview in which he criticised the centrepiece of Trump's legislative agenda. AP

## IAF chief sore over delays

**Says ‘not a single defence project’ completed on time**

**NEW DELHI**

Chief of Air Staff Air Chief Marshal AP Singh on Thursday flagged serious concerns over inordinate delays in various defence acquisition projects and failure to stick to delivery schedules for supply of key platforms even as he hailed Operation Sindoor as a “national victory”.

In his first public comments following the four-day military clashes between India and Pakistan, the Air Chief Marshal said that “not a single project” has been completed on time and that the armed forces



have refrained from calling “black sheep as black sheep”.

In his remarks at the CII Business Summit, he, however, did not provide specific details of the projects or made a reference of the period since when delays have been impacting the IAF. He also referred to dialogues from Salman Khan-starrer movie *Wanted*: “*Ek baar jo humne commit kiya hai, fir mai apne aap ki bhi nahi sunta*”, to emphasise that commitments made to the armed forces on defence projects have to be adhered to. (SEE PAGE 2)

## ‘Day not far when PoK will return to India’

**NEW DELHI:** People of Pakistan-Occupied Kashmir (PoK) are part of India's “own family” and the day is not far when they will return to the Indian mainstream by listening to their inner voice, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh said on Thursday. Laying out India's policy approach towards Pakistan, Singh said New Delhi has “redesigned and redefined” its strategy and response to terrorism and that possible dialogue with Islamabad will be only on terrorism and PoK. In an address at the CII Business Summit, he said ‘Make-in-India’ in the defence sector has been an essential component in the country's national security. PTI

## IN FULL SWING



With the early onset of monsoon in Telangana, farmers begin sowing operations in Mahabubnagar on Thursday.

## TOEFL undergoes major changes

**NEW DELHI**

From 2026, English language test TOEFL will be offered as a personalised test which will adjust in real time based on how a student performs and will feature AI-assisted identity verification, according to the Educational Testing Service (ETS).

Princeton-based ETS, which conducts exams like TOEFL and GRE, has announced a series of changes and enhancements in the exam, some of which will be implemented from May 30, 2025, and the remaining from 2026. According to officials, ETS will implement a multi-stage adaptive design for the reading and listening sections of the TOEFL iBT from 2026.

“This means the test will adjust in real time based on how a student performs. Additionally, traditional

**Princeton-based Educational Testing Service to introduce adaptive testing, AI-based identity verification**

content will be supplemented with modern, equitable topics. The tailored test will better reflect how students use English in real academic settings, like group discussions and project work. The test will use content that is relevant, accessible and carefully reviewed to reduce cultural bias,” said Rohit Sharma, senior VP of Global Mobility Solutions at ETS. Test of English as a Foreign Language is a standardised test to measure the English language abilities of non-native speakers. (SEE PAGE 2)

## Vande Bharat Sleeper train between Sec'bad and Delhi?

**C. ROMEO**  
Hyderabad

As Indian Railways prepares to roll out a brand new set of Vande Bharat Sleeper services, buzz is growing about the Secunderabad-New Delhi route being part of the first batch.

Despite there being no confirmation from South Central Railway (SCR), social media is abuzz with speculations that the high-speed, long-distance sleeper train will offer a redefined travel experience between Hyderabad and Delhi.

Coming on the heels of the high patronage that the



**IF INTRODUCED, THE VANDE BHARAT SLEEPER TRAIN IS EXPECTED TO REDUCE THE JOURNEY TIME CONSIDERABLY COMPARED TO THE ALREADY POPULAR EXISTING SERVICES — RAJDHANI EXPRESS AND DURONTO EXPRESS, WHICH TAKE 22-24 HOURS TO COVER THE 1,700-KM DISTANCE BETWEEN NEW DELHI AND SECUNDERABAD**

Vande Bharat Express trains have garnered in a short time, the sleeper service for long distances, promising a

more comfortable and faster overnight journey, is highly awaited by commuters.

If introduced, the Vande

Bharat sleeper train is expected to reduce the journey time considerably compared to the already popular exist-