



25-03-2026  
Total pilgrims: 73,411  
Tonsures: 30,474  
Hundi kanakalu: 4,433R  
Waiting Compartments: 30

Approx. Darsan Time for Sarvadarshanam (with out SSD Tokens): 8 H



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The Divine Appearance day of Lord Sri Ramachandra

## IN BRIFS

### PM MODI TO INAUGURATE NOIDA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT PHASE I ON MAR 28

New Delhi (TSIT) Prime Minister Narendra Modi will visit Uttar Pradesh on March 28 to inaugurate Phase I of the Noida International Airport, a major infrastructure project expected to significantly boost aviation capacity and connectivity in the National Capital Region. According to an official release issued on Thursday, the Prime Minister will arrive at the airport site in Jewar, located in Gautam Buddha Nagar, where he will undertake a walkthrough of the terminal building at around 11:30 AM. He is scheduled to formally inaugurate the airport at noon and address a public gathering on the occasion. The Noida International Airport, developed at an estimated cost of Rs 11,200 crore under a public-private partnership model, is being seen as a milestone in India's ambition to emerge as a global aviation hub. Officials said the airport will serve as the second international gateway for the Delhi NCR region, complementing operations at Indira Gandhi International Airport. Together, the two facilities are expected to ease congestion and significantly enhance passenger and cargo capacity in the region.

### ED ATTACHES RS. 55.33 LAC PROPERTIES IN AYUSHMAN BHARAT FRAUD CASE IN ASSAM

New Delhi (TSIT) The Enforcement Directorate (ED), Guwahati Zonal Office, has attached immovable properties worth Rs55.33 lakh belonging to Mobzzil Hussain Barbhuiya, proprietor of Shifa Hospital & Research Centre, Hailakandi, Assam, in a case related to large-scale fraud under the AB-PMJAY (Ayushman Bharat - Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana) scheme. The ED initiated a PMLA investigation based on an FIR registered by Hailakandi Police Station, Assam. The ED investigation revealed that Shifa Hospital & Research Centre, Hailakandi, which was empanelled under the AB-PMJAY scheme, fraudulently raised 778 fake reimbursement claims amounting to Rs64,10,780 during the period from April 22, 2019, to November 5, 2022, without providing any actual medical treatment to beneficiaries. The hospital was found to be non-existent at its declared address.

### AP Cabinet approves resolution for legal sanctity to Amaravati



Amaravati, March 26 : The Andhra Pradesh Cabinet on Thursday approved a resolution to be passed in the special session of the Legislative Assembly on March 28, urging the Union Government to grant legal sanctity to Amaravati as the capital city of Andhra Pradesh. Section-5 of the Andhra Pradesh Reorganisation Act, 2014 will be amended for this purpose. The Cabinet meeting presided over by Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu decided to pass the resolution in the Assembly after a debate of four hours. It was also decided to incorporate the word 'Amaravati' in place of new State capital in the Capital Region Development Authority (CRDA) Act Chief Minister Naidu had already requested the Centre to provide legal sanctity to Amaravati as the capital of Andhra Pradesh.

The Centre has asked the State government to send a resolution in this regard after adopting it in the State Assembly. The Centre wants a fresh resolution on the State capital to avoid any technical or legal complications in the future. After receiving the resolution passed by the State Assembly, the Union Cabinet will give its nod and an announcement declaring Amaravati as the capital city of Andhra Pradesh is expected to be made during the current session of Parliament. Farmers who provided land for the capital city, have also sought legal sanctity for Amaravati. During his meeting with Union Home Minister, Amit Shah, in New Delhi in January, Chief Minister Naidu had urged the Centre to accord statutory status to Amaravati as the permanent capital of the State. The Chief Minister urged the Centre to grant statutory status to Amaravati by introducing a Bill in Parliament, terming it vital for the state's long-term development and stability.

### Congress slams Centre over Pak's reported mediation role in West Asia conflict

New Delhi (TSIT) Senior Congress leader Jairam Ramesh on Thursday launched a sharp attack on the Centre's foreign policy, alleging that India's diplomacy has suffered a setback amid reports of Pakistan emerging as a mediator in the ongoing West Asia conflict. In a post on X, Ramesh criticised the role of the External Affairs Minister, saying he was attempting to "cover up India's extreme embarrassment" on the global stage. "The dapper and long-experienced External Affairs Minister is doing his best to cover up India's extreme embarrassment and the setback to its regional diplomacy," he said. Calling Pakistan's reported involvement in mediation "truly atrocious," Ramesh listed a series of allegations against the neighbouring country, including its history of sponsoring terrorism, providing shelter to global terrorists such as Osama bin Laden, and violating nuclear non-proliferation norms through the network led by A Q Khan. He also accused Pakistan of carrying out attacks on civilian infrastruc-



ture and engaging in internal conflicts against its own population. "That Pakistan can even be considered for such a role is a most damning indictment of both the substance and style of Prime Minister Modi's diplomacy," Ramesh said, targeting Narendra Modi. He further alleged that the government's foreign policy approach had been "full of bombast and marked by cowardice." Drawing a comparison with the period following the 2008 Mumbai terror attacks, Ramesh said that under former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, India had successfully isolated Pakistan diplomatically. In contrast, he claimed that recent developments—including remarks attributed to Pakistan Army Chief Asim Munir and the April 22, 2025 terror attack in Pahalgam—had not led to similar international isolation. Ramesh also alleged that Pakistan had instead gained relevance globally, claiming that its military leadership had found favour with sections of the international community, including figures associated with US President Donald Trump. Referring to remarks by the External Affairs Minister that India is not a "broker country," Ramesh said the situation on the ground suggested otherwise. "The colossal failures in our diplomacy, outreach, and narrative management have made a broken country a broker country," he stated, adding that this, in his view, reflected poorly on the government's diplomatic record. The remarks come amid ongoing political exchanges over India's foreign policy stance and its handling of regional and global developments related to the West Asia conflict.

### ECI SEIZES RS 400 CR AHEAD OF POLLS, 95% COMPLAINTS RESOLVED WITHIN 100 MINUTES

New Delhi (TSIT) The Election Commission of India on Thursday reported that seizures of illicit inducements have surpassed Rs 400 crores in the run-up to the General Elections for the Legislative Assemblies of Assam, Kerala, Puducherry, Tamil Nadu, and West Bengal, as well as bye-elections in six other states, scheduled to begin on April 9. Announcing the poll schedule on March 15, the Commission directed the State and Union Territory governments to ensure strict compliance with the Model Code of Conduct (MCC). "We have reviewed readiness with Chief Secretaries, CEOs, DGPs, and heads of enforcement agencies from the poll-bound and neighboring states to ensure violence-free, intimidation-free, and inducement-free elections," the ECI said in a press note on Thursday.

### Trump warns time running out as Iran issues 5-point plan

New York (TSIT) : With the world in the throes of an energy crisis from the partial closure of the Strait of Hormuz, President Donald Trump warned on Thursday that time was running out for Tehran to "get serious" about a deal. Iran responded to the United States' 15-point peace proposal with a five-point plan, according to the Iranian news agency Tasnim. Trump said on Truth Social that Iran "better get serious soon, before it is too late, because once that happens, there is no turning back, and it will not be pretty". He described the Iranian negotiators as "very different and strange", claiming they were "begging" for a deal while publicly saying they were considering the United States proposals. Later, at an open cabinet meeting, he remarked, "We will see if we can make the right deal, and they make the right deal, and then the strait will open up."



Keeping the Strait open, a chokehold on 20 per cent of fossil fuel flows to the world, has emerged as a top priority for the United States and many countries affected by the blockage. Trump added, "Even now, we do not know if there are any mines."

### India, Fiji discuss strengthening cooperation in agriculture & capacity building

Suva (TSIT): India's High Commissioner to Fiji Suneet Mehta held a meeting with Fiji's Minister for Agriculture, Waterways and Sugar Industry Tomasi Tunabuna on Thursday, with discussions focused on strengthening bilateral cooperation in agriculture and capacity building. "High Commissioner Suneet Mehta was pleased to call on Minister for

Agriculture, Waterways and Sugar Industry, Hon. Tomasi Tunabuna," Indian High Commissioner in Suva posted on X. "Productive discussions were held focusing on strengthening bilateral cooperation in agriculture, capacity building, further deepening the strong and growing partnership between our two nations and people," it added.

### IRAN 'CROSSED ALL RED LINES': GCC CALLS FOR DIPLOMACY

Abu Dhabi (TSIT) The Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) has accused Iran of crossing "all red lines" as tensions in the region escalated sharply, with missile strikes, maritime threats, and disruptions to global trade through Strait of Hormuz raising alarm.

### UAE: Indian national among two killed by falling debris of intercepted missile

Abu Dhabi, March 26 : One Indian national was killed and another injured as two people died and three suffered injuries after the debris of a ballistic missile fell in UAE's Abu Dhabi on Thursday following a successful interception by the country's air defence systems. "As part of the ongoing follow-up to the previously reported incident caused by falling debris following the successful interception of a ballistic missile by air defence systems, the incident has resulted in the deaths of two individuals of Pakistani and Indian nationality, and in injuries ranging from serious to moderate sustained by three individuals of Emirati, Jordanian and Indian nationality," the Abu Dhabi Media Office wrote on X. "The public is advised to obtain information



only from official sources and to avoid spreading rumours or unverified information," it added. Earlier in the day, Abu Dhabi Media Office had said that authorities had responded to an incident involving falling debris in Sweihan street after the missile was intercepted by air defence systems. "Abu Dhabi authorities have responded to an incident involving falling debris in Sweihan street, following the successful interception of a ballistic missile by air defence systems. The incident resulted in the deaths of two unidentified individuals, three injuries, and damage to a number of cars. Further updates will be provided in due course," Abu Dhabi Media Office posted on X. "The public is advised to obtain information only from official sources and to avoid spreading rumours or unverified information," it added. The ongoing conflict in West Asia began on February 28 following the strikes carried out by Israel and the US on Iran, which resulted in the killing of Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei and top military officials. In response, Iran has launched drone and missile attacks targeting the US and Israeli facilities, regional capitals and allied forces in West Asia. Earlier in the day, UAE's Ministry of Defence said that its air defences were responding to incoming missile and drone threats from Iran. It advised people to adhere to the safety and security instructions issued by the authorities. In a statement shared on X, UAE's Ministry of Defence said, "UAE air defences are currently responding to incoming missile and drone threats from Iran. MOD asserts that the sounds heard are the result of the Air Defence Systems intercepting missiles and drones."

### CM Revanth directs formulation of CSR policy to boost corporate participation

Hyderabad TSIT BUREAU: Chief Minister A.Revanth Reddy has directed officials to formulate a dedicated policy for effective mobilization and optimal utilization of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) funds in Telangana. At a review meeting held on Thursday, the Chief Minister emphasized the need to attract greater CSR contributions for developmental and public welfare activities in the state. He stated that corporate companies supporting such initiatives through CSR funds should be formally appreciated by the government. He proposed organizing an annual felicitation programme to honour companies that make



outstanding CSR contributions. This recognition event will be held as part of the State Formation Day celebrations. Chief Minister also instructed officials to establish a state-level CSR cell with a dedicated office. The cell will coordinate CSR activities across departments, compile details of projects undertaken by corporate companies, and identify government projects that can be taken up through CSR funding. To strengthen coordination

between the government and corporate sector, the Chief Minister directed the development of a Telangana CSR portal. The portal will provide comprehensive information on CSR opportunities, enabling companies to contribute funds and select suitable projects across various departments. Officials informed the Chief Minister that Telangana currently receives only about 3% of CSR contributions at the national level. Expressing concern, the Chief Minister questioned why companies operating in Telangana are spending CSR funds in other states. He stressed that more CSR funds should flow into Telangana and directed officials to ensure that industries and corporate entities within the state prioritize spending their CSR funds locally. He also instructed officials to study best practices from other states and design attractive policies to increase CSR inflows. Senior officials including Chief Secretary Ramakrishna Rao, Special Chief Secretary Sabyasachi Ghosh, Principal Secretary to CM Seshadri, Special Secretary Ajit Reddy, Secretary Manikya Raj, Yogita Rana, Shashank, Bhavesh Mishra, and Nikhil Chakravarthy attended the meeting.

### PM Modi invokes Lord Ram's ideals for 'Viksit, Aatmanirbhar Bharat' on Ram Navami

New Delhi, March 26 : Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday greeted citizens on the occasion of Ram Navami and prayed for the well-being of all, expressing hope that the blessings of Lord Ram would guide the nation towards the goal of a 'Viksit' and 'Aatmanirbhar Bharat'. Ram Navami marks the birth of Lord Ram, worshipped as the seventh avatar of Lord Vishnu in Hinduism. The festival falls during the nine-day Chaitra Navratri period and is observed as a time for reflection on values such as truth, compassion and righteousness. In a message posted on X, the Prime Minister said, "My fellow countrymen across the nation, unlimited best wishes on the occasion of Ram Navami. From the life of Maryada Purushottam, filled with sacrifice, austerity, and



restraint, we draw inspiration to confront every situation with our full strength." "His ideals will continue to guide not only the people of India but all of humanity for eternity. My wish is that by the grace of Lord Ram, the welfare of all may be ensured, paving the way for the fulfilment of our resolve for a Viksit and Aatmanirbhar Bharat," he added. Lord Ram is widely regarded

as a symbol of righteousness, truth and duty, and his life continues to inspire millions to follow the path of ethical conduct and moral values. He is often seen as the ideal ruler of human being, embodying virtue, discipline and justice. On the occasion, temples across the country witnessed large gatherings of devotees offering prayers and participating in rituals. Observances typically include fasting, devotional singing, recitations from the Ramayana and religious processions. Earlier in the day, the Prime Minister also extended greetings on the eighth day of Chaitra Navratri, dedicated to Goddess Mahagauri. "Millions of salutations at the feet of Mother Mahagauri! May her divine aura bring happiness, prosperity, and good health into everyone's life," he posted on X.

## NIRANJAN REDDY VISITS ARRESTED LEADERS, DEMANDS RELEASE

Wanaparthi (TSIT): Former minister Singireddy Niranjana Reddy visited the Wanaparthi town police station to meet leaders who were arrested while protesting over an alleged rape incident.



Leaders including Nandimalla Ashok, Cheerla Chandr, Mechanic Srinu, and six others had reportedly gone to question the incident when they were taken into

custody. Niranjana Reddy met them at the police station and expressed solidarity, encouraging the detained leaders. Speaking on the occasion, he alleged

that the arrests were part of a conspiracy to protect the accused in the case. He criticized the Congress government, stating that instead of taking strict action against those responsible for the crime, those raising their voice were being targeted.

He demanded the immediate and unconditional release of all the arrested leaders and called for justice for the victim.

## TPCC PRESIDENT MAHESH KUMAR GOUD CONDOLES DEMISE OF FORMER MP RANJITH REDDY'S MOTHER

Hyderabad TSIT: The recent demise of the mother of former MP Ranjith Reddy has cast a pall of gloom among family members and well-wishers. On Thursday, TPCC President Mahesh Kumar Goud visited the residence of Ranjith Reddy and conveyed his heartfelt condolences to the bereaved family. He paid floral tributes to the portrait of the departed soul and offered prayers for her eternal peace.



Mahesh Kumar Goud expressed deep sorrow over the loss and extended his sympathies to Ranjith Reddy and his family members during this difficult time. He prayed that they find the strength to bear the irreparable loss. Several party leaders and supporters were also present on the occasion to pay their respects.

## SEMINAR ON "WORLD WATER DAY" UNDER THE THEME: WATER AND GENDER ORGANIZED AT KITS WARANGAL

WARANGAL, March 26, TSIT: Department of Electrical and Electronics Engineering (EEE), Kakatiya Institute of Technology & Science Warangal (KITSW) and the institution of engineers (India) Warangal Local Centre (WLC) are jointly organising seminar on "World Water Day" under the Theme: Water and Gender\* held at in Civil Seminar Hall, KITS Warangal campus said by the Principal Prof. K. Ashoka Reddy.

On this occasion the guest speaker NIT Warangal, Professor (HAG), Department of CE, Prof. N. V. Umamahesh focused on highlighting the theme to explore the critical relationship between water, women, and gender equality. It requires sustainable water management, integrated river



development and sustainable development goals. Water is the driving force of life. Reverses to be managed in the best engineering practices for the benefit of society. He concluded that making water a force for sustainable development and gender equality that benefits us all with safe drinking water.

On this occasion The Principal Prof. K. Ashoka Reddy gave the presidential remarks. The session was

informative and interactive, with the students actively participating in discussions and raising questions in the domain of sustainable development techniques. The former MP, Rajya Sabha and KITSW chairman, Capt. V. Lakshminantha Rao and Treasurer, P. Narayana Reddy and Additional Secretary & former Husnabad MLA Vedula Satish Kumar have congratulated and appreciated the department of EEE for successfully conducting the technical seminar on Water and gender.

In this programme, NIT Warangal ECE department professors, Prof. L. Anjaneyulu (Chairman, IE(I), WLC) & Prof. P. Muralidhar (MIE, honorary secretary), Head and Associate Professor, Dr. M. Narsimha Rao, Associate Professor of Chemistry & PRO Dr. D. Prabhakara Chary, faculty coordinator, Dr. B. Vijay Kumar & Dr. C. Pavan Kumar & Dr. G. Sunil Kumar (Asst. Professor), EEED faculty, staff and 200 students were present.

## CM Naidu to Inaugurate TTDCO Housing Units in Naidupeta on March 30

Tirupati, March 26: District Collector Dr. S. Venkateswar has directed officials to ensure fool-proof and meticulous arrangements for the upcoming visit of Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu, who is scheduled to inaugurate TTDCO housing units at Puduru village in Naidupeta on March 30.



The Collector, along with District SP L. Subbarayudu and other senior officials, conducted an inspection of the housing site and surrounding areas to review preparations. The team examined key arrangements including sanitation, plantation drives, infrastructure readiness, and overall site development.

The Collector emphasized that all arrangements for the Chief Minister's tour, including the inauguration and house-warming (Gruha Pravvesam) ceremony, must be carried out in a systematic and timely manner. He instructed officials to personally monitor the works and ensure completion before the visit.

Special focus was laid on providing essential amenities such as drinking water, electricity, and sanitation facilities to all the housing units to be inaugurated.

Officials including Joint Collector Govindarao, Additional SP Ravi Manoharachi, Naidupeta DSP Chenchu Babu, Sullurupeta RDO Devendra Reddy, and local municipal and revenue authorities participated in the inspection.

## AYILENI MOHAN REDDY REMEMBERED ON 30TH DEATH ANNIVERSARY



recalled his lifelong dedication to the working class and the Communist movement in the region.

Speaking on the occasion, his son Ayileni Mallikarjuna Reddy said his father had served in the Communist Party of India (CPI) for nearly 25 years, tirelessly working for public welfare. He expressed anguish over the circumstances surrounding his father's death, stating that misinformation had led to his unjust killing. Despite the hardship faced by the family after his demise, he noted that Mohan Reddy continues to live in the hearts of the people.

Husnabad, March 26 (The South India Times): The 30th death anniversary of veteran Communist leader Ayileni Mohan Reddy was observed with great solemnity at Ambedkar Crossroads in Husnabad on Thursday, with leaders and citizens paying heartfelt tributes. Leaders from various political parties and civil society organisations garlanded his portrait and

## LOAN FACILITY TO BENEFICIARIES OF INDIRAMMA HOUSES: DISTRICT COLLECTOR



Wanaparthi: District Collector Adarsh Surabhi suggested that the beneficiaries of Indiramma Houses who are unable to make advance investment by themselves should provide loans through Self Help Societies instead of borrowing from outside. On Thursday, District Collector visited Buddharam village under Gopalpet mandal and inspected Indiramma houses and double bedroom houses under construction.

## GITAM to Host 5-Day Workshop on AI & ML for Business Decision-Making

Hyderabad: The GITAM School of Business is set to organize a five-day online hands-on workshop titled "Artificial Intelligence & Machine Learning for Business Decision-Making" from May 25 to 29, 2026, between 6:00 PM and 9:00 PM.



The Management Development Programme (MDP) aims to equip participants with practical knowledge of how Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Machine Learning (ML) are transforming modern business decision-making. The workshop will focus on real-world applications such as customer acquisition, demand forecasting, risk management, and personalized marketing through AI-driven analytics.

Designed primarily for faculty members from Management, Commerce, Economics, Computer Applications, and Engineering backgrounds, the programme emphasizes business-oriented use cases rather than purely technical concepts. Participants will engage with practical datasets, visualization tools, and user-friendly analytics platforms to better understand AI/ML applications.

The sessions will be led by Dr. M. Kamakshiah, an expert in Business Analytics, Data Science, and AI/ML, who has conducted several training programmes in the field.

Key topics include supervised and unsupervised learning, recommender systems, and ensemble models, with applications in customer churn prediction, market segmentation, and fraud detection.

Upon completion, participants will gain both conceptual clarity and hands-on experience, enabling them to apply AI/ML techniques in business scenarios and develop AI-enabled academic projects.

For registration and details, interested participants can contact Dr. Joseph Paul, Chairperson, Executive Education, Center for Business Engagement, GITAM.

## KITS WARANGAL STUDENTS DONATE 560 UNITS IN MEGA BLOOD CAMP

WARANGAL, TSIT: 560 Units of Blood donated to Indian Red Cross Society (IRCS) Hanumakonda by KITS Warangal Students in association with Lions Club Warangal. Special Thanks to the KITSW Management and Enthusiastic



Students, faculty & staff of the KITSW family proved their social responsibility by donating blood, said by Ex. Governor, Lions club warangal, Ln. K. Venkata Reddy. The NSS Club, Student Activity Centre (SAC), Kakatiya Institute of Technology & Science, Warangal (KITSW) is organized the "Mega Blood Donation Camp" in association with Lions Club Warangal held at auditorium KITS Warangal campus on 25th March, 2026 said by the Principal Prof. K. Ashoka Reddy. It is organized in the memory of Sulochana garu wife of late Dr. V. Vishwanath Rao.

The former Rajya Sabha MP and KITSW Chairman,

Capt. V. Lakshminantha Rao and KITSW treasurer P. Narayana Reddy, Husnabad constituency former MLA & KITSW Additional secretary, Vodithala Satish Kumar have congratulated and appreciated the faculty, staff and SAC student executive team for donating blood. On this occasion the chief guest Ex. Governor, Lions club warangal, Ln. K. Venkata Reddy highlighted that any healthy person can donate blood 250-300ml. After donating the blood the amount of satisfaction is incomparable with any kind of donation. By donating the blood students look younger and also enhance their dynamism with respect to skill development.

## 'MEE INTIKI MEE DOCTOR' LAUNCHED IN TIRUPATI; MOBILE MEDICAL UNIT TO SERVE RURAL POOR

Tirupati, March 26: District Collector Dr. S. Venkateswar inaugurated a Mobile Medical Unit under the "Mee Intiki - Mee Doctor" project to strengthen primary healthcare services in rural areas of the district. Launched under the aegis of the Indian Red Cross Society with CSR support from the Rural Electrification Corporation (REC), the initiative aims to provide free and quality medical services to the poor, particularly in remote SC



and ST habitations. The specially designed mobile unit will offer outpatient services and medicines to nearly 100 patients. Staffed with a doctor, nurse, pharmacists, and driver, the unit will visit two to three villages daily as per a fixed schedule. It will also coordinate with ASHA and ANM workers for follow-up care and refer patients to higher medical facilities when required. Implemented at a cost of Rs.8.40 crore, the programme is being introduced in seven districts across the state, including Tirupati. The initiative focuses on achieving 100% immunization, reducing communicable diseases like dengue and malaria, and lowering maternal and infant mortality rates. The Collector also highlighted plans to launch a Mobile Blood Bank soon to promote voluntary blood donation and ensure timely availability of blood. Officials from the Health Department and Indian Red Cross Society attended the programme.

## 'EKAA: THE ONE' SHOWCASES RARE 64 YOGINI ARTWORKS IN HYDERABAD

Hyderabad | March 26, 2026: A unique and culturally significant art exhibition, "Ekaa: The One - The 64 Yogini Trail," by Dr. Beena Unnikrishnan, is being held in Hyderabad from March 26 to 28 at Gallery 78, Silpa Hills, Khanamet near HITEX. The exhibition presents a rare collection of all 64 Yogini artworks, offering an immersive experience rooted in the philosophy of Shakti—the primordial feminine energy. Through a contemporary artistic lens, the works explore themes of feminine power, balance, consciousness, and transformation.



Developed over five years, the collection is being showcased as a cohesive body of work by a single artist for the first time globally, marking a significant cultural milestone. Unlike traditional depictions, the exhibition reinterprets the Yogini tradition within modern social and cultural contexts.

Conceived as a non-commercial public initiative, the exhibition is open to all, with artworks not available for sale,

emphasizing cultural dialogue over commerce. The showcase is part of a nationwide tour spanning 16 states over 81 days, covering more than 10,000 kilometres, and aims to build a pan-India narrative around India's sacred feminine heritage. Inspired by ancient Yogini temples dating back to the 9th-12th centuries, the artworks symbolize various aspects such as intuition, courage, healing, and renewal. A distinctive feature of the artist's process is beginning each painting with the eyes, creating a deep emotional connection in every piece.

## BHADRACHALAM DECKED UP FOR CELESTIAL WEDDING OF LORD RAMA

Khammam (TSIT): The temple town of Bhadrachalam has transformed into a spiritual spectacle as it gears up for the grand celebrations of Sri Rama Navami. The famed Sri Sita Ramachandra Swamy Temple is resplendent with elaborate decorations, marking preparations for the celestial wedding of Lord Rama and Sita.



The temple premises are adorned with colourful flowers, festoons and dazzling illuminations, creating a divine ambience. Devotional hymns, especially the keertanas of saint Bhadrachala Ramadasu, echo through the air, immersing devotees in deep spiritual fervour. Priests are making meticulous arrangements to conduct the Sitaranga Kalyanam in accordance with sacred traditions, accompanied by Vedic chants and rituals. Thousands of devotees

from across Telangana, Andhra Pradesh and other parts of the country, as well as from abroad, are expected to witness the grand event. Authorities have put in place extensive arrangements to ensure a smooth experience for pilgrims, including queue management systems, drinking water facilities, annadanam, medical camps and tight security. On behalf of the state government, Chief Minister Revanth Reddy and his spouse will offer pattu vastrams and mutyala talambalu to the deities, continuing a long-standing tradition associated with the temple festivities.

## NRI EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS GRANTED DEEMED-TO-BE UNIVERSITY STATUS BY UNIVERSITY GRANTS COMMISSION



Eluru: NRI Educational Institutions, located near Agiripalli in Eluru district, has been granted Deemed-to-be University status by the University Grants Commission (UGC), New Delhi, announced Chairman Dr. R. Venkata Rao.

Founded in 2007 with the establishment of NRI College of Pharmacy and expanded in 2008 with the NRI Institute of Technology, the institution achieved autonomous status in 2018. It later secured NAAC A-Grade and NBA Tier-1 accreditations, culminating in this major milestone in 2026.

CEO M. Teja Sai stated that admissions for the academic year 2026-27 will commence soon for courses including B. Tech, M.Tech, B.Pharmacy, MBA, and other programmes.

The official recognition was received from Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu. Principal Dr. C. Nagabhaskar said that detailed information regarding entrance examinations, courses, and scholarship opportunities will be announced shortly. The achievement marks a significant step in the institution's growth, positioning it as a prominent center for higher education and research in the region.

## BUDA DELEGATION MEETS VMRDA OFFICIALS IN VISAKHAPATNAM.



Visakhapatnam (TSIT) A delegation from the Ballari Urban Development Authority (BUDA), led by Chairman Anjaneyulu along with members of the Board of Directors, paid a visit to Visakhapatnam and met VMRDA Chairman M.V. Pranav Gopal and Metropolitan Commissioner Mr. N. Tej Bharat on Thursday. During the meeting, the BUDA representatives were briefed in detail about the comprehensive master plan prepared for the Visakhapatnam Metropolitan Region (VMR), maintenance of parks under VMRDA, and various development works being undertaken by its technical wing. Discussions were also held on planning strategies and implementation of development projects. The meeting was attended by the Mayor of Ballari, BUDA members Geddappa, Ranjith Kumar, Joint Commissioner Mr. Ramesh, Secretary Muralikrishna, Chief Planning Officer Shilpa, Chief Statistical Officer Hariprasad, and Planning Officers Mounika and Kishore, among others.

## AP POLICE NAB BALLARI YOUTH FOR EXTREMIST LINKS

Ballari (TSIT) A 36-year-old man from Ballari city has been arrested by Andhra Pradesh Police on charges of allegedly spreading extremist propaganda online and maintaining links with banned terrorist organisations, police sources said on Thursday. The accused, identified as Abdul Salam, a resident under Kaul Bazaar police station limits, was taken into custody on Tuesday night following specific intelligence inputs. He was tracked down and apprehended near Dhara Mill in Ballari by a special police team from Andhra Pradesh. Subsequently, with assistance from local police, a search (panchanama) was conducted at his residence before he was produced before a court and taken to Vijayawada for further investigation. According to officials, the arrest is part of a wider crackdown initiated by Vijayawada police after receiving information on March 22 about individuals allegedly using social media to promote extremist ideologies and maintain links with terrorist groups. During the probe, investigators reportedly found that Abdul Salam was in contact with key accused in the case and was part of an online network involved in sharing and propagating radical content.

## D. K. Shivakumar Defends Bengaluru Development Plans; Says Critics Will Acknowledge Decisions in Future

Bengaluru : Deputy Chief Minister D K Shivakumar today said that the Opposition may criticise his contribution to Bengaluru City today but would realise its value a few years later. Replying to a debate on Greater Bengaluru in the Legislative Assembly, the DCM, who also serves as the Minister for Bengaluru Development, said, "The opposition may criticize many of the decisions we have taken for the benefit of Bengaluru city today. But five years from now, they will say D K Shivakumar made good decisions. That is enough for me. I may not be able to convince everyone right now, but when the time comes, they will agree."

"Opposition leaders have engaged in extensive debate regarding the GBA. R Ashok and Ashwath Narayan have given many suggestions and I accept them. They have also criticized. I have always been one to accept criticism. Without

criticism, no person can change. When gold is tested, it is put into fire. When a person is tested, criticism and allegations are made. How we correct ourselves from this is what matters. I do not get angry the moment someone criticizes," he said.

"Veteran leaders of the House in the past such as S Bangarappa, Kagodu Thimmappa, Lakkappa, AK Subbaiah, M C Nanaiah and many others — used to debate very well. Those debates were constructive. Now debates are turning negative. Positive thinkers always have a solution for every problem. Negative thinkers always have a problem for every solution. We must always remain positive. I took charge of the Bengaluru Development portfolio with great interest. I was previously Urban Development Minister, I was Energy Minister — I now have enough experience and I set out to bring change in Bengaluru too. Yet some found



fault. That is also the duty of the Opposition," he said.

"Since taking charge of the Bengaluru Development, I have done extensive study. I am searching for solutions to Bengaluru's problems. The population that was 70 lakh then is now 1.40 crore. There are 1.30

crore vehicles. In other cities, major roads account for 16% of the area. Here it is only 8%. The NICE Road was started earlier but never completed. The Peripheral Ring Road, if built then, would have been completed for Rs.3,000 crore. All these reasons have caused traffic con-

gestion," he added.

"On May 15, 2025, a new notification was issued for administrative reform of Bengaluru city, and five corporations were formed including the existing areas. On September 2, it was decided to bring the 74th Amendment. The decision was not made overnight. As suggested by opposition leaders, a House committee was formed and their suggestions were incorporated. If there are errors, those too will be corrected. Now 369 wards have been created. Bengaluru is not being divided for any reason. This is administrative decentralization. Large projects need to be taken up in Bengaluru and government support is needed for that — which is why the Chief Minister has been made the head of the GBA. Bengaluru had no Planning Authority and that issue has been resolved. The GBA will decide on these matters," he explained.

"For Bengaluru's development, the BJP government in 2008 gave Rs.1,960 crore in grants for five years. Our government gave Rs.7,000 crore. BJP raised it to Rs.12,000 crore. Step by step, we gave Rs.3,000 crore, then Rs.7,000 crore in 2025, and the Chief Minister's grant added another Rs.1,500 crore. This year Rs.7,000 crore has been given. Thus the grant has been increasing over time. The BJP government's 2020 tax law has not been changed. We have provided even more facilities to the people — OTS, reduced penalties and many other opportunities have been given. Because of OTS implementation, Rs.1,277 crore in additional revenue has come in," he said.

"Why did Modi call Bengaluru a Global City? He said Bengaluru must be prepared for all future challenges. Atal Bihari Vajpayee had said that India can be seen through

### THE GOVERNMENT WILL KEEP ITS WORD TO FARMERS ON ALAMATTI: DCM D K SHIVAKUMAR



Bengaluru : Deputy Chief Minister D K Shivakumar today said that the state government would keep its word given to farmers regarding the Upper Krishna project.

Speaking on a resolution moved by H K Patil in the Legislative Council regarding the Alamatti issue, the DCM, who is also the Irrigation Minister, said, "We are committed to providing water to farmers. There are financial challenges, but our government will definitely do something about it."

"We travelled to Delhi, held meetings, and discussed legal options to take action as Andhra and Maharashtra are creating obstacles to the project. Bosaraju, M.B. Patil, H.K. Patil, the State's Advocate General, Nagamohan Das, and other legal experts discussed and arrived at a decision to protect the interests of the state," he said. "All members have passed the budget. Good discussions have taken place in the Council. H.K. Patil has moved a resolution on the Alamatti issue in the interest of our state. I congratulate everyone for giving their approval to this resolution," he added.

### Mourya Concepts Celebrates 20 Years with Employee-Centric Initiatives; 135 Two-Wheelers Distributed Across India



Bengaluru : Mourya Concepts marked its 20th anniversary with a significant employee welfare initiative, distributing 135 two-wheelers across India, reinforcing its strong people-first philosophy. With an expanding national presence comprising 45 branches and a team of over 330 employees, the company continues to grow, driven by a focused commitment to employment generation and workforce empowerment. Further strengthening its

progressive outlook, Mourya Concepts recently gifted six Mahindra BE6 electric vehicles worth Rs.1.5 crore, reflecting its emphasis on sustainability and forward-looking practices.

Speaking on the occasion, Founder Vaynugopal said, "Our employees are the backbone of our organisation. This initiative underscores our commitment to enhancing their mobility, improving productivity, and supporting their overall growth."

## R. Ashoka Slams Congress Budget, Alleges 'Debt Trap'; Seeks Coastal Policy and Protection of Forest Land

Bengaluru : Opposition Leader R. Ashoka said that the Congress government has pushed the people into a debt trap through the budget, and they have clearly highlighted this during the Legislative Assembly session. He added that they have also raised several issues logically and compelled the government to take action.

Speaking to reporters after the session, he said: "In this session, we have exposed the government's mistakes. We brought to light how bribes were being taken through PhonePe in the I-Khata system, and the government has taken action against that officer. A detailed discussion was held on the development of Bengaluru. We have explained point by point how Chief Minister Siddaramaiah has created a debt trap in the budget. We have forced the government to accept its mistakes. This government will continue to take



loans next year as well. We have made the public realize that Congress leaders are experts in taking loans but zeros when it comes to development."

He further stated that they fought in the House to save the Air Force training school in Jakkur, and as a result, the land has been protected. They have also saved the silk yarn factory in T. Narasipur. "We have discussed all these issues and brought them to a logical conclusion," he said.

Ashoka mentioned that he will participate in election campaigning in Davangere and Bagalkot at

the end of this month and in April. He added that the BJP team will work unitedly to win these elections.

Bring a Coastal Policy During the Question Hour in the Legislative Assembly, Opposition Leader R. Ashoka said that there are several problems in the coastal region. Unlike other areas, roads there do not last long. There are also different types of health issues in the region. More taxes are being collected from Mangaluru. Therefore, a separate development policy should be brought for the coastal region, similar to the one for Kalyana Karnataka. This policy can be implemented within the existing grants. He suggested that Speaker U.T. Khader, who also belongs to the same region, should also provide suggestions on this matter.

Save Forest Land There are 452 acres of reserved

forest land in the Jalahalli Circle. The Ramakrishna Hegde government had identified it as revenue department land and handed it over to the Air Force. I had inquired about this with officials. Now, we need to protect these forest areas. No other projects can be implemented in forest regions. There are also court orders related to this. However, Air Force officials are not allowing any infrastructure development around this land. They are not permitting the construction of any roads or underpasses. This land should not be transferred to anyone for any reason.

He pointed out that some development works are currently being carried out by the Air Force in this area. But people are finding it difficult even to move around in the Jalahalli Circle. The Air Force is carrying out development works unauthoriz-

## Samsung Introduces Galaxy A57 5G, Galaxy A37 5G with Exciting Offers in India



GURUGRAM, India, March 26, 2026 – Samsung, India's largest consumer electronics brand, today introduced the Galaxy A57 5G and Galaxy A37 5G, the newest additions to the Galaxy A series for young users who prioritise photography, performance, AI-enabled everyday features and durability.

New Design Language with Enhanced Durability Galaxy A57 5G comes with an aluminium frame, and at 6.9mm, it is the slimmest Galaxy A series device so far. The slimmer bezels on Galaxy A57 5G improve the device's visual balance and allows for a more immersive viewing experience.

Galaxy A57 5G features a 120Hz refresh rate and comes with Vision Booster technology, with 1900nits peak brightness that allows users to view content clearly in outdoor conditions and enjoy HDR content. Both Galaxy A57 5G and Galaxy A37 5G come with Gorilla Glass Victus+ on the front and back, improving resistance to scratches and drops. The devices also carry an IP68 rating for

safety against water and dust. Galaxy A57 5G and A37 5G are built to last with six Android OS upgrades and six years of security.

Night Photography Designed for Social Media and Low-Light Content

Galaxy A57 5G and Galaxy A37 5G feature a 50MP main camera with optical image stabilisation and a 1.0µm (micron) big pixel sensor, paired with enhanced image signal processing (ISP) and a Low Noise Mode. The result is brighter photos with sharper detail in low-light environments. Galaxy A57 5G has a 50MP main camera, a 12MP ultra-wide camera and a 5MP macro camera. Galaxy A37 5G includes a 50MP main camera, an 8MP ultra-wide camera and a 5MP macro camera. Both devices have a 12MP HDR front camera for clearer selfies and video calls.

The camera software on the new A series also includes AI-driven editing tools. The Best Face feature supports up to five people, allowing users to select the best facial expression from each person in a group shot. The Object Eraser tool

runs on device and works 33 percent faster, enabling users to remove unwanted elements from images without an internet connection.

Processor and Performance Improvements

Galaxy A57 5G packs Exynos 1680 that delivers 33 percent higher NPU, while Galaxy A37 5G is powered by Exynos 1480 that delivers 162 percent improvement in NPU performance for faster on-device AI tasks. Both devices come with LPDDR5X RAM and UFS 3.1 storage, which reduce application load times and improve file transfer speeds.

Galaxy A57 5G includes a flagship-size vapor cooling chamber, which is 13 percent larger than the previous generation for managing heat during extended gaming or heavy workloads.

Battery Life and Faster Charging

Galaxy A57 5G and Galaxy A37 5G have a 5000mAh battery that can last up to 2 days. With 45W charging support, the new devices reach 60 percent battery in 30 minutes. AI-Powered One UI 8.5

Experience

Galaxy A57 5G and Galaxy A37 5G run One UI 8.5, which integrates AI-driven tools—Samsung Bixby, Gemini and Perplexity—designed to support everyday tasks. The enhanced Circle to Search with multi-object recognition allows users to search objects directly from the screen and find related information or similar products.

Direct Voicemail allows voice messages to be stored directly on the device without relying on a network operator's voicemail system. Voice Transcription is new to the Voice Recorder app, making it easier to revisit important details from meetings, lectures or calls by quickly transcribing and translating call recordings or turning voicemail audio into text. Real-time call transcription converts voice conversation into on-screen text during calls.

Security and Privacy with Samsung Knox Vault

Galaxy A57 5G and A37 5G come with Samsung Knox Vault, which stores data in dedicated tamper-resistant hardware and monitors for hardware-level attacks. The devices also include software-level protections, alerting users in cases of data breach.

Availability and Offers Galaxy A57 5G and Galaxy A37 5G will be available across retail stores, Samsung Exclusive Stores, Samsung.com and other online platforms. Customers can choose among three attractive offers: INR 3000 Bank/UPI Cashback or a 24-month zero interest, zero down payment EMI plan or INR 3000 upgrade bonus.

## Rs.51,469 Cr Investments at Invest Karnataka 2026; 70,000 Jobs Expected

Bengaluru: The Invest Karnataka Conclave 2026 witnessed a major boost to the State's industrial growth, with 48 domestic and global companies committing investments worth Rs.51,469 crore, Industries Minister M. B. Patil announced. Addressing the conclave, the Minister said Karnataka is focused on staying ahead by promoting investments in emerging sectors such as advanced manufacturing, semiconductors, green energy, electric vehicles, digital technologies, and biotechnology. He emphasized that strong coordination between the government and industry is crucial in the current volatile global environment. The agreements, signed in the presence of the Minister, are expected to generate around 70,000 jobs, further strengthening



Karnataka's position as a leading industrial hub. Over 100 representatives from multinational companies and technology startups participated in the event. Major companies including AxisCADES, Ultraviolet Automotive, SFO Technologies, Mahindra Aerospace, and Yazaki signed MoUs for new projects and expansion.

The government also reiterated key incentives, including revised zoning regulations to increase industrial land availability, identification of 20 Special Investment Regions, and the introduction of a new single-window system to streamline approvals.

Sector-wise, the highest investments came from ESDM and data centres (Rs.24,103 crore), followed by aerospace & defence (Rs.13,800 crore), manufacturing (Rs.6,503 crore), automobile/EV (Rs.4,998 crore), and pharma/biotechnology (Rs.2,065 crore). The Minister described the conclave as a significant milestone in Karnataka's investment promotion efforts, reflecting strong industry confidence in the State's policies, skilled workforce, and ease of doing business...

## Puravankara Limited Plans 30 Projects Worth Rs.55,000 Cr; Targets 1 Million Trees by 2030

Bengaluru, March 25, 2026: Leading real estate developer Puravankara Limited has announced an ambitious expansion plan to launch 30 projects across South India and Mumbai over the next 24 months, with a total Gross Development Value (GDV) exceeding Rs.55,000 crore. The upcoming projects will span nearly 51.14 million sq. ft. of developable area, with several already in the approval stage and the rest in design, reflecting a significant boost in the company's growth trajectory. The expansion is focused on prime urban markets, supported by a strong project pipeline and disciplined capital allocation. As of the first nine months of FY26, the company reported pre-sales of Rs.3,859 crore and customer collections of Rs.3,045



crore, indicating strong demand and operational momentum. Speaking on the development, Managing Director Ashish Puravankara said the company is entering its next growth phase with a robust pipeline, improved capabilities, and a continued focus on delivering high-quality developments. He emphasized confidence in India's growing housing demand and emerging urban opportunities. CEO (South) Mallanna Sasalu highlighted that the projects are designed as inte-

grated communities catering to evolving customer needs, while also contributing to economic growth and employment generation. The company's upcoming developments are expected to generate nearly 8 million man-days of direct employment annually and support over 250 ancillary industries linked to the real estate sector. Reinforcing its sustainability commitment, Puravankara has pledged to plant 1 million trees by 2030 under the World Economic Forum's 1t.org initiative. As part of this effort, 10,000 trees will be planted during the Puravankara 10K Run scheduled for March 29, 2026.

The company also reiterated its focus on green building practices, water conservation, and environmentally responsible development as it marks its Golden Jubilee year, aiming to deliver long-term value to customers and stakeholders.

# EDITORIAL

## Sandeshkhali, RG Kar: Is BJP Trying To Revive The 2 Issues In Bengal?

Sandeshkhali, a remote stretch in the Sundarbans region of North 24 Parganas, lies far from Kolkata, not only geographically but also culturally. It is a region marked by poverty, weak infrastructure, and chronic underdevelopment. Yet, in recent years, particularly during the last election cycle, Sandeshkhali has emerged as a politically sensitive flashpoint in West Bengal. The controversy began with allegations against a local Trinamool Congress strongman, Sheikh Shahjahan, accused of running illegal operations and perpetrating serious atrocities against women. Reports of the degrading treatment of poor local women triggered widespread outrage. Following sustained protests, Shahjahan was arrested and remains in custody. Among those who led the resistance was Rekha Patra, who emerged as a prominent face of the movement against the ruling party government.

Despite the intensity of the protests, however, the issue failed to significantly alter the electoral outcome. The Trinamool Congress retained control of the area.

While Sandeshkhali represented a rural flashpoint, a separate controversy in urban Kolkata drew national attention. The alleged rape case in the RG Kar area became a major political issue. Although the accused was arrested, the BJP continued to campaign on the claim that justice remained incomplete and that the real culprits had not been fully brought to account. The case sparked protests, candlelight marches, and broader civil society mobilisation. In the 2026 election campaign, the BJP is attempting to stitch these two episodes together - from rural Sandeshkhali to urban Kolkata - into a single political narrative. The strategy is clear: to revive both controversies as emblematic of a larger question of governance and women's safety in West Bengal. The unanswered question is whether this effort will translate into electoral gains. The BJP has returned to Sandeshkhali with renewed vigour. Rekha Patra has shifted her political activity to Hingalgaon, an adjacent constituency, signalling an attempt to expand the issue's geographic resonance. The party hopes that allegations of atrocities in Sandeshkhali will influence voters beyond the immediate locality.

This strategy draws on the deeper structural realities of the region. Sandeshkhali remains vulnerable to flooding, suffers from poor connectivity, and lacks adequate healthcare and educational facilities. Its economy is largely agrarian, with betel leaf cultivation playing a central role, and poverty continues to shape everyday life. These conditions provide fertile ground for political mobilisation. At the same time, the region's history offers a longer lens. The undivided 24 Parganas has long witnessed cycles of agrarian distress and local tensions. Colonial-era records describe administrators mediating communal disputes, while writers such as Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay chronicled the hardships of Bengal's peasantry. Contemporary unrest, therefore, is not an aberration but part of a deeper historical continuum. Yet history alone does not win elections. In the previous contest, Sandeshkhali did not produce a decisive political shift. This time, however, the BJP appears determined to refine its campaign. Alongside Sandeshkhali, the focus has sharpened on the R.G. Kar case. The hospital falls within the Kashipur-Belgachia Assembly constituency, where Trinamool leader Atin Ghosh-seen as relatively popular and non-controversial-is contesting. But the political resonance of the case extends far beyond constituency boundaries. The victim's mother has also publicly expressed her desire to enter electoral politics, even appealing to the BJP for support in her pursuit of justice. This has reportedly caused friction within the CPI(M), whose leaders had been among the most vocal supporters of the family during the protests. Whether the BJP will offer her a nomination remains uncertain. Irrespective of that decision, the party is actively campaigning on both issues. Women have taken the lead in this effort, supported by high-profile visits from leaders such as Smriti Irani at the national level, and Rupa Ganguly and Agnimitra Paul within the state.

## Is The Dreaded 'Dahiya Doctrine' Guiding Israeli Actions In Iran, Gaza, Lebanon?

Close your eyes for a moment and imagine this: millions of people in South Delhi are told to leave their homes overnight and move across the Yamuna to East Delhi. The warning is stark. Stay, and your life is at risk. But even the escape is dangerous. The bridges you must cross could be bombed at any moment. It sounds unthinkable in the calm, peaceful bubble of South Delhi, doesn't it?

And yet, this is exactly what has been unfolding in Lebanon. More than a million people fled southern Lebanon as Israeli strikes intensified. Entire communities are being uprooted, families carrying what little they can, uncertain not just of where they are going, but whether they will get there safely. A few days ago, that danger was captured in a moment that felt almost like a scene from a Hollywood war movie in its suddenness. British journalist Steven Sweeney, reporting for the Russian outlet RT, was covering the mass exodus while standing on a bridge over a river. In a dramatic 17-second video clip, a missile strikes the bridge. The screen shakes violently. For a brief, chilling moment, neither the reporter nor his cameraman is visible, leaving viewers fearing the worst. They survived, miraculously, with minor injuries. But the aftermath has sparked fresh controversy. Sweeney, who was clearly identifiable in a flak jacket marked "Press", has accused Israel of deliberately targeting him. He says he was documenting what he described as the "forced displacement of one million people" when the strike occurred. Israel has said civilians were warned, but Sweeney disputes this, alleging that the attack was an attempt to silence journalists reporting from the ground. The Russian government has also claimed it was a deliberate targeting of Russian TV journalists.

### War Spilling Into Civilian Life

Theatres of war are generally seen on frontlines and in trenches. But not in Lebanon. Not in Iran. And, to be honest, not even in Israel. As Israel's fury with Hezbollah in Lebanon and its war with Iran intensify, and as both its adversaries respond with missiles



fired into Israel, the battle lines are expanding into civilian life and destroying it.

Across Iran, for example, the scale is striking. Housing complexes, medical facilities, schools, shops, and even heritage sites, have been hit. According to the Iranian Red Crescent, more than 67,000 civilian sites were struck, including 498 schools and 236 health facilities, until 18 March. Lebanon's misery appears equally bad, if not worse. In the midst of this widening destruction, a difficult question comes to mind: Is there a method behind this madness? Why do civilian areas and infrastructure repeatedly become part of the battlefield? Is this incidental or strategic? Those who have covered the Israeli-Palestinian bloody conflicts for years know what it is. They call it Israel's dreaded Dahiya doctrine.

### What Is the Dahiya Doctrine?

It is certainly, as far as we know, not a formally written policy, but a widely discussed Israeli military approach. At its core is the idea of using overwhelming, often disproportionate force, including against infrastructure, in areas where hostile groups

operate. It takes its name from the Dahiya suburb of Beirut, heavily bombed during the 2006 war with Hezbollah, the Iran-backed militia group. The destruction there became a reference point for future military thinking. Former Israeli general Gadi Eisenkot later articulated the logic clearly: in future conflicts, areas from which Israel is attacked would face intense destruction. The aim was deterrence - making the cost of conflict so high that it discourages future attacks. In simple terms: hit hard enough that the message cannot be ignored.

### Why Israel Uses It

From Israel's perspective, this approach is shaped by the nature of its adversaries. Groups like Hezbollah and Hamas are often accused by Israel of operating within civilian areas, blending into urban environments. Israeli officials argue that the battlefield is embedded within civilian spaces. They say that a clear separation between military and civilian targets is often impossible. They also claim that strong, decisive force is needed to avoid prolonged conflict. It is said that the strategy is built

around three goals: deterrence, speed and pressure. Deterrence sends a message across the region. Speed aims to shorten wars. Pressure, more controversially, seeks to raise the cost of conflict for the environment in which armed groups operate. Civilian casualties, which often run into thousands, are just collateral damage and can't be helped.

### The Legal and Moral Fault Line

For obvious reasons, this approach has been widely criticised. International humanitarian law is based on two key principles: distinction and proportionality. Civilians and civilian objects must be protected. Even when attacking military targets, civilian harm must not be excessive. Human rights bodies argue that the scale of destruction and deaths witnessed in places like Gaza, Lebanon, and now Iran, raises serious concerns. Israel, however, rejects the accusation that it deliberately targets civilians as a way of collective punishment. Its position rests on three main points: It acts in self-defence. The Gaza operations by Israel began as a result of the brutal Hamas attack inside Israel, killing over 1200 people.

## Cuba And The End Of An Era

Cuba's deepening crisis represents more than the failure of an economic model-it signals a turning point in Global South politics. While attention remains fixed on the Middle East, consequential shifts are unfolding across Latin America, shaped in significant part by a more assertive U.S. policy posture that has intensified long-standing pressures on the region. The island is facing a severe economic and energy crisis, driven by structural weaknesses and the cumulative weight of external constraints. Decades of U.S. economic embargoes-tightened in recent years-have pushed an already fragile system toward breaking point. Fuel shortages, power outages, and rising social strain reveal a system under acute stress, reflecting a wider shift in hemispheric dynamics. Cuba, long seen as an emblem of resistance to Western dominance, now confronts the practical limits of that posture.



For decades, countries such as Cuba, Venezuela, and Bolivia were romanticized across the Global South as symbols of sovereignty and defiance. Figures like Fidel Castro, Che Guevara, and Hugo Chávez occupied an outsized place in this imagination. Yet ideology and symbolism often obscured more complex realities. Cuba became a Soviet outpost during the Cold War, culminating in the Cuban Missile Crisis-the closest the world came to nuclear confrontation in that era. Economically, Cuba and Venezuela might have achieved more sustained development had they pursued more pragmatic engagement with the United States, as many in the region did.

Today, that question is no longer theoretical. The collapse of Venezuelan support, particularly in the energy sector, combined with sustained U.S. pressure, has left Cuba increasingly isolated. Early signs suggest Havana may now explore limited accommodation with Washington. Even tentative steps would mark a profound departure from decades of entrenched positioning. If this trajectory continues, it may signal the decline of an older form of Global South politics-once anchored in ideological defiance, now yielding to the imperatives of realism. The Non-Aligned Movement and the Group of 77, once central to the moral and rhetorical architecture of the post-colonial world, are likely to see their influence further diluted in this evolving environment. An earlier era of ideological posturing is giving way to

more pragmatic navigation of power and opportunity.

Yet realism does not eliminate the need for dignity. States must recognize their limitations, but major powers must also understand that humiliation can seed future instability. The experiences of Iraq, Afghanistan, and Libya illustrate how coercive or poorly managed transitions often create new crises. Similarly, the post-Cold War order-widely perceived in Moscow as dismissive of its security and status-helped shape grievances that continue to influence global geopolitics.

An instructive counterpoint is the evolution of relations between the United States and Vietnam. Despite a deeply traumatic war, the two countries today engage as pragmatic partners. This transformation underscores that even the most adversarial histories can give way to stable and mutually beneficial relationships-provided transitions are managed with foresight and respect.

How transitions are managed can be as important as the transitions themselves.

Amid this evolving landscape, India has a distinct opportunity. It is one of the few countries with credibility across the Global South and sustained engagement with the United States. This positions it to act as a bridge-engaging countries like Cuba while supporting gradual, dignified economic and political adjustment.

India's own experience-balancing strategic autonomy with pragmatic

partnerships-offers a relevant template. Platforms such as the Non-Aligned Movement and BRICS will need to adapt, or be complemented by more flexible coalitions aligned with contemporary realities.

Diasporas also shape outcomes. In the United States, Cuban, Venezuelan, and Iranian communities influence domestic debates and, at times, foreign policy. India, too, must navigate the growing influence of its diaspora in key Western capitals-an asset if managed carefully, but a potential complication if not. The manner of transition remains critical. Cuba and Venezuela must adapt with legitimacy intact. An emerging order perceived as purely coercive or dismissive will generate resistance, undermining both regional stability and broader strategic objectives. Successful transitions require early, careful engagement, guided by respect and strategic foresight. The stakes are significant. Cuba, Venezuela, and others remain symbols of a historical narrative, but the world is moving toward a multipolar order shaped by realism, strategy, and negotiated respect. India has both the credibility and the opportunity to help guide this transition-toward a Global South that is pragmatic, resilient, and capable of asserting itself without confrontation. The Global South is not disappearing; it is being redefined. The question is whether India and its partners will move early enough to shape that process-ensuring the emerging order reflects inclusion, pragmatism, and respect, rather than humiliation.

## Not China, Not Russia: Why Is Pak Suddenly Everywhere In US-Iran 'Talks'?



It seems nothing can stop Pakistan's power play even as it battles Afghanistan and multiple internal crises. The news that Washington routed the 'peace' deal via Islamabad has most Pakistanis themselves puzzled, and not a little apprehensive. After all, the ebullient Trump may change his mind at any minute, and trifling with Iran, or even reaching out to it, is fraught with danger. But what is clear is that Pakistan is certainly reaching out, and that too publicly. If this succeeds, the key actors will claim a victory in the region and in the Muslim world. In fact, it may be anything but. That's the stuff of details.

### Too Many People Talking

First, the facts as reported. The Financial Times reported that Field Marshal Asim Munir had reached out to Trump proposing Pakistan as the 'venue' for talks. This was on March 23, at about the same time that Trump announced the 'five-day' pause. These two events may not be directly connected, since a number of countries, including Turkey, Egypt, not to mention Russia, have been

pressing Washington to end the war. However, none is very keen to get directly involved. Turkey, for instance, has its own Shia population that might get restive if talks are held on its territory. In short, Pakistan may well be the fall guy. At the same time, Pakistan Prime Minister Shahbaz Sharif was talking to Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian. Not surprisingly, the Chinese also reached out to persuade Iran to pitch for peace. On March 25, the Prime Minister was briefing the Saudis, while Pakistan's Foreign Minister, Ishaq Dar, was talking again to his counterparts in Turkey, also reaching out to Iraq recently in an effort to get the Ummah united to end the war. That's a lot of people talking almost at the same time. The big takeaway for the political leadership was, however, that President Trump 'reposted' Shehbaz Sharif's tweet welcoming and supporting 'ongoing' efforts to end the war. That was when Tehran denied that there was anything at all in the pipeline. But Pakistan has much to gain from peace in the region.

### Riyadh Compliance Demands

First, there is that troublesome Saudi-Pakistan 'Strategic Mutual Defence Agreement', signed in September last year, which specifically promised that Pakistan would stand by Riyadh if it was attacked. Though labelled 'Mutual', Saudis are hardly capable of standing by Pakistan in a war; but they could certainly provide the money, which made the whole deal attractive to Pakistan - which, in any case, was already providing training and even manning much of the Saudi Armed Forces, besides getting access to the best of US weapons that money could (literally) buy. But with the first drone attacks - either intended or mistaken - that hit the kingdom, the Saudis summoned the Field Marshal, with Defence Minister Prince Khalid posting pointedly that the two had discussed the attacks "and the measures needed to halt them within the framework of our Joint Strategic Defence Agreement". The Field Marshal would have quailed

at the thought of standing against a neighbouring Shia power - and Iran is a power, make no mistake. But it seems Munir would have had its answer ready. On March 1, thousands of Shia youth went on a rampage in Karachi, even entering American embassy premises, with this continuing at other locations till the next day. For a country that has been able to stop even its majority Sunni protests, despite the public decision to deploy to Gaza - and mysteriously then stage massive protests when pressure came to deploy following the peace accord - this violence, particularly the total failure to protect foreign embassies, was inexplicable. At any rate, Shia anger would certainly have crept into the conversation as a highly limiting factor. If Riyadh was displeased, the next best thing would have been to stop the war itself. A Crisis Uninterrupted Second, an end to the war is entirely in Pakistan's interest. The country imports 99% of its LNG from Qatar. After the Iranian attack on Ras Laffan, and Oman being hit, too, reports indicate serious disruption in the country.

## 'A game-changing moment for social media' - what next for big tech after landmark addiction verdict?

A jury in LA has delivered a damning verdict for two of the world's most popular digital platforms, Instagram and YouTube. It ruled those apps are addictive, and deliberately engineered that way - and that its owners have been negligent in their safeguarding of the children who have used them. It's a sombre moment for Silicon Valley and the implications are global. The tech giants in this case, Meta and Google, must now pay \$6m (£4.5m) in damages to a young woman known as Kaley, the victim at the centre of this case. She claimed the platforms left her with body dysmorphia, depression and suicidal thoughts. Both companies intend to appeal, with Meta maintaining a single app cannot be solely responsible for a teen mental health crisis. Google, meanwhile, says YouTube is not a social network. But for now the ruling means "the era of impunity is over" according to Dr Mary Franks, a law professor at George Washington University. It is hard to overstate what a game-changing moment this court verdict is for social media. Whatever happens next, and there will undoubtedly be appeals and further legal processes, this is going to redefine the landscape. It could even be the beginning of the end of the



social media era as we know it. A 'big tobacco' moment? The world's doomscrollers might not have been shocked by the verdict but I think the tech companies were. Meta and Google racked up eye-watering legal fees defending this. This case, and others like it, are clearly of huge significance to them. The other two companies in the trial - TikTok and Snap, the owner of Snapchat - settled before it went to court. There were mutterings in the tech sphere they couldn't afford the fight. I had been invited to slick briefings about all the tools social networks offer (mainly to parents) to protect kids. But ultimately the court ruled their measures were not enough. Arturo Bejar,

who used to work at Instagram, said he warned Mark Zuckerberg of the dangers it posed to children several years ago. "It changed from a product you used to a product that uses you," he told BBC Radio 4's Today programme on Thursday. Meta has denied his claims. Some experts have described the verdict as big tech's "big tobacco" moment, and we know how that worked out - although it didn't stop people smoking altogether. Could there be health warnings on screens? Restricted advertising and sponsorship opportunities? The tech companies are currently legally protected in the US by a clause known as Section 230, which shields them from liability

for the content that is published on them. Other types of media companies do not have this benefit. It is often said the tech industry couldn't survive without it. But scepticism over the shield may be growing, with Senate Commerce Committee having held a hearing to discuss it on Wednesday. The tech leaders enjoy a generally cosy relationship with US President Donald Trump, who has championed the sector. He hasn't yet leapt to their defence. Another option is that the platforms are forced to strip out all the features designed to keep people there. But engagement is big tech's lifeblood. Lose all the techniques: the endless scrolling, the algorithmic rec-

ommendations, the auto play, and you're left with a very different, and arguably limited, social media experience. The success of big platforms lies in their foothold - keeping large numbers of people online for as long as possible and coming back as often as possible, in order that they might be targeted with as many ads as possible. That's how the companies make money. In several territories, including the UK, children do not contribute to this advertising machine but only since regulators intervened. However, today's children are tomorrow's adults and the ideal scenario for the tech companies is that they turn 18 as established users already. Facebook, Meta's original social network, is often jokingly referred to as the "boomer platform" - but 2025 figures suggest nearly half of its worldwide users are aged 18-35. More challenges to come Kaley's court victory is now big tech's second defeat in a number of similar cases set for trial in the US this year. There are more to come. "This landmark verdict, along with many other similar lawsuits against social media companies, signals a shift in how courts view platform design as a set of choices that can carry real legal and social consequences.

## New India bill to amend transgender rights sparks protests

India's parliament has passed a controversial bill that seeks to change how transgender people are legally recognised and their right to self-identify, amid protests by opposition parties and the LGBTQ community. The government says the changes will make welfare benefits more accessible and strengthen an existing law against exploitation and trafficking, but critics warn it could exclude many transgender, non-binary and gender-fluid people. India is estimated to have around two million transgender people, though activists say the true number is higher and legal recognition remains uneven. The legislation was approved by both houses this week and now needs the president's assent to become law. In 2014, India's Supreme Court recognised transgender people as a "third gender" and affirmed their right to self-identify. Despite legal protections, many transgender people in India continue to face discrimination and limited access to education, healthcare and formal employment, often relying on traditional or informal forms of work. In 2019, the Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Act was enacted, aimed at addressing vulnerabilities



faced by the community. Now, the new bill - essentially a proposed amendment to the 2019 law - centres on how a transgender person is defined. The government says the current definition is too vague and makes it difficult to identify those who are most marginalised. It argues that a narrower definition will help ensure welfare benefits - such as job reservations and healthcare support - reach those who need them. It says the changes are intended to protect people facing "extreme and oppressive" discrimination and to prevent exploitation and trafficking. The bill removes the right to self-identify and instead limits recognition to those defined by biological or physical traits. This includes people with intersex variations - where a person is born with sex characteristics that do not fit typical definitions of male or female - as well as

traditional identities long used among transgender communities in India. The bill also makes certification from medical boards and district authorities mandatory for those undergoing gender-affirming surgeries. Activists say the new bill moves away from the self-identification principle of the 2014 court ruling and could reshape how transgender people are legally recognised. Critics further argue that the new definition could exclude many transgender people, particularly those who rely on self-identification, including some trans men and women as well as non-binary and gender-fluid people. They also say that mandatory medical certification undermines dignity and autonomy. "It has shattered our identity," transgender rights activist Laxmi Narayan Tripathi told reporters.

## OPENAI CLOSES SORA VIDEO-MAKING APP AND CANCELS \$1BN DISNEY DEAL

OpenAI has shut down its artificial intelligence (AI) video-generation app Sora less than two years after its unveiling made headlines for creating realistic clips based on simple prompts. At the same time OpenAI will also wind down its \$1bn content partnership with entertainment giant Disney, the BBC understands. OpenAI told the BBC on Wednesday that it has discontinued Sora so that it can focus on other developments, such as robotics "that will help people solve real-world, physical tasks". A spokesperson for The Walt Disney Company said "we respect OpenAI's decision to exit the video generation business and to shift its priorities elsewhere". Disney will engage with other AI platforms to find ways to responsibly use the technology without infringing on intellectual property rights, a spokesperson said. OpenAI said it is shutting down both its Sora consumer app and the internet-based platform that professional install to generate videos. The BBC understands that with the closure of Sora, OpenAI will no longer focus



on developing video-generation tools. The firm said it aims to create other forms of advanced AI, including "agentic" technology capable of autonomously completing tasks with little human oversight. OpenAI plans to apply the same technology used to teach AI how to produce realistic videos to training robots. Image-making tools on ChatGPT have not been affected by Sora's closure, OpenAI said. What went wrong? Sora was unveiled in 2024 to huge interest around the world due to the high quality of its AI-generated

videos. But there were questions around how much money could be made from the tool. Since the platform's launch, Sora made \$1.4m in global net in-app revenues, compared to \$1.9bn over the same period for ChatGPT, according to data from Seema Shah, VP of insights at market intelligence firm Sensor Tower. Forrester analyst Thomas Husson told BBC News it was "a resource black hole" with "limited monetisation". "The platform struggled to prevent the creation of non-consensual imagery and realistic misinformation, not to

mention major copyright infringement," he said. Husson said the decision may have been taken now to "minimise the associated risks" in the run-up to a potential stock launch, which would turn OpenAI into a public company where shares could be bought and sold on an open market. "Given OpenAI is still unprofitable and pressure from investors and rivals is growing, this is cash they likely decided they can't afford to continue burning as initial interest has faded," said Henry Ajder, an expert on AI and deepfakes.

## OIL PRICES VOLATILE AS TRUMP TALKS UP IRAN NEGOTIATIONS

Oil prices remained volatile on Wednesday, as the US and Iran clashed over what terms might bring the conflict in the Middle East to an end. Brent crude rose to \$101 a barrel at midday in the US before falling back to \$98 as President Donald Trump spoke optimistically about the possibility of reaching a deal. But Iranian media on Wednesday cited leaders criticising the US peace proposal. They presented their own terms for a ceasefire, including international recognition of Iran's "sovereign right" to control the Strait of Hormuz, a key route for global oil and gas supplies. On Wednesday, White House press secretary Karoline Leavitt maintained that US attacks were working to convince the Iranian regime to negotiate. She said failure to reach an agreement would be a result of the Iranian regime refusing "to understand they have already been defeated". Distance between the two sides could prolong a conflict



that has rocked financial markets and sent energy prices soaring since the US and Israel attacked Iran on 28 February. Iran has effectively blocked the Strait of Hormuz since the start of the war, cutting off a waterway that usually sees about 20% of the world's oil and liquefied natural gas pass through each day. It has generated a supply crisis, forcing countries in Asia - the main destination for oil from the Gulf - to take unusual measures to try to secure oil and gas supplies. Philippine President Ferdinand Marcos declared a state of emergency in his country, which imports 98% of its oil from the Gulf, while on

Tuesday, the boss of energy giant Shell said oil shortages could hit Europe next month. Larry Fink, the boss of US financial giant BlackRock, told the BBC that a global recession could be triggered if the price of oil hits \$150 a barrel. But hopes that momentum might be building to reach resolution have helped to boost investor spirits and ease oil price pressures. In the US, the main indexes closed higher with the Dow Jones up 0.6% and the Nasdaq 0.7% ahead. The S&P 500 finished marginally higher. In the UK, the FTSE 100 was 1.4% higher after trading ended. Germany's Dax index rose

1.3% and in France, the Cac gained 1.1%. Overnight, major stock exchanges in the Asia Pacific closed higher. Japan's Nikkei 225 ended 2.8% up and South Korea's Kospi index rose 1.5%. Both countries are heavily reliant on oil that passes through the Strait of Hormuz. Australia's ASX 200 index was up by more 1.8%. Hong Kong's Hang Seng and Shanghai's composite each gained by around 1%. In a message posted by its mission to the United Nations on Tuesday, Iran had said it would allow "non-hostile vessels" to pass through the Strait of Hormuz, provided they coordinate with "the competent Iranian authorities". The statement came after some countries appeared to have negotiated safe passage for their vessels despite Tehran threatening to target ships that tried to use the channel. The US on Friday had also lifted sanctions on Iranian oil, in a move it said would help ease the supply crunch.

## Proposed IBC amendments risk weakening insolvency framework: Nagarkurnool MP

New Delhi: Nagarkurnool MP Mallu Ravi on Wednesday, March 25, raised serious concerns over the proposed amendments to the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (IBC), warning that the Bill in its current form could undermine the foundational principles of India's insolvency resolution framework. Speaking on the amendments, Ravi said the changes dilute the institutional strength of the insolvency resolution process by moving away from the core objective of preserving and maximising asset value for all stakeholders. He expressed particular concern over proposals that would subordinate the role of the liquidator to the Committee of Creditors (CoC). "The earlier framework ensured a fair and balanced approach by empowering the liquidator with quasi-judicial authority. Subordinating this role to the CoC risks undermining neutrality and due process, while concentrating excessive power in the hands of financial creditors," he said. The MP also flagged concerns with the proposed Creditor-Initiated Insolvency Resolution Process (CIIRP), arguing that its continued reliance on payment default as a trigger rather than enabling early intervention allows value erosion to set in before corrective action can begin. He said the mechanism also creates inequity by excluding operational creditors and certain financial creditors from initiating proceedings, narrowing access and reducing transparency. On procedural grounds, Nagarkurnool MP warned that restrictions on the withdrawal



of insolvency applications, both before the formation of the CoC and after resolution plans are invited, would discourage early settlements and out-of-court resolutions. "Such rigidity runs counter to the need for flexibility in a complex financial ecosystem," he said. Turning to cross-border insolvency provisions, he cautioned against excessive delegation of legislative powers to the executive, urging Parliament to lay down clear guiding principles rather than transplanting global frameworks such as UNCITRAL without adapting them to Indian realities, including judicial delays and promoter-driven litigation. Ravi also took issue with the amendments' emphasis on strict timelines without adequately addressing systemic constraints such as tribunal backlogs, infrastructure gaps and institutional capacity.

## EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT GIVES CONDITIONAL APPROVAL TO EU-US TRADE DEAL

The European Parliament has backed legislation to implement an EU-US trade deal, following months of uncertainty over President Donald Trump's tariff threats. A majority of lawmakers voted in favour of the measures on Thursday, but added a series of safeguards to ensure the US honours its side of the deal struck last July. The legislation would set tariffs at 15% for most EU goods - down from the 30% initially threatened - in exchange for European investment in the US and the removal of EU import duties on US industrial goods. The vote comes after months of delay following Trump's threats to annex Greenland and a US Supreme Court ruling that found some of his tariffs unlawful. The EU assembly voted by 417 to 154, and 71 abstentions, in favour of the legislation. The text will need to be signed off by all of the bloc's 27 member states before it is implemented, with a concluding vote



expected in April or May. On Thursday, lawmakers moved to strengthen its safeguards, including a provision to suspend the agreement if the US imposes additional tariffs above 15% or introduces new duties on EU goods. Another would halt the deal if the US threatened the EU's territorial sovereignty. MEPs also included a "sunrise clause" that means EU tariff reductions will only take effect if the US upholds its side of the bargain - including lowering

tariffs to 15% on EU products that contain less than 50% steel and aluminium. When the framework agreement was announced last summer, Trump said the 50% US tariff on global steel and aluminium would still apply to the EU. But on Thursday the parliament voted that it will only accept zero tariffs on US goods if hundreds of European goods made with steel and aluminium are excluded from that 50% tariff. A "sunset clause" will see the agree-

ment end by 31 March 2028. "At this stage, we have received reassurances from the US that they intend to honour the deal," European economy commissioner Valdis Dombrovskis said after the vote. "While we will continue our efforts to maintain constructive relationships and avoid volatility, we will not turn a blind eye to any risks to our interests." EU trade commissioner Maros Sefcovic described the vote as a "crucial step". The framework agreement

was made during a meeting between European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen and Trump at the president's Turnberry golf course in Scotland last July. Von der Leyen hailed it as a "huge deal," while Trump said it was a "good deal for everybody". Trump said at the time that the EU would boost its investment in the US by \$600bn (£446bn) - including purchases of American military equipment - and spend \$750bn on energy. Von der Leyen said increased purchases of American liquefied natural gas, oil and nuclear fuels would help reduce Europe's reliance on Russian energy. The US and the European Union are each others' largest trading partners. More than 1.6tn (\$1.9tn, £1.4tn) in goods and services were exchanged in 2024, according to European figures - nearly a third of all global trade. Trade in goods alone totalled about \$976bn in 2024.

# Iran has 'legal right' to control Strait of Hormuz, official tells state media, as Israel kills navy chief

Trump says that since 28 February, when the war began, the US has been hitting Iran's military capability "at a level that few people have ever seen before". He says the US has wiped out Iran's navy and air force "completely" and knocked out "close to 90%" of Iran's missile launchers, and "probably more than 90%" of the missiles themselves. Trump continues, saying Iran is begging to make a deal. "They're great negotiators," he says. "Lousy fighters, but great negotiators". While we wait to hear from the US president, Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps-affiliated Tasnim News Agency says Tehran has responded to the US's reported 15-point peace plan and is now awaiting a response. Citing an "informed official", Tasnim reports that Iran's conditions are: "Acts of aggression and assassination by the enemy must cease" "Objective conditions must be established to ensure that war will not recur" "Compensation and war reparations must be guaranteed

and clearly determined" "An end to hostilities must be implemented on all fronts and for all resistance groups involved in the conflict across the region", referring to Iran's allies and proxies in the region. The official is also reported to have told Tasnim that Iran's exercise of sovereignty over the Strait of Hormuz is the country's "natural and legal right". Polish PM Donald Tusk says his government will cut VAT and excise duty on fuel to shield drivers from rising prices caused by the war in the Middle East. He says VAT on fuel would be cut from 23% to 8% and excise tax would fall to a minimum. His government is also working on introducing a maximum retail fuel price, to be set daily, as well as a bill to introduce a windfall tax on energy companies benefiting from higher sales prices, Tusk says. The price of diesel at the pump has risen by 45% since 25 February to 8.69 zlotys (£1.76) per litre and the price of regular petrol was up 25% during the same period. Tusk says



the government does not plan to impose any restrictions on fuel sales because stocks remain sufficient. The cabinet, he goes on, will hold an extraordinary meeting later to take decisions on lowering fuel prices. Here in Germany, lawmakers have approved initial measures aimed at curbing surging fuel costs as the Iran war pushes up prices. It means petrol stations, for a time, will only be able to increase prices once a day, at noon. The government says it will review the measures after six months. The bill, which still needs to pass the upper house, will also make it easier for Germany's competition regulator to combat excessive pricing. It's disputed whether the plans will really lead to lower prices at the pump, while there have also been industry warnings about rushing through major changes in competition law. A little earlier, we heard from Nato's chief

Mark Rutte who was presenting his 2025 annual report at a news conference in Brussels. Asked if the war in Iran is now a Nato issue, Rutte says the Nato alliance has "long recognised the threat Iran's missile programme poses to allies and their interests". He says that what the US is doing is "degrading those capabilities, both the nuclear and the missiles". Iran now has "capabilities increasingly dangerous for allies", Rutte says, adding that Nato defence systems have successfully intercepted ballistic missiles heading towards Turkey from Iran on three separate occasions. His comments come after US President Donald Trump continued to criticise Nato countries and their response to the Iran war. Iran is still under a government-imposed internet outage, but some residents are paying hefty prices to connect to the internet. I've been speaking to some of them, and asking what they plan to do after the war ends. Some of them replied to my question with a

question, saying that their answer depends on whether the Islamic Republic stays in power. "Will the Islamic Republic still be in power in this scenario? If yes, I'll start using all my options to get out of Iran. If no, I'll wait and see what happens. I've got some ideas to maybe start a business," a Tehran-based man in his 30s says. A woman in her 20s, also in Tehran, says: "The answer really depends on whether the Islamic Republic stays in power or not. If they go, I'll go on a trip as a reward to myself. If they stay in power, I'll try my best to get out of the country." Others tell me they're missing the small things. "I really want the war to end. I'll go to my favourite library. It's closed because of the war. I don't like studying at home," another woman in Tehran says. "I'll stay out until midnight and sit in a cafe. It might seem very basic, but I miss it. I miss going out at night in Tehran," a final woman in her 20s, in the Iranian capital, says.

## 'We are in agony' - Savannah Guthrie does first interview since mum's disappearance



US television presenter Savannah Guthrie has spoken of her family's "agony" in the first interview since her mother's disappearance. Nancy Guthrie, 84, has been missing since 1 February, when she was last seen at her Tucson, Arizona home. Police released images of a masked person captured by a security camera, but investigative leads received so far have fallen through. "To think of what she went through, I wake up every night in the middle of the night, every night," Guthrie said in an excerpt of the interview released by the TODAY show. The Guthrie family is offering a \$1 million reward, in addition to \$100,000 pledged by the FBI, for information leading to Nancy's return. "Someone needs to do the right thing," Savannah Guthrie told her former TODAY show co-host Hoda Kotb in the emotional interview. "We are in agony. It is unbearable." Her family is one of 33 awaiting word from loved ones reported missing in Arizona in the past year to the US justice department's missing-persons database. Six of those went missing from Pima County, including Nancy Guthrie.

## Trump confirms May meeting with Xi Jinping as Iran war forces postponement



US president Donald Trump says he will meet Chinese president Xi Jinping in China on 14-15 May, after delaying the landmark trip amid the US-Israel war with Iran. This would be the first visit to China by a US president in nearly 10 years. Trump is also set to host Xi in Washington DC later this year, and officials are "finalizing preparations for these Historic Visits", he wrote on Truth Social on Wednesday. White House press secretary Karoline Leavitt confirmed the dates of Trump's visit, telling reporters that President Xi had understood and accepted the request to postpone the trip. "President Xi understood that it's very important for the president to be here throughout these combat operations right now," Leavitt said at a press briefing on Wednesday. Beijing has not confirmed the dates listed by Trump - though it does not typically reveal Xi's schedule so far in advance. Chinese foreign ministry spokesperson Lin Jian told reporters on Thursday that "both sides are maintaining communication regarding

President Trump's visit to China". He also said that "leader-level diplomacy plays an irreplaceable strategic guiding role" in bilateral ties. Trump's trip, originally slated for 31 March, was delayed after the US and Israel launched wide-ranging strikes on Iran last month, killing the country's supreme leader. In response, Iran attacked Israel and US-allied states in the Gulf and effectively closed the Strait of Hormuz - a key waterway for the world's oil and liquefied natural gas - leading to a global fuel crisis. Trump has urged US allies to help unblock the strait. He also threatened Iran with attacks on its energy production infrastructure if it did not allow full access through the waterway. When asked if the Iran war would wind down by the time Trump visits China, Leavitt said they had "always estimated approximately four to six weeks, so you can do the math on that". The last time a US president visited China was in November 2017, during Trump's first term. The last time Trump and Xi met was last October in South Korea, on the sidelines of the Apec summit.

## AUSTRALIA'S SUNSCREEN REGULATOR WANTS NEW RULES AFTER RECENT PRODUCT SCANDAL



Australia's sunscreen regulator has proposed sweeping reforms to the industry after a recent scandal saw dozens of popular brands pulled off shelves. An experiment by a trusted consumer advocacy group last year found many Australian sunscreens were not providing the protection they claimed to, sparking public outrage in a country which is a skin cancer hotspot. An investigation by the Australian Broadcasting Corporation also alleged issues with a leading laboratory which test sunscreen efficacy and a manufacturer which made a common base formula. The Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) has now announced plans to make sunscreen labelling simpler and introduce more oversight at testing labs.

## 'I HAVE NO RECOLLECTION OF ANYTHING' - EPSTEIN SURVIVOR SAYS SHE WAS DRUGGED AND RAPED

A woman who said she was drugged and raped by convicted sex offender Jeffrey Epstein has spoken publicly for the first time to BBC Newsnight about her ordeal. The woman, who spoke on condition of anonymity and whom the BBC will refer to as Nicky, said she met the disgraced financier when she was 19, working as a model. She said that after she gave him a massage at his waterfront mansion in Palm Beach, Florida, he gave her a drink of water, and she blacked out for hours, when she believes she was raped by Epstein. Nicky said she felt encouraged to come forward by other survivors sharing their stories. She is now calling for the US Department of Justice to release all its remaining files on Epstein. "There's nothing you won't



do to stop reliving all of it' In an extensive interview with BBC Newsnight, Nicky described in detail Epstein's abuses. As other survivors of Epstein have recounted, Nicky's interaction with Epstein began with a massage. He asked her to remove her top and bra. "I honestly thought, OK, maybe it's just an old rich guy that has a fetish and so be it," she said. "Whatever. I

mean, it paid my rent." But a few weeks later, when Nicky returned to see Epstein, her encounter was different. "So I took my top off just like last time, started at his feet, worked my way up, and when I got to his upper thigh and went on to his chest, he pulled at my jeans, like almost to unbutton them," Nicky said. She told Epstein she was on her period, which was not true. He encouraged her to have sex with him anyway and proceeded to masturbate in front of her, Nicky recalled. She quickly got dressed and told herself she had to "get the hell out of here". She went to the bathroom to wash the massage oil off her hands and when she returned, Epstein offered her a sip of water. "I took some water and I have no recollection of anything for a minimum of 12 hours after that," Nicky said. She said she woke up feeling sick, sluggish and heavy. Nicky said when she went to the bathroom, there were signs she had had sex, although she could not recall any intercourse. "I have done various psychotherapies to try to remember, to try and have a glimpse of something, and it's black, I have no idea," she said of the interaction.

## ARMY COMMANDER CONVICTED OF GUINEA STADIUM MASSACRE DIES IN PRISON

One of the key military figures convicted of crimes against humanity for his involvement in Guinea's 2009 stadium massacre has died in custody, authorities say. Aboubacar Sidiki Diakité - also known as Toumba - died early on Wednesday in hospital following a medical emergency, the prison administration said. He was serving a 10-year sentence for his role in one of the darkest episodes in Guinea's history in which more than 150 people were killed in the capital, Conakry, as they demanded an end to military rule. At least 109 women were also raped. While in custody, Diakité



remained a controversial figure, creating a political party and attempting to run for president. Last year, he declared his intention to stand in the presidential elections, which was rejected by the Supreme Court after it ruled he was ineligible. At the time of the mas-

sacre, Diakité was commander of the presidential guard and a close ally of Guinea's then military ruler, Moussa Dadis Camara. According to the prison administration, Diakité was declared dead at the Samory Touré Military Hospital in Conakry, where he was taken late on Monday. Citing his medical report, the administration said he presented symptoms characterised by gastric swelling, abdominal pain and constipation. His death has prompted mixed reactions in Guinea where memories of the 2009 violence remain politically sensitive, with people still waiting for justice. One political expert likened his death to "the end of an era", telling the BBC: "He died, but the full truth died with him." Tens of thousands of people had gathered at a stadium on 28 September 2009 to protest against the possibility of Camara running for president.

## 'We are being choked': Philippines transport workers strike over fuel costs



Hundreds of transport workers in the Philippines' capital Manila have gone on strike over rising fuel costs. Diesel and petrol prices have more than doubled since the Iran war broke out on 28 February - with the Philippines now in a state of national energy emergency. One 62-year-old driver in Manila told the BBC the situation was getting increasingly desperate, saying he had no food to support his five children and had not received any cash aid from the government. As the two-day strike started on Thursday a ship carrying more than 700,000 barrels of Russian crude oil arrived in the country. President Ferdinand Marcos' spokeswoman said. Press Secretary Claire Castro told reporters that the Sierra Leone-flagged Sara Sky arrived earlier this week with the crude shipment. Marcos had promised to look for new sources of oil as the country had been relying on supplies that pass through the Strait of Hormuz for 98% of its requirements. The transport coalitions leading the strike have laid out sweeping demands - from scrapping fuel taxes

and rolling back oil prices, to abandoning deregulation and introducing state controls. They are also pushing for fare increases and higher wages. Groups of protesters gathered in different areas across the capital on Thursday morning, holding signs and calling for the government to do more to help. Many of them were drivers of jeeps - mini-buses known for their cheap fares. Motorcycle and car ride-hailing drivers were also among those who earlier said they would join protests, according to local reports. Some said they had not received the payout of 5,000 pesos (\$83; £62) that the Department of Social Welfare and Development had said certain drivers would be eligible for. "I lined up for more than five hours yesterday for the cash aid from the government, but my name was not there," said 62-year-old Guillermo Japole, adding that he had received "no cash aid, no earnings, no food for the family". Guillermo, whose five children are in school, says his family is on the edge of being evicted from their rental home.



Zimbabwe says 15 nationals killed after being lured to fight for Russia

## A right-wing populist party made big poll gains - and it's shaking up Australian politics



Thirty years ago, against the odds, a fish-and-chip shop owner with little political experience won a seat in the Australian parliament. Since then Pauline Hanson has become as well known for her inflammatory anti-immigration rhetoric as much as her parliamentary stunts, while support for her right-wing populist One Nation party has ebbed and flowed. But after

returning from the political wilderness a decade ago, Hanson's party is now riding a new wave of popularity, driven by voters weary of mainstream political parties that they say don't understand their struggles. On 21 March, One Nation achieved its first electoral breakthrough outside Hanson's home state of Queensland. In a state election in South Australia, the party won the second highest number of votes - more than 20% - the first time it has done so in Australia where two parties have traditionally been dominant. Incumbent Labor Premier Peter Malinauskas won a resounding victory in the poll, increasing his majority in the process.



## RCB's Name To Be Changed After Rs 16,700 Crore Sale? Ananya Birla Might Just Have Answered The Question

Will Royal Challengers Bengaluru change its name after being acquired by a new group? That is one question on everyone's mind since a consortium led by the Aditya Birla Group (ABG) on Tuesday acquired 100 percent equity stake in the IPL franchise Royal Challengers Bengaluru for a whopping USD 1.78 billion (approximately Rs 16,706 crore) from its current owner, United Spirits Limited. Other parties involved in the group are Blackstone's perpetual private equity strategy, BXPE (a firm of which Viral Patel is the CEO), Bolt Ventures owned by American investor David Blitzer, and media conglomerate Times of India. RCB are one of the eight original IPL franchises that have been part of the league since its inception in 2008. They won the IPL title for the first time in 2025. However, if a post by Ananya Birla, a prominent face in the Aditya Birla Group, is anything to go by,



RCB's name will not be changed. Ananya reposted an Instagram post on her story which said the team's name will not be changed. Talking about the mega RCB sale, which made the team the costliest IPL side ever, the USL said in a statement: "United Spirits Limited, pursuant to the meeting of its Board of Directors, today announced

that it has entered into definitive agreements for the sale of the 100 percent equity stake held in its wholly owned subsidiary Royal Challengers Sports Private Limited (RCSPL) to a consortium. "The consortium comprises Aditya Birla Group (ABG), The Times of India Group (Times), Bolt Ventures (Bolt), and Blackstone's per-

petual private equity strategy, BXPE (Blackstone), for a total consideration of INR 166.6 bn in an all-cash transaction," the statement added. The transaction includes RCB's men's and women's (WPL) teams. "RCSPL owns and operates the Royal Challengers Bengaluru (RCB) franchises that participate in the Indian Premier League

(IPL) and Women's Premier League (WPL). "Upon completion of this transaction, the consortium will, through its ownership of RCSPL, acquire the rights to own and operate the IPL and WPL franchise," said the USL. The announcement also concluded the strategic review of RCSPL that was initiated by USL on November 5, 2025.

## TENSION BETWEEN TESTS AND FRANCHISE T20 - CUMMINS

Australia Test captain Pat Cummins says there is a growing tension between Test and franchise T20 cricket after several team-mates opted out of The Hundred auction because of a home series against Bangladesh in August. The Hundred organisers hoped to attract major names to its inaugural auction, but none of Australia's Test regulars entered the selection process. Some Australia white-ball players picked up Hundred deals, with Tim David, Mitchell Marsh and Adam Zampa set to play in this summer's tournament. "Some of our guys are saying no to a half a million pounds for 20 days' work to go and play those two Test matches against Bangladesh," Cummins told the Business of Sport podcast, external "It's a tension point. It has been for a while, but I think it's only growing. "Something we speak about is how do we make sure we've got our best Australian guys to choose from when we're picking a Test side or an ODI side, because there is so much demand for them elsewhere."



Fast bowler Cummins is captain of Sunrisers Hyderabad in the Indian Premier League (IPL), and the owners of his franchise bought into Hundred side Northern Superchargers, renaming them Sunrisers Leeds. Cummins' wife Becky is from Harrogate, and he said he would be interested in playing for the franchise. "We spend a lot of time over in England during the summer," said Cummins. "All the boys that go and play it love it. Slightly different format; I think it's less than a month long. It looks good fun, so one

day I'd like to play." Cummins is set to miss the start of the IPL, which begins on Saturday, as he recovers from the back injury that ruled him out of all but one Test in their Ashes series win over England. The Bangladesh series - Australia's first Test assignment since the Ashes ended in January - runs from 13 to 26 August, while this year's Hundred takes place from 21 July to 16 August. The Tests will be the first between the sides since 2017, while Bangladesh have not toured Australia since their first visit in 2003.

## "Imran Khan In A Cell Built For Death Row Inmates": Pakistan Great's Son Makes Explosive Appeal At UN

Kasim Khan, the son of former Pakistan Prime Minister and legendary cricket captain Imran Khan, has made a statement at the United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC), urging for the release of his father from prison. Imran Khan has been in jail since 2023 and was sentenced last year, along with his wife, to 17 years on corruption charges they both deny. Kasim alleged that Imran has been held in a solitary confinement cell, one which is "built for death row inmates". Kasim's statement comes after it was reported in recent weeks that Imran had lost a large part of his vision in his right eye during his imprisonment. "I'm deeply concerned by the alarming rise of intolerance



in persecution in Pakistan. We are witnessing a systematic campaign to dehumanize and silence specific segments of the population," Kasim said in his speech at the UNHRC. "My father, Imran Khan, has been in prison for nearly 1,000 days. He is the primary target of a regime that treats dissent not as a political disagree-

ment, but as a grave crime to be crushed. I've not seen my father in over three years. He is held in a solitary confinement cell - a cell built for death row inmates. "UN experts have warned the inhumane conditions could amount to torture. This is not neglect - it's a deliberate persecution designed to strip a human being of his dignity. The

intolerance extends beyond him," Kasim added. "Pakistan has expanded its blasphemy laws to impose life imprisonment, and branded citizens as terrorists, fostering a climate of hatred. We ask this council and the OHCHR to urge Pakistan to end this persecution immediately. They must comply with UN Working Groups' opinion, and they must release my father and all political prisoners. Thank you," he concluded. In February, following reports of Imran's condition in prison, a 14-member group comprising Imran's former teammates and opponents, including Indian cricket legends Sunil Gavaskar and Kapil Dev, had made a formal appeal to the Pakistan government for "fair and humane treatment" of Imran.

## Lalit Modi Controversially Calls Sanjiv Goenka 'Clown'. It's Related To RCB, RR's Record Sales

Lalit Modi, Indian Premier League (IPL)'s first chairman, launched a brutal attack on Lucknow Super Giants owner Sanjiv Goenka over his social media post on the record-breaking sales of Rajasthan Royals and Royal Challengers Bengaluru. While a Kal Somani-led consortium for USD bought RR for 1.63 billion dollars, RCB became the most expensive franchise in IPL history after being acquired by a consortium comprising Aditya Birla Group, Blackstone, Times of India Group and Bolt Ventures for 1.78 billion dollars. Goenka downplayed Lalit Modi's role in IPL's growing valuation over the years and credited the league's structure, particularly its media rights model. Modi did not mince his



words while reacting to Goenka's social media post and even called him a 'clown' and added that he 'has a memory loss'. "Seriously this guy really has a memory loss of who conceived the model. Thats ok. He just lives in his own world. We all know that @DrSanjivGoenka is a (clown emoji) wish it was his

brother @hvgoenka who owned the ipl franchise. He is a true cricket fan. Not this clown - who thinks his tweet will change history. Just proves he has zero knowledge. Just swelled up head Jai hind. @LalitModi posted on X (formerly Twitter). Earlier, Goenka reacted to the record sales of

the franchises with special mention of the league's governance. "@rajasthanroyals, acquired for roughly ₹270 crore in 2008, have just been sold for over ₹15,000 crore. @RCBTweets, acquired for roughly ₹485 crore, sold for over ₹16,600 crore. Two franchises, same week, each over ₹15,000 crore," Goenka wrote on X. "That value was built by the architecture of the IPL. The way broadcast and digital rights were structured. The governance that gave brands confidence to invest at premium levels. Much of this traces back to the vision of @JayShah," he added. Lalit Modi left India in 2010 in a haze of allegations related to tax evasion, money-laundering and proxy ownership linked to the money-minting IPL.

## VIRAT KOHLI GETS A NEW FULL SLEEVE TATTOO AHEAD OF IPL 2026

India and Royal Challengers Bengaluru star batter Virat Kohli got a new full sleeve tattoo on his left hand ahead of the Indian Premier League 2026. He got the work done at 'Aliens Tattoo India', which shared the video of it on Instagram and it went viral on no time. As per the company, the tattoo signifies Kohli's journey. The player will be seen in action during the 19th edition of IPL that begins on March 28. RCB take on Sunrisers Hyderabad in the first game at M Chinnaswamy Stadium, Bengaluru. "This was not about adding another tattoo. It was about creating something that carries depth, something that reflects who he has become," wrote Aliens Tattoo in its website. "This piece draws



from his journey as a person. It reflects the transformation he has gone through, what he has moved beyond, what he has arrived at, and the direction he continues to move in. At every inflection point in his life, he has shed parts of who he once was, through discipline, through focus, through an unwavering sense of belief. And yet, not everything was left

behind. Some parts stayed. Some became stronger. And much more was added - to his personality, to his beliefs, to the way he approaches life today. His new full sleeve tattoo reflects exactly that. "His left arm was not a blank canvas. It already carried years of ink, an incomplete arm-band, older tattoos, elements that belonged to different phases of his life.

## NORTHAMPTON COACH VESTY QUESTIONS ENGLAND'S IDENTITY

Northampton head coach Sam Vesty has questioned whether England have lost their identity under Steve Borthwick. The RFU are currently holding a review into the team's under-performance in the Six Nations in which England lost four games for the first time in the championship since 1976. Under scrutiny will be not only England's results but the style of play which has been criticised as being overly kick-heavy and conservative. Borthwick, who has spoken of his desire to develop England's game from the basic approach which took England to the World Cup semi-final in 2023, has referred to the weight of the jersey proving restrictive. However Vesty, who coaches England half



backs Alex Mitchell and Fin Smith as well as Tommy Freeman, Henry Pollock, Alex Coles and Fraser Dingwall at Northampton, thinks this is a red herring. "It is the same with all of the other countries as well. They all have a weight of expectation," Vesty told BBC Radio Northampton's The Saints Show. "Scotland move the ball. Italy move

the ball... all those teams that we have just mentioned - if I asked you what their identity was, you could pretty clearly say something, couldn't you? I'm not sure you can say that with England at the moment." England delivered a much-improved display in a narrow 48-46 defeat to France in the final round with plenty of attacking rugby but Vesty queried how much importance should be attached to the game. "It's the easiest time in the world to play, isn't it?" added Vesty, who was an assistant coach on England's 2017 tour to Argentina under Eddie Jones. "Everyone's written them off. There's no pressure on them. Can't win. And we see a free rugby team.

## 'TREATMENT OF SCOTLAND PLAYERS WASN'T GOOD ENOUGH'



Captain Rachel Malcolm says it was a "hard read" when BBC Sport laid out the struggles of some of her Scotland players at last year's Women's Rugby World Cup. The 34-year-old said she wants the squad to be "happy and supported". In February, some Scotland players told BBC Sport of an emotionally damaging World Cup tournament because Scottish Rugby's handling of player contracts left them with poor mental health. Scotland reached the last eight, the women's team's best performance at a World Cup in 23 years. But off the field some players were struggling with uncertainty over their professional futures, and one said she suffered a breakdown as a result. "I think it ultimately wasn't good enough in terms of how the players were treated and team-mates were feeling," said Malcolm at the launch of the 2026 Women's Six Nations. "As a player group we were very together in that whole process and we were very aware of different people's situations and different people's respons-

es to what happened. "I think it's obviously brave of those girls to speak out but I think the most important thing is that moving forward change needs to happen for that process to be better - and that is what has happened. "The Scottish Rugby Union is now working with us and making sure those processes are better so the same doesn't happen and people aren't made to feel that way in the future." Scotland's player contracts had been due for renewal in June last year, two months before the World Cup, and they had asked for 12-month deals to ensure job security and allow them to focus on the tournament. While some were offered that deal, a quarter were told their deals would end in October, immediately after the tournament. Four players spoke to BBC Sport on the condition of anonymity and described the news as a "big shock" that put them under huge mental strain. At the time annual contracts ranged from £18,000 to £27,000 and in most cases were a player's main source of income.

## Barefoot In Abidjan, Fearless In Germany: The Rise Of RB Leipzig's Yan Diomande

One of the biggest stars in the German Bundesliga, Yan Diomande, is a name that instills fear in the minds of teams across the globe. The man whose speed and dribbling ability take him past some of the finest defenders in the world once had to fight for the absolute basics. His journey from the dusty streets of Abidjan in Ivory Coast to the clinical brilliance of Germany's top flight wasn't a straight line, but a battle fought through sheer defiance. In a video feature released by RB Leipzig, the 19-year-old winger took a deep dive into his raw self, revealing a

story defined not just by goals, but by an unwavering sense of responsibility. Diomande's story began in the Sicogi neighbourhood of Abidjan, Ivory Coast. Like many of the world's greatest talents, his first pitch was the street, and his first boots were nonexistent. Playing barefoot wasn't a choice but the harsh reality of the circumstances back home. In those early years, football wasn't merely a hobby or a path to fame, it was, as Diomande put it himself, a mechanism for survival. What he and his friends learned by playing on the sun-baked streets of Sicogi was a lesson in resilience

that even the finest academies in the world could not have taught. Looking back at a picture of himself and his friends, playing football in the streets of Abidjan, Diomande highlighted how so many of his friends have now broken into European football. While he is playing in Germany, a number of others are in England or Belgium. Despite his move to Germany, Diomande stays in touch with his old friends through a WhatsApp group, sharing the same bond that they once did back home. From Ivory Coast to the USA Diomande moved to the DME Academy in Florida (USA) in 2022. It was

a period of rapid maturation where he traded the spontaneity of street football for the structured discipline of the American league system. "It's not easy to go so far away from your family. Now I feel like I could live on my own forever," he said of his experience in the USA. This chapter proved crucial, providing him with the mental fortitude required to navigate a life far from home. From not knowing the English language to battling loneliness, the USA stint laid the foundation and battle-hardened Diomande for challenges that had started to unfold in his top-tier football career.



## After watching "Carmeni Selvam," people will feel like reducing their EMIs: Versatile actor Samuthirakani at Trailer Launch event

Produced by Arun Rangarajulu under the Pathway Productions banner and directed by Ram Chakri, the bilingual film "Carmeni Selvam" has been made in Telugu and Tamil. Versatile actor Samuthirakani plays the lead role, while Gautham Vasudev Menon appears in a key role. Lakshmi Priya and Abhinaya also play important roles. The film is set for a grand theatrical release on April 3 in both Telugu and Tamil. It will be distributed by PVR Inox Pictures. The already released first look poster and teaser have created interest, and the trailer launched on Thursday has further raised expectations with its family emotions and a storyline connected to current trends. The trailer launch event was held in Hyderabad. Telugu directors who have worked with Samuthirakani, "Vimanam" fame Shiva Prasad, "Ramam Raghavam" fame Dhanraj, and "Save the Tigers" fame Teja Kakumanu attended as guests. Director Shiva Prasad of "Vimanam" said, "When we think of a middle-class father character, the first name that comes to mind is Samuthirakani garu. Looking at this story, it



seems to revolve around money. This film will connect with every middle-class family." Teja Kakumanu said, "The Earth stopped revolving around the Sun long ago. Now everything revolves around money. This film will definitely appeal to all middle-class families." Dhanraj said, "Only when we encourage such good stories will more good films be made. I wish this movie great success." Speaking on the occasion, versatile actor Samuthirakani said, "Life can be viewed and expressed in many ways. We are pre-

sending it differently in this film as well. Ram Chakri is a very intense creator. I thank him for bringing such a good story to me. Lakshmi Priya and Abhinaya's performances will impress everyone. This film will make every viewer think after they walk out of the theater. Also, everyone will feel like reducing their loan EMIs. Only when we reduce the burdens on us can we achieve our dreams. This is a film that says if everyone becomes financially strong, they will definitely succeed." Director Ram Chakri said, "Samuthirakani

garu will showcase different variations in this film. Ramanujam garu composed the music as a service. I will never forget the support given by producer Arun. This film will connect with every middle-class family. Through this film, we show how people can reduce their debts and live happily." Producer Arun Rangarajulu said, "This movie will connect with everyone. Special thanks to our distribution partner PVR Inox Pictures." Actress Abhinaya said, "I feel proud to play this character. It is a great honor to work

with Samuthirakani garu. He can perform any role. This film will create awareness among people." Actress Lakshmi Priya said, "This film is very special to me. The character Shanti that I played will be relatable to everyone. It is a film that families can watch together." Lyric writer Rambabu Gosala said that this is an emotional film and that he was happy to get the opportunity to write all the songs in it. Music director Ramanuja, music producer Jeevan, and the entire film unit participated in the event.

## Nandamuri Balakrishna Honoured with Lifetime Achievement Award at International Film Festival Delhi 2026

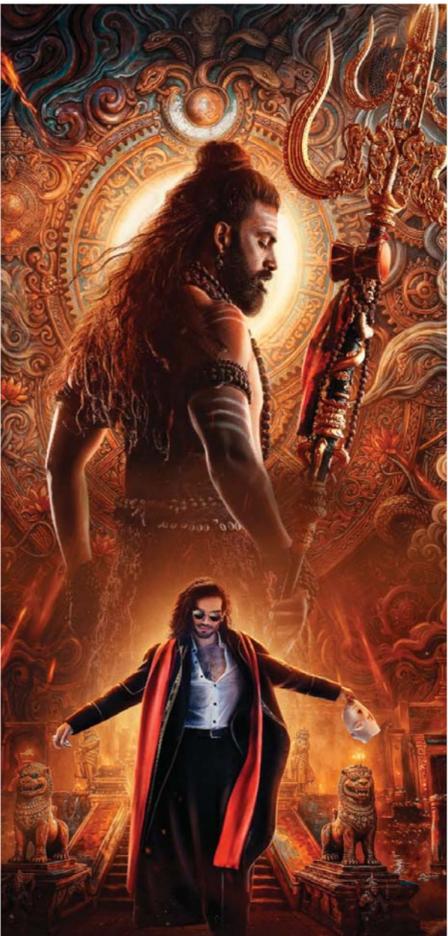


We are delighted to announce that Nandamuri Balakrishna has been honored with the prestigious "Lifetime Achievement Award" at the International Film Festival Delhi 2026. The award was presented by the Hon'ble Chief

Minister of Delhi, Rekha Gupta. This recognition marks yet another significant milestone in the illustrious journey of Shri Nandamuri Balakrishna Garu. His contribution to the Telugu film industry has been remarkable, and this honor stands as a

moment of pride not only for him but for the entire Telugu cinema fraternity. On this special occasion, we extend our heartfelt congratulations to Shri Nandamuri Balakrishna Garu and wish him continued success, hoping he receives many more accolades in the years to come.

## Nagabandham Set for Grand Worldwide Release on July 3rd



Abhishek Nama, Virat Karnna, Kishore Annapureddy, Nishitha Nagi Reddy, NIK Studios, Abhishek Pictures Pan India Mythological Epic Nagabandham Grand Worldwide Release On July 3rd Abhishek Nama's highly anticipated pan-Indian epic Nagabandham, starring Virat Karnna, has now locked its worldwide release date- July 3rd. Produced by Kishore Annapureddy and Nishitha Nagi Reddy on NIK Studios and Abhishek Pictures, the team has opted for an early

monsoon arrival. The release date poster is designed with a striking concept. It visually bridges mythology and the modern world. The upper half showcases Virat Karnna in a fierce, Shiva-inspired avatar gripping a colossal, intricately designed trishul, radiating divine intensity and spiritual might. The lower half shifts dramatically into a sleek contemporary universe, introducing the antagonist with a sharp, stylish presence that hints at a high-voltage clash between ancient power and modern chaos.

## Priyadarshi, Sai Kumar "Suyodhana" movie pre release press meet, the movie is going to have a worldwide grand release on 27th of this month

"Suyodhana" is a film under the banner of Prajwala Line Creations featuring Priyadarshi, Drishika Chander as the hero heroine, dialogue king Saikumar and senior heroine Prema in pivotal roles. This film is being directed by YS Madhav Reddy and is being produced by Bosubabu Nidumolu. This movie is releasing worldwide on 27th of this month. Sri Lakshmi Pictures, which has released many hit films, is releasing the movie "Suyodhana". Today, the pre-release press meet of this film was held in a grand manner in Nuhyderabad. In this program Art Director Brahma Kadali said - Editor Chhota K Prasad is the reason why I came into this film. He supported this film in many ways along with editing. We have done good set work for this movie. It is seen in a very big span in the movie. "Suyodhana" stands as a special movie for Saikumar and



Priyadarshi in their career. Said. Music director Jai Krish said - I felt happy as a music director when I got to know that the movie "Suyodhana" will be a sound theme. A new vibe you will all feel in this movie. After watching the performances

of Priyadarshi and Sai Kumar, I made sure to improve my BGM. This movie will give you all a new experience. Said. Editor Chhota K Prasad said - "Suyodhana" is a new kind of movie. Such films do not come regularly. Our produc-

er Bosu made the movie with great passion. Technically every craft is quality. I want you all to watch this film which is releasing on the occasion of Sri Rama Navami and give your response. Said. Producer Bosubabu Nidumolu said - Our technicians are the main strength of our film. Brahma Kadali's art work, Karthik's camera work, Jai Krish's music, Chhota K Prasad's editing, all these made the movie come out in high quality. Chhota K Prasad supported us in all matters. Even though it was the first film for our director Madhav, he got the output he wanted from everyone like a veteran. I can't forget the support given to us by Priyadarshi and Saikumar. Bapiraju sir is releasing our film in a grand manner. If all the producers get people like him, no one will have a problem. Filmchamber programs are being requested to educate new producers about film making.

## What's The Clarification From Peddi Makers On Charan Injury



The team behind Mega Power Star Ram Charan's much-awaited film Peddi, directed by Buchi Babu Sana, has issued an official statement regarding a minor accident that occurred during the shoot yesterday. While performing an intense action sequence, Ram Charan sustained a small injury just above his eye. According to Team Peddi, the injury is completely minor and nothing to be concerned about. Ram Charan, known for his discipline and unwavering commitment, went on to finish the remaining portions of the day's schedule despite the incident. The production unit has now paused the shoot briefly, giving Ram Charan a short break. The team assures that filming will resume tomorrow. Sharing the update on social media, the team urged fans not to speculate about the

incident. In their statement, they said, "We'd like to address the recent chatter surrounding a minor incident on the sets of Peddi. We want to assure everyone that Ram Charan Garu is absolutely fine and doing well. He had a minor injury to the left eye on the sets, and there was a small procedure done. He will be resuming the shoot tomorrow with no disruptions to the schedule. We appreciate the concern, but there is no cause for worry. Everything is under control, and the film continues to move forward smoothly." The makers reiterated that the situation is under control and thanked fans for their concern, while emphasizing that production remains on track. Actor's Dedication Impresses Fans Despite the injury, Ram Charan reportedly continued working, showcasing his commitment to the project.

## Barbarikudu The Son of Ghatotkacha Movie Grand Opening of Ram Laxman's Disciple Krishna as Indian Hero

PP Movie Makers, Renuka Ellamma Creations banners T. Barbarikudu is the latest film under the direction of Sivajhansi Regala, produced by Malleshwarudu, Anthati Naresh Kumar and Anthati Rajesh Kumar. Barbarikudu, the most ambitious film, recently celebrated a grand pooja. It seems that this film is going to open with the story of a warrior from Mahabharata Kurukshetra war. Sivajhansiregala, who worked as an assistant director for many films in the Telugu film industry as a disciple of famous music director MM Keeravani's father Shiv Shakti Dutta, is making his directorial debut with this film. The story of a warrior from India's biggest epic Mahabharata is going to be screened to capture the



hearts of Telugu people. In this regard, the passion of the director as well as the producers should be appreciated. Movies like this are not produced unless there is love and affection. In this regard, the producers of the film T. Malleshwarudu, Anthati

Naresh Kumar and Anthati Rajesh Kumar were successful in the beginning. They are confident that the film Barbarikudu that they are making will definitely win the hearts of the audience. Many people know less about the history of Barbarikudu.

The makers say that with this film, everyone will know how great a warrior he is. Krishna Bharat, who choreographed fights for many super hit films and is the disciple of Ram Laxman and the son-in-law of stunt master Badri Master.