

OM NAMO VENKATESAYA

13-03-2026

Total pilgrims: 67,264

Tonsures: 25,410

Hundi-kankaku: 4,28CR

Waiting Compartments: Out side line at Krishna Teja guest house.

Approx. Darsan Time for Sarvadarshanam (with out SSD Tokens) : 18 H

TO BOOK YOUR ADS CALL

99484 80279, 73307 78889

COMMERCIAL LPG SUPPLY RESUMED, NO RETAIL SHORTAGE, SAYS OIL MINISTRY

WHY HAS THE US TARGETED IRAN'S KHARG ISLAND?

RISHABH PANT'S MESSAGE TO LUCKNOW SUPER GIANTS TEAMMATE AHEAD OF IPL 2026 IS HILARIOUS



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SHORT TAKES

TRUMP URGES GLOBAL NAVIES TO SECURE HORMUZ STRAIT

Washington (TSIT): Amid rising tensions with Iran and fears over the safety of maritime traffic, US President Donald Trump Saturday said that multiple countries could join the United States in deploying warships to the Strait of Hormuz, a vital global shipping route. In a statement posted on social media, Trump said nations affected by potential disruptions in the waterway should help secure it alongside US forces. "Many countries, especially those who are affected by Iran's attempted closure of the Hormuz Strait, will be sending war ships, in conjunction with the United States of America, to keep the Strait open and safe," he wrote.

'NAXAL TERROR VANQUISHED' BOOK COVER UNVEILED

New Delhi (TSIT): The cover of 'Naxal Terror Vanquished', an upcoming book by author, political commentator and policy analyst, Tuhin A. Sinha, was unveiled here on Saturday. The book gives a sweeping account of how India dismantled one of its longest-running internal security challenges — the decades-long Maoist insurgency. The book traces the arc of Left-Wing Extremism from the ideological uprising at Naxalbari in 1967 to the steady decline of insurgent networks across the once-formidable Red Corridor, stretching through large parts of central and eastern India.

KERALA GST ISSUES KEY COMPLIANCE ADVISORY FOR TAXPAYERS AHEAD OF FY 2026-27

Thiruvananthapuram (TSIT) The Kerala State Goods and Services Tax (SGST) Department has issued a detailed advisory to GST-registered traders and businesses ahead of the 2026-27 financial year, highlighting several key compliance requirements. These include the March 31 deadline for opting into the Composition Scheme, mandatory e-invoicing for businesses with aggregate turnover above Rs5 crore, the option to enrol in the QRMP quarterly return scheme, submission of LUT for exporters, tax options for Goods Transport Agencies.

Orders Steps for Uninterrupted LPG Supply in T'gana: Uttam



HYDERABAD TSIT BUREAU: A high-level review meeting on uninterrupted LPG supply and distribution in Telangana was held on Saturday at the Telangana State Secretariat under the chairmanship of N. Uttam Kumar Reddy. Meeting was attended by Telangana Government Advisor (Protocol & Public Relations) Harkara Venugopal Rao, Civil Supplies Commissioner Stephen Ravindra, senior officials from Oil Marketing Companies, and representatives of LPG dealers and distributors from across the state. During the review, the Minister assessed the current LPG supply situation and the challenges affecting distribution in certain areas of the state. Officials from Oil Marketing Companies and LPG distributors briefed the Minister on issues related to supply chain management, logistics, and delivery timelines that have impacted the smooth distribution of LPG cylinders. Addressing the officials, Minister Uttam Kumar Reddy directed all departments and companies involved to take immediate

and coordinated measures to ensure uninterrupted LPG supply to consumers across Telangana. He stressed that the public should not face any inconvenience and asked officials to closely monitor the supply and distribution system. Speaking on the occasion, Advisor Harkara Venugopal Rao stated that the state government is closely monitoring the LPG supply situation and is committed to ensuring adequate availability of cylinders for both domestic and commercial consumers. He added that steps are being taken to strengthen the distribution network and resolve issues raised by LPG dealers and distributors. Civil Supplies Department and Oil Marketing Companies were also instructed to maintain regular coordination with LPG agencies and ensure timely delivery of LPG cylinders to households across Telangana. Officials described the meeting as constructive and productive, expressing confidence that the measures discussed would help improve the efficiency of LPG supply and distribution across the state.

PM Modi launches development projects worth over Rs 23,550 cr in Assam's Silchar

New Delhi (TSIT) Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday laid the foundation stone and inaugurated multiple development projects worth around Rs 23,550 crore in Silchar in southern Assam, with a focus on boosting connectivity, strengthening agricultural education and accelerating infrastructure growth in the Barak Valley and the wider Northeast region. The projects were launched during a public programme in Silchar in Cachar district, where the Prime Minister also performed the Bhoomi Poojan for several major infrastructure initiatives. Modi had



The projects launched from Silchar would strengthen connectivity and improve the agricultural ecosystem in the region. "From Silchar, several projects aimed at strengthening connectivity and boosting the agricultural education ecosystem in the region are being launched,"

Shillong-Silchar Corridor, the first access-controlled greenfield four-lane high-speed corridor in Northeast India. Built at an estimated cost of around Rs 22,860 crore, the expressway will connect Shillong in Meghalaya with Silchar in Assam, significantly improv-

ing regional connectivity. According to officials, the corridor will reduce the distance between Guwahati and Silchar and cut travel time from about 8.5 hours to roughly five hours, facilitating faster movement of goods and passengers while promoting trade and economic growth in the region. The Prime Minister also highlighted the growing strategic and economic importance of the Northeast in India's foreign and trade policy. "Today, the Northeast is at the center of India's Act East Policy. It is becoming a bridge connecting India with Southeast Asia," Modi said.

Rahul Gandhi questions delay in legal MSP implementation, alleges govt avoiding answers

New Delhi (TSIT) Senior Congress leader and Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi on Saturday said he raised a direct question in Parliament about the government's unfulfilled promise to provide farmers a legally guaranteed Minimum Support Price (MSP) based on the C2 50% formula, alleging that the government avoided giving a clear answer. In a post on X, Gandhi said he asked the government why the commitment made to farmers in 2021 to implement a legal MSP at "C2 50%" had still not been fulfilled. "In the Lok Sabha, I asked the government a direct question: why has the promise made to farmers in 2021 to implement a legal MSP



at C2 50% still not been implemented?" he wrote. According to Gandhi, the government did not address the question directly and instead reiterated its existing MSP policy. He also claimed that the government acknowledged putting pressure on states to withdraw additional MSP bonuses. "The government admitted

that it pressured states to end the MSP bonus, which was justified without any reasoning in the name of 'national priorities'," Gandhi said. The Congress leader also raised concerns about India's ongoing trade discussions with the United States, particularly references to reducing "non-trade barriers." Gandhi questioned whether such provisions could weaken the MSP system and public procurement mechanisms that support farmers. "Another serious question is about the trade agreement with the United States where there is talk of reducing 'non-trade barriers'. Does this mean weakening MSP and government procurement?" he asked.

India strongly condemns Pak's deadly air strikes in Afghanistan

New Delhi/Kabul (TSIT) : Terming it as another act of aggression by a Pakistani establishment that remains hostile to the idea of a sovereign Afghanistan, India on Saturday severely condemned the latest strikes by Pakistan inside Afghan territory which has led to the death of several civilians and massive loss to local infrastructure. Afghan officials on Saturday confirmed that several civilians have been killed in the Pakistani airstrikes on Friday in Kabul, Kandahar, Paktika and Paktia provinces.

Mojtaba Khamenei asks regional countries to shut down all US bases they host

New Delhi (TSIT) Iran's Supreme Leader, Mojtaba Khamenei, has called upon all regional countries to shut down US bases as soon as possible, saying Washington's claims of ensuring security and peace to these countries have been nothing but lies. "I advise the leaders of regional countries to shut down those [US] bases as soon as possible, for they must surely have realised by now that the US's claims of ensuring security and peace have been nothing but lies," Mojtaba Khamenei said on X.



(The US had negotiated a deal with Saudi Arabia on June 8, 1974, under which Saudi Arabia agreed to invest their vast surplus oil revenues into the US economy. In exchange, the US said

Washington would provide military protection, weapons, and technical support to Saudi Arabia. With that intention, the US set up military bases in these countries.) On March 7, Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian had apologised to these countries for Iran's air and drone strikes on the US assets there. Mojtaba said the Islamic Republic (Iran) is fully prepared for unity and fostering warm, sincere, reciprocal relations with all its neighbours. He said shutting down US bases in the region

will enable those governments to strengthen ties with their own people, who are generally dissatisfied with the humiliating behaviour associated with those bases. It will also bring an increase in their wealth and power. These regional countries must determine their position on the "aggressors," he added. Mojtaba made it clear that Iran had clearly warned, and without committing any act of aggression against those regional countries themselves, only the US bases there had been targeted.

India says refineries running at full capacity amid West Asia tensions

New Delhi, Mar 14: The Government of India on Friday said all oil refineries in the country are operating at full capacity and there is adequate crude inventory despite concerns arising from the ongoing tensions in West Asia. During an inter-ministerial briefing, Joint Secretary in the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas, Sujata Sharma, said domestic supplies of piped natural gas (PNG) and compressed natural gas (CNG) for vehicles are being maintained without any cuts. She said there are about 1.5 crore consumers of PNG across the country and supply is being ensured for all users. On LPG availability, Sharma said the situation

is being closely monitored. While the government considers it an area of concern, she clarified that none of the country's 25,000 LPG distributors have run out of stock. Around 50 lakh LPG cylinders are currently being delivered daily across India, she said, urging people not to believe rumours or resort to panic buying. Sharma added that authorities are taking strict action against cases of black marketing and hoarding of LPG cylinders. She also noted that domestic production of LPG has increased by nearly 30 percent. Meanwhile, India has conveyed to Iran the importance of ensuring uninterrupted transit of energy supplies and goods amid the current regional

situation. Spokesperson of the Ministry of External Affairs, Randhir Jaiswal, said Prime Minister Narendra Modi spoke with Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian on Thursday. During the conversation, Modi emphasised New Delhi's priority regarding the safety and well-being of Indian nationals in the region, including those residing in Iran. The government also said that port operations across India remain stable. A Standard Operating Procedure has been issued for all major ports and State Maritime Boards to ensure smooth coordination with shipping lines and exporters, along with time-bound grievance redressal.

TN offers Rs 2-per-unit power subsidy for hotels shifting to electric stoves

Chennai (TSIT): The Tamil Nadu government on Saturday announced a Rs 2-per-unit subsidy on electricity for hotels, tea stalls and cloud kitchens that switch to electric stoves instead of LPG cylinders, as the state moves to address an emerging fuel shortage triggered by the ongoing war in West Asia. The decision was taken at a high-level meeting chaired by Chief Minister M.K. Stalin, where officials reviewed the impact of disruptions in LPG supply on commercial establishments and the hospitality sector across the state. According to an official press release, the electricity subsidy will remain in force until restrictions on the use and



availability of LPG cylinders are lifted. The government said the measure is intended to encourage eateries and small businesses to temporarily shift to electric cooking methods while ensuring that their operating costs remain manageable. In addition to the power subsidy, the state government announced the allocation of 3,228 kilolitres of kerosene for

distribution to ration card holders to ease the burden on households during the fuel shortage. To further support businesses adapting to the crisis, the government said micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) would be eligible for loans to purchase electric stoves and heaters. Under the Unemployed Youth Employment Generation Programme (UYEGP), entrepreneurs can avail loans with a 25 per cent capital subsidy or a maximum grant of Rs 3.75 lakh. Similarly, loans will be provided under the Tamil Nadu Women Entrepreneur Empowerment Scheme (TWEEES), offering a 25 per cent subsidy or up to Rs 2 lakh.

Democracy invests in higher education so that graduates may govern themselves well, CJI says

CHANDIGARH: A democracy does not invest in higher education so that its graduates may simply prosper, it does so to ensure that they govern themselves well, Chief Justice of India (CJI) Surya Kant said on Saturday.

"Every institution of public life -- the courts, the civil services, the schools, the hospitals, the local governance bodies all depend for their quality on the calibre of the people who choose to serve within them," the CJI said while addressing the 12th convocation ceremony of the Central University of Haryana in Mahendragarh.

Justice Kant said in barely 17 years, the university has earned national accreditation and recognition for its swift growth.

He told the gathering of students that the degrees conferred on them certify the knowledge they have acquired and they should be proud of it but at the same time, he emphasised that "what your degree does not certify, and no examination can measure -- how your character and judgment hold up once the structure of formal education is no longer around you. In my experience, this ultimately determines the trajectory of life".

The CJI said there are graduates of the most-celebrated institutions who have faltered under pressure, not because they lacked knowledge but because they were never tested by anything other than a school or college examination.

"And then there are professionals from institutions nobody has heard of, who rise with composure and seriousness, earning the confidence of every room they enter," he said.

So what is the distinguishing factor then, he asked the students.

"In my view, it has nothing to do with the talent one may display in the classroom and almost everything to do with upbringing.

"Those who grew up observing their families manage scarcity with dignity, who understood early on that the world does not rearrange itself for your convenience and who entered professional life already knowing that hard work is not just a phase but a permanent state, they carried something that no curriculum can teach. They carried a seriousness that was not performative but genuine," Justice Kant said.

Many of the students present on the occasion carry exactly this formation, he said.

"You grew up in homes where a university degree was not a given but a goal



that the entire family organised itself around. The investment by your families was not made so that you could merely earn a comfortable living.

"It was made because they believed, even if they could not always articulate it, that an educated daughter or son would use what they learned to build something beyond themselves," the CJI said.

This belief is the bridge between "what your upbringing gave you and what the world is now entitled to expect from you", he told the students.

The CJI said it is often discussed what education provides to an individual.

It opens doors, boosts earning potential and enhances mobility, he said, adding that however, there

selves well....," Justice Kant said.

In the Ramayana, when Bharat was handed the throne of Ayodhya by his father's own decree, he chose to place Ram's "paduka" on the seat of power and govern from Nandigram as a trustee, not as a sovereign, he pointed out.

"This distinction between holding authority for yourself and holding it on behalf of others is what your obligation towards the public means," the CJI said.

He told the students that "wherever your careers take you, carry with you the awareness that our collective life depends on whether educated people choose to engage with the systems around them or simply benefit from them".

Giving the example of a "raider" in a Kabaddi game, the CJI told the students, "Watch the finest raiders carefully.... Their greatness is not in the distance they cover, but in the precision with which they judge the line between ambition and overreach."

He told the students that as they advance in their chosen careers, they must carry the discipline their families have imparted, the endurance that this landscape has taught them and the straightforwardness that Haryana is known for.

India should have taken anti-war stand: Akhilesh Yadav, targets PM Modi and BJP

MUMBAI: Samajwadi Party president Akhilesh Yadav on Saturday said India should have taken a stand against the ongoing US-Israel-Iran conflict which killed several women and children and has started affecting India's economy. In a swipe, he said Prime Minister Narendra Modi could have become a "vishwaguru" by sending a message of peace and preventing the war.

"There is an opportunity for the prime minister and the BJP to become a vishwaguru.... We should have taken a stand against the war. Women and children have been killed, and in India, the war is impacting our economy," he told reporters. Yadav arrived in Mumbai to attend Iftaar (the evening meal to break the daily fast during the Islamic month of Ramadan) hosted by the party's Maharashtra unit chief Abu Asim Azmi. He said sending a message of peace and stopping the war, in which many people have lost their lives, was required. "Energy security is connected with foreign policy," Yadav said. Reacting to the reports of people queuing up to buy LPG cylinders amid a "shortage", the SP leader said, "LPG has become 'lapata' (missing) gas which is affecting the lives of common people".

Conspiracy hatched to break Tipra Motha Party: Pradyot Debbarma

AGARTALA: Tipra Motha Party (TMP) supremo Pradyot Kishore Manikya Debbarma on Saturday alleged that a conspiracy has been hatched to break his party before the Tripura Tribal Areas Autonomous District Council (TTAAD) elections. Debbarma's allegations came amidst rumours circulating in the state that a section of TMP legislators, including a minister, will join the BJP before the TTAADC elections.

The Tipra Motha has 13 MLAs in the 60-member Tripura Assembly, and two of its legislators are also ministers in the Manik Saha government.

Chief Minister Manik Saha on Thursday had said that reports of TMP MLA and Forest Minister Animesh Debbarma joining the BJP were a rumour.

Addressing a party programme at Khumilwng in West Tripura, Debbarma said he has been fighting for the rights of Tiprasa people for the past two years.

Without naming any leader, he said, "There were reports on attempts being made to split the party, but the conspiracy was actually hatched to break Bubagra (king). Those who have made an attempt will get a fitting reply in due course of time."

Underlining the need to be united, Debbarma alleged that attempts will be

made to divide the indigenous people along the lines of Hindu and Christian or Tripuri (community), Reang or Mog to win the elections.

Debbarma said TMP will declare the list of candidates for TTAADC elections within five minutes of the BJP announcing its aspirants, so that it (BJP) cannot pick any TMP leaders.

The TMP supremo also urged the leaders of the tribal party not to fight among indigenous people in the elections.

"In the TTAADC election in 2021, the TMP had to fight against the Indigenous People's Front of Tripura (IPFT), for which the Tiprasa (tribal) community had to suffer. This time, the stage is set for a battle between the BJP and TMP. We all must ensure that there should not be an electoral battle within the Tiprasa community," he said.

Referring to Chief Minister Manik Saha's announcement of the BJP contesting all the 28 seats of the tribal council in some recent rallies, Debbarma said the TMP is ready to fight against the BJP in all the seats.

"We have not broken the electoral understanding with the BJP, but if the chief minister throws a challenge, we will accept it wholeheartedly. I hope the chief minister will not backtrack later," he said.

ASI credits Babu Jagat Singh with discovery of Sarnath, plaque at Buddhist site revised

VARANASI: The Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) has officially acknowledged that the history of Sarnath first came to light following excavations carried out by Babu Jagat Singh, officials said.

ASI Director General Y S Rawat said that the earliest excavation work at Sarnath was undertaken by Jagat Singh, which led to the discovery of the site's historical significance.

Rawat added that the inscription plaque installed at the Sarnath complex has now been revised to include Jagat Singh's name in recognition of his role. The revision is reflected in the updated plaque installed at the Sarnath complex recently.

Rawat told PTI over the phone that Jagat Singh's descendant, Pradeep Narayan Singh, had submitted documentary evidence to the ASI establishing that Jagat Singh had conducted the first excavation at the site.

"After examining the documents, it became clear that Babu Jagat Singh had initiated the first excavation at Sarnath, which later brought its history to light," Rawat said.



tion at Sarnath, which later brought its history to light," Rawat said.

Sarnath, located about 10 km from Varanasi, is one of the most important Buddhist pilgrimage sites in the world. It is believed to be the place where Gautama Buddha delivered his first sermon after attaining enlightenment, marking the beginning of the spread of Buddhism.

Pradeep Narayan Singh said the area of Sarnath once fell under the zamindari of his family and that historical records show that Babu Jagat Singh had undertaken excavation work there in 1787-88. "Jagat Singh carried out some excavation work in the area, which eventually led to the discovery of the site," he said.

While the earlier plaque attributed the first discovery of the site's archaeological significance to British officials in 1798, the new plaque states that the importance of the site came to light in the late 18th century when Babu Jagat Singh of Kashi dug the ancient mound for construction material, leading to the discovery of significant artefacts.

The revised inscription thus recognises Jagat Singh's role in the earliest excavation activity at the site, while noting that several archaeologists, including others, carried out subsequent excavations that uncovered monasteries, stupas, temples and sculptures dating from the 3rd century BCE to the 12th century CE.

Pradeep Narayan Singh, representing the Jagatganj royal family of Varanasi and the sixth-generation descendant of Babu Jagat Singh, said that efforts had been underway for a long time to gather research and documentary proof of his ancestor's historical contribution.

"Now, the ASI has formally recognised that the history of Sarnath first came to light after the excavation carried out by Babu Jagat Singh," he said.

Singh said it had long been believed that the discovery of Sarnath and its ancient remains was made by the British, but the ASI's recognition has clarified that Jagat Singh's efforts preceded them.

NEW DELHI: Delhi Chief Minister Rekha Gupta on Saturday inaugurated several key development projects in the Shalimar Bagh Assembly constituency of North West Delhi, and carried out surprise inspections of ongoing works in the area, instructing officials to ensure quality and timely completion.

The Chief Minister said these initiatives would help reduce waterlogging during the monsoon while also strengthening roads and the surrounding infrastructure.

Among the projects launched was the remodelling of the stormwater drain on Haiderpur Main Road, stretching from the bus stand to the DA Block in Shalimar Bagh.

The work is being carried out under the New Master Drain Plan, 2025, which involves constructing RCC drains to improve the area's drainage system, aimed at preventing waterlogging and also addressing sanitation matters.

Gupta also reviewed the progress of several projects related to infrastructure development during the visit, and reviewed drainage systems and public amenities.



She said drainage improvement works have also been initiated on Road No. 319, RUB Shalimar Bagh, Chaudhary Mehr Chand Marg, Road No. 320 and Swami Shradhdhanand Saraswati Marg in the area.

To streamline traffic movement in the area, the Chief Minister also launched the construction of a slip road at Shalimar Chowk and the development of a U-turn facility near the Railway Under Bridge.

This is expected to ease traffic pressure in the area and provide a smoother movement for residents and commuters.

Gupta inaugurated an Ayushman Arogya Mandir at the Sahipur village chaul. The centre is expected to provide primary healthcare services to residents and improve access to basic medical facilities at the local level.

The work is expected to further strengthen the drainage system in the

area and reduce problems during the rainy season.

The Chief Minister conducted a surprise check on the ongoing road widening and drainage improvement work at Singapur Labour Chowk in Shalimar Bagh.

During the inspection, Gupta sought detailed updates from officials present at the site and directed them to ensure quality, transparency and timely execution of the development works.

She emphasised that, along with road widening, a strong drainage system is essential to provide a permanent solution to waterlogging in the area.

Gupta also instructed officials to ensure that the convenience of residents is a top priority during construction and that all works are completed within the stipulated timeframe.

She reiterated that the Delhi government is committed to strengthening roads, drainage systems, traffic management and healthcare facilities across every part of the capital.

316 domestic LPG cylinders used for commercial purposes seized in Karnataka

BENGALURU: The Karnataka Food and Civil Supplies Department said on Saturday that authorities have seized 316 domestic LPG cylinders allegedly being used for commercial purposes across the state and registered cases against those involved.

Also, a case has been registered against a gas agency which was illegally refilling gas cylinders.

"Following the minister's (K H Muniyappa) instructions to take appropriate legal action if domestic cylinders are used for commercial purposes, cases have been registered under the Essential Commodities Act and seizures have been made across the state, including 45 in Peenya and 209 in Chikkajala of Bengaluru, 3 in Shivamogga district, 46 in Davanagere and 13 in Yadgir district," the department said in a release.

Similarly, a case has been registered against a gas agency shop in KGF, Kolar district, which was conducting illegal refilling of gas cylinders, it said.

As per the central government guidelines, 20 per cent of the total commercial cylinders will be distributed to hospitals, schools, educational institutions, airports, railway stations, bus stands, canteens, important temples for distribution of prasada, government offices, old age homes, and important private sector offices on priority, the department said.

Further, it said that a total of 3,86,363 domestic cylinders (14.2 kg) and 6,371 commercial cylinders have been distributed across the state today. Steps have been taken to ensure that there is no problem with the supply of domestic cylinders, it added.

AAP accuses Goa govt of stalling bills on land, environment

PANAJI: The Aam Aadmi Party on Saturday accused the BJP-led government of blocking the introduction of key private members' bills in the legislative assembly in Goa to prevent discussion on issues related to land protection, environment and livelihoods.

Addressing a press conference, the AAP leaders alleged that the democratic process in the assembly was being deliberately undermined to stop debate on matters affecting the people of the state.

The opposition had protested inside the House on Friday during the ongoing budget session after Speaker Ganesh Gaonkar refused to table the private members' bills submitted by them.

A private member's bill is a legislative proposal initiated by a member who is not a minister. These bills enable legislators to draw

attention to issues they consider to be of public importance.

AAP said its MLAs Venzy Viegas and Cruz Silva had consistently raised in the assembly issues concerning Goa's identity, environment and traditional livelihoods. The party has two lawmakers in the 40-member Goa assembly.

The party's Goa senior vice president Sandesh Teleikar-Dessai said the developments in the assembly reflected the government's "true intentions".

"These bills were meant to safeguard Goa's agricultural fields, ecology and traditional livelihoods, but the government chose to silence the discussion itself," he said.

Teleikar-Dessai also alleged that unchecked land conversions, expansion of casino gambling and commercial control over rivers and coastlines were benefit-



ing a "powerful nexus that funds the BJP's political machinery".

AAP organisation secretary Prashant Naik said the proposed Goa Protection of Agricultural Lands Bill, 2026, was brought forward jointly by opposition MLAs in response to public sentiment against large-scale land conversions and protests against Section 39A.

The section of the Goa Town and Country Planning Act empowers the au-

thorities to reclassify land zoning, allowing conversion of green or no-development zones into settlement zones.

The bill sought to ensure protection of agricultural lands and eco-sensitive zones, he said, adding that the government blocked its introduction to avoid public scrutiny.

"Private Members' Day was hijacked to stop discussion on issues that expose the BJP government's anti-people policies," Naik

alleged. AAP leader Roque Mascarenhas said Viegas had also sought to introduce the Goa Public Gambling (Amendment) Bill, 2026, the Goa, Daman and Diu Irrigation (Amendment) Bill, 2026, and the Goa Maritime Board Act Bill, 2026, which addressed concerns over the expansion of casino gambling, pollution in creeks and the expansion of port jurisdiction affecting traditional fishing communities.

Man found dead in UP's Etah following theft allegation; police probe underway

ETAH: A 50-year-old man was found hanging from a tree in an orchard near his home in the Nai Basti locality here on Saturday morning, police said.

The deceased has been identified as Sarvan.

His body was found hanging from a tree with a gamcha (cotton towel) tied around his neck, according to his family members. The incident drew a large crowd of villagers to the spot.

Ashok Kumar, the brother of the deceased, said he was informed about the incident via a phone call from a local resident named Bhurelal.

The family claimed that Sarvan had been under mental stress for some time. They alleged that a local youth had accused him of stealing money a day earlier.

Following the accusation, Sarva was taken to a spiritual healer in Aligarh who supported the youth's claim.

Domestic LPG supply stable, commercial cylinders for hotels delayed: Minister Muniyappa

Bengaluru, March 13: Karnataka food and civil supplies minister K H Muniyappa has assured that domestic LPG supply remains stable across the state, even as commercial cylinders for hotels will not be available for at least a week due to limited stock. Addressing the Karnataka Legislative Council during the 'zero hour' on Friday, Muniyappa called the situation "inevitable" and advised hotel owners to temporarily use electric stoves for preparing essential food items. He expressed hope that the shortage of commercial cylinders would ease within 10 days.

The minister was responding to concerns raised by members M. Nagaraju and Ivan D'Souza, who highlighted that the shortage has severely affected hotels—forcing some to shut down and others to reduce menus. They also flagged disruptions in food preparation at



paying guest accommodations, prasada distribution at temples, and even autorickshaw operations, alongside reports of black market sales and rising firewood prices.

Muniyappa said he had met with oil marketing companies ear-

lier in the day and assured the House that the limited supply of commercial cylinders would be prioritised for hospitals, hostels, and residential schools.

"Wherever there is a dire requirement for cylinders, we will supply them on a priority basis," he said, urging hotel owners to wait until the situation stabilises. To prevent hoarding and black marketing, deputy commissioners and the director general of police have been instructed to maintain strict vigilance. Two LPG tanker ships have already reached India from the Strait of Hormuz, with around 12 more expected soon. Plans have been drawn up to streamline supply once additional stock arrives.

The Karnataka Food, Civil Supplies and Consumer Affairs Department has also warned of strict action under the Essential

Commodities Act, 1955, instructing deputy commissioners to monitor storage centres and transportation. Consumers are urged not to panic book cylinders.

Meanwhile, GAIL Gas Limited confirmed that Piped Natural Gas (PNG) supply in Bengaluru remains uninterrupted. Industries, hotels, and commercial establishments connected to the PNG network will continue to receive supply, and users dependent on commercial LPG can switch to PNG connections within about two months, subject to network availability. GAIL is expanding its pipeline network across the city to enable more consumers to shift to cleaner and more efficient fuel. A Government of India notification allows industrial and commercial users to receive up to 80% of their average gas consumption over the past six months.

Union Minister Announces Progress on Establishing ARAI Testing Centre in Mandya

Facility to benefit Mandya and neighbouring districts; employment opportunities to increase

Mandya : Union Minister for Heavy Industries and Steel H.D. Kumaraswamy has said that efforts to bring industries to the Mandya Lok Sabha constituency are progressing steadily, and that the process to establish an Automotive Research Association of India (ARAI) testing centre in the district is currently underway. He stated that once the land allotment letter is formally received, a team of experts from the Centre will visit Mandya to conduct an inspection of the proposed site.

The Union Minister was speaking at a public programme after performing the foundation-laying ceremony for a Rs.14-crore indoor sports complex at VC Farm* in Mandya. "I have given my word, and I will keep it," Kumaraswamy said, adding that work related to the ARAI testing centre is moving quickly at the Delhi level, and the necessary steps are being taken to bring the project to Mandya.

He noted that the demand for a well-equipped indoor sports complex in Mandya had been pending for a long time. "We have now fulfilled that commitment. The foundation stone has been laid, and construction will begin very soon. The work will also be completed at the earliest," the Union Minister said. Kumaraswamy expressed his gratitude to Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Union Minister for



Youth Affairs and Sports Mansukh Mandaviya for approving the indoor stadium under the Khelo India scheme following his request.

"Responding to my request, they sanctioned the stadium for Mandya district under the Khelo India initiative. I will always remember the concern they have shown towards the development of this region," he said.

The Union Minister also appreciated the support extended by several companies through their Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiatives. Organisations including TVS, Steel Authority of India Limited (SAIL) under the Ministry of Steel, Infosys, Hinduja Group, and HMT contributed to the initiative.

Through these CSR contributions, electric vehicles were distributed to over 388 specially-abled persons with disabilities, desktops and laptops were provided to around 600 schools in Mandya, and a fully equipped ambulance was presented to the

Mandya Institute of Medical Sciences (MIMS). "The corporate sector has shown commendable social responsibility through these initiatives," Kumaraswamy remarked. He further said that the government led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi is giving the highest priority to youth empowerment. According to him, the Prime Minister regularly provides guidance during Cabinet meetings on initiatives aimed at the welfare and development of young people.

"These directions are being effectively implemented by Union Sports Minister Mansukh Mandaviya," he added.

Kumaraswamy also said that several development programmes are being brought to Mandya. Under CSR funding, 96 schools have already received grants for renovation.

He assured the people that their expectations would not be disappointed and that industrial development in Mandya district is being actively pursued through his ministry.

Rs.14-Crore Indoor Sports Complex Foundation Laid at VC Farm, Mandya Under Khelo India

Mandya: Union Minister for Youth Affairs and Sports Mansukh Mandaviya and Union Minister for Heavy Industries and Steel H. D. Kumaraswamy on Saturday laid the foundation stone for a Rs.14-crore multi-purpose indoor sports complex at VC Farm in Mandya. The project has been sanctioned under the Government of India's Khelo India scheme.

The facility will be built within the campus of the University of Agricultural Sciences, Bengaluru at VC Farm. Addressing the gathering, the Union Ministers urged youth to strengthen sports culture in the district under the



slogan "Khelo India, Vibrant Mandya," and encourage more young athletes to emerge from the region. Speaking on the occasion, Dr. Mansukh Mandaviya said the Khelo

India initiative aims to revive sports at the grass-roots level and transform India into a global sporting powerhouse. He praised Mandya for producing notable sportspersons

such as Vikas Gowda and K. P. Shilpa, highlighting Shilpa as India's top-ranked wheelchair tennis player. The minister also noted that the government led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi has significantly increased investment in sports infrastructure, allocating Rs.4,000 crore in the latest Union Budget compared to Rs.1,200 crore a decade ago. The event was attended by several dignitaries, including former minister C.S. Puttaraju, MLAs Darshan Puttannaiah and Manjunath, and other public representatives.

As part of the programme, 388 persons with disabilities were provided electric vehicles through

CSR initiatives of Tata Consultancy Services and Steel Authority of India Limited. Additionally, 500 desktops and 100 laptops donated by Infosys were distributed to government schools, while a state-of-the-art ambulance from the Hinduja Group was presented to the Mandya Institute of Medical Sciences.

The event also witnessed an emotional moment when H.D. Kumaraswamy became visibly moved while handing over electric vehicles to beneficiaries. The ministers were later welcomed with a massive jaggery garland, a unique symbol of Mandya's famous jaggery tradition.

Whitefield Art Collective inaugurates its 9th edition of the month-long Public Art Festival in Bengaluru

Bengaluru: The Whitefield Art Collective, supported by the Yuj Foundation, inaugurated its ninth edition, marking the beginning of a month-long public art festival themed "Tomorrow, Altered!". Environmentalist and Grammy Award-winning music composer Ricky Kej, recipient of the Padma Shri 2025, inaugurated the festival with a traditional lamp lighting ceremony and the unveiling of the 'Kala Car'.

The inauguration was



followed by an exclusive viewing of the art installations across VR Bengaluru. The evening also featured a live musical concert by Ricky Kej and a wearable art fashion show titled 'A Rose for Khadi'.

Over 300 installations, sculptures, paintings, and photographs are displayed at the festival. The installations are by students of Karnataka Chitrakala Parishath, Vogue Institute of Art & Design, Bangalore University, and JD Institute of Design.

Will meet MPs in Delhi to discuss objections raised by Andhra Pradesh on UKP: Shivakumar

Bagalakote : Deputy Chief Minister D K Shivakumar today said he will meet the state MPs in Delhi on Tuesday to discuss objections raised by Andhra Pradesh for the Upper Krishna Project and put pressure on the Centre. Speaking to reporters, he said, "Andhra Pradesh has written a letter to the Centre objecting the land acquisition for Upper Krishna Project. The Centre has written to us seeking our clarification. We are going on with the project as per the Tribunal order and we have already spent Rs 26,000 crore." "We are only preparing to make use of our quota of



water as per the Tribunal order of 2010. Andhra Pradesh has raised an objection to this project. Besides this, Andhra Pradesh is also not cooperating with us for the balancing reservoir on Tungabhadra.

158th State Level Single Window Approval Committee Meeting Approves Rs.4,824 Crore Investment: Industries Minister M. B. Patil

Bengaluru: The 158th State Level Single Window Approval Committee meeting has approved a total investment of Rs.4,824.31 crore for 37 new industries and 2 additional investment projects across 13 districts, including Vijayapura, Bagalkot, Chitradurga, Kolar, and Ramanagara. "The approved projects in sectors such as IT infrastructure, sugar manufacturing, technical textiles, compressed biogas, aerospace, jewellery production, electronics, software, and five-star hotel construction will generate 14,525 new employment opportunities in the state," said Minister for Large and Medium Industries and Infrastructure Development, M. B. Patil on Friday.



How right is it for the Prime Minister, who talks about science and technology, to make unscientific statements like "gutter gas"? S. Manohar



Bengaluru: When the price of cooking gas cylinders is increasing day by day, it is the government's top priority to provide relief to the people of the country, but the central government is busy with propaganda. How right is it for the Prime Minister, who talks about science and technology, to make unscientific statements like "gutter gas", said MEI President and KPCC General Secretary S. Manohar. Speaking after participating in a protest against the continuous rise in the price of cooking gas and the anti-people policies of the central government through a novel mock performance near Congress Bhavan on Race Course Road, he said that this is sending a wrong message to the youth and the scientific spirit of the country. He questioned that the Modi government should answer what the government's priority is when people are suffering due to high gas prices. Instead of providing relief to the people, there is more propaganda and political speeches. Why is the opposition leader Rahul Gandhi evading questions in Parliament? He has alleged that Prime Minister Narendra Modi has forgotten that it is the government's duty to answer questions in a democracy. The people of the country are facing a shortage of cooking gas due to the high prices of cooking gas and it is being sold in the black market.

Aster DM Healthcare receives overwhelmingly positive shareholder and creditors vote for Aster-QCIL merger

Bengaluru: Aster DM Healthcare Limited today announced that it has received an overwhelming 96.68% voting approval from shareholders along with a significant majority of minority shareholders and creditors voting in favour of the proposed Scheme of Amalgamation with Quality Care India Limited (QCIL). The approval follows support from the Company's shareholders, in favour of the share swap preceding the merger, reflecting broad-based investor support for the overall transaction. The merger is expected to be completed in the next quarter, post receipt of remaining regulatory and statutory NCLT approvals.

Commenting the strong positive voting, Dr. Azad Moopen, Founder Chairman, Aster DM Healthcare said, "The strong support from our shareholders reflects their confidence in the strategic rationale of this merger and the long-term value it will deliver. By bringing together Aster DM Healthcare and Quality Care India, we



are building a scaled, future-ready healthcare platform with the clinical depth, operational strength and governance framework required to serve millions of patients across the country. This partnership combines Aster's legacy of patient-centric care and physician leadership with the institutional strength and growth expertise of Blackstone. Together, we are well positioned to expand access to high-quality healthcare, invest in clinical excellence and innovation, and create one of India's leading

integrated healthcare networks." Upon completion, the combined entity is expected to emerge as one of the top three hospital chains in India, with a diversified presence across 9 states and 28 cities. The merged platform will operate 39 hospitals with 10,625+ beds, supported by over 36,307+ employees and clinicians, serving millions of patients annually across hospitals, clinics, laboratories and allied healthcare services.

India continues to be Aster's largest growth market. Looking ahead, the merged entity aims to increase total bed capacity to around 14,710+ beds over the coming years. Of the planned 4,080+ bed additions by the combined platform, approximately 2,368 beds will be added by Aster, while the remaining capacity expansion will be driven by QCIL. Aster's expansion will be supported by a capital outlay of approximately Rs.2,300 crore, of which Rs.350 crore has already been invested in critical projects as of September 2025.

The company plans to

add ~2,368 beds across the country through a mix of greenfield projects and selective acquisitions, strengthening its presence in key states such as Kerala and Karnataka, where it already holds a strong position. Key upcoming additions include two new hospitals in Bengaluru — a 430-bed facility on Sarjapur Road and a 500-bed hospital in Yeshwanthpur. The company will also add 350 beds at Aster CMI Hospital and 159 beds at Aster Whitefield, further reinforcing Aster's leadership position among the top three healthcare providers in the country.

In Kerala, the 263-bed Aster Kasaragod Hospital became operational in October 2025. Additionally, the 454-bed greenfield Aster Capital Hospital in Trivandrum is currently under development, while Aster Medcity, Kochi is being expanded with the addition of 100 beds. Other planned projects include a 300-bed Women & Children's Hospital in Hyderabad and a 75-bed expansion at Aster Ramesh Hospital in

Warning Issued to Samar International Islamic School for Starting Admissions in Violation of Government and Court Orders

Bengaluru : The recognition of Samar International Islamic School in Thanisandra has been cancelled, and the High Court has ordered that the school should not begin the admission process. However, the school has allegedly started admissions in violation of both government and court orders. The School Education Department has now warned the school management that appropriate action will be taken.

The matter is currently under hearing in the High Court, and initiating the admission process for the academic year 2026-2027 would amount to contempt of court. Therefore, the school has been instructed not to start any admission process until further orders from the High Court. If admissions are carried out in violation of the order, a contempt report will be submitted to the court and brought to the attention of higher departmental authorities, warned the Block Education Officer (South Zone-14) of the School Education Department to the Chief Executive Officer of the school.

This warning was issued following a complaint filed by Abdul Hameed Pasha of Gangodanahalli and Arshiya Modammadi Sarish of Bharathi Nagar.

Based on the complaint, the Block Education Officer has also directed Ranganath, Education Coordinator of the High School Section, to conduct an inspection and submit a detailed report within three days. The complainants stated that the institution, which currently has no valid recognition, has started the admis-



sion process for Classes 6 to 8. They alleged that although the school had assured the High Court that it would not admit students, it has continued to run the school and has violated all rules, regulations, and legal provisions. They urged the School Education Department to take immediate action in the interest of students.

Due to the stance of the school management, both students and parents have been left confused, the complainants said, urging the authorities to intervene and issue clear directions. They further alleged that the management has secretly begun the admission process and is collecting money without issuing receipts. They pointed out that admissions for the next academic year should not be started without the court's permission. The High Court has already stayed all activities of the school until the next hearing, yet starting admissions under such circumstances is improper, they added while drawing the government's attention to the issue.

EDITORIAL

Trump And His America Are Fast Losing Touch With Reality

In Kalimpong, a small hilly town of West Bengal, the news of oil shortage seems to be spreading across the city. The petrol pump down the road from our Airbnb hasn't had any fuel supplies over the past forty-eight hours. Meanwhile, in faraway lands governments and international organisations are urgently releasing their strategic fuel reserves to temper down crude oil and gas prices.

How protracted will the fuel crisis in India and across the world be, is beside the point. The question worth asking is, when was the last time the application of a superpower's might resulted in household-level shortages across the world? China shutting itself down as the sole factory to the world is arguably the closest instance. But that was during a once-in-a-century pandemic.

How A President Got Carried Away

To even the most passive observers of foreign affairs, it is evident that US President Donald Trump has become significantly more casual when it comes to deploying American power abroad. From restricting access to American markets via astronomical tariffs to taking out the Venezuelan President to now attempting regime change in the Iranian Republic, there is a certain undertone in US foreign policy that harkens back to the unipolar moment.

Generally, it is during a unipolar world that a hegemon tends to get a bit carried away and overestimates its ability to bring about dramatic change at either the system-level or within specific nation-states. But here lies the paradox. The prevailing global balance of power is quite some distance away from such a distribution of power. The current world can best be described as one tilting towards bipolarity, but with a few caveats. If security and economy are the central criteria, then the US is the dominant security power, while China is the key manufacturing and trading power. Now here come the caveats. While the US continues to be the only power capable of global power projection, the Chinese have accumulated adequate power to deny any serious notions of American security hegemony. Similarly, the scale, dynamism and the centrality of the US currency in the global economy mean that although China is the leading manufacturing power, America continues to be the financial hegemon.

Beyond Simple Explanations

Now, given the US no longer enjoys any semblance of pure hegemony, it begs the question, why exactly is the US behaving like a superpower does at the height of unipolarity? What is the guiding logic of the rather brash turn in American foreign policy? It is all too easy to box Trump as an irrational player, and frankly, it is a bit of an analytical copout.

Instead, a more compelling explanation is that the very design of the global balance of power, with all its intricacies, coupled with a generational populist leader in Trump, has created a sense of faux unipolarity in the American strategic mind.

Under actual unipolarity - what the US enjoyed from the end of the Cold War to arguably the Global Financial Crisis - the significant power differential that a hegemon enjoys made it conclude that it could use its instruments of statecraft to instill change beyond its borders.

Sometimes such conclusions are correct. The US-led Operation Desert Storm under the leadership of President HW Bush is a leading example of what a hegemon can achieve when it has monopoly over power. In a deft operation, the US-led coalition forced the Iraqi forces to withdraw from Kuwait, and more importantly, in almost record time. Unipolar moments also result in superpower delusions regarding its capacity to enforce change abroad. Such miscalculations were on display during the US' war efforts in Afghanistan and Iraq, all under a deluded notion of democracy promotion.

WHEN IT COUNTED, INDIA STOOD WITH THE UAE

On 11 March, the United Nations Security Council adopted the historic Resolution 2817, condemning in the strongest possible terms Iran's unprovoked attacks on the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Oman, and Jordan. The resolution passed with 13 votes in favour. Not a single nation voted against it. India did not just vote in support. India co-sponsored the resolution, joining 135 nations in putting its name to a text that leaves no room for ambiguity. Iran's indiscriminate and cowardly aggression against infrastructure, civilian populations, and sovereign territory are a violation of international law, a threat to regional stability, and a danger to global economic security. This resolution sends a clear and unified message that the international community will not tolerate attacks on our sovereignty or the deliberate targeting of civilians and critical infrastructure. What Iran Has Done Since 28 February, in an act of sustained aggression, Iran has launched ballistic missiles, cruise missiles, and drones against the UAE and neighbouring countries. The UAE has borne the brunt of these attacks, facing down 278 ballistic missiles, 15 cruise missiles, and a staggering 1,540 drones as of 12 March."Despite Iran's claims, excuses, and justifications, these are not precision strikes against military targets. Iranian munitions have struck residential neighbourhoods, commercial districts, and civilian infrastructure. In the UAE alone, civilians of multiple nationalities have been killed and injured, including an Indian national whom His Highness Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al

Nahyan, the President of the UAE, personally visited in hospital. Iran's unprovoked, hostile actions are not directed at the states that declared war on it, but rather at its neighbours - countries that have played a significant role in efforts to avert escalation. The UAE categorically rejects any narratives seeking to justify this aggression and views it as further evidence of Iran's short-sighted policies. We remain resilient in the face of any threat and are fully capable of safeguarding our sovereignty, stability, and security. Any aggression will not go unanswered, and the UAE stands fully prepared to address such threats. The Safety Of Indians In The UAE Since the outbreak of the conflict, I have been in daily contact with Indian families in the UAE and across India. The question I consistently hear is: "Are our people safe?" I would like to use this opportunity to dispel concerns directly to the Indian public. The safety, security, and well-being of everyone in the UAE remains the nation's top priority. The UAE is home to more than 200 nationalities, including a substantial Indian community, who live together in peace and harmony. This spirit of openness and stability continues to define the UAE today. Daily life continues without disruption. Essential services, including energy, water, telecommunications, transport, healthcare, and supply chains, are operating at full capacity. The UAE's integrated air defence network has intercepted an overwhelming majority of the incoming threats. Our civil defence systems are operational; our hospitals prepared; and our emergency protocols are functioning exactly as

designed. His Highness Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan has made it clear that all nationals living in the UAE, whether they be Emirati or Indian "are all our responsibility". Indians in the UAE are far beyond being considered our guests. They are teachers, engineers, doctors, entrepreneurs, and labourers, whose contributions are woven into the very fabric of our society. In 2024, the UAE was the second-largest source of remittances to India, contributing \$21.6 billion of India's record \$129.4 billion in inflows. The over four million Indians residing in the UAE are not an abstract number. They proudly represent families and communities in Kerala, Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh, and every state in between, whose livelihoods depend on a stable, functioning, and secure UAE. Their safety is an obligation we take seriously. A Word On Predictions Of "Dubai's Demise" I have read, with interest, the commentary in some quarters suggesting that the current conflict marks the end of Dubai, the collapse of the UAE's economic model, or the beginning of a mass exodus. I understand the instinct behind these narratives. Conflict is alarming, and alarm generates dramatic headlines. However, allow me to offer the facts. The UAE's non-oil sectors now account for 75 per cent of GDP. Our sovereign wealth funds hold \$2.49 trillion in assets, making the UAE the third-largest sovereign wealth holder in the world, behind only the United States and China. S&P Global affirmed our AA-/A-1+ credit rating with a stable outlook just days ago, noting that the UAE's consolidated net asset posi-

tion will reach approximately 184 per cent of GDP in 2026, with government liquid assets at roughly 210 per cent of GDP. Our average budget surplus over the past five years has been 5.6 per cent of GDP. This is not an economy that collapses under pressure, it is one that is built to last. The UAE's foundations have been nurtured by five decades of leaders who planned not for the next quarter, but for the next generation. Bilateral trade between the UAE and India reached \$100 billion in FY 2024-25. In January 2026, His Highness Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, UAE President, visited India and both nations agreed to double that figure to \$200 billion by 2032. The UAE is India's third-largest trading partner and second-largest export destination. To certain commentators glibly predicting the UAE's downfall, I would gently suggest they revisit their predictions in 12 months. The cranes will still be turning. The thousands of flights each week will still be landing. And the millions of people who have chosen to build their lives in the UAE will still be here, because they understand something that distant commentators sometimes do not - the UAE faces pressure head on, we do not succumb to it. What Comes Next The current crisis has not weakened the UAE, and it will not. Instead, it has demonstrated the depth of the UAE's national structure, the resilience of its institutions, the cohesion of its society, and the strength of its international standing. The UAE has once again proven itself to be a nation built on a firm foundation, a clear vision, and the ability to face challenges with resolve, wisdom, and a profound sense of responsibility.

Edit

Adornment to the Pearl City – The Revival of the Musi Rive

A Mangali to the Pearl City – The Revival of the Musi River. The Telangana region was once part of the princely states ruled by the Nizam Nawabs in the vast Indian subcontinent. Our land has earned a unique place in world history due to its rich heritage, the struggles of armed movements, the oppression of marginalized communities, and the progress of civilization. It is a land where arts, music, culture, dance, beauty, ornaments, pearls, and precious gems flourish, while the flowing waters of the Musi and Esi rivers have long been the lifelines and fortune lines of the twin cities. In the history of Hyderabad, the story of the Musi River is deeply intertwined with the city's development as well as its many challenges. Many decades ago, the Musi River was the lifeline for the people living here. The river flowed clean and supported agriculture, daily life, and trade. However, the river is also remembered for a tragic event that changed the course of Hyderabad's future planning. In 1908, after heavy rains, the Musi River overflowed and caused devastating floods that brought massive destruction to the city. Houses, roads, and public buildings were damaged, and thousands of people lost their lives. This disaster deeply shook the rulers of the Hyderabad State under the Nizam, forcing them to seriously consider flood control and water management. To prevent such disasters in the future, the rulers ordered the construction of large reservoirs upstream of the river. As a result, two

major reservoirs—Osman Sagar and Himayat Sagar—were built in the early twentieth century. These reservoirs not only helped control floods but also became important sources of drinking water and irrigation for Hyderabad. For many decades thereafter, the Musi River flowed cleanly, and these reservoirs played a crucial role in protecting the city from floods. After India's independence, particularly from the 1980s onward, Hyderabad began expanding rapidly. The city's population increased dramatically, industries and commercial activities grew, and new residential colonies emerged across the metropolitan region. However, this rapid urbanization also created a serious problem—industrial waste and untreated sewage began flowing into the river in large quantities. Hundreds of drains started carrying sewage directly into the Musi River. Over time, the river lost its natural flow and became severely polluted. For many citizens, it no longer appeared to be a natural river but rather an open drainage canal flowing through the city. The pollution of the Musi River has created serious environmental and public health issues. The water became unsafe, foul odors spread across nearby areas, and aquatic life in the river declined significantly. During heavy rains, the polluted waters increased the risk of flooding in low-lying areas along the riverbanks. Because of these problems, urban planners and policymakers began exploring ways to restore the river.

After the formation of the state of Telangana in 2014, the state government initiated steps toward the revival of the Musi River. As part of this effort, the ambitious Musi Riverfront Development Project was conceived. The objective of this project is not only to clean the river but also to transform the entire riverfront into a modern, attractive, and environmentally sustainable urban space. To implement this plan, the government established the Musi Riverfront Development Corporation Limited. However, due to various reasons, the project did not progress as expected for some time. The cleaning and rejuvenation of the Musi did not move forward at the desired pace. Later, when Revanth Reddy assumed office as the second Chief Minister of Telangana, he revived the Musi River rejuvenation project along with the six guarantees he proposed under the people's governance agenda. The Musi River flows for approximately 55 kilometers through Hyderabad city. The goal of the project is to develop the entire stretch in phases. In the first phase, development is planned from areas near Himayat Sagar up to important localities such as Attapur, Nampally, Chaderghat, and Nagole. This phase includes the construction of sewage treatment plants, strengthening of riverbanks, landscaping, and the development of parks and beautification infrastructure. One of the most important aspects of the project is the construction of multiple

sewage treatment plants. These facilities will ensure that wastewater is treated before being released into the river. Additionally, interceptor drains will be constructed along the riverbanks to capture sewage from city drains and divert it to treatment plants, thereby controlling pollution at its source and gradually restoring both the river's ecosystem and public health. Beyond environmental restoration, the project also aims to enhance recreation and tourism opportunities in Hyderabad. Plans include the creation of parks, walking tracks, cycling paths, and cultural spaces along the riverbanks. These places could become attractive spots for citizens to relax and enjoy the beauty of the river. Furthermore, roads and bridges will also be improved to strengthen connectivity between different parts of the city. However, the project has also sparked discussions and criticism. Concerns have been raised about the rehabilitation of people living along the riverbanks. Over the years, many informal settlements have developed in these areas. Implementing the project may require their removal. Critics demand that the government provide proper compensation and housing facilities for the displaced families. Environmental experts also warn that a balance must be maintained between development and nature conservation. They caution that excessive construction or large commercial projects along the riverbanks could damage the natural ecosystem. Therefore,

they emphasize the need for a sustainable plan that prioritizes long-term environmental protection. Despite these challenges, the Musi Rejuvenation Project is considered one of the most ambitious urban transformation initiatives in Telangana. If implemented effectively, it could restore a polluted river, improve urban infrastructure, create new recreational spaces, and reshape the future landscape of Hyderabad. Thus, the story of the Musi River reflects the city's past struggles and the hopes of future generations. A river that was once neglected could become a symbol of environmental restoration and modern urban development, attracting global attention as a historic transformation. Chief Minister Revanth Reddy has expressed confidence that the project will cause no harm to anyone and has assured that families living along the riverbanks will be permanently rehabilitated with houses built on government land. The government has also invited support, suggestions, and advice from everyone for the success of the Musi River rejuvenation initiative.



-Suresh Kasyap Senior Journalist 14 March 2026

AT THE EDGE OF LIFE:

When the Constitution listens to human Suffering

"The quality of mercy is not strained; it droppeth as the gentle rain from heaven." — William Shakespeare

The question of whether a person has the right to die with dignity has long troubled legal systems, philosophers, and societies across the world. At its heart lies a profound moral dilemma: while law traditionally protects the sanctity of life, it must also acknowledge the reality of human suffering. The ancient medical ethic attributed to Hippocrates emphasised that the physician's duty is to "relieve suffering and preserve life." Yet modern constitutional democracies increasingly recognise that preserving life at all costs may not always serve human dignity. As the philosopher John Stuart Mill once observed, "Over himself, over his own body and mind, the individual is sovereign." It is within this moral and philosophical tension that India's legal conversation on euthanasia has evolved. As philosopher Immanuel Kant observed, "Human beings must always be treated as ends in themselves." This philosophical insight forms the ethical foundation for global discussions on euthanasia and end-of-life autonomy. For decades, Indian courts approached the issue with great caution, guided by the belief that the Constitution primarily safeguards the sanctity of life. The Supreme Court in Gian Kaur v. State of Punjab (1996) clearly held that the right to life under Article 21 does not include the right to die. Upholding the constitutional validity of the offence of abetment of suicide, the Court reaffirmed that the State has a legitimate interest in protecting human life.



However, even while rejecting a broad right to die, the Court made a subtle but influential observation. It noted that the right to live with dignity extends until the end of natural life, which includes a dignified process of death when life is naturally approaching its end. This observation quietly planted the seed for future legal recognition of end-of-life autonomy. The debate returned to the national spotlight through the tragic story that became the case of Aruna Shanbaug v. Union of India (2011). Aruna Shanbaug, a nurse in Mumbai's KEM Hospital, had remained in a persistent vegetative state for over four decades following a brutal assault in 1973. When a plea was filed seeking permission for euthanasia, the Supreme Court refused to permit withdrawal of life support in her specific case. Nevertheless, the Court took a historic step by recognizing passive euthanasia in principle, subject to strict judicial safeguards. In doing so, the Court acknowledged that there may be situations where prolonging biological existence serves little purpose when recovery is med-

ically impossible. The judgment marked the first formal recognition that the dignity of a patient must remain central to end-of-life decisions. A more definitive constitutional framework emerged years later in the landmark ruling of Common Cause v. Union of India (2018). In this judgment, a Constitution Bench declared that the right to die with dignity is an integral component of Article 21 of the Constitution. The Court also legally recognized the concept of advance directives or "living wills," allowing individuals to record their wishes in advance regarding medical treatment if they become incapable of communicating their consent. Justice D.Y. Chandrachud observed in the judgment that "human dignity cannot be lost merely because illness or disability has rendered a person incapable of expressing choice." The ruling thus placed individual autonomy at the centre of medical decision-making. Despite its progressive spirit, the procedural safeguards laid down in the 2018 judgment proved extremely complex. The process required multiple layers of verifica-

tion, certification by a judicial magistrate, and elaborate medical board procedures. Families and hospitals soon found these requirements difficult to implement in real-life medical emergencies. The Indian Council of Critical Care Medicine later approached the Supreme Court seeking clarification and simplification of the process, pointing out that the system, though well-intentioned, was practically unworkable. Responding to these concerns, the Supreme Court revisited the issue in 2023 and introduced significant modifications to simplify the procedure. The revised guidelines allowed advance directives to be attested by a notary or gazetted officer instead of a judicial magistrate, permitted more than one surrogate decision-maker to represent the patient's wishes, and streamlined the medical board process. Two medical boards—primary and secondary—are now required to give their opinion within forty-eight hours. Instead of seeking approval from a magistrate, hospitals now only need to inform the magistrate about the medical decision. These reforms made the process more practical while maintaining safeguards against misuse. The legal framework established through these judgments was finally tested in practice in the case involving Harish Rana. After suffering severe brain injuries following a fall from a building in 2012, Rana remained dependent on clinically administered nutrition for more than a decade with no signs of recovery. His family approached the Supreme Court seeking permission to withdraw life-sustaining treatment.

Commercial LPG supply resumed, no retail shortage, says Oil Ministry

New Delhi: Commercial LPG cylinder distribution has begun in 29 states and Union Territories, while authorities have stepped up raids and surprise inspections across the country to curb hoarding and black-marketing amid heightened pressure on cooking gas supplies, a senior oil ministry official said on Saturday, March 14. Sujata Sharma, Joint Secretary in the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas, said panic booking continues to rise despite the fact that there are enough stocks available to meet domestic household requirements of cooking gas LPG. India, she said, has adequate crude oil inventories, and domestic refineries are operating at full capacity, ensuring sufficient availability of petrol and diesel across the country. "There are no dry-out reports from any retail outlets. Our refineries are operating at full capacity, and sufficient petrol and diesel are available. Based on our requirements, we produce adequate petrol and diesel domestically and do not need to import," she said. Sharma said domestic LPG supply is being prioritised even as the government continues to closely monitor the situation amid the prevailing geopolitical developments that ham-



pered energy supplies from the Gulf countries. India imports 88 per cent of its crude oil needs, 50 per cent of its natural gas requirement and 60 per cent of its LPG demand. Before the US and Israel attacked Iran on February 28, and Tehran retaliated by hitting US bases in neighbouring countries as well as Israel, more than half of the crude oil requirement came from the Middle East countries, 30 per cent of gas from the region and 85-90 per cent of LPG. The war has led to an effective blockage of the Strait of Hormuz, which is the usual sea transit for energy from the Gulf countries. While India has managed to source crude oil from other

countries, including Russia, the hit on gas supply has led to cuts for industrial users and to commercial establishments such as hotels and restaurants. Panic buying raises cylinder bookings to 88 lakh "The situation is a matter of concern for all of us, but we are ensuring that household consumers do not face inconvenience. Domestic consumers have been prioritized, and LPG cylinder supply is being ensured for them," she said. However, LPG refill bookings have surged sharply due to panic buying by consumers. "Yesterday, the number of bookings was about 75 lakh, and it has now increased to around 88 lakh. This is nothing but panic booking,"

the official said, urging consumers to book cylinders only when required. Pre-war, daily bookings totalled around 55 lakh and oil marketing companies delivered 50 lakh cylinders per day. While the cylinder deliveries remain the same, bookings have surged. She also clarified that booking restrictions are linked to the time gap between two deliveries. "In urban areas, there is a minimum gap of 25 days between the last delivery and the next booking, while in rural areas the gap is 45 days. If consumers try to book before this window, the booking will not take place," she said. Govt increases domestic LPG production, consumers asked to switch to PNG To

ease supply pressure, the government has ramped up domestic LPG production. "The first day we informed you about a 10 per cent increase in domestic production, then 25 per cent, then 28 per cent, and today the increase has reached 31 per cent," she said. The official added that state-run GAIL has met city gas distribution (CGD) operators and asked them to provide piped natural gas (PNG) connections to commercial consumers facing LPG supply constraints. Consumers who can easily shift from LPG to PNG – both domestic and commercial – are being encouraged, she said. Sharma also said commercial LPG cylinders have been placed at the disposal of state governments to prioritise distribution among consumers. Commercial cylinder distribution has already started in about 29 states and Union Territories, she added. As part of supply management measures, the Commission for Air Quality Management (CAQM) has allowed the temporary use of biomass and RDF pellets in place of natural gas and LPG by industries, hotels, restaurants and other establishments in the National Capital Region, including Delhi, for a period of one month.

PhysicsWallah (PW) Expands Offline Presence in Andhra Pradesh with First Tech-Enabled Vidyapeeth Centre in Vijayawada



Vijayawada: Education company PhysicsWallah (PW) has expanded its presence in Andhra Pradesh with the inauguration of its first tech-enabled PW Vidyapeeth centre in Vijayawada, located on M.G. Road. The centre, inaugurated by Amit Singh Rathore, SVP at PW, features multiple tech-enabled classrooms that offer a conducive learning environment. The new PW Vidyapeeth is located on D. No. 40-1-65, 1st & 2nd Floor, Noorani Plaza, M.G. Road, Benz Circle, Vijayawada, Andhra Pradesh - 520010 PW Vidyapeeths are tech-enabled offline centres where students attend in-

person classes taught by experienced teachers. These centres offer a comprehensive curriculum for JEE/NEET/Foundation & also focus on scholastic exams such as Olympiads. Facilities such as recorded lectures, assistance with NCERT materials, offline doubt-solving, Daily Practice Problems, specialised modules, activity-based learning, Previous Year Questions, and PW-AITS are also offered. Additionally, the centres have a dedicated desk for the Student Success Team (SST) and a parent-teacher dashboard system for updates on student progress. Ankit Gupta, CEO of Vidyapeeth

Offline, PhysicsWallah (PW), said, "At PW, we try to find out avenues of making students' learning experience better. We believe that students should not have to travel to other cities to access quality education, as this can be both emotionally and financially stressful. By opening our first PW Vidyapeeth centre in Vijayawada, we aim to bring tech-enabled quality education closer to their homes and create more educational hubs around the country." Currently, PhysicsWallah has 215 Vidyapeeth, Pathsahala and Tuition centres across the country.

Domestic Fundamentals Strengthen Even as Global Uncertainties Drive Market Volatility

Pune/ Mumbai, 14 March 2026: Indian equity markets have remained broadly range bound for nearly eighteen months, even as global markets experienced a robust bull run. Over the past six months, however, several of these headwinds have eased meaningfully. Corporate earnings have shown strong momentum, with Nifty 500 profits rising 16% year on year in Q3 FY26, an eight-quarter high and among the strongest reporting seasons in recent years. Sorbh Gupta, Head-Equity, Bajaj Finserv Asset Management Limited, said, "Corporate earnings momentum has strengthened meaningfully over the past few quarters. The latest reporting season reflects a broad-based recovery in profitability, which provides a more supportive foundation for equity markets going forward." At the same time, credit growth has returned to double digits, reflecting an improvement in demand



and liquidity availability, while consumption indicators supported by GST cuts have begun to recover. The Reserve Bank of India's cumulative 125 bps rate cuts, along with liquidity infusion, have also helped lower borrowing costs for companies and consumers. However, new uncertainties have also emerged in 2026 that have contributed to market volatility. The rapid proliferation of artificial intelligence globally has raised concerns about potential short-term impacts on Indian IT services demand and overall job creation, which has been reflected in the recent underperformance of the IT sector. "Technological



transitions such as artificial intelligence often create periods of uncertainty for traditional service models. However, Indian IT companies have historically demonstrated the ability to adapt to such shifts, and we believe the sector will gradually reposition itself as the new technology cycle evolves," he added. Geopolitical tensions in the Middle East have also heightened crude oil risks for India, which imports around 85% of its crude requirement. Notably, nearly 40-50% of these imports transit through the Strait of Hormuz, making supply routes vulnerable in the event of an escalation in the region.

A prolonged conflict could lead to higher inflation, pressure on the rupee, margin pressures for sectors such as aviation, paints, chemicals and oil marketing companies, and potential FPI outflows. However, India's strong foreign exchange reserves and strategic petroleum buffers provide an important cushion against external shocks. "While global developments may continue to introduce bouts of volatility, India's structural growth drivers remain firmly in place. As earnings visibility improves and domestic demand strengthens, disciplined investors are likely to benefit from staying invested through market cycles," Sorbh explained. Meanwhile, the Fixed Income markets began the month under pressure following the Union Budget and the Monetary Policy Committee meeting. Concerns around persistent geopolitical tensions, and sustained FPI outflows weighed on market sentiment.

White House now begging world, including India, to buy Russian oil: Iran Minister

Dubai: Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi has said the US, despite "bullying India" to end Russian oil imports, is now begging them to buy crude from Moscow, two weeks after its war with Iran. "The US spent months on bullying India into ending oil imports from Russia," said Araghchi on Friday, March 13, in a post on social media platform X. "After two weeks of war with Iran, White House is now begging the world – including India – to buy Russian crude," he added. This comes after, on March 5, the US issued a 30-day waiver allowing India to buy Russian oil, having previously imposed heavy sanctions related to the war in Ukraine. Calling out Europe's stance on the conflict in West Asia, the minister termed the war on Iran "illegal" and said that Europe thought backing an illegal war on Iran would win US support against Russia. He even termed the current stance



of the Trump administration towards the purchase of Russian crude oil as "Pathetic". Starting February 28, the US and Israel launched a joint attack on Iran, which came after days of build-up with US President Donald Trump ramping up the pressure on Tehran to agree to a new deal on its nuclear programme. Iran's retaliation escalated the war to the entire Gulf region. Amid rising oil prices, the Trump administration has announced a temporary authorisation to other countries to purchase Russian oil currently stranded at sea, as there

were no immediate signs of an early end to the US war on Iran. The US had granted a similar waiver from sanctions to India to buy Russian oil as part of efforts to cool down oil prices that have been on the rise since the outbreak of war on February 28. "@POTUS is taking decisive steps to promote stability in global energy markets and working to keep prices low as we address the threat and instability posed by the terrorist Iranian regime," US Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent said in a post on X on Thursday, March 12. On March 5, the US had issued a 30-day

waiver allowing India to buy Russian oil, having previously imposed heavy sanctions related to the war in Ukraine. "To increase the global reach of existing supply, @USTreasury is providing a temporary authorisation to permit countries to purchase Russian oil currently stranded at sea," Bessent said. He said this narrowly tailored, short-term measure applies only to oil already in transit and will not provide significant financial benefit to the Russian government, which derives the majority of its energy revenue from taxes assessed at the point of extraction. "President Trump's pro-energy policies have driven US oil and gas production to record levels, contributing to lower fuel prices for hardworking Americans. The temporary increase in oil prices is a short-term and temporary disruption that will result in a massive benefit to our nation and economy in the long-term," Bessent said.

TG RERA fines Bharathi Builders Rs 4.74 crore for illegal pre-launch offer

Hyderabad: The Telangana Real Estate Regulatory Authority (TG RERA) has imposed a fine of Rs 4.74,17,729 on Bharathi Builders Pvt Ltd for illegally collecting funds from customers through pre-launch offers without RERA registration and then failing to commence the project. The company has been declared a "defaulter promoter" by RERA and has been asked to refund the amounts collected from buyers with interest within 60 days. The project in question is Bharathi Lake View Apartments at K o m p a l l y , Medchal-Malkajgiri district. TG RERA has warned that such pre-launch schemes in unregistered projects are illegal and advised buyers to verify project registration on their portal before investing. Advisory RERA has instructed that no promoter should invite people to purchase or engage in any promotional activities of



plots, apartments, buildings or any real estate project exceeding an area of 500 square metres or more than eight units without getting it registered with RERA. The promoter must also get approval from the Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (GHMC)/Hyderabad Metropolitan Development Authority (HMDA)/ Directorate of Town and Country Planning/ Urban Development Authority/ Telangana State Industrial Infrastructure Corporation (TSIIC) and the municipal authorities

before offering a project for sale. Additionally, the RERA registration number and the website address of the authority, wherein all details of the registered project have been entered, must be prominently displayed in the advertisement or prospectus issued or published by the promoter. If any promoter fails to register as per the Real Estate (Regulation and Development) Act, they will be liable to a penalty which may be extended up to 10 per cent of the estimated cost of the project, it said in a press release.

Can plastic-eating fungi help clean up nappy waste?

Before Leila Green became a mother of triplets three years ago, she envisaged she'd be the kind of parent who would use reusable nappies. "But as soon as my babies arrived, I realised I just couldn't – I was flat out looking after the three of them so I went for the easy option." "I'd buy disposables and in the early days we'd get through 25 a day," continues Green, who lives in Broadstairs in Kent and runs an online community focused on motherhood issue. "I think the reality is that mums would like an eco option but they are so busy and it would have to be priced appropriately." Globally, it's estimated that 300,000 disposable nappies are sent to landfill or incinerated every minute, leading to environmental issues as many contain plastics and synthetic materials and can take hundreds of years to decompose. While there's sustainable alternatives such as washable nappies, the effort and cost limits how widely they're used. Over the years many start-ups have marketed greener alternatives to disposable



nappies. Can the latest make an impression? Texas-based company Hiro Technologies has created unbleached disposable diapers that comes with a packet of fungi which is added to the used diaper when it's ready to be thrown away. The fungi are able to break down and digest the diaper over time, says co-founder Miki Agrawa, who started the brand after being shocked by how many nappies her son was going through. So how quickly does it work? Agrawa says it's

hard to be specific. "We cannot give a timeline because all conditions are different and the fungi currently works in some conditions better than others," says Agrawa. "All we can say that it's exponentially faster than without the fungi in the best conditions, and still better than nothing in the worst conditions." The diapers cost \$136 (£100) for a month's supply, though there is a subscription price of \$199. That's significantly more than regular disposables, which are estimated to cost

around \$70 a month. Is the price out of range for most parents? "The price is less expensive than luxury diapers," replies Agrawa. "I think it's a great deal for the diaper that is best for baby and their planet they will grow up in." She adds that demand is growing fast. Price tags aside, Sonali Jagadev, senior research analyst at Euromonitor, says progress in creating a more innovative and sustainable nappy remains slow and uneven due to several factors including

high production costs and supply chain constraints. "Bio-based polymers, bamboo fibres and organic cotton all come with higher raw material and processing costs than traditional plastics, while the supply chains for these sustainable inputs are still immature, making prices volatile and challenging for mass market brands," she says. Jagadev says smaller players face bigger hurdles. "Rising inflation, higher raw material costs and the need for heavy marketing investment can make it difficult for them to survive, even when their sustainability credentials are strong." Lack of composting infrastructure is another challenge. "Most biodegradable nappies still end up in landfill because industrial composting facilities are limited or unavailable in many regions," says Jagadev. And, of course, there are consumer priorities. "Parents continue to prioritise performance, hygiene and convenience over sustainability, meaning brands take a risk if greener solutions compromise any of these core expectations."

Trump urges UK and other nations to send ships to help secure Strait of Hormuz after Iranian attacks

White House: In its latest update on 12 March, the UK Maritime Trade Operations (UKMTO) said it had received 20 reports of incidents affecting vessels operating in and around the Arabian Gulf, Strait of Hormuz, and Gulf of Oman. Sixteen of those ships have been attacked, it adds, and four cases of suspicious activity recorded in the area. The Thai-flagged Mayuree Naree, was hit while transiting through the Strait of Hormuz on Wednesday morning, the ship's owner told BBC Verify. Iran's new supreme leader Mojtaba Khamenei vowed to keep blocking the Strait of Hormuz in his first public statement on Thursday. Verified footage showed two tankers on fire in Iraqi waters at the north of the Gulf late on Wednesday and UKMTO reported the ships had been "struck by an unknown projectile". Safesea Vishnu, a US-owned vessel heading to India, is one of the most

recent boats to have been attacked. It was hit by an "unmanned speed boat carrying explosives" which "rammed into it, resulting in a major fire onboard", Indian authorities said. The Strait of Hormuz has become a sticking point in the US-Israel war with Iran. US President Trump vowed a short while ago to get the Strait "open and safe", "one way or the other". He called on the UK and other nations to join the US in sending ships to help secure the shipping lane. More missiles have been launched towards Israel from Iran, the Israeli Defense Forces say. In a recent update, the IDF adds that defence systems are working to intercept the threat and the public has been asked to enter shelters. It follows a series of strikes in rapid succession launched from Iran towards Israel a short while ago. Sirens sounded in Jerusalem, Israel, and injuries have been reported in Eilat in southern Israel.



As we've just reported, US President Donald Trump says "one way or the other" the US will get the Strait of Hormuz "open and safe". The Strait of Hormuz is a key trade artery through which around 20% of the world's oil passes. Since the beginning of the conflict, numerous ships have been reported to have come under attack in the area and Iran's new supreme leader on Thursday said that Iran should keep using the "lever

of blocking" the Strait. About 3,000 or so ships usually sail through the corridor each month. In 2025, about 20 million barrels of oil passed through the Strait per day. It is deep enough for the world's biggest crude oil tankers, and is used by the major oil and gas producers in the Middle East – and their customers. US President Donald Trump says that "one way or the other, we will soon get the Hormuz Strait OPEN,

SAFE, and FREE!" In a post on his platform Truth Social, he writes that he hopes China, France, Japan, South Korea and the UK will send war ships to the key shipping channel so it can "no longer be a threat" by Iran. He adds that many countries will be sending war ships to keep the key shipping channel "open and safe". In the meantime, he says, the US will be "bombing the hell out of the shoreline and continually shooting Iranian boats and ships out of the water". He claims the US has "destroyed 100% of Iran's military capability" but says it's still "easy" for them to use drones, mines and close-range missiles. Iran's representative in Geneva, Ali Bahrani, said Trump's claims about eliminating Tehran's capabilities are "based on fabricated lies". In our next post, we'll bring you a reminder of what you need to know about the Strait of Hormuz. Fatemeh Mohajerani, spokesperson for the Iranian government,

says more than 200 students and teachers have been killed since the start of the war. She adds that 120 schools have been "severely damaged". Tehran's landmark Azadi Tower has sustained damage, she says on state TV. Iran's minister of education said on 11 March that 206 students and teachers had been killed and 161 injured in the attacks so far, according to a report by official IRNA news agency. Iran's Red Crescent Society says that, so far, 42,914 civilian properties have been damaged. Of these, 6,179 are commercial properties and 36,489 are residential, including 10,000 in Tehran. "Since the start of the war, 160 medical, health, and emergency centres across the country have been seriously damaged by enemy attacks," it adds. US President Donald Trump denies reports that five US tanker planes were heavily damaged at the Prince Sultan Air Base in Saudi Arabia.

Charges dropped against teens whose teacher died during toilet paper prank



The five teenagers whose teacher died during a fatal practical joke will not be prosecuted over the death, a district attorney in the US state of Georgia has said. The teen driver faced homicide and trespassing charges after Jason Hughes, 40, was inadvertently run over during a toilet paper prank at his home. The four others faced lesser misdemeanour charges. The teacher's family had asked for the charges to be dropped to "prevent a separate tragedy from occurring, ruining the lives of these students". A lawyer for the driver thanked the family for their compassion

and forgiveness, saying he was determined "to live a life that would make Jason Hughes proud", according to the BBC's US partner, CBS News. The maths teacher had known the students were going to prank him and emerged from his home hoping to catch them in the act and surprise them as they tossed toilet paper over trees during their senior prank, police said. But Hughes tripped and fell on the ground which was slick from rain. As the students tried to flee in two separate cars, he was inadvertently run over by the driver of one of the cars, police said.

MORE US MARINES AND WARSHIPS BEING MOVED TO MIDDLE EAST, REPORTS SAY



More US Marines and warships are being deployed to the Middle East, two officials confirmed to CBS News, the BBC's US partner. The officials said the reinforcements were to come from an amphibious ready group and its Marine expeditionary unit, with one official adding that the group would be led by the Japan-based USS Tripoli, an amphibious assault ship. The unit headed by the USS Tripoli typically consists of around 5,000 sailors and Marines distributed across several warships. The development comes as President Donald Trump said US forces had "totally obliterated" Iranian military infrastructure on Kharg Island in the Strait of Hormuz, a critical waterway for global oil shipping. Retaliatory Iranian strikes targeting Israel and US military bases across the Middle East have disrupted major hubs for international air travel and caused the price of oil to soar. Asked when the US Navy would start escorting tankers through the Strait of Hormuz, Trump told reporters on Friday: "It will happen soon." The Wall Street Journal, which first reported the movement of US personnel, also reported that the request for rein-

forcements was made by US Central Command, the part of the US military responsible for the Middle East, and approved by Defence Secretary Pete Hegseth. The BBC has approached the US military and the Pentagon for comment, though future troop movements are usually not confirmed publicly. The US is also relocating parts of a missile defence system installed in South Korea to the Middle East, according to officials cited by the Washington Post and South Korean news outlets. Trump earlier said Iran would be hit "very hard" over the coming week, adding that the war with Iran would be over when "I feel it in my bones". Hegseth also said the US military would show "no mercy for our enemies". The Pentagon has said it had already struck 6,000 Iranian targets during the first two weeks of conflict, which began when the US and Israel launched strikes on Iran on 28 February, killing Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei. Iran's new supreme leader - and son of the former leader - 56-year-old Mojtaba Khamenei said Tehran would continue to block the Strait of Hormuz in his first public address on Thursday.

Family of Michigan synagogue suspect killed in Lebanon airstrike, officials say



The man who rammed his truck into a synagogue in Michigan on Thursday had recently lost family in an Israeli airstrike in Lebanon, officials say. Dearborn Heights Mayor Mo Baydoun said that the suspect, Ayman Mohamad Ghazali, recently suffered "devastating and personal losses overseas" but that it was "not an excuse" for the attack. On Friday, the FBI said Ghazali died of a self-inflicted gunshot wound to

the head during a firefight with police. They also said he had large quantities of commercial-grade fireworks and several jugs of flammable liquid in the bed of his truck, which ignited during the attack on Temple Israel in West Bloomfield, near Detroit. No staff or children at the synagogue and its attached school were hurt. A security guard was being treated for injuries and was expected to recover.

Why has the US targeted Iran's Kharg Island?

Donald Trump has said the US military has bombed a small island off the coast of Iran - home to a major oil terminal that is considered the country's economic lifeline. The US president said Kharg Island's military facilities were "totally obliterated" but that it had held off targeting its oil infrastructure. Trump, however, warned that he would reconsider the decision not to target oil facilities on the island should Iran or others "do anything to interfere" with the safe passage of ships through the Strait of Hormuz - one of the world's most important shipping channels, located south of Iran's coast. Iran's military said oil and energy infrastructure belonging to firms working with the US would "immediately be destroyed" should Kharg's oil infrastructure be attacked. Kharg



Island is a small rocky outcrop just 15 nautical miles (24km) off the coast of Iran. Despite its size, it is one of the most critical pieces of Iran's energy infrastructure. The US striking this small but vital island in the northern Gulf is like going for Iran's economic jugular vein. Ninety percent of Iran's crude oil comes through a terminal on the island - transported through pipes from the mainland. Very

large tankers - capable of carrying up to 85 million gallons of oil - are able to come up to the island's long jetties to pick up the oil. The island's coast is close enough to deep waters, unlike the shallower coast of the mainland. The tankers then come back down the Gulf and out of the Strait of Hormuz, to China - the main buyer of Iranian oil. A terminal for the export of Iranian oil, the island provides a major source of rev-

enue for the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC). Trump said on Friday that the US Central Command (Centcom) had "executed one of the most powerful bombing raids in the History of the Middle East and totally obliterated every MILITARY target in Iran's crown jewel, Kharg Island". He added that "for reasons of decency" he had "chosen NOT to wipe out the Oil Infrastructure on the Island". Centcom said US forces had struck "more than 90 Iranian military targets on Kharg Island, while preserving the oil infrastructure". The regional military command unit said it had destroyed naval mine storage facilities, missile storage bunkers and numerous other military sites. Iranian state media reported that no damage was done to the island's oil facilities.

HAMAS URGES KEY ALLY IRAN TO HALT ATTACKS ON GULF STATES

The Palestinian armed group Hamas has called on Iran to stop attacking Gulf states, in a rare appeal to its key ally. The Tehran-backed group urged its "brothers in Iran to avoid targeting neighbouring countries", saying in a statement that all regional nations should co-operate "to preserve the bonds of brotherhood". At the same time, Hamas, which runs Gaza, affirmed Tehran's right to defend itself against attacks by the US and Israel, which are continuing to strike Iran. The Iranian authorities have said their own retaliatory strikes target "American installations" on Gulf soil rather than the



neighbours themselves - but many attacks have hit civilian infrastructure. Hamas said on Saturday that it had been following the war in the region with "deep concern". It called upon "all states and international organisations to work towards halting [the war]

immediately". Iran has not publicly commented on Hamas's statement. Tehran's retaliatory drone and missile strikes have been felt by many of its Gulf neighbours over the past two weeks. At least 18 people have been killed across the region so far, most of them

security personnel or foreign workers. Six people have been killed in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and another six in Kuwait, while Oman, Saudi Arabia and Bahrain have all reported two deaths each. Iran is Hamas's biggest backer in terms of funding, weapons and political support. The Palestinian group has previously condemned as a "heinous crime" the assassination of Iran's Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei in joint US-Israeli strikes on the first day of the war on 28 February. Hamas is a member of Iran's "axis of resistance" - a loose coalition aimed at combating US and Israeli influence.

Explosion at Amsterdam Jewish school 'a deliberate attack' says mayor



An explosion at a Jewish school in Amsterdam was a "deliberate attack against the Jewish community", the mayor of the Dutch capital has said. Femke Halsema said the overnight blast caused limited damage to the outer wall of the school in the Buitenveldert district. No injuries were reported. "This is a cowardly act of aggression towards the Jewish community," the mayor said, adding that Amsterdam "must be a place where Jews can live safely". Prime Minister Rob Jetten said "there must be no place for anti-semitism" in the Netherlands. Security had already been stepped up at Jewish institutions, after a suspected arson attack on a synagogue in Rotterdam on Friday. Firefighters and police were quickly deployed to the scene after the explosion at the school. They also said police were examining CCTV footage reportedly showing a person placing explosives. After the blast, Halsema

said she understood "the fear and anger of Jewish Amsterdammers" who are "increasingly confronted with anti-semitism". An investigation is under way, and so far police have not publicly commented on possible motives of the attack. Later on Saturday, the Israeli foreign ministry said that "in the Netherlands, an antisemitism epidemic is raging". In its statement, the ministry mentioned the recent attacks in Amsterdam and Rotterdam, as well as "the pogrom against Israelis in Amsterdam in November 2024" - a reference to an attack on Israeli football fans in the Dutch capital. "Where will the next attack be? The Dutch government needs to do much more to fight anti-semitism," the Israeli statement added. In recent days, there have been concerns that Jewish and US communities around the world could be targeted, following joint Israeli-US strikes against Iran.



Rescuers blame weather and 'underprepared skiers' for rise in Alps avalanche deaths

Under drone fire, exiled Kurds wait to confront Iranian regime

Like many exiled Iranian Kurds, Shaho Bloori, 53, hears the call of home from both the living and the dead. Two of his sisters remain in Iran, and 18 of his relatives lie buried there, killed by the regime. That includes one of his brothers, who he tells us is "forever young" - a protest singer, executed at the age of 21. It wasn't enough for Iran's Islamic Revolution Guard Corps to hang him, he says, and riddle his body with bullets, they heaped more suffering on his mother, after his death. "When she went to wash his body [for burial], there were 16 bullet holes," he says. "They told her: 'You must not cry. If you do, we will not let you



clean him and bury him." He wants justice not revenge if the regime falls. There is no sign of that yet. "We must stop the hanging," he says. "Even if someone is guilty of hanging my brother, I don't want them to be executed. We need freedom, not another regime like the Islamic regime."

Will Management Drop MS Dhoni From Playing XI?

Mumbai: At 44, MS Dhoni is set to feature in his 19th Indian Premier League (IPL) season later this month. Chennai Super Kings (CSK) CEO Kasi Viswanath has already confirmed that the franchise great will be available for the full season. Last season, Dhoni scored 196 runs across 14 matches, walking out to bat lower down the order. Whether he'll play a similar role is something the management will have to take a call on. Speaking on his YouTube channel, former CSK batter S Badrinath, however, had a different view on the matter. Badrinath, who played at CSK for six seasons, feels that neither head coach Stephen Fleming nor anyone else in the management can take the decision to bench Dhoni, given the veteran's influence within the franchise. "I don't know if it is an administrative decision where [the CEO] said that [Dhoni] is ready to

play all matches... Now, will Fleming go and tell Dhoni, 'You don't play this match, we are dropping you'? I don't think Fleming has a chance at all. How will he go and tell Dhoni that he is dropped? I literally feel that

At 44, MS Dhoni is set to feature in his 19th Indian Premier League (IPL) season later this month.

it is not possible," said Badrinath. Badrinath added that Dhoni is likely to play all the matches, as no one can force him to sit out or take a step backward. "I don't think any support staff in the world, be it even Fleming, can tell Dhoni,

'You are an impact player,' or 'You don't play this match.' There is no chance. We can take it that he is going to play all the matches," he added. Dhoni is one of the most influential players in the CSK ranks and is a core member of the leadership group. He has won five titles for the team during his captaincy stint. CSK had a poor run last season. The team finished last in the points table. The five-time champions are only able to win four matches out of fourteen. Dhoni is still one of the finest batters in IPL history, with 5,439 runs in 278 matches and 242 innings at an average of 38.80, a strike rate of 137.45, and 24 fifties, with a best score of 84 not out.



KKR NEW JERSEY FOR IPL 2026: FORMER CHAMPIONS REVEAL JERSEY FOR NEW SEASON

=Three-times champion Kolkata Knight Riders (KKR) have unveiled a fresh new jersey ahead of IPL 2026, designed in the theme of Lines of Legacy. At the heart of the design are the defining moments that have shaped KKR's journey over the years. From the unforgettable opening night when Brendon McCullum smashed 158* back in 2008, to Rinku Singh's five sixes in the final over, KKR have produced many such moments that have become part of IPL folklore. Each iconic moment forms a line in the franchise's star-studded story, and when these lines come together, they create the initials (K) (K) (R) in the style of abstract linear art. This season, those lines are not just remembered - they are woven into the jersey itself, allowing fans to wear a piece of the team's story. Speaking on the jersey reveal, Venky Mysore, Chief Executive Officer, Knight Riders Sports, said: "The



Lines of Legacy captures the essence of KKR's storied history and celebrates the journey of the team over the years. Each line represents a pivotal moment of brilliance, reflecting the energy and spirit that weaves together to form our identity. We are proud of this legacy that we have built and want to carry it into the upcoming season while creating more memories for our fans to cherish." To bring the idea to life, the jersey reveal was supported by a viral creative campaign on Social Media, culminating in a film

featuring well known artists from various works of the industry. Talking about the film that blends humour and pop culture into the storytelling around the new kit, Binda Dey, Chief Marketing Officer of Knight Riders Sports, said: "Through our 'Kya Line Hai?' campaign film featuring actor Rajat Bedi and comedian Anirban Dasgupta, and other popular creators from Kolkata, we wanted to bring the idea of the 'Lines of Legacy' to life and celebrate the iconic moments that define KKR's journey.

"DON'T BREAK THIS BAT": Rishabh Pant's Message To Lucknow Super Giants Teammate Ahead Of IPL 2026 Is Hilarious

The 2026 Indian Premier League (IPL) will be an acid test for Lucknow Super Giants (LSG) skipper Rishabh Pant. In IPL 2025, his team finished seventh. Although Pant did score a ton, it came too late in the day. Ahead of the season, he stressed the importance of team bonding, communication, and clarity of goals as the franchise began its preparations for the upcoming IPL season, starting March 28. In a video shared by the Lucknow-based franchise on their X handle, skipper Pant welcomed both returning members and new faces in the squad, urging players to focus on building strong relationships



during the pre-season camp. "A lot of people are from last year. A few new faces for sure. Welcome, everyone. I think let's keep it very short and simple. Let's look to build the relationships. If we don't talk about cricket, we're not going to improve.

As individuals, let's take whatever we can from all these gentlemen here and try to build something for this season to look forward to," Pant said. In another video, Pant can be seen giving a bat to his LSG teammate Ayush Badoni. "You

like a short-handle bat? Here, take this one. This is a great bat. Don't break this one," he said. Pant-led LSG managed only six wins. Despite hitting an unbeaten 118 in LSG's final league game against Royal Challengers Bengaluru, it didn't help the side's cause as they finished seventh in the points table. "When we come into a season, every time there is a thought in our mind that 'let's build something; let's look to win.' But at the same time, to be clear in your thought process - what do you want to do? What do you want to achieve as an individual and as a team? And this is the best time to have that clarity.

WWE SmackDown Results, March 13: Randy Orton Sets WrestleMania 42 Expectations Clear With Heel Turn

The latest episode of the WWE SmackDown was dominated by one big and unexpected development as Randy Orton turned heel in dramatic fashion, attacking Cody Rhodes during their WrestleMania 42 contract signing. What was supposed to be a routine segment quickly turned violent as Orton unleashed a brutal assault, leaving Rhodes bloodied and the crowd stunned. This betrayal re-established Orton as "The Viper" and set up a heated WrestleMania showdown between the ruthless veteran and the resilient champion. The attack confirmed Orton's return to the dark side of the game, ensuring that WrestleMania 42 will feature yet another "hero versus villain" storyline.



Cody Rhodes now stands as the heroic figure defending his Undisputed WWE Championship, while Orton has positioned himself as the dangerous challenger determined to take it away. The timing of this heel turn adds intensity to the build-up for WrestleMania, making their clash one of the most anticipated matches on the card.

retained the Women's Tag Team Championships against Alexa Bliss and Charlotte Flair. - Solo Sikoa and Tama Tonga battled Uncle Howdy and Erick Rowan in a chaotic non-title tag match. - Drew McIntyre attacked Jacob Fatu, keeping their rivalry alive after McIntyre's recent title loss. - Jelly Roll appeared on Miz TV and knocked out The Miz, while The Bella Twins made a surprise return. This episode of SmackDown proved that WWE is building strong momentum heading into WrestleMania 42. Randy Orton's heel turn was more than just a storyline twist-it was a reminder of why he remains one of the most dangerous and unpredictable figures in WWE history.

MERCEDES DOMINATE BUT FIRST SIGNS OF VULNERABILITY

Mercedes showed a first hint of 2026 vulnerability in qualifying for the Chinese Grand Prix, but still ended up with a front-row lock-out to underline their superiority over the field at the start of this season. Both Kimi Antonelli, who broke the record for Formula 1's youngest pole-winner, and championship leader George Russell hit trouble. But they still had enough pace in hand to beat the Ferraris of Lewis Hamilton and Charles Leclerc on the two-by-two grid in Shanghai. Mercedes' problems reduced Ferrari's gap to pole - Hamilton was just 0.351secs slower than Antonelli, more or less halving the deficit the next fastest car had to pole in both qualifying at the first



race of the season in Australia and in the sprint qualifying on Friday in China. That might lead to a suggestion that Ferrari could take the race to Mercedes on Sunday, given Ferrari took themselves out of the lead battle in Melbourne with a strategy error, and that Leclerc and Hamilton had battled for the lead in the early stages in

the China sprint on Saturday as well. But Hamilton said he would "take that with a pinch of salt" given the circumstances - and he did not even know all of them at the time. "It's highly unlikely that we will be able to beat them in the race," Hamilton said. "In our statistics they've got some between 0.4-0.6secs race pace [advantage].

ENGLAND AND BORTHWICK BACKED UP TO THE BRINK IN PARIS

"If South Africa are the best side in the world, I think France would be right up there just behind them," said England head coach Steve Borthwick this week. Judging by that silver standard, England have come a long way during his three years in charge. In 2023 at Twickenham France ran amok. Damian Penaud gleefully scampering past Alex Dombrandt on his way to the line and a 53-10 scoreline - England's heaviest home defeat - remains an image that haunts the home of English rugby. In 2024 in Lyon England shut that gap. Only a 79th-minute Thomas Ramos penalty ensured a 33-31 win for France. And last year England overtook France, as Elliot Daly glided in for a decisive last-gasp



try in a 26-25 victory. A steady incremental improvement year on year? If only it were that simple for Borthwick and his team. Instead, the 2026 Six Nations has cast doubt on the whole project. Defeats by Scotland, Ireland and Italy are new low points to be plotted on the graph. France will relish extending the losing streak and ratcheting up the sud-

den and considerable pressure on Borthwick. Just as in 2022, when England were swatted aside 25-13 in the final game of a clean sweep, this was supposed to be the match in which they clinched a Grand Slam. Instead, France's dreams of a full house were punctured by an extraordinary 50-40 defeat in Scotland last weekend.

ARYNA SABALENKA SETS UP INDIAN WELLS TITLE SHOWDOWN WITH ELENA RYBAKINA



Aryna Sabalenka roared past Linda Noskova on Friday to book an Indian Wells title showdown with Australian Open champion Elena Rybakina. Sabalenka beat 14th-ranked Czech Noskova 6-3, 6-4 and Rybakina downed Ukraine's Elina Svitolina 7-5, 6-4 to set up a mouth-watering rematch of their Melbourne final. Rybakina also beat Sabalenka in the 2023 championship match in Indian Wells - where the Belarusian star has come up empty in two prior trips to the final. But Sabalenka has been in imperious form in the California desert this year. She fired 37 winners, with 11 aces, applying relentless pressure from the baseline in a commanding win over Noskova. She broke the big-serving Czech twice as she powered to a 5-1 lead in the opening set. There was a hiccup as she tried to serve out the set and Sabalenka, who had lost just one point in her first three service games, was broken. Noskova kept the set alive with a battling

hold in a marathon eighth game, fending off a set point with a service winner and sealing the game with an ace. Serving for the set again, Sabalenka opened with a double fault and went down 0-30, but a pair of big serves and a backhand winner brought her to set point and she claimed it with an ace. Sabalenka broke Noskova to open the second and was on her way. Noskova fended off a second break, but she was unable to convert a break opportunity in the eighth game as Sabalenka brought it home, capping the victory with a forehand winner on her third match point. "I think I really played great tennis," Sabalenka said. "I was serving well. I was playing well. I like the way I put her under pressure on her serve." Rybakina, who is set to rise one spot to number two in the world on Monday, had too much firepower for ninth-ranked Svitolina, who was coming off a three-set win over two-time champion Iga Swiatek in the quarter-finals.

"Arjun Is My Whole Heart, And Now...": Sara Tendulkar's Emotional Message To Saaniya Chandok

In a touching moment that brought warmth to the entire wedding party, Sara Tendulkar shared a heartfelt message for her sister-in-law, Saaniya Chandok, as she married Arjun Tendulkar. Speaking amid cheers and claps from the guests, Sara expressed just how much Saaniya means to her, saying, "Saaniya, you are the sister I always wanted but never had." She went on to explain that their bond goes beyond traditional

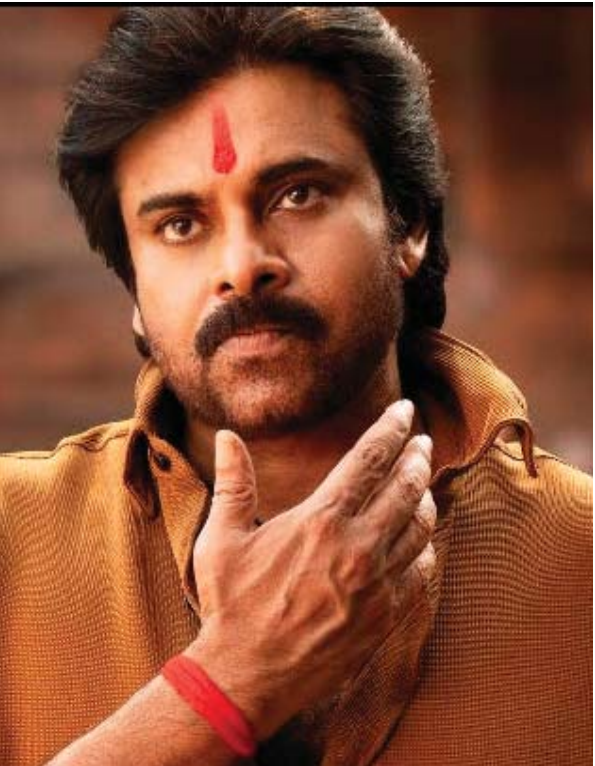
titles, adding that Saaniya is "truly more like a sister to me than a sister-in-law." This sense of belonging has clearly been around for a long time. Sara mentioned a beautiful thought from her mother, telling Saaniya, "Like my mother said, I cannot welcome you to the family because you have already been a part of this family for so many years." Since Saaniya is already such a loved member of the inner circle, Sara felt certain that the future would be bright.

She continued her emotional speech by saying, "I am sure your transition is gonna be extremely smooth because everybody loves you and showers you with all the affection in the world." The most moving part of the speech focused on the deep love Sara has for her brother Arjun. Recalling what she had mentioned previously, she told the crowd, "As I said at your engagement, my brother is my whole entire heart. And now, my heart

belongs to you, Saaniya. So please look after him, love him, cherish him, take care of him, and I am sure he will do the same for you." Sara ended her tribute with a shower of good English wishes for the couple's new life together. She concluded by saying, "I love you both. I wish you all the love, abundance, happiness, and everything in the world." This speech perfectly captured a family coming together, strengthening the bond of friendship that existed for years.



POWERFUL & ENTERTAINING TRAILER OF USTAAD BHAGAT SINGH UNVEILED



Amidst sky-high expectations, the makers of Ustaad Bhagat Singh have released its much-awaited trailer, and it promises a complete entertainer packed with power, action, and fun. Pawan Kalyan looks in top form and delivers his trademark charisma throughout the trailer. From punchy dialogues to high-voltage action blocks and entertaining moments, every element lands effectively, taking the hype around the film to the next level. Director Harish Shankar once again proves his strength in crafting mass

entertainers and presenting Pawan Kalyan in the way fans love to see him on the big screen. The trailer cut is sharp, engaging, and perfectly sets the tone for what promises to be a full-fledged feast for fans and movie lovers in theatres. With the excitement building rapidly, Ustaad Bhagat Singh is gearing up to deliver a memorable cinematic experience on the big screen. Ustaad Bhagat Singh is prestigiously being produced by Naveen Yerneni and Y.Ravi Shankar under Mythri Movie Makers and is slated for a grand release on March 19th.

Aamir Khan recalls Lagaan days: ‘We listened to Gayatri Mantra daily’

Before the cameras rolled on the sets of “Lagaan”, the film’s cast would start each day with the Gayatri Mantra, said superstar Aamir Khan on Friday, adding that the daily ritual fostered a collective discipline and meditative focus in the



team. The period sports drama film, which completes 25 years in June this year, was helmed by Ashutosh Gowariker. The movie was screened at the first day of the 2026 Red Lorry Film Festival. “Akhilendra Mishra (who played Arjan) would play Gayatri Mantra when we would travel in the bus. There were some people who wanted to listen to English songs but I insisted we listen to Gayatri Mantra.

For six months we would listen to it every day before reaching the shoot location. “And that helped us in a meditative state of mind. When you go to work, it’s important to understand to know the state of mind we are in. In the bus, it would be dark, as we would travel before the sun would rise, and we would listen to Gayatri Mantra,” Khan said. “Lagaan” revolved around a villager who assembles a ragtag team to defeat the Britishers in a game of cricket to avoid paying triple the tax. The film received widespread critical acclaim as well as commercial success,

and was nominated for the Academy Award for Best Foreign Language Film. Khan said he is eternally grateful to the audience for giving love and respect to “Lagaan”. “Everyone works hard work but very few films get this kind of love and respect,” the 60-year-old actor said, adding, when he watched the last ten minutes of the film, he got quite emotional. Asked if he would do anything differently were “Lagaan” to be remade, Khan promptly said he would opt for an unshaven look and speak in pure Awadhi. “Ashu and I had a long discussion on Awadhi dialect. I liked the language that Yusuf

sahab (Dilip Kumar) used in ‘Ganga Jamuna’. We had used a diluted version.



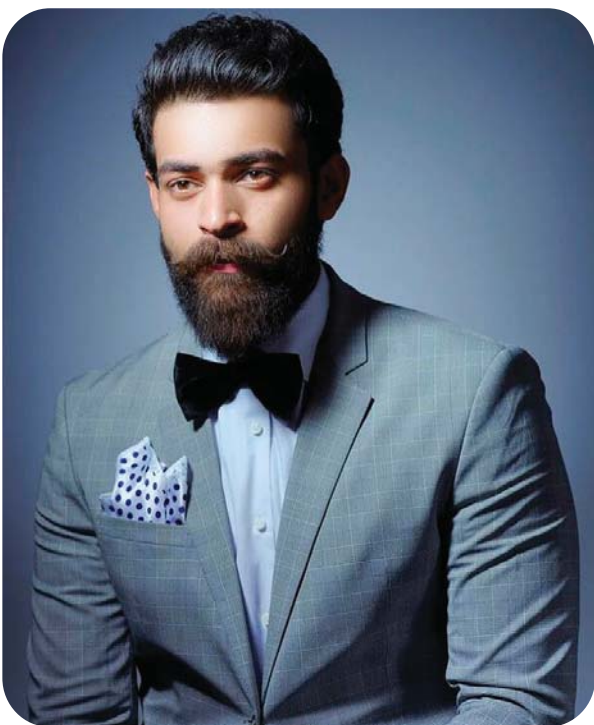
MEENAKSHI SERVES GODDESS ENERGY IN LASTEST POST

budget mythical adventure thriller stars Naga Chaitanya in the lead, while Meenakshi will be seen in the role of Daksha. Directed by Karthik Dandu, who earlier delivered the hit Virupaksha, the movie promises a dark supernatural story filled with ancient mysteries, destiny and action, making it one of the most awaited Telugu films. Meanwhile, Meenakshi recently shared a stunning picture that quickly caught fans’ attention online. In the photo, the actress looks elegant in a stylish black sleeveless outfit paired with a textured long skirt. She stands gracefully with her arms raised above her head, striking a confident and artistic pose against a dark background. The dramatic lighting highlights her glowing skin and sharp features, giving the photo a

classy fashion-editorial vibe. Her soft makeup, wavy hair and minimal accessories add to the sophisticated look, while her silver heels bring a touch of glamour to the outfit. The entire frame gives a bold yet graceful fashion moment, with fans praising her effortless style and confident presence. The film Vrushakarma has also been trending recently because of the intense transformation of Naga Chaitanya. The actor revealed behind-the-scenes pictures showing his lean and chiselled physique achieved through rigorous workouts and disciplined training for his role Arjun. His viral look shows him pushing his limits in the gym, while another presents him in a rugged, battle-ready avatar that hints at the film’s action-packed nature.

Meenakshi, who already appeared this year in Anaganaga Oka Raju playing the role of Charulatha “Charu,” is now preparing for her next big project Vrushakarma. The upcoming Telugu-language, high-

VARUN TEJ AS VOLLEY BALL PLAYER



Varun Tej is awaiting the release of his Korean Kanakaraju. The actor will be teaming up with Committee Kurrallu fame Yadhu Vamsi for next project. It is said to be a Sports Drama and Varun Tej will be seen as a Volleyball Player.

“WE DON’T BEG FOR LOVE, WE BECOME LOVE -

That’s What ‘Padhe Padhe’ Is and Rakasa Is a Wholesome Family Entertainer,” Says Niharika at Second Single Launch

The makers of Rakasa unveiled the film’s second single “Padhe Padhe” at a vibrant on-ground launch event held at St. Peter’s Engineering College, Hyderabad. Producer Niharika Konidela, lead actors Sangeeth Sobhan and Nayan Sarika, along with composer Anudeep Dev, attended the event to introduce the romantic track to the audience gathered at the venue. Speaking about the idea behind the song, Niharika Konidela said, “In most

songs, women beg for love, but in this song we become love. We don’t beg for love, we become love - that’s what Padhe Padhe is.” She also described Rakasa as a “wholesome family entertainer,” adding that the film brings together fantasy, adventure, strong performances and plenty of comedy. Composer Anudeep Dev spoke about the concept behind the song while appreciating the energy of the crowd. “That’s some energy here! If Rapappa is for the boys, Padhe Padhe is for the girls. It’s a really beautiful song and it explores the girl’s point of view. If anyone is not getting the hints, girls can just play this song. There’s a

lot more good stuff coming up, and please watch the film in theatres on April 3,” he said. Actress Nayan Sarika shared her personal reaction to the track, saying, “When I first heard Padhe Padhe, it was on loop. Girls often find it hard when boys are unable to understand the hints, and this song is for both.” She thanked the audience for their energy and support for the film. Actor Sangeeth Sobhan spoke about how the project came to him and what drew him to the story. Recalling the moment director Manasa Sharma narrated the film after the success of MAD Square, he said, “When I asked her what the USP of the film was, she said it’s me.”



HORROR RE RELEASE BRINGS UNEXPECTED CROWD TO THEATRES



WILL ANUSHKA’S WEDDING TALK TURN REAL THIS TIME?



For many years, the most common rumour around Anushka Shetty was about her marrying Prabhas. The speculation kept returning again and again, but it never turned out to be true. Even though both actors clarified that they are only good friends, the gossip never completely disappeared. Now, wedding rumours around Anushka have surfaced once again. But this time the talk is not about Prabhas. Industry buzz suggests that the actress may be considering marriage with a businessman who is known to her family. According to the latest chatter in film cir-

cles, discussions are said to be happening at the family level. If things move in the right direction, the actress could reportedly take this big step sometime this year. Anushka has always maintained a very private life and rarely reacts to such reports. Because of that, speculation often grows whenever new rumours appear. While nothing has been officially confirmed yet, the fresh buzz has once again caught the attention of fans. After years of hearing different stories about her marriage, many are simply hoping that this time the news might actually turn out to be true.