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Short Takes

US expands visa bond rule to 50 nations

Washington (TSIT): The US is expanding its visa bond programme to cover 50 countries from April 2, requiring foreign nationals seeking B1 and B2 visas for business and tourism to post a \$15,000 bond, the State Department said Wednesday. The bond will be returned to visa holders who comply with the terms of their stay and leave the US on time, or if they do not travel. The move is aimed at curbing illegal overstays, which U.S. authorities say have been significantly reduced under the programme. "Nearly 1,000 foreigners have been issued visas under the program, and 97 per cent of bonded travellers have returned home from the United States on time," the State Department said. By contrast, in the final year of the previous administration, more than 44,000 visitors from the 50 countries currently under the visa bond framework overstayed their visas, the fact sheet noted. The April 2 expansion will bring 12 additional countries under the policy - Cambodia, Ethiopia, Georgia, Grenada, Lesotho, Mauritius, Mongolia, Mozambique, Nicaragua, Papua New Guinea, Seychelles, and Tunisia. These nations will join 38 others already subject to the visa bond requirement, including Algeria, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Bangladesh, Benin, Bhutan, Botswana, Burundi, Cabo Verde, Central African Republic, Cote d'Ivoire, Cuba, Djibouti, Dominica, Fiji, Gabon, The Gambia, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Kyrgyzstan, Malawi, Mauritania, Namibia, Nepal, Nigeria, Sao Tome and Principe, Senegal, Tajikistan, Tanzania, Togo, Tonga, Turkmenistan, Tuvalu, Uganda, Vanuatu, Venezuela, Zambia, and Zimbabwe.

More flights being operated on India-Middle East routes

New Delhi, March 18 : Flight operations are gradually improving with additional services being introduced between India and the Middle East region, according to an official statement issued on Wednesday. In the UAE, around 70 flights operated on March 17 and about 75 flights are expected on Wednesday to various destinations in India. Over 50 flights have been operating daily since 5 March 2026, indicating improved connectivity. Flights continue to operate from Saudi Arabia and Oman to India. The Qatar airspace remains partially open, with 5 flights operated on Tuesday and services to nine Indian destinations announced from Wednesday. However, the Kuwait airspace has remained closed since February 28. Special non-scheduled flights by Jazeera Airways are expected from Al Qaisumah Airport in Saudi Arabia. For Indian nationals in Kuwait, Bahrain, and Iraq, where airspace remains restricted, transit through Saudi Arabia continues to be facilitated. In Iran, Indian students from Tehran, Isfahan, and Shiraz have been relocated to safer locations, with all necessary assistance being provided by the Embassy.

Governor's address historic reflects Telangana's Vision says CM Revanth

Hyderabad TSIT BUREAU: Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy on Wednesday described the Governor's address to the joint session of the Legislature as "historic," stating it reflects the people's aspirations and the government's vision for the state's development. Speaking in the Assembly, CM Reddy said the Governor's speech outlined a comprehensive roadmap to transform Telangana into a \$1 trillion economy by 2034 and a \$3 trillion economy by 2047. He thanked Governor Shiv Pratap Shukla for presenting the visionary plan. Taking a dig at the opposition, the Chief Minister expressed disappointment over the absence of the Leader of the Opposition, K. Chandrashekar Rao, despite significant occasions. He alleged that feudal attitudes persist among some leaders and pointed out that Rao had received over Rs.1 crore in salaries and allowances since December 2023 without attending Assembly proceedings.



HIGHLIGHT POINT:
CM REVANTH TERMED THE GOVERNOR'S ADDRESS "HISTORIC," UNVEILING A BOLD VISION TO TRANSFORM TELANGANA INTO A \$1 TRILLION ECONOMY BY 2034 WHILE PREPARING THE STATE FOR THE EMERGING AI-DRIVEN FUTURE.

Highlighting the government's focus, CM Reddy stressed the need to prepare

for the emerging "AI tsunami" and mentioned forward-looking policies in the Telangana Rising 2047 Vision document. He also announced tax exemptions for EV purchases and plans to retrofit autos into electric vehicles free of cost. On encroachments, he accused the previous government of inconsistency and proposed a fact-finding committee to examine illegal constructions in Musi and Uppal Bhagayat.

INDIAN NAVY BOLSTERS PRESENCE NEAR GULF OF OMAN, ESCORTS INDIAN VESSELS

New Delhi (TSIT): Amid escalating tensions in West Asia, the Indian Navy has significantly increased its warship deployment near the Gulf of Oman and is actively escorting Indian-flagged vessels from the Strait of Hormuz to ensure their safe passage. Government sources confirmed that Indian-flagged tankers continue to navigate the strategically vital Strait of Hormuz under naval escort. Vessels including Shivalik, Nanda Devi, and Jag Ladki have already arrived safely at Indian ports. The enhanced deployment is part of the Navy's "mission-based deployment" framework, operational since 2017. While at least one warship has been stationed near the Gulf of Oman since then, the current security situation has prompted a substantial increase in presence. The number of warships was initially raised from one to three and has been increased further, though the exact count remains undisclosed.



'Big boost to manufacturing push': PM Modi as Cabinet clears BHAVYA scheme



New Delhi, March 18 : Calling it a "big boost to India's manufacturing push", Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday said the Union Cabinet has approved the Bharat Audyogik Vikas Yojna (BHAVYA), a major initiative to develop 100 plug-and-play industrial parks across the country. The plug-and-play model will allow industries to begin operations quickly, supported by pre-approved land, ready infrastructure, and integrated services, significantly reducing entry barriers for investors.

Under the scheme, industrial parks spanning 100 to 1,000 acres will be developed with financial assistance of up to Rs 1 crore per acre. This will cover core infrastructure such as internal roads, utilities, drainage systems, and common facilities, along with value-added infrastructure like factory sheds, testing labs, and warehousing. Social infrastructure, including worker housing and essential amenities, will also be part of the development plan. In addition, support of up to 25 per cent of the project cost will be provided for external infrastructure to ensure seamless connectivity. Projects under BHAVYA will be selected through a competitive challenge mode, ensuring that only high-quality, investment-ready proposals move forward. The industrial parks will be designed as future-ready ecosystems aligned with PM GatiShakti principles, enabling efficient multimodal connectivity and improved logistics.

PM Modi and Kuwait Crown Prince discuss West Asia situation, free navigation through Strait of Hormuz



New Delhi, March 18 : Prime Narendra Modi held a telephonic conversation with Kuwait Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaleed Al-Hamad Al-Mubarak Al-Sabah on Wednesday, discussing the evolving situation in West Asia and sharing concerns over the recent developments. PM Modi reiterated India's condemnation of attacks on Kuwait's sovereignty and territorial integrity. He also thanked Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaleed Al-Hamad Al-Mubarak Al-Sabah for continued support and ensuring the safety and well-being of the Indian community in Kuwait. "Spoke with HH Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaleed Al-Hamad Al-Mubarak Al-Sabah, Crown Prince of Kuwait and conveyed greetings on the upcoming festival of Eid. We exchanged views on the evolving situation in West Asia and shared concerns over recent developments. Reiterated India's condemnation of attacks on Kuwait's sovereignty and territorial integrity."

Andhra pays Rs 226 crore to families displaced by Polavaram project

Amaravati, March 18 : Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu on Wednesday handed over a cheque of Rs 226.61 crore to families displaced by Polavaram Project as part of third instalment under land acquisition and rehabilitation & resettlement.



The Chief Minister met the displaced people at his official residence here and presented them the cheque on the eve of Ugadi, the Telugu new year. Speaking on the occasion, he remarked that the government holds in high esteem the displaced persons who sacrificed their lands and homes for the sake of the Polavaram project. He stated that the project is becoming a reality solely as a result of their sacrifices. Describing the Polavaram Project as lifeline of the state, the Chief Minister said that once it is completed and river interlinking is achieved, it will benefit the entire state.

He noted that due to the negligence of previous governments, the diaphragm wall was damaged. After consulting experts, the government has now undertaken reconstruction of a new diaphragm wall at a cost of Rs 1,000 crore. CM Naidu said the diaphragm wall will be completed within a week and that project works are progressing rapidly. Stating that work has been accelerated over the past 21 months, he expressed confidence that the project will be completed within two months after next year's Ugadi, fulfilling the long-cherished dream of the people. The Chief Minister clarified that

Rampachodavaram constituency was reorganized as Polavaram district keeping the displaced and displaced people in mind. Though it is a Central government project, he said the state government is completing it with strong commitment. The Chief Minister stated that compensation payments to displaced families have accelerated only after the coalition government came to power. He said Rs 800 crore was released as the first instalment during Sankranti in January 2025, and Rs 916 crore as the second instalment during Diwali last year. Now, Rs 226.6 crore is being released as the third instalment on the occasion of Ugadi. A total of Rs 1,943 crore has been paid to 26,149 displaced persons over the past 21 months. As part of the two-phase project construction, steps have been taken to relocate 38,068 displaced persons in the first phase.

CM responsible for maintaining discipline among MLAs, says Shivakumar

New Delhi, March 18 : Amid the leadership tussle, Karnataka Deputy Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar on Wednesday maintained that the responsibility of maintaining discipline among MLAs lies with Chief Minister Siddaramaiah. Interacting with the media here, Shivakumar, asked whether MLAs are holding meetings without informing the party leadership, said: "It is the responsibility of the Chief Minister to control the MLAs. As the leader of the legislature party, the Chief Minister has the responsibility to ensure discipline among MLAs." About reports that first-time MLAs held a dinner meeting seeking cabinet berths and that senior MLAs met the Chief Minister regarding the issue, Shivakumar, who is also the state Congress chief, said: "I do



not have information about the meeting with the Chief Minister. They have not met me to discuss it." On the confusion over the Davanagere ticket, he said: "I do not have information about that. The Chief Minister and I have discussed the issue, but the report has not yet come. The Chief Minister has called the family members of Meti today and discussed the matter. Aspirants from Davanagere are meeting me."

Yesterday I held discussions with the MP from that region and the district in-charge minister. I will submit a report to the high command leaders, and the final decision will be taken by the high command." Asked when the selection of candidates would be completed, he said: "It will be finalised within two to three days." On Congress MP from Assam, Pradyut Bordoloi, quitting the party and joining the BJP, he said: "It came as a surprise that a loyal Congress leader has left the party. I tried to speak with him, but by then he had already made his decision. We did not expect this. He was considered a role model in the Congress party." On similar developments having taken place twice within a month, he said: "I will not react much on this. Sitting MLAs and senior leaders leaving the party is a loss. The

Congress party is strong in Assam, and I know how much impact this could have. However, the people of Assam want change. We will hold a meeting at Indira Bhavan." About the Defence Ministry not cooperating despite requests made for many years, Shivakumar said: "No. The Defence Ministry is now gradually addressing the issue. Similar problems exist in other states as well, and they have said that a comprehensive decision will be taken." Asked whether discussions were held about restrictions on developing or establishing another airport until 25 years are completed, he said: "Kempegowda International Airport will complete 25 years in 2033. By then, we must complete all preparations, including land acquisition. If the Bengaluru Airport Limited undertakes the project.

CABINET APPROVES SCHEME TO SUPPORT SMALL HYDRO PROJECTS WITH RS 2,584.60 CRORE OUTLAY

New Delhi, March 18 : The Union Cabinet, chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, on Wednesday approved a scheme to support small hydro projects (SHPs) with an outlay of Rs 2,584.60 crore.



The 'Small Hydro Power (SHP) Development Scheme for the period FY 2026-27 to FY 2030-31 will support projects (between 1-25 MW capacity) to come up in different states - especially benefitting hilly and northeastern states with high potential for such projects. It will support 51 lakh person days of employment during the project construction and will also enable employment in the maintenance and operation of these SHPs, which will come up in largely rural and remote locations. In the northeast and in districts with an international border, Central financial assistance to the tune of Rs 3.6 crore per MW or 30 per cent of the project cost, whichever is lower, with an

upper limit of Rs 30 crore per project, will be available. In other states, Rs 2.4 crore per MW or 20 per cent of project cost, whichever is lower, with a cap of Rs 20 crore per project, would be available. This will help in tapping the small hydro potential in remote and difficult-to-reach locations. According to the Cabinet, an amount of Rs 2,532 crore has been earmarked for such projects. This is likely to bring in Rs 15,000 crore of investment in the small hydro sector, giving a boost to the clean energy initiative, investment in remote and rural areas and creating significant employment opportunities.

Rajasthan, Bengal lag in providing tap water to schools, Anganwadis, says Parl committee

NEW DELHI: Observing that Rajasthan and West Bengal are lagging in providing tap water to schools and Anganwadis, a parliamentary standing committee has asked the Centre to coordinate with these states to expedite the work and enhance coverage.



In its report, the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Water Resources noted that the provision of tap water connections in institutions such as schools, Anganwadi centres and Ashramshalas is a key component of the Jal Jeevan Mission, with a direct impact on children's health, learning capacity and overall well-being.

As of February 11, 2026, potable tap water supply has been provided to 9,23,297 (89.62 per cent) schools and 9,66,876 (85.60 per cent) Anganwadis centres across the country, the committee said on Tuesday.

However, the panel found that in some states, especially Rajasthan, the pace of work needs to be expedited as only 57.75 per cent of schools have been covered with tap water.

Similarly, in West Bengal, only 41,895 out of 1,11,074 Anganwadis (37.72 per cent) have been provided with tap water connections, while in Rajasthan, the coverage stands at 53.67 per cent for Anganwadis.

In view of the low coverage in these institutions, the committee urged the Department of Drinking Water and

Sanitation to work in coordination with the lagging states, noting that children are particularly vulnerable to water-borne illnesses and spend a significant amount of time in schools and Anganwadis.

The committee also expressed concern over the time taken in getting the approval for a renewed budgetary outlay under the Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM), noting that no renewed budgetary provisions for actual expenditure have been made to JJM since March 2024 due to pending cabinet approval.

It said states have taken up 6.83 lakh schemes costing Rs 8.07 lakh crore, and stressed that the implementation of such a major programme cannot

be left entirely to states, many of which face financial constraints. The panel urged the department to make concerted efforts to obtain approval on an urgent basis.

The committee also took cognisance of the key findings of the assessment of the reports submitted by central nodal officers (CNOs) which indicated that state-specific policies or practices are leading to technically inconsistent and economically inefficient designs.

It also pointed to serious findings of CNOs, including instances in Manipur and Gujarat where schemes and water supply assets reported on paper were not found on the ground.

The committee called for strengthening

monitoring mechanisms and taking disciplinary action against those responsible.

The panel further noted that only about 52 per cent of sanctioned schemes under JJM have been completed so far. It said states such as West Bengal, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh and Kerala are lagging behind in providing tap connections to a large number of rural households, and urged the department to work closely with states to address bottlenecks and ensure timely implementation.

Highlighting the low contribution under the Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), the committee urged the department to take up the matter with the Ministries of Finance and Corporate Affairs to frame appropriate policies or amend existing rules to incentivise corporates, including startups, to contribute to JJM and Swachh Bharat Mission (SBM) (Gramin).

The committee also recommended that the Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) be requested to conduct a performance audit of the Swachh Bharat Mission (Gramin), noting that the scheme has been extended till March 2027 and such an exercise would help identify deficiencies at various levels and improve its long-term sustainability.

Assembly polls: Congress leader announces to contest as rebel in K C Venugopal's home turf

ALAPPUZHA: A district Congress leader on Wednesday revolted in AICC General Secretary K C Venugopal's home turf, Alappuzha, over the party's candidates' list for the upcoming Assembly polls and announced that he will contest as an independent in the key Kuttanad constituency.

Venugopal represents the Alappuzha constituency in the Lok Sabha.

As the grand-old party is busy finalising its candidates list for the April 9 polls, its DCC vice president Saji Joseph on Wednesday resigned from the party in this coastal district and announced he would contest as an independent candidate from the Kuttanad Assembly constituency.

The leadership's decision to give the Kuttanad seat to the UDF ally, Kerala Congress (Joseph) faction, against the reported request of the local Congress leaders and workers, irked Joseph and those who support him.

Addressing a press conference here, he said that there had been per-

sistent demands within the Congress here to reclaim the Kuttanad seat and field a party candidate there.

Declaring himself a rebel candidate, Joseph said he would take on the official UDF nominee in the upcoming polls scheduled for April 9 as a mark of protest.

The press conference also witnessed emotional scenes as the leader broke down while speaking about his long association with the Congress, stating that he had been part of the movement "since birth" and had made significant sacrifices for the party.

He maintained that he had never shied away from agitations, including police action during protests. However, Joseph said his decision to contest was driven by the need to protect the "self-respect" of the people of Kuttanad.

Calling it a fight against "two major financial forces," Joseph admitted that he faces serious financial constraints in mounting his campaign but expressed confidence in securing a decisive vic-

tory. He further claimed that several party workers and leaders would quit the Congress and join him in his campaign.

Ruling out any possibility of withdrawing from the contest, Joseph also expressed sadness over leaving the Grand Old Party.

Earlier in the day, Saji Joseph hit hard at the leadership of both the Congress-led UDF and CPI (M)-headed LDF in a Facebook post.

In the FB post, he alleged that both the UDF and the LDF have reduced Kuttanad to a "commodity" for wealthy interests, ignoring the region's pressing issues while selecting candidates for the Assembly elections.

He criticised the UDF for what he described as "sacrificing Kuttanad before financial powers" despite claims of fighting for justice for the area.

"The people of Kuttanad will never forgive the UDF and LDF leadership for treating the region as a mere object for political and financial transactions," the leader alleged.

'33 per cent of MP budget still unutilised, but govt taking loans'

BHOPAL: The Congress on Wednesday criticised the BJP government in Madhya Pradesh, accusing it of taking loan after loan while failing to spend the budgeted amount on time.

While only 12 days remain in the current financial year, the government has still not spent "33 per cent of its budget, or nearly Rs 1.1 lakh crore", claimed former leader of opposition Ajay Singh.

The government is now preparing to "dispose" of this huge amount in a haphazard manner in the last fortnight, he said. "This is a clear sign of wastage of public money and corruption," said Singh.

The state's economic condition is so dire that in the past week alone, the government has taken new loans worth Rs 9,900 crore, he said.

In a statement, he claimed that the state's total debts have exceeded Rs 5.1 lakh crore, and that every citizen will face a heavy debt burden in the future.

NITI Aayog itself has raised questions about the MP government's "rising borrowings and low revenue col-

lection", claimed the Congress leader.

Singh said, "The government's failure to fully utilise the budget, even in crucial departments like agriculture and health, reflects its administrative failure."

Development work remains "stalled" throughout the year, and a race to "spend the budget" begins in the last days of March, said Singh, demanding that the government issue a white paper and explain why the public is being pushed into such a situation.

He claimed that priority departments such as health, public works, agriculture, and renewable energy have averaged nearly 60 per cent of their respective budget allocations.

Meanwhile, the Communist Party of India (Marxist) claimed that the state borrowed Rs 4,100 crore on March 17th, "its third such loan this month". The state took loans of Rs 6,300 crore and Rs 5,800 crore on March 3 and March 10, respectively, the CPI (M) said.

CPM state secretary Jaswinder Singh said the Mo-

han Yadav government has "set a new record of loans, if not of development".

He said, "The BJP government has bankrupted the state to the point where it doesn't even have enough money to run the administration for a month. And it is so directionless that it lacks even a single month's plan, which is why it has to beg for loans three times in a single month."

The people of the state will have to bear the brunt of the BJP government's "directionlessness and corrupt policies", said the Left leader.

Speaking to PTI, BJP spokesperson Neha Bagga said that only a state with credibility in the country receives such loans.

"The state government has credibility, which is why it is receiving loans. It is also consistently repaying the loans. The state government is using this money for various welfare schemes."

She said the Congress should explain whether its governments in Telangana and Himachal Pradesh are running without loans.

Appellate courts must carefully re-appreciate evidence while altering findings in accident cases: Supreme Court

NEW DELHI: Appellate courts must carefully re-appreciate evidence and give clear reasons before altering the findings and compensation awarded by the Motor Accident Claim Tribunals in accident cases governed by welfare legislation, the Motor Vehicles Act, the Supreme Court said on Wednesday.

The observations were made by the top court in a judgement by which it enhanced the compensation awarded to a former manager from Rs 35.61 lakh to Rs 97.73 lakh in a road accident case.

"Before parting with the

matter, we deem it appropriate to reiterate that when an appellate court interferes with findings of fact duly recorded by the Motor Accidents Claims Tribunal (MACT), particularly on issues such as assessment of disability and loss of earning capacity, it is incumbent upon it to undertake a thorough re-appreciation of the evidence and to assign cogent, clear and convincing reasons for departing from the conclusions arrived at by the MACT," a bench comprising Justices Prashant Kumar Mishra and Sandeep Mehta said. Justice Mehta, who au-

thored the judgement, said that such an obligation is more on appellate courts in proceedings under the Motor Vehicles Act, 1988, "which is a beneficial and welfare-oriented legislation enacted with the object of ensuring expeditious relief and just compensation to victims of motor accidents and their families."

The bench said the statutory framework is designed to advance social justice and to provide solace and financial security to those who suffer on account of road accidents.

"Any interference with a reasoned award of the Motor Accidents Claims Tribunal

must, therefore, be consistent with the spirit and object of the enactment and supported by sound judicial reasoning," the verdict said.

The top court set aside a 2022 order by the Madras High Court which had drastically reduced the victim's compensation and held that severe cognitive impairment and brain injuries should be treated as 100 per cent "functional disability" when they prevent a victim from performing their professional duties.

In the instant case, appellant R Halle was working as a manager at a logistics firm in

Chennai when he met with a head-on motorcycle collision on May 5, 2016.

The accident resulted in a severe head injury, facial fractures, and a broken femur. While the MACT initially awarded him Rs 65.53 lakh based on a 63 per cent physical disability, the Madras High Court later slashed this to Rs 35.61 lakh, reducing his functional disability to just 30 per cent.

The top court rejected the high court's approach and noted that it had "abruptly concluded" the disability was lower without analyzing the medical evidence.

Properties worth Rs 650 Cr restored to over 2,300 homebuyers in SRS Group case

NEW DELHI: A Special PMLA Court in Gurugram has ordered the restitution of immovable properties worth Rs 650 crore to 2,312 genuine homebuyers in connection with a money laundering case against the SRS Group, being investigated by the Enforcement Directorate (ED).

The restored properties include flats and plots across various SRS Group projects, including SRS City, SRS Pearl Floor, SRS Pearl Tower, SRS Residency, SRS Royal Hills, SRS Prime Floor, SRS Pearl Unity, SRS Affordable Housing Project, SRS Pearl Height, and SRS Retreat Farms.

The ED initiated its probe under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) based on 81 First Information Reports registered

under various sections of the Indian Penal Code at police stations across Faridabad and Delhi, as well as by the CBI. The SRS Group is accused of allegedly cheating investors and banks to the tune of Rs 2,200 crore. The group operated in real estate and financing, and its promoters allegedly committed offences including fraud, criminal conspiracy, cheating, and criminal breach of trust by diverting and misappropriating funds belonging to homebuyers, plot buyers, banks, and other financial institutions. According to the ED investigation, the accused entities of SRS Group allegedly lured investors with promises of high returns in residential and commercial projects. Funds collected



from investors were routed through hundreds of shell companies created by the group and subsequently laundered.

The ED had earlier attached assets worth Rs 2,215.98 crore in the case and

filed a chargesheet before the Special PMLA Court in Gurugram. The court took cognizance of the chargesheet in 2022 and framed charges against the accused.

This latest development paves the way for further

restoration of attached properties to other genuine homebuyers and legitimate claimants, including banks and financial institutions. It marks a significant step in securing justice for investors affected by the alleged fraud.

Will election be concluded before panchayats' tenure expires, HC asks UP poll body

PRAYAGRAJ: The Allahabad High Court has asked the State Election Commission (SEC) in Uttar Pradesh to file an affidavit stating whether it is in a position to conclude the panchayat polls in accordance with the mandate of Article 243E of the Constitution.

The court pointed out that according to the mandate under the article, the poll process has to be completed on or before May 26.

Article 243E establishes a fixed five-year term for panchayats from their first meeting.

The order was passed by a bench of Justices Atul Sreedharan and Siddharth Nandan

on a write petition filed by Imtiaz Husain. The petitioner has moved the court with a prayer seeking directions to the SEC to place on record a detailed time-bound schedule for the completion of the entire panchayat poll process well before the expiry of the district panchayat's tenure.

Fixing March 25 for the next hearing in the matter, the court, in its order dated March 13, said, "It is expected from Respondent No.2 (SEC) that the entire schedule for holding the election should be finalised and brought on record before the next date of listing."

"We also request the state to ensure that on the

next date, either the learned advocate general or the learned additional advocate general may appear and apprise the court on the aforesaid issue," the bench added.

The petitioner has submitted before the court that according to the mandate of Article 243E, the duration of a panchayat shall be for five years from the date of its first meeting and "no longer".

He has further submitted that the date appointed for the first meeting for all the gram panchayats in the state was May 27, 2021, and accordingly, the five-year period comes to an end on May 26, 2026.

Auto driver shot at in Delhi, accused at large

NEW DELHI: A 30-year-old auto driver was shot at allegedly by two motorcycle-borne assailants in south Delhi's Neb Sarai area on Wednesday afternoon over prior enmity, police said.

The incident took place around 4 pm when the victim, identified as Bunt, sustained a gunshot injury to his hand and was rushed to a hospital, where he is undergoing treatment,



they said.

Two assailants arrived on a motorcycle and opened fire at the victim before fleeing the spot. One of the accused has been identified, and efforts are underway to apprehend him.

Preliminary investigation suggests that the attack was a result of prior enmity, the police said. A case has been registered and further investigation is in progress.

Acid attack on minor girl raised in Maha legislature

MUMBAI: An alleged acid attack on a Class 6 girl student in Sangamner prompted the Congress to slam the Maharashtra government in the legislative assembly on Wednesday, alleging deterioration in law and order in the state.

The matter also came up in the legislative council.

Replying to the issue raised by independent member Satyajit Tambe, Minister of State (Home) Pankaj Bhojar said the incident took place outside D K More Janta Vidyalaya in Ahilyanagar district.

Terming the incident serious and unfortunate, Bhojar said instructions have been given to the police to conduct a thorough probe.

When asked how the accused got the acid, Bhojar said it is available in school laboratories. The minister said police are working on ways to prevent such incidents, and a committee will be formed to deliberate on the matter.

Calling the acid attack extremely disturbing, Congress legislature party leader Vijay Wadetiwar targeted the government in

the assembly and accused it of failing to curb crimes against women and minor girls.

Raising the issue through an adjournment motion, Wadetiwar demanded an immediate discussion, claiming that the minor is in a serious condition and the accused are yet to be arrested.

He questioned how the accused managed to flee after committing such a serious offence. The Congress leader also criticised the functioning of the local police, alleging inefficiency and corruption, and said such lapses



embolden criminals.

Wadetiwar further claimed that incidents of atrocities against minor girls have increased in the state, and the government has failed to take effective action.

Speaker Rahul Narwekar took note of the issue and directed the government to present a detailed statement in the House on the incident at the earliest.

Congress member Nana Patole demanded that the girl be brought to Mumbai and given better medical care for free.

AIM TO PRODUCE 25,000 MW OF RENEWABLE ENERGY IN THE NEXT 5 YEARS: GAURAV GUPTA



Energy Minister Mr. K.J. George and Revenue Minister, Mr. Krishna Byre Gowda have simplified land acquisition processes and created a special online portal for investors and farmers to facilitate land conversion. Investors can discuss with farmers and register online for land conversion post which renewable energy projects can be initiated".

T.D. Rajegowda, MLA and Chairman of KREDL, praised the government's initiatives, including the "Chief Minister's Solar Agriculture Scheme".

He stated "Karnataka has been in the forefront in Renewable Energy and achieved many awards and accolades at the national level. The Chief Minister's Solar Agriculture Scheme" announced by Hon'ble CM which combines agriculture and renewable energy is a remarkable project ". The event featured discussions on various aspects of renewable energy, attended by Mr. K.P. Rudrapaiiah, Managing Director, KREDL, Mr. Karthik Ganesan, Director, CEEW and other senior officials of the department and industry representatives.

Development Corporation Ltd (KREDL) and Council on Energy, Environment and Water (CEEW), Gaurav Gupta said, "We need to achieve the target of 25,000 MW with the cooperation of investors and people."

Gupta highlighted the challenges in land acquisition for renewable energy projects, saying, "People are concerned about the impact on their livelihoods, and investors see this as a hurdle. We need to educate people that renewable energy is crucial for the country's development."

He added that the Hon'ble Chief Minister, Mr. Siddaramaiah along with

DKM Shivakumar Urges Centre to Review Building Height Limits Around Bengaluru Airports

New Delhi: In a move aimed at easing congestion and unlocking the city's development potential, Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar has appealed to the Union Aviation Minister to review and increase the height restrictions for buildings around Kempe Gowda International Airport, Jakkur aerodrome, Yelahanka Air base, and HAL airport.

Speaking to reporters after meeting Union Aviation Minister Ram Mohan Naidu in New Delhi, Shivakumar highlighted the disparity between Bengaluru and other metropolitan cities. "Hyderabad, Mumbai, and other cities have higher building height limits. We are seeking parity for Bengaluru. Builders are hesitating to purchase Premium FAR due to these limitations, which is becoming a hindrance for the city's development," he



said. The Deputy Chief Minister expressed optimism after the discussion, noting that the Union Minister assured he would take up the matter with the Defence Minister. "Our officials have had discussions with HAL. I will also meet

the Defence Minister personally to push for this, as it is crucial for Bengaluru's growth," Shivakumar added. He was accompanied by Minister Bose Raju and the Government's Special Representative in Delhi, T.B. Jayachandra.

Karnataka Seeks Early Approval for Rs.3,052 Crore Projects Under PMKSY and RRR; Centre Responds Positively



New Delhi / Bengaluru : Karnataka has sought expedited approval for irrigation projects worth Rs.3,052 crore under the Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana (PMKSY) and Repair, Renovation and Restoration (RRR) schemes, with the Union Government indicating a positive response, said Minister N.S. Boseraju. During his visit to New Delhi, the Minister submitted a memorandum to Union Minister of State for Jal Shakti V. Somanna, urging early clearance of proposals that are currently pending at various stages within the Ministry. "The State Government has already committed its 40% share of funding in the budget, while the remaining 60% is expected from the Centre. We have requested early approvals to fast-track implementation, and the response from the Union Minister has been encouraging," Boseraju said. Push for Airport Development and Regional Connectivity In a parallel development, Deputy Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar, along with Minister Boseraju, held discussions with Union Civil Aviation Minister Kinjarapu Ram Mohan Naidu on key aviation infrastructure projects in Karnataka.

Flooding on Outer Ring Road Largely Resolved Through Comprehensive Lake Development: Chief Commissioner Maheshwar Rao

Bengaluru: The persistent flooding issues on the Outer Ring Road, particularly in the Hebbal-Nagawara region, are set to be largely resolved with the comprehensive development of Hebbal and Nagawara lakes. Chief Commissioner Maheshwar Rao, after inspecting the ongoing works, directed officials to expedite and complete the projects at the earliest.

The development works, being carried out under the Bengaluru North City Corporation limits, aim to address the severe waterlogging that leads to heavy traffic congestion on the Outer Ring Road during the monsoon. Rao noted that innovative wetlands are being developed over 16 acres each in both lakes, designed to store water up to a depth of about 1.5 meters. This will



enhance water storage capacity and ensure that silt and waste are retained within the wetland area, which can be periodically removed to maintain clean lake water. Flooding Issue Largely Resolved: At Hebbal Lake, the construction of inlets and wetlands will significantly reduce flooding in Bhadrappa Layout and surrounding Outer Ring Road areas. Similarly, at

Nagawara Lake, the wetland development will help address waterlogging at Veerannapalya Junction and nearby Outer Ring Road stretches. Adoption of Nature-Based Solutions: Officials were instructed to implement nature-based solutions to improve water quality in the lakes. Plantation of species capable of absorbing and purifying wastewater is being planned

Clear Pending Bills Immediately, Directs BNCC Commissioner Pommala Sunil Kumar

Bengaluru : Commissioner Pommala Sunil Kumar has directed officials to take immediate steps to clear all pending bills under the Bengaluru North City Corporation (BNCC). He emphasized that timely payments would strengthen coordination, trust, and efficiency between the Corporation and its contractors, agencies, and suppliers.

The Commissioner chaired a high-level meeting at his office to review the status of pending bill payments. Officials from various divisions presented detailed reports on outstanding bills related to their respective departments. Discussions were held regarding payments to outsourced staff, contractor bills, and other financial liabilities. The Commissioner instructed concerned officials to clear all dues on a priority basis.



Directions on GAIL Gas Applications: A separate meeting was also held with officials from GAIL Gas regarding road cutting and related works. It was noted that the agency had submitted 58 applications seeking permission

rules. Weekly Review Meeting Instituted: To ensure continuous monitoring, the Commissioner announced that a regular review meeting will be held every Wednesday under his chairmanship to track the status of pending bills and ensure timely payments. The meeting was attended by Additional Commissioner (Development) Smt. Latha, Joint Commissioners Sri Mohammed Naem Momin and Smt. Pallavi, Chief Engineers Sri Raghavendra Prasad and Smt. Yamuna, Deputy Controllers and Assistant Controllers of the Finance Department, Executive Engineers of all divisions, and other concerned officials.

Meeting with Recognized Political Parties on Voter List and Election Preparedness



Bengaluru: A meeting was held with representatives of recognized political parties under the chairmanship of Dr. Rajendra K V, Commissioner of Bengaluru West City Corporation and Additional District Election Officer (ADEO), regarding voter list revision and election preparedness. During the meeting, discussions were held with representatives of recognized political parties on matters related to the preparation of the voter list. The Commissioner instructed the Electoral Registration Officers to take necessary actions in accordance with the standards prescribed by the State Election Commission.

The Commissioner informed that the list containing details of all polling stations will be provided to political parties. He also stated that the objections submitted by political party representatives will be examined as per rules and appropriate action will be taken. Further steps will be carried out in accordance with the guidelines of the State Election Commission. On this occasion, representatives of recognized political parties, Joint Commissioners

L&T Finance Limited
(erstwhile, L&T Finance Holdings Limited)
Registered Office: L&T Finance Limited, Brindavan Building Plot No. 177, Kalina, CST Road, Near Mercedes Showroom Santacruz (East), Mumbai 400 098
CIN No.: L67120MH2008PLC181833
Branch office: Kerala

L&T Finance

PUBLIC AUCTION FOR SALE OF MORTGAGED PROPERTY

The Authorised Officer of L&T Finance Limited under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 [54 of 2002] and in exercise of powers conferred under the said Act is auctioning the following property on "AS IS WHERE IS BASIS" and "AS IS WHAT IS CONDITION" by way of "PUBLIC AUCTION" for recovery of its dues and further interest, charges and costs etc.

Name of Borrower and Co-Borrower	Secured Property Address	Loan Account Number(s)	Physical Possession taken	Earnest Money Deposit 10% or more of RP (in ₹)	Secured Debt	Reserve Price (in ₹)	Date of Inspection	Date and Time of Auction
1. Deepesh Kumar 2. Neethu Shajan	All The Piece And Parcel Of The Property Address: Sy. No. 228/23A/55-2 Admeasuring 1.40 Ares Together With Building Bearing Door No. CC 34548, in Cochin Corporation And Along With Right To Use 3.6-Meter-Wide Private Road At The North West Side Of The Subject Property And All Other Rights Therein, Situated At Edappally South Village, Taluk Kanayannur, Sub District Edappally, Desom, Elamakkara, District Ernakulam.	H0564919 05230242 21 H0564919 05230242 21L	20-02-2026	Rs. 6,60,000/-	As per Demand Notice dated 13-08-2024 Total outstanding dues is Rs. 54,11,362.61/- As On Date 09-08-2024.	Rs. 66,00,000.00/-	on 22/04/2026 from 12:30 A.M to 5:00 P.M with prior appointment nt.	29/04/2026 from 12:30 P.M. to 2:00 P.M
	North Road South Property Of Dilshad							
	Boundaries East Property Of Dilshad And Road West Road							

TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF PUBLIC AUCTION

- The E-auction Sale is being conducted online by the Authorised Officer through the website <https://sarfaesi.auctiontiger.net/EPROC/> under the provisions of SARFAESI Act with the aid and through public e-auction mode.
- The public E-auction will be conducted on the date and time mentioned herein above, when the secured asset/s mentioned above will be sold on "AS IS WHERE IS BASIS" & "AS IS WHAT IS CONDITION".
- For participating in the public E-auction, intending purchasers/bidders will have to submit the details of payment of refundable Earnest Money Deposit of 10% of the reserve price of the secured assets along with copies of the PANCARD, Board Resolutions in case of company and Address Proof on or before 28/04/2026.
- The EMD of all other bidders who did not succeed in the public E-auction will be refunded by LTF within 7 days of the closure of the public E-auction. The EMD will not carry any interest.
- The successful purchaser/bidder shall deposit the 25% (inclusive of EMD) of his/its offer by way of by way of D.D./P. O favoring "L&T Finance Limited" payable at Mumbai on or before 18:00 hours on 29/04/2026 i.e., day of e-auction or on the next working day i.e., 30/04/2026, which deposit will have to be confirmed by L&T Finance Limited, failing which the sale will be deemed have been failed and the EMD of the said successful bidder shall be forfeited. The balance amount i.e., 75% of purchase price payable shall be paid by the purchaser to L&T Finance Limited on or before the fifteenth day of confirmation of sale of immovable property or such extended period as per provisions of law.
- For inspection of property or more information, the prospective bidders may contact The Authorised officer **L&T Finance Ltd, Brindavan, Plot no. 177, CST Road, Kalina, Santacruz (East), Mumbai - 400 098, Maharashtra, India, Contact No. 0222-68076666**. At any stage of the E-auction, the Authorised Officer may accept/reject/modify/cancel the bid/offer or post-pone the E-auction without assigning any reason thereof and without any prior notice.
- The successful purchaser/bidder shall bear any statutory dues, taxes, fees payable, stamp duty, registration fees, etc. that is required to be paid in order to get the property conveyed/delivered in his/her favour as per the applicable law.
- The Borrower/Guarantors, who are liable for the said outstanding dues, shall treat this Sale Notice as a notice under Rule 8 (6) of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, about the holding of above-mentioned public E-auction sale.
- The Borrower (s)/Co-Borrower(s)/Guarantor(s)/Mortgagor(s) are hereby called up on to pay the entire loan outstanding dues as mentioned above before the said E-auction date failing which the L & Finance Ltd shall sale the property as per the provisions laid down in the SARFAESI ACT, 2002.
- The Borrower (s) Co-Borrower(s)/Guarantor(s)/Mortgagor(s) public at large are hereby restrained from transferring by way of sale, lease or otherwise with the secured assets referred to in the notice without prior written consent of L&T Finance Limited.

Date: 19.03.2026
Place: Kerala

Sd/-
Authorized Officer
For L&T Finance Limited

Ensure Proper Connectivity to Shoulder Drains to Prevent Water Stagnation on Roads - Lokhande Snehal Sudhakar

Bengaluru : Additional Commissioner (Development) Lokhande Snehal Sudhakar visited and conducted a comprehensive inspection of ongoing road and infrastructure works across major roads, sub-arterial roads, and ward-level roads within the Bengaluru East City Corporation limits. The inspection focused on progress, quality, and pre-monsoon preparedness, and necessary technical directions were issued to the officials. Key Locations and Status of Works HAL Main Road to Outer Ring Road Stretch - Under the Chief Minister's Infrastructure Development Programme (CMDIP), comprehensive development works including road improvement, drainage system upgrades, and footpath development are in progress. Officials were instructed to complete the works within the stipulated timeline.

Doddanekkundi Near Rama Temple - White topping works under the Nagarothana Grant were inspected. Officials were directed to strictly follow proper curing and finishing practices to ensure durability and quality of the road.

Aswath Nagar, AECS Layout - Ward-level works

including road development, repairs, asphaltting, and drainage improvements are underway. Instructions were given to complete the works at the earliest with high quality standards. Technical Directions and Encroachment Management - Officials were instructed to immediately remove all encroachments on footpaths and ensure safe and obstruction-free pedestrian movement. Drainage and Desilting Works - After clearing encroachments, desilting of drains should be taken up immediately, and proper gradient should be ensured for smooth flow of rainwater. Road Shoulders and Drain Connectivity - To prevent water stagnation on roads, officials were directed to ensure proper connectivity of rainwater to shoulder drains and to install gratings on road-side drains to prevent solid waste from entering the drainage system.

Solid Waste Management - The waste transfer point near Doddanekkundi Circle was found to be causing environmental and public health concerns due to leachate issues. Officials were instructed to relocate the transfer station immediately.

MANAPPURAM HOME FINANCE LIMITED
FORMERLY MANAPPURAM HOME FINANCE PVT LTD
Registered Office: 8/596 A, Padmanabha Building, Near Sreevaraha Swami Temple, Cherpuzha - Thrissur Road, Thrissur, Thrissur, Kerala 680567 | Phone No.: 0487-3520504, Website: www.manappuramhomefin.com

DEMAND NOTICE

Whereas the Authorized Officer of Manappuram Home Finance Ltd., having our registered office at 8/596 A, Padmanabha Building, Near Sreevaraha Swami Temple, Cherpuzha - Thrissur Road, Thrissur, Thrissur, Kerala 680567 and branches at various places in India (hereinafter referred to as "MAHOFIN") is a Company registered under the Companies Act, 1956 and a Financial Institution within the meaning of sub-clause (iv) of clause (m) of sub-section (1) of Section 2 of the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 (hereinafter referred to as the Act) read with Notification No. S.O. 3486 (E) dated 18th December, 2015 issued by the Government of India, Department of Financial Services, Ministry of Finance, New Delhi, inter alia carrying on business of advancing loans for construction and / or purchase of dwelling units and whereas the Borrower / Co-Borrowers as mentioned in Column No. 2 of the below mentioned chart obtained loan from MAHOFIN and whereas MAHOFIN being the secured creditor under the SARFAESI Act, and in exercise of powers conferred under section 13(2) of the said Act read with Rule 2 of the security interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002, issued demand notice calling upon the Borrowers / Co-Borrowers as mentioned therein below, to repay the amount mentioned in the notices with further interest therein within 60 days from the date of notice, but the notices could not be served upon some of them for various reasons. That in addition thereto for the purposes of information of the said borrowers enumerated below, the said borrowers are being informed by way of this public notice.

Sl. No.	Name of the Borrower/ Co-Borrower	Description Of Secured Asset In Respect Of Which Notice is Issued	Due Date	Date of Notice Sent At Outstanding Amount
1	Mahina Bahuleyan, Rathesh P, Kunjamma P, Ponnappan T, MALAPPO1900684/ Kottayam	All That Is Part And Parcel of Property Having An Extent 1.60 Ares of Land In Sy. No. 236/4A-1, Block No. 1, Re. Sy. No. 2022/1 Situate At Village Karachi, Taluk Changanassery, District Kottayam, Kerala, Pin: 686532, East-Property of Gogonath, West-Road, South-Property of Santhosh, North-Property of Man.	14-01-2026	19-01-2026 & Rs. 294977/-
2	Soumya V, Bineesh V, MAL0808013569/ Attingal	Total Area Measuring 1.162 Ares of Land, Re Survey No. 241/9/2/3, Block No. 017, Thandapper No. 18799, Class of Land is Dry Land, Situated/Lying At Village Arattupuzha, Taluk Karmalappally, District Alappuzha, Kerala, Pin: 690555, East-Property of Chalkalakkal, West-Kochu Chalkalakkal, South-Property of Kochcheparambil & Road, North-Property of Man.	15-01-2026	19-01-2026 & Rs. 473854/-
3	Sneha S, Asif A, Beena Shafi, MALAPPO1900777/ Attingal	Total Area Measuring 1.21 Ares of Land, Re Survey No. 309/15/2/2, Block No. 11, Thandapper No. 31268, Class Of Land is Dry Land, Situated/Lying At Village Thazhava, Taluk Karunagappally, District Kottayam, Kerala, Pin: 690523, East-Property Of Nadeera Bevi, West-Property of Sudheer, South-Property of Rajendra, North-Road.	19-01-2026	22-01-2026 & Rs. 1509763/-

Notice, is therefore given to the Borrowers / Co-Borrowers, as mentioned herein above, calling upon them to make payment of the total outstanding amount as shown herein above, against the respective Borrower / Co-Borrower, within 60 days of publication of this notice. Failure to make payment of the total outstanding amount together with further interest by the respective Borrower/ Co-Borrower, MAHOFIN shall be constrained to take up 13(4) for enforcement of security interest upon properties as described above, steps are also being taken for service of notice in other manners as prescribed under the Act and the rules made hereunder. You are put to notice that the said mortgage can be redeemed upon payment of the entire amount due together with costs, charges and expenses incurred by MAHOFIN at any time before the date of publication of notice for public auction or private treaty for transfer by way of sale, as detailed in Section 13(8) of the SARFAESI Act.

The secured asset described below is being sold on "AS IS WHERE IS, AS IS WHAT IS AND WHATEVER THERE IS" under Rule No. 8 & 9 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules ("the Rules") for recovery of the dues detailed as under - **Particulars of E-auction.**

Date: 19th March 2026 | Place: KERALA
Sd/- Authorized Officer Manappuram Home Finance Ltd

BAJAJ FINANCE LIMITED
REGISTERED OFFICE : Bajaj Auto Limited Complex, Mahabal - Pune Road, Akurdi, Pune - 411035. BRANCH OFFICE : Bajaj Finance Ltd, 1st Floor, Aurum Park Complex, Patturakkal Junction, Thrissur, Kerala-680022. Authorized Officer's Details: Name: M. Anjith P.K. Email: id. anjith.pkb@bajajfinance.in Mob No. 9702222373

APPENDIX - IV A (See proviso to rule 8 (6))
Public Sale Notice Under SARFAESI ACT 2002

Sale of Immovable Assets Under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 ("ACT")

Notice is hereby given to the public in general and to the Borrowers/Co-Borrowers/Mortgagor(s) in respect of below mentioned secured asset which is mortgaged with Bajaj Finance Limited ("BFL"), and possession of which had been taken by undersigned Authorized Officer of BFL under the provisions of the ACT will be sold by Auction for recovery of the amount mentioned hereunder and further applicable interest, charges, and costs etc.

The secured asset described below is being sold on "AS IS WHERE IS, AS IS WHAT IS AND WHATEVER THERE IS" under Rule No. 8 & 9 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules ("the Rules") for recovery of the dues detailed as under - **Particulars of E-auction.**

Name & Address of Borrower & Co-Borrower's	SMART PROPRIETOR/AUTHORISED SIGNATORY/MANAGING DIRECTOR	(BORROWER)	(THROUGH)	ITS
	PRASANNAKUMARAN K (CO-BORROWER), AT : 5/274 A, KANNANKUMARATHI PUDUSSERY CHERUTHURUTHY P O TRICHUR, 676511			
	SARITHA NAR (CO-BORROWER), AT : KANNANKUMARATHI CHERUTHURUTHY P O TRICHUR, 676511			
	CHERUTHURUTHY P O TRICHUR, 676511			
	NO.36 (OLD SY NO 693/1) AN EXTENT OF 5.26 ARES IN MULLURKARRA VILLETTE THALAPALLY TALUK THRISSUR TRICHUR KERALA - 680583			

Loan Account Number 4360H128249322

Statutory Demand Notice (s/s. 13(2) Date & Amount Notice dated 21-Jan-23 Demand amount ₹. 54,68,821/-

Outstanding Amount as on 12.03.2026 ₹73,48,422.92/- (Rupees Seventy-Three Lakh Forty-Eight Thousand Four Hundred and Twenty-Two and Ninety-Two Paise Only) as on 12/03/26

Description of Immoveable Property ALL THAT PIECE AND PARCEL OF THE NON-AGRICULTURAL PROPERTY DESCRIBED AS - AN EXTENT OF 5.26 ARES (12.89 CENTS) RE SY NO 8/3 IN BLOCK NO 36 (OLD SY NO 693/1) IN MULLURKARRA VILLETTE THALAPALLY TALUK THRISSUR TRICHUR KERALA - 680583. EAST - PROPERTY OF SIDIQ PALLIPARAMBIL, WEST - PROPERTY OF ABDUL NORTH - PANCHAYATH ROAD, SOUTH - PROPERTY OF PALLIPARAMBIL, FATHIMA AND SIDIQ.

Reserve Price in INR ₹ 42,00,000/-
EMD ₹ 4,20,000/-

E-auction date and time 21/04/26 3:00 pm to 5:00 pm
E-auction Portal <https://bankauctions.in>
Last date of submission of EMD 20/04/26
Bid Increment Amount in Rs. ₹ 25,000/-
Encumbrance Known to Secured Creditor Not Known
Date of Inspection of Property From 14/03/26 to 20/04/26 on working day between 9.30 AM to 5.30 PM with Prior appointment

Public in General and Borrowers in particular please take notice that if in case auction on date scheduled herein fails for any reason whatsoever then secured creditor may enforce security interest by way of sale through private treaty, at the discretion on of the secured creditor. For detailed terms and conditions of sale, please refer to the link <https://www.bajajfinance.in/sarfaesi-auction-notices>

Date: 19/03/26, Place: TRICHUR
Authorized Officer, For M/S BAJAJ FINANCE LIMITED

EDITORIAL

The Key Templates That Defined India's Op Sindoor

Operation Sindoor, the 88-hour 'mini-war' between India and Pakistan in May last year, came to redefine modern aerial conflict in ways that are now evident in the ongoing war being fought in the Middle East.

While my recently published book, *The Sky Warriors: Operation Sindoor Redefined*, focuses on first-person accounts of the Indian Air Force's (IAF) war fighters between May 7 and May 10 last year, the conflict itself can be seen through the prism of five key templates that this article lists, along with small excerpts from the book.

Air combat fought between fighter jets or by surface-to-air missile systems targeting fighters is increasingly premised on ultra-long-range weapons. Air-to-air or surface-to-air engagements, which could reliably take place at ranges no more than 100 km in the last decade, are now being fought at ranges beyond 400 km. During Op Sindoor, Russian-built S-400 surface-to-air missile systems operated by the IAF from Adampur proved to be decisive in engaging Pakistani airborne targets, in the process swinging the conflict decisively in India's favour.

On October 7, shortly after the IAF and Indian Army struck terror camps in Pakistan and Pakistan-occupied Kashmir, Group Captain Animesh Patni, who went on to be honoured with a Vir Chakra, helmed one of the firing units of the S-400. With missiles flying across the international border, Patni knew he could be called into action in minutes. He was. Patni was ordered to fire. Weapons free, engage targets. It was a scenario that he had trained for time and time again, but always with his formidable weapons system in safe mode - the missiles would not leave their launchers. The radars and systems would simulate incoming threats. And kills would not be real. But this was the real deal."

In *The Sky Warriors*, I describe just how Patni and the officers and men under his command ended up bringing down a PAF Airborne Early Warning or Electronic Warning aircraft at a range of more than 400 km. No Air Force is believed to have shot down an enemy aircraft at this range.

The Vital Role of Integrated Electronic Warfare (EW)

Operation Sindoor demonstrated that modern air warfare is all about managing the electromagnetic spectrum - the strategic control of radio, radar, and infrared waves to ensure your own communications and sensors work while simultaneously blinding, jamming, or "listening" to those of the adversary. Aircraft equipped with advanced internal EW suites, such as the Rafale's SPECTRA system, were able to operate within highly contested "bubbles" by jamming enemy fire-control radars and spoofing incoming missiles. In the book, I write in detail about the role of SPECTRA in protecting IAF Rafales from enemy air-to-air and surface-to-air missiles.

Group Captain Ranjeet Singh Sidhu, the Commanding Officer of a Rafale squadron who was awarded the Vir Chakra, played a key role in the IAF's attack missions.

"SPECTRA is one of the world's most advanced electronic warning suites. It ended up being a huge advantage, Pakistani radars and missiles tried to lock onto Rafales, but SPECTRA defeated them repeatedly. Yes, the adversary fired a lot of missiles, but they were defeated successfully. [It] was giving us indications [of inbound Pakistani missiles]." The basic point: electronic warfare, in all its forms, is no longer a support function. It is a primary survival tool.

Sensor Fusion and Data Link Resiliency One of the most significant technical takeaways of Operation Sindoor was the success of Sensor Fusion. Pilots who could see a unified "god's eye view" compiled from their own radar,IRST (Infra-Red Search and Track), and off-board data from Airborne Warning and ground-based sensors are likely to have performed significantly better under pressure. In a dense combat environment, processed, fused intelligence is a massive enabler, an asset, one that saves lives.

WORKPLACE, WOMEN'S HEALTH AND MENSTRUAL LEAVE

(Does a mandatory leave policy empower women or risk limiting their...)
Chiluka Sudha reddy

Menstruation is a natural biological process in women's lives, but for a long time, it was shrouded in social embarrassment, silence, and neglect. In modern times, as discussions about gender equality, inclusiveness, and sensitive workplace policies have intensified, the concept of "compulsory menstrual leave" has also become central to the discussion. Many countries and institutions have adopted policies to provide women with special leave during menstruation, allowing them to rest during times of physical discomfort and mental stress. However, the important question is whether such mandatory policies actually promote equality in the workplace, or inadvertently reinforce gender discrimination in employment. In this context, a critical analysis of this issue is necessary. First, it's important to understand that many women experience physical pain, fatigue, dizziness, or even mental stress due to hormonal changes during menstruation. This can make it difficult for them to continue working at the workplace. The primary objective of the mandatory menstrual leave policy is to protect the health and dignity of women. This policy recognizes that women have different biological needs and should be accommodated accordingly in the workplace. In this regard, this policy embodies gender sensitivity and promotes empathy and respect for women. Additionally, mandatory menstrual leave is an attempt to break the long-standing silence in workplaces, where menstruation was considered



something to be hidden or shamed. When organizations formally acknowledge this topic, it also sends a positive message at the social level that menstruation is not a weakness but a natural process. This gives women the courage to speak openly about their problems and can create a more humane and sensitive workplace environment. Some experts also believe that such policies can indirectly increase productivity in the workplace. When employees get the rest they need, they recover and work better. If a woman experiences severe pain or discomfort during menstruation and still has to work, her performance may be affected. In such cases, short-term leave can help her regain physical and mental balance. Thus, health-sensitive policies can also prove beneficial for organizations in the long run. However, it's important to consider these arguments in favor of this policy as well as its potential negative impacts. Many critics believe that

mandatory menstrual leave policies may inadvertently promote gender discrimination in employment. If an organization feels that female employees will have to take extra leave each month, it may prioritize male candidates when hiring. Especially in the private sector, where productivity and time management are highly valued, employers may begin to view women as an "additional liability." This perspective also argues that mandatory leave policies may portray women as "less competent" or "less reliable" employees. It may create the impression that women will be unavailable for work for a certain number of days each month, which could negatively impact employers' perceptions of them. As a result, women may have fewer opportunities for higher positions, leadership roles, or important projects. Thus, a policy designed to benefit women may inadvertently hinder their professional development. Another important criticism

is that not all women experience menstruation in the same way. Some women experience extreme pain during this time, while others can function normally. If leave were made mandatory, it would apply even to women who don't need it. This could send the message that every woman is unable to work during menstruation, which is not true. Therefore, many experts believe that the term "mandatory" itself could be problematic. Furthermore, it is argued that providing special leave only for women in workplaces could contradict the principle of equality. The fundamental idea of gender equality is that all employees receive equal opportunities and equal respect. Privileging one group could lead to resentment or a sense of inequality among others. While this argument may not be entirely justified, as equality does not always mean "equal treatment" but also "just treatment," it is still important to consider this perspective in policymaking.

Experiences from several countries also complicate this debate. In some places, despite having a menstrual leave policy in place, women have reduced their use because they fear it may create negative stereotypes. This illustrates that simply having a policy isn't enough; the culture and mindset of the workplace are equally important. If the organization's environment isn't sensitive and supportive, employees may hesitate to take advantage of the available benefits. In this context, some experts advocate for a "flexible and optional policy" rather than "mandatory menstrual leave." They believe that employees should be given the freedom to take leave according to their physical condition. For example, general medical leave or flexible work schedules could allow female employees to work from home or take time off when needed. Such arrangements respect individual needs and can also mitigate the problems arising from mandatory leave.

Debt Trap To Youth Exodus, The Big Crises Ailing Kerala

As Kerala moves quickly towards the 2026 Assembly elections - more quickly than anyone expected, since the Election Commission started the state by announcing polls at three weeks' notice - it has become apparent that this is a 'do or die' moment for the future of Kerala.

Today, Kerala needs change. And it is not an option but a necessity if the State is to survive as a viable economy. The current administration has failed the people of Kerala across the board. One can identify ten crises under which the state is reeling: 1. A Crippling Financial Crisis The government has pushed Kerala into a massive debt trap, borrowing money before the end of the year just to pay routine salaries and pensions. Today, our state spends more money on servicing its debt than on actual development projects. The state is currently trying to run the economy by relying solely on liquor taxes, lotteries, and remittances.

2. The Exodus of Our Youth We have created a highly educated young population, but we have failed to build an economy that can employ them. Because there are no jobs available, our brightest young minds are voting with their feet and fleeing abroad.

3. The Cost of Living Crisis The daily life of the aam admi has become unbearable. Instead of expanding the economy, the government burdens the public (which already pays the highest property taxes, stamp duties and other local levies in the country) with extra taxes and cesses, trapping us in a cycle where stability is maintained at the cost of affordability and progress is abandoned in the effort to make ends meet.

4. Agricultural Distress



Our farmers are in distress. Despite Kerala being one of the world's hottest hotspots of biodiversity, our agricultural backbone is ignored, spices languish, fruit and vegetable farmers can barely make ends meet and procurement payments are delayed for months.

5. A Hostile Environment for Investors

Our state is plagued by ideological politicians, rent-seeking officials, and militant trade unions that thwart progress. We have failed to completely abolish extortion-based practices like nokkukooli (by which union members extort payment for standing and watching your own labour) or ban the coercive practice of hartals.

6. The Collapsing State of Public Healthcare While Kerala has an enviable reputation nationwide for its public health system, the COVID-19 pandemic revealed our deep vulnerabilities. Today, our public healthcare system is faltering thanks to under-funding and neglect, failing to provide resilient systems that protect the most vulnerable.

7. Betrayal in the Cooperative Sector The cooperative banking sector was built on the deep

trust of ordinary people. Recent scams have wiped out the life savings of poor families, breaking the backbone of our rural economy.

8. Decline in Higher Education

Our universities are failing to prepare students for the 21st century. Merit is ignored in the blatant promotion of political interests, and our education system lacks the critical thinking and technological innovation needed for the 21st-century world.

9. Failing Civic Infrastructure and Everyday Crises

We face urgent, everyday crises that the government ignores. Our fragile ecology is threatened by unchecked quarrying and sand mining, as well as reckless, unplanned construction. We are also facing a severe drug crisis among our youth and deadly fatalities from an unchecked stray dog menace.

10. Neglect of Social Welfare

A welfare-only model cannot survive without wealth creation. Because the state has no money, welfare pensions are delayed for months, forcing our most vulnerable to beg for what is rightfully theirs (and which is not

enough to begin with). The list is daunting, but the imminent state election means that an alternative is at hand. Though I am not a candidate myself, I have agreed to take on the co-chairmanship of the Congress Campaign Committee - not just to point out problems but to present a vision for 'Kerala 2.0' that will inspire the jaded electorate, and particularly younger voters, to vote for change.

For too long, we have unwisely compared ourselves to massive industrial states like Tamil Nadu or Maharashtra and lamented our inability to emulate them. Our future does not lie in competing for heavy smokestack industries. We must look across the seas and learn from small, successful states like Singapore, the Netherlands, and Costa Rica - countries with similar challenges of size and population density that have found creative solutions to their own development challenges and become models of success. The UDF manifesto is yet to be finalised, but here are five possible responses to the ten crises outlined above: 1. Building an Innovation and Weightless Economy: We must transform our remittance economy into an innovation economy.

Aditya Dhar Says Sorry For Show Cancellations And Delays

Dhurandhar 2 Release Live Updates: After a long wait of three months, Dhurandhar: The Revenge, the highly-anticipated sequel of Dhurandhar is set to be released in theatres tomorrow, with paid previews beginning today. Audiences are gearing up to watch Dhurandhar 2, one of the most awaited Hindi film releases of 2026. Unlike Dhurandhar, the sequel will be a pan-India release, with dubbed versions in Tamil, Telugu, Kannada and Malayalam.

In Dhurandhar 2, Ranveer Singh returns to play Indian spy Jaskirat Singh Rangri, who goes deep undercover in Pakistan's Lyari, a town infamous for gang wars, as Hamza Ali Mazari. In the second part of Aditya Dhar's spy action thriller, viewers will see Hamza become the 'King of Lyari' after the death of Rehman Dakait (Akshay Khanna). Dhurandhar 2: Film Exhibitors Bet Big On The Ranveer Singh-Starrer With packed houses for the paid previews, the success of part one still buzzing, and its release coinciding with Eid and Gudi Padwa holidays, Dhurandhar: The Revenge is set for a bumper opening, with industry insiders and trade pundits looking at the Aditya Dhar film setting box office records. The Ranveer Singh-starrer, which comes soon after Dhurandhar, releases in cinemas on Thursday, and more than 15 lakh tickets have already been sold. This includes the paid previews, which begin from 5.30 pm on Wednesday.

"At PVR INOX, we have not seen this sort of advance booking even pre-COVID-19... The excitement is phenomenal; there's no precedent. It looks like the film is going to take a massive opening. We are looking at



a strong finish to March and a strong start to April," Kamal Gianchandani, chief business planning & strategy, PVR INOX Limited, told PTI. "I hope it breaks the record of Dhurandhar Part 1 and hope it turns out to be the first film to cross Rs 1,000 crore nett box office in Hindi, besides the contribution from dubbed versions in Tamil, Telugu, Kannada, and Malayalam. I hope that's an addition to Rs 1,000 crore," he added. Early reactions to Dhurandhar: The Revenge have started pouring in as the film began its paid previews on March 18, and the response so far points to a massive cinematic spectacle led by Ranveer Singh and directed by Aditya Dhar. Read the full story here. Trade analyst Taran Adarsh took to X to review Dhurandhar 2. He wrote, "The expectations from the sequel to #Dhurandhar were naturally sky-high... Thankfully, #DhurandharTheRevenge not only meets those mammoth expectations - it surpasses them by leaps and bounds." A viewer has flagged a frustrating experience at a cinema hall during the paid previews of Dhurandhar 2. Taking to X, the user described the situation as

"absolute chaos" at the multiplex, claiming that shows were running behind schedule. According to the post, their screening at Cinepolis Nexus Westend in Pune, which was slated to begin at 5 PM, had not started even by 5:30 PM, leaving audiences visibly annoyed. The viewer expressed their irritation over the lack of updates or clarity from the theatre staff. Amid ongoing screening disruptions, Allu Arjun's Allu Cinemas has issued a fresh update for Dhurandhar 2, informing audiences about a change in its exhibition format. During the paid previews, they displayed the message: "Due to a delay in receiving the Dolby Vision files, we are unable to screen the film in Dolby Vision format. The current screening will be in 4K projection with Dolby Atmos sound." Amid confusion over show cancellations and delays, filmmaker Aditya Dhar has addressed audiences with an official statement regarding the release of Dhurandhar 2. Taking to X, Dhar shared that the film holds deep emotional value for the team. He wrote, "To our dear Dhurandhar family, Dhurandhar is not just a film for us - it is something we have lived with, nurtured, and dreamed of sharing with each and every one of you, together, at the same moment, in every language." "Most of our Hindi shows across India are running as scheduled from 5 pm onwards. All of our Tamil and Telugu shows will commence from 9 pm onwards. However due to unforeseen technical difficulties, our Malayalam and Kannada shows will begin from tomorrow morning," Dhar added. "If the dubbed version you have tickets for is not currently playing at your cinema, you will have an option for refund or to watch the Hindi version with subtitles. Instead. We truly apologise for the inconvenience. Your love for this film means the world to us, and we cannot wait to share it with you. Team Jio Studios and B62 Studios," the director concluded. A few hours ahead of the release, director Aditya Dhar shared a long note on Instagram, expressing gratitude to audiences and making a heartfelt appeal to protect the film's viewing experience by avoiding spoilers. In his caption, the filmmaker also urged viewers to stay in their seats until the end credits roll. In Delhi NCR, Dhurandhar 2 is facing last-minute exhibition issues.

SBI Chairman Drives Dual Milestone in Telangana with TGB HQ Foundation

“SBI’s approach to banking goes beyond financial services to enabling long-term social transformation” – Chairman, CS Setty SBI Chairman outlined Bank key CSR focus areas: strengthening primary education, improving Primary Health Centers (PHCs), and promoting menstrual hygiene Hyderabad/Warangal, March 15, 2026: State Bank of India (SBI), nation’s largest Bank, marked a significant milestone in its continued commitment to Telangana’s growth and development with two key initiatives led by its Chairman, Shri Challa Sreenivasulu Setty. The Chairman laid the foundation stone for the new Head Office building of Telangana Grameena Bank (TGB) at Uppal Bhagayath, Hyderabad, and also laid major Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiatives in Warangal, reinforcing SBI’s dual focus on strengthening financial infrastructure and driving community impact. Telangana Grameena Bank is among the 9 Regional Rural Banks sponsored by SBI. The Bank has emerged as one of the leading and most profitable Regional Rural Banks in the country



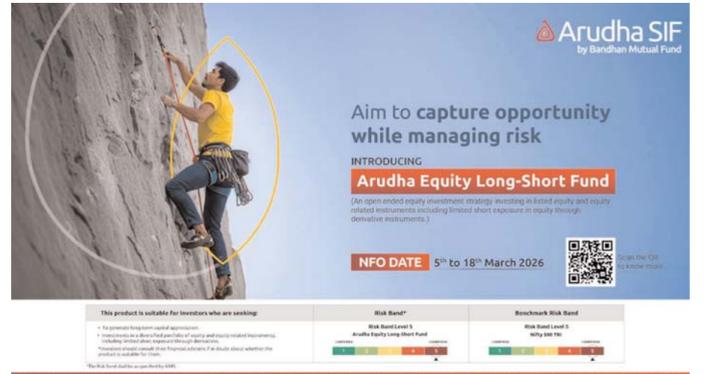
with a total business of 79,667 crore, comprising deposits of 34,659 crore and advances of 45,008 crore, as of December 31, 2025. The bank serves over 90 lakh customers across rural and semi-urban areas of Telangana through a network of 933 branches. The foundation stone laying ceremony for the new Head Office of Telangana Grameena Bank marks a pivotal step in enhancing the bank’s administrative capacity and supporting its expanding operations across Telangana. The ceremony was attended by senior dignitaries including Shri Ashwini Kumar Tewari MD, SBI, Shri Chinmoy Kumar, Regional Director, RBI,

Hyderabad, Shri Uday Bhaskar, CGM NABARD Telangana RO, Shri Atul Srivastava, CGM(A&S), SBI Corporate Centre, Shri Radhakrishnan S, CGM, LHO Hyderabad, Shri Rayi Ravi, Special Secretary (Finance), Telangana Government, members of the Bank’s Board of Directors and other Officials. Further reinforcing its commitment to inclusive development, SBI announced key CSR activities at its Warangal Administrative Office. The Bank extended a grant of 75 lakh to the Society for Rural Development for the comprehensive upgradation of rural primary school infrastructure and 17.5 lakh

to Sahrudaya Old Age Home for critical renovation aimed at enhancing the quality of life, safety, and comfort of senior citizens. Addressing the gathering, Shri Challa Sreenivasulu Setty highlighted the strategic importance of SBI pan-India CSR activities in driving meaningful social impact. He outlined the bank key CSR focus areas: strengthening primary education, improving Primary Health Centers (PHCs), and promoting menstrual hygiene. Shri Setty reiterated SBI’s strong commitment to social responsibility and financial inclusion, emphasizing that supporting underserved communities remains inte-

gral to SBI’s mission. SBI continues to expand its presence in Telangana through digital innovation, customer-centric services, and deep rural outreach. With 1,337 branches across the State, the Bank is strengthening last-mile connectivity through focused support to agriculture, MSMEs, and self-help groups. These efforts reflect SBI’s ongoing commitment to building robust financial infrastructure and fostering inclusive, sustainable growth in Telangana. About State Bank of India: State Bank of India is the largest commercial Bank in terms of assets, deposits, branches, customers, and employees. It is also one of the largest mortgage lender in the country which has so far fulfilled the home buying dreams of around 30 lakh Indian families. The home loan portfolio of the Bank has crossed 9 lakh crore. As of 31 st December 2025, the Bank has a deposit base of over 57 lakh crore with CASA ratio of 39.13% and advances of more than 46.8 lakh crore. Ranked as the 4th most trustworthy Bank in the world by Newsweek, SBI commands a market share of 27.9% and 19.2% in home loans and auto loans, respectively.

ARUDHA SIF LAUNCHES ARUDHA EQUITY LONG-SHORT FUND



Hyderabad, March 2026: Arudha SIF, by Bandhan Mutual Fund, has announced the launch of the Arudha Equity Long-Short Fund, an open-ended equity investment strategy under the Specialised Investment Funds (SIF) framework. The New Fund Offer (NFO) opens on Thursday, 5 March 2026, and closes on Wednesday, 18 March 2026. The investment strategy is suited for investors seeking a more adaptive portfolio in an environment characterised by market swings, shifting leadership, and heightened volatility. Investments in the Arudha Equity Long-Short Fund can be made through licensed distributors, investment advisors, online platforms, or directly at: <https://arudhasif.com/nfo/ar>

udha-equity-long-short-fund/ Commenting on the launch, Vishal Kapoor, CEO, Bandhan AMC Limited, said, “Equity investing has traditionally involved a trade-off between pursuing higher returns and accepting higher volatility. Investors today are increasingly seeking approaches that participate in growth while managing risk in a more structured manner. The Arudha Equity Long-Short Fund adopts a long-short framework that combines high-conviction long positions with selective short exposure, enabling portfolios to capture opportunities in both rising and declining markets.” As per the strategy document it can allocate minimum 80% and maximum 100% in equity and equity instruments and

can take short unhedged derivatives exposure up to 25%. The strategy aims to deliver equity-like returns with volatility comparable to hybrid funds. It seeks to capture growth opportunities in the equity market while actively managing inherent volatility through a combination of long-short positioning, along with the selective use of debt and derivative strategies. The strategy is built on four different return engines – long equity, short equity, covered calls, and debt – each serving a defined role within the portfolio. Through dynamic allocation across these components, the strategy aims to enhance upside participation in bull markets, generate income and alpha in range-bound phases, and improve resilience during market downturns.

LPG CRUNCH: Amazon sees 15 pc demand growth on packaged foods

New Delhi: E-commerce major Amazon India has witnessed a significant surge in demand for convenient, ready-to-consume meals, with categories such as instant noodles, packaged meals, snacks, and beverages recording over 15 per cent growth on its platform, driven by concerns over the ongoing LPG shortage. The spike in demand is not limited to major urban centres but is broad-based, spanning metros like Hyderabad, Kolkata, and Chennai, as well as tier-2 and tier-3 cities such as Sonipat and Panaji, the company said. “Over the past few weeks, we have seen consistent growth in demand for convenient, ready-to-consume meal solutions that require minimal cooking time. Categories such as instant noodles, packaged meals, snacks and beverages are seeing over 15 per cent growth on Amazon.in,” an Amazon India spokesperson said. The demand is particularly pronounced on the company’s quick commerce vertical, Amazon Now. Sales of ready-to-eat and packaged foods on Amazon Now have increased



around 20 per cent month-on-month, driven by customers in select parts of Delhi-NCR, Mumbai, and Bengaluru who are increasingly relying on quick deliveries for immediate needs. Alongside the rise in quick-convenience shopping, the e-tailer reported sustained momentum in planned grocery purchases. Categories such as staples, oils, beverages, and dry fruits and nuts continue to see strong traction, Amazon said, and added that it reflects a balanced con-

sumer shift towards both instant convenience and essential stocking. To cater to this dual demand for immediate and planned grocery shopping, Amazon India has introduced a curated ‘Ready to Eat Store’ to consolidate high-quality meal solutions in one place. In a bid to ease pressure on cooking fuel availability, the central government on Wednesday promised to increase supplies of commercial LPG to states that fast-track the rollout of piped gas

networks. LPG consumption in India dropped 17.7 per cent in the first half of March on the back of supply disruptions due to war in West Asia, preliminary industry data showed. LPG consumption fell to 1.147 million tonne during the first fortnight of March, 17.3 per cent lower than 1.387 million tonne consumed in the same period last year and 26.3 per cent lower than 1.557 million tonne demand in the first half of February.

Indian students are moving from brand-led destinations to ROI-led: Shweta Guru

March 2026: Indian students are expanding their global education horizons and are increasingly opting for emerging education destinations such as Spain, Germany, France, Singapore, the UAE, New Zealand and South Korea, reflecting a clear shift in overseas education preferences. While English-language destinations like the USA, Canada, the United Kingdom and Australia continue to remain highly desirable, especially the USA for STEM courses, Indian students are now actively diversifying their choices. This shift is influenced by factors such as overall cost of education, quality of institutions, visa norms, internship and employment opportunities, and student safety. “Indian students today are far more pragmatic and ROI-driven in their approach to overseas education. Destinations like Spain, Germany and New Zealand are witnessing strong demand as they offer high-quality education,

affordability, clearer visa pathways and better alignment between education and employment outcomes, especially for postgraduate and STEM programmes.” informed Shweta Guru, CBO – Overseas Loan, Auxilo Finserve. Several non-traditional European destinations have recorded strong and sustained growth between 2023 and 2025. Data indicates a growing acceptance of these markets as first-choice destinations by Indian students. “Emerging destinations increasingly offer comparable postgraduate and STEM outcomes at nearly half the cost of legacy markets, with lower visa risk and faster return on investment.” added Ms. Guru. The evolving study-abroad landscape indicates a more mature, research-driven decision-making process, where emerging destinations are no longer considered fallback options but strategic first choices for a growing segment of Indian students. “We expect the trend to continue strongly in 2026” added Ms. Guru.

Auxilo offers financing solutions that cover the entire expense of tuition fees, travel, accommodation, laptop, study materials, and living expenses. Till date, Auxilo has enabled education financing for over 18,000 students across more than 1,600 universities in over 30 countries. **Key trends in higher education and STEM enrolments include:** **Spain (Higher Education only):** Indian student enrolments increased from 965 in 2023 to 1,192 in 2025, reflecting a 17% CAGR over two years. Growth is being driven by postgraduate programmes in business, data analytics, engineering and public policy, supported by affordable tuition and a growing number of English-taught courses. **Portugal and Lithuania (Higher Education only):** Portugal recorded a sharp rise from 980 students in 2023 to 1,350 in 2025, while Lithuania grew from 1,120 to 1,557 stu-

dents during the same period. These destinations are attracting Indian students for technology, life sciences and applied engineering programmes with strong employability outcomes. **Italy and the Netherlands (Higher Education only):** Italy witnessed steady growth from 4,145 students in 2023 to 5,196 in 2025, reinforcing its appeal for design, architecture, engineering and management studies. The Netherlands saw enrolments increase from 2,871 to 3,512 students, driven by demand for STEM, AI, fintech and sustainability-focused postgraduate programmes. **Germany (Higher Education, PG & STEM focus):** Germany continues to be one of the most preferred non-English European destinations for Indian postgraduate and STEM students, supported by low or no tuition fees at public universities, strong research orientation and deep industry integration.

PuREPower Strengthens Southern Footprint with Strategic Showroom Launch in Vizianagaram

Vizianagaram, March 2026 – Strengthening its presence in the heart of Andhra Pradesh’s growing energy landscape, PuREPower today announced the grand opening of its latest high-tech showroom in Vizianagaram. Located strategically at Adarsh Nagar, Vizag Road, Vizianagaram, the new facility goes beyond a conventional retail space and serves as a key milestone in the company’s mission to make reliable and sustainable energy solutions accessible across Southern India. The launch comes at a time when the region is witnessing a strong shift toward clean and dependable energy, driven by rising demand and supportive government policies. The showroom offers an immersive experience into modern energy solutions, featuring PuREPower’s advanced range of energy storage systems designed for homes and businesses. Visitors can explore solutions built to ensure uninterrupted power, improved energy efficiency, and long-term reliability. With a focus



on smart integration, safety, and performance, the PuREPower portfolio is designed to support both everyday energy needs and critical backup requirements. This new facility positions itself as a central hub for clean energy resilience, helping customers move towards energy independence while reducing reliance on conventional power backup systems. The showroom

reflects PuREPower’s commitment to delivering not just products, but complete energy solutions tailored for modern Indian households and commercial establishments. As Vijayanagar continues to evolve as an important regional centre, this new PuREPower showroom stands as a testament to the brand’s vision of enabling a cleaner, more stable, and sustainable energy future across India.

Dreame Technology expands its product portfolio with the launch of L40 Ultra AE and D20 Ultra All-in-one robotic vacuums in India

New Delhi, India, 18th March 2026 – Dreame Technology, a global leader in smart home innovation, today announced two new additions to its robotic vacuum portfolio in India - Dreame L40 Ultra AE and Dreame D20 Ultra. Tailored specifically for contemporary homes, this new product lineup represents a remarkable fusion of high-powered suction capabilities, intelligent navigation systems, and cutting-edge obstacle avoidance technology. The result is a cleaning experience that is both precise and highly efficient, ensuring that every nook and cranny in your home is thoroughly cleaned. As Indian consumers increasingly adopt smart home solutions, Dreame continues to push the boundaries of innovation with products that offer enhanced convenience, efficiency, and personalized cleaning experiences. Equipped with automated mopping systems, smart carpet detection, and multifunctional docks with self-cleaning and maintenance capabilities, the new products offer a seamless, hands-free cleaning experience. The devices integrate advanced technologies such as Dreame’s Vormax™ suction system and intelligent mapping to ensure optimized performance across different surfaces while simplifying everyday home cleaning. Starting 18th March, L40



Ultra AE and D20 Ultra will be available on Amazon India and select Cromo stores at a price of INR 59,999 and INR 39,999 respectively. Manu Sharma, Managing Director, Dreame Technology India, said, “Indian consumers are increasingly embracing smart, high-performance solutions that simplify everyday living. One of the biggest shifts we are seeing is the growing preference for all-in-one, highly automated cleaning solutions that minimize manual effort while delivering superior performance. With the launch of the L40 Ultra AE and D20 Ultra, we are expanding our portfolio with intelligent, fully integrated systems that combine powerful cleaning with advanced automation.

These solutions give consumers greater control and flexibility in how they manage their homes, while reinforcing our larger mission of making everyday living simpler through innovation.” **Dreame L40 Ultra AE** 19,000Pa Vormax™ Suction with Advanced Brush System: Dreame’s proprietary TurboForce motor delivers superior suction power that significantly outperforms industry standards. Dreame L40 Ultra AE comes with the internal rotor electromagnetic design that increases the motor’s maximum rotation speed, offering a peak suction of 19,000Pa. The tooth-to-

slot ratio is also optimized to reduce low-frequency noise for higher sound quality. **TriCut Brush 3.0:** Delivers adaptable cleaning across different floor types and is especially useful for homes with pets. The liftable rubber brush efficiently removes dust and larger debris from hard floors and carpets, capturing dry mess from carpets and floor gaps without clogging the vacuum. The TriCut Brush 3.0 is designed to tackle long and pet hair, featuring a built-in hair-cutting blade that easily cuts through hair and collects it efficiently, helping reduce hair tangles. **In-Depth Gap cleaning:** A built-in MopExtend™ technology reaches tight and narrow spaces by effortlessly stretching its “robot arm.” It smoothly removes tiny spots, food crumbs, and coke spills from the corners of your home. The latest MopExtend™ RoboSwing technology easily handles messes along the edges and irregular corners. The robot vacuum twists and delves deeper into corners, further cleaning hidden debris under your low-profile couch. **3DAdapt™ Smart Navigation & Obstacle Avoidance:** Intelligently detects and navigates around furniture and household objects for smooth, collision-free cleaning.

IRAN CONFIRMS INTELLIGENCE MINISTER KILLED IN ISRAELI STRIKE

Iranian media is reporting that no one was killed or injured as a result of attacks on the country's petrochemical complex on the South Pars gas field. The oil ministry says efforts to control the fire are still under way, according to the Tasnim news agency, which is affiliated with Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC). Tasnim also reports that the attack occurred earlier on Wednesday, blaming action "by Israel and the US". Qatar's foreign ministry spokesman, Majed Al Ansari, said earlier that the South Pars facilities were targeted by Israel. Iran's armed forces has warned it will take "decisive action" in response to attacks on its energy infrastructure, according to a statement carried on the IRGC-affiliated news agency Tasnim. As we've been reporting, Iran has said its facilities at the South Pars gas field have been targeted. "The enemy has attacked part of Iran's fuel and energy infrastruc-



ture in the south," the Iranian military says in a statement. "As previously warned, if the fuel, energy, gas, and economic infrastructures of our country are attacked by the American-Zionist enemy, in addition to a powerful counterattack against the enemy, we will severely strike the origin of that aggression as well. "We consider targeting the fuel, energy, and gas infrastructures of the countries of origin legitimate and will retali-

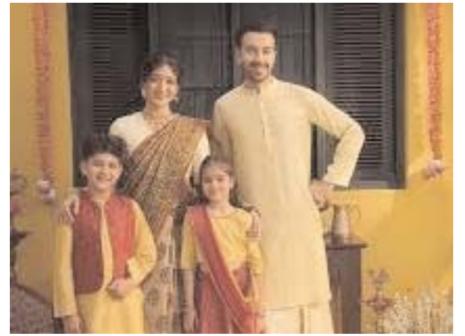
ate strongly at the earliest opportunity," it adds. Qatar's foreign ministry spokesman, Majed Al Ansari, says the South Pars facilities were targeted by Israel. As we've just reported, the Iranian President Mazoud Pezeshkian has confirmed the country's Intelligence Minister Esmail Khatib has been killed. In a post on X, Pezeshkian says: "The cowardly assassination of my dear colleagues Esmail Khatib, Ali Larjani, and

Aziz Nasirzadeh, along with some members of their families and those accompanying team has left us mourning." The deaths of Larjani, Iran's top security official, and Nasirzadeh, the country's defence minister, have previously been confirmed. Iran's president has confirmed the Intelligence Minister Esmail Khatib has been killed. Israel earlier said it had killed Khatib in a strike overnight. Qatar says strikes against Iranian facilities - which it

says were launched by Israel - linked to the world's largest natural gas field are "dangerous and irresponsible". Both Qatar and Iran operate facilities which extract from the same gas field, the Iranian side of which is known as South Pars. Iran says its petrochemical complex at the site has been hit. Qatar's foreign ministry spokesman, Majed Al Ansari, says strikes against energy infrastructure "constitutes a threat to global energy security". "We reiterate, as we have repeatedly emphasised, the necessity of avoiding the targeting of vital facilities," he says, calling on "all parties" to adhere to international law and work towards de-escalation. Israel says it has detected more missiles fired from Iran towards its territory, following a previous wave about two hours ago. The Israel Defense Forces (IDF) says air defence systems are in operation and those who need to shelter will receive alerts on their phone. Oil prices leapt to

more than \$108 a barrel following Iranian media reports that a facility on the world's largest natural gas field was struck. The Brent crude oil benchmark reached \$108.60 a barrel around 13:00 GMT - up by 5% on Tuesday's prices. It remains above \$107. The benchmark UK gas price also soared, rising by nearly 6% to 139p a therm. Both those price spikes are below highs seen earlier in the conflict. Iran has issued evacuation orders for five energy facilities in the Gulf. The IRGC-affiliated news agency Tasnim posted on Telegram an "urgent warning" for citizens and residents near to: The Samref refinery in Saudi Arabia The al-Jubail petrochemical complex and Masaid Holding Company in Saudi Arabia The al-Hosn gas field in the United Arab Emirates And the Ras Laffan refinery in Qatar The statement says: "These centres have become direct and legitimate targets and will be targeted in the coming hours.

Celebrate New Beginnings with Fabindia's Ugadi Collection



VIZAG, INDIA—As the auspicious occasion of Ugadi marks a fresh start and a harvest of prosperity, Fabindia announced its exclusive Ugadi curation. Rooted in tradition and crafted for joyful beginnings, this curated range features festive looks for the entire family, including specially designed ensembles for men, women, and children that capture the spirit of the festival. The women's range includes elegantly hand-block printed saris, silk embroidered kurtas, and the timeless grace of Banarasi and Chikankari dupattas. For men, it offers a sophisticated variety of shirts and both short and long kurtas, complemented by artisanal Bandhgala jackets. Expanding the celebration to the youngest members of the family, the kids' wear line features silk blend hand-block printed jackets and long kurta-pyjama sets for boys, alongside vibrant hand-block printed choli and lehenga sets for girls. The Ugadi collection is now available at Fabindia stores nationwide and online at www.fabindia.com. This season, celebrate new beginnings with the authentic artisanal charm that defines the Fabindia experience.

Death of Ali Larjani deepens crisis at heart of Iran's leadership



The Israeli air strike which killed Iran's security chief, Ali Larjani, has removed one of the Islamic Republic's most experienced and influential policymakers at a critical moment. Larjani was not a military commander, but he was a central figure in shaping Iran's strategic decisions. As secretary of the Supreme National Security Council, he sat at the heart of decision-making on war, diplomacy, and national security. His voice carried weight across the system, particularly in managing Iran's confrontation with the United States and Israel. After the killing of Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei on 28 February, Larjani struck a defiant tone, signalling that Iran was prepared for a long conflict. His death, now confirmed by state media, comes amid a broader campaign in which several senior Iranian officials and commanders have been killed within a matter of weeks. This pattern suggests a sustained effort to weaken Iran's leadership structure during wartime. Despite his hardline stance against the West, Larjani was often described inside Iran as a pragmatist. He combined ideological loyalty with a technocratic approach,

favouring calculated strategy over rhetoric. He remained deeply sceptical of engagement with Western powers, but he was also involved in key diplomatic efforts, including acting as an envoy in Iran's long-term co-operation agreement with China. At the time of his death, Larjani was in charge of managing three major crises. The first was the war itself. He argued that Iran should prepare for a prolonged struggle and expand the conflict across the region and beyond, including closure of the Strait of Hormuz. The second was a wave of domestic unrest, which began with economic grievances but quickly turned into wider protests seeking to topple the Islamic Republic. These were met with a crackdown that killed many thousands of protesters across the country. The third was Iran's nuclear programme and stalled indirect negotiations with Washington, both of which had already been disrupted by military strikes. His removal leaves these issues unresolved and transfers them to an as-yet-unknown successor facing an extremely fragile situation. While Iran has shown resilience,

Air strike hit Kabul rehab centre as patients ate dinner



Rescue teams are continuing to pull bodies from the smoking rubble of a drug rehabilitation centre in the Afghan capital, Kabul, which was hit on Monday night in a devastating Pakistani air strike. The attack on the Omid Addiction Treatment Hospital, which happened at about 21:00 local time (16:30 GMT), is the deadliest in recent violence between Pakistan and Afghanistan. The strike happened as resi-

dents broke their daily fast for the Muslim holy month of Ramadan. The death toll has continued to rise, and the Taliban government says it believes the number of people killed is about 400, although this figure has yet to be confirmed. Many people were also injured. Mohammad Shafee, a patient in his 20s, survived the attack. "I was in the kitchen helping to serve dinner when I heard a loud bang and ran for safety.

Total repression and air strikes bring unrelenting dread for Iranians

A woman stands on a rooftop listening to the sounds of the city below. There is only the dull hum of traffic tonight. But she knows how easily that can change. It is usually the dogs who notice the sound first and begin to bark furiously. The noise of aircraft. Then the ominous percussion of explosions. A ball of orange rising from an airstrike in a familiar neighbourhood. The BBC has obtained footage and interviews from Tehran which evoke a city of strained nerves, of constant waiting for the next blast and relentless fear of the state security apparatus. Baran - not her real name - is a businesswoman in her thirties. She is now too scared to go to work. "With the start of the drone attacks, no one dares to go



outside. If I open my door and step out, it is like gambling with my life." She lives alone but is in constant communication with her friends. "My friends and I message each other constantly asking where everyone is...and even when there is no sound the silence itself is terrifying. I am doing everything I can to stay alive and witness

whatever lies ahead." Like so many young Iranians, Baran saw her hopes of change devastated in recent months. Thousands of people were killed in a crackdown by regime forces in January after widespread demonstrations demanding change. "I cannot even remember how I used to live in the past without being reminded of the

loved one I lost during the protests," she says. "I fear tomorrow. I fear the person I will be tomorrow. Today, I survive somehow, but how will I get through tomorrow? That is the real question. Will I even live through tomorrow?" Now repression is total. Open dissent is impossible as the state's watchers are everywhere. Footage we obtained shows regime supporters driving through the city at night, flags flying from their cars - a message to any who might be tempted to protest. The official narrative is the only one allowed. State television broadcasts footage of demonstrations and funerals. Interviews with pro-regime officials and protestors offer repeated denunciations of America and Israel.

US JUDGE ORDERS TRUMP ADMINISTRATION TO REOPEN VOICE OF AMERICA

A judge in the US has ruled that the effective closure of the Voice of America (VOA) last year was "illegal" and that hundreds of its journalists should be reinstated. District Court Judge Royce Lamberth has given authorities one week to put the international broadcaster back on air. The VOA was set up during World War Two to counter Nazi propaganda. Just weeks after returning to office as president, Donald Trump issued an executive order to close the broadcaster which his officials accused of left-wing bias. Trump also ordered outlets such as Radio Free Europe and Radio Free Asia to be "eliminated to the max-



imum extent consistent with applicable law". The president appointed Kari Lake to head the US Agency for Global Media (USAGM) - the parent company that oversees and funds the VOA as well as Radio Free Europe and Radio Free Asia. Lake proceeded to sack more than

85% of the agency's employees - more than 1,000 staff at VOA alone - leaving just a handful of employees in their jobs. Most have been on paid administrative leave since last year, including Persian Service reporters who were called back to work after Israel attacked

Iran last June. Last week, Judge Lamberth ruled that Lake did not have authority to order the suspension of the USAGM workforce as she had not been confirmed by the US Senate. In Tuesday's ruling, the federal judge described the decision to sack the journalists as "arbitrary and capricious," adding that the government had not taken into account legislation that determines what languages and regions the VOA must serve. "Defendants have provided nothing approaching a principled basis for their decision," Lamberth wrote. Three VOA journalists had sued the Trump administration.

Norway prosecutor asks for seven years' jail for crown princess's son in rape trial



Prosecutors in the trial of Marius Borg Hoiby, son of Norwegian Crown Princess Mette-Marit, have requested a jail term of seven years and seven months, arguing he should be found guilty of 39 of the 40 charges he is accused of. The 29-year-old denies the most serious charges, which include four counts of rape as well as serious assault. The trial, which began in early February, is due to come to an end this week and the three judges will then retire to consider their verdicts. Hoiby was in court on Wednesday as the prosecution wrapped up its case. He was born before his mother married Norway's crown prince in 2001, and grew up within the royal family without being a member of it. He maintains that he had consensual sex with all four women before the alleged rapes took place. His defence lawyers were due to begin summing up their case later. The defendant has pleaded guilty to some of the lesser offences, which include a drugs charge, traffic offences and breaching a restraining order. He has partially admitted a charge of seri-

ously assaulting a woman in her flat but has denied charges of criminal abuse related to his ex-girlfriend Nora Haukland, with whom he maintained a close relationship. The trial at Oslo district court has lasted almost seven weeks and every day of evidence has been front-page news in Norway. Giving evidence last week, the crown princess's son complained of the immense pressure of media coverage of the trial and how he had become an object of hatred. "I'm not Marius any more, I'm a monster," he said. When the case began at the start of February, the crown princess was herself in the public spotlight over revelations surrounding contacts with late sex offender Jeffrey Epstein. Starting his summing-up on Monday, state prosecutor Sturla Henriksbo said Hoiby was "not a monster" and should be judged for what he had done, not for who he was. Going through the charges on Wednesday, Henriksbo and police attorney Andreas Kruszewski recommended the punishments they believed Hoiby should face.



Italy warns Russian tanker could explode in Mediterranean at any time

Top US counterterrorism official resigns over Iran war, urging Trump to 'reverse course'

Donald Trump's top counterterrorism official has resigned over the war in Iran, urging the president to "reverse course". In a letter posted on X, National Counterterrorism Center Director Joe Kent said that Iran posed "no imminent threat" to the US and claimed the administration "started this war due to pressure from Israel and its powerful American lobby". The White House dismissed the letter, saying the president had "compelling evidence" that Iran was going to attack the US first. A US hate monitor accused Kent of "antisemitic tropes". With his departure, Kent is the most high-profile figure within the Trump administration to publicly criticise the US-Israeli attack on Iran. In the



Oval Office on Tuesday, Trump said Kent was a "nice guy", but "weak on security". He also said Kent's resignation letter had made him realise "it was a good thing that he's out". In the letter addressed to Trump, Kent alleged that "high-ranking Israeli officials" and influential US journalists had sown "misinformation" that led the president to undermine his "America First" platform.



Rajasthan Royals Unveil New Jersey Ahead Of IPL 2026

Rajasthan Royals unveiled their new jersey for the upcoming Indian Premier League (IPL) season on Wednesday in Jaipur. The winners of the inaugural IPL season in 2008, the Royals shared the news with an Instagram post. "New look, same Halla Bol. Jersey: RRevealed," the caption said. The newly appointed captain, Riyan Parag, was present at the event with destructive teenage batter Vaibhav Sooryavanshi and leg-spinner Ravi Bishnoi. They displayed their new jerseys for the IPL 2026 season at the event. Bishnoi, 25, was acquired by the Rajasthan Royals (RR) for Rs 7.2 crore at the mini auction in December last year. Born in Jodhpur, his move to the franchise is considered a homecoming as he initially started his journey as a net bowler for the team. The franchise is likely to travel to Guwahati on



March 26, 2026, for its season-opening match-up against CSK on March 30, as per the fixtures announced by the IPL Governing Council. Notably, the Rajasthan Royals were involved in one of the biggest trade-offs in

IPL history ahead of the IPL 2026 season. Sanju Samson, who had been the face of Rajasthan Royals for more than a decade, representing the franchise across 11 seasons, was traded to Chennai Super Kings (CSK) and will now

don the yellow colours. Rajasthan Royals, in turn, got Sam Curran and India's seasoned all-rounder Ravindra Jadeja, who were traded to the inaugural champions. Jadeja was part of the Rajasthan squad that lifted

the inaugural IPL trophy in 2008 under the captaincy of the late Australian spinner Shane Warne. The veteran all-rounder represented the franchise during the 2008 and 2009 seasons before moving to other teams in the years that followed.

Australia Legend Sends Massive Warning To KKR Over Rs 25.20 Crore Buy: 'Stuck'

Upon Cameron Green rests a lot of Kolkata Knight Riders fans' hopes. However, former Australian captain and India coach Greg Chappell has raised concerns over the decline in the all-rounder's batting form, saying he feels Green "is stuck in the crease, cannot move, and cannot use his reach and athleticism to score runs." Chappell's comments come ahead of the Indian Premier League (IPL) 2026 season, where the young cricketer will represent Kolkata Knight Riders (KKR) as one of their marquee players, signed for Rs 25.20 crore. However, despite his recent century in the Sheffield Shield against New South Wales, Chappell expressed worry about Green's form. As quoted by news agency ANI, Chappell said Green's bowling workload has impacted his batting, and while he can still become one of the finest all-rounders, it now depends on his decision-making, mental skill set and the quality of advice he is receiving. "Bowling has impacted his batting. He can still be one of the great all-rounders of the



game because he has the talent, but (it depends on) whether he has the decision-making, the mental skills to go with it, and whether he's getting the best advice on where he is going," Chappell said. "I saw a very athletic young batsman with a beautiful setup and able to move in any direction, and now I see a batsman who is stuck at the crease, who cannot move, cannot use his reach to score runs," he added. During the T20 World Cup, Green fizzled out under the pressure of proving himself not only as a worthy buy for KKR but also as one of the

leading figures of Australia's next generation. With 24 runs in three innings, two single-digit scores, and just one wicket, the 26-year-old all-rounder struggled badly. In the series against Pakistan prior to the World Cup, which Australia lost via a clean sweep, Green was their leading run-getter, scoring 93 runs in three innings at an average of 31.00, with a strike rate above 124 and a best score of 36. His Test batting numbers also look modest, with 1,736 runs in 37 Tests and 59 innings at an average of 32.75, including two centuries and seven fifties.

The Swoosh Meets The 'B': Beats, Nike Unveil Historic First-Ever Collaboration For Powerbeats Pro 2

Today, Beats and Nike announced the first hardware collaboration in their shared history: Powerbeats Pro 2 - Nike Special Edition. In a landmark design shift, Beats has - for the first time - shared its iconic earbud real estate with a partner, featuring the Nike Swoosh on the right bud and the signature Beats "b" on the left. The limited-edition release marries Nike's high-energy "Volt" color palette with the industry-leading audio tech of the Powerbeats Pro 2. The result is a performance tool built to bridge the gap between elite sport and street style. The Nike Special Edition arrives in a striking matte black, Volt-speckled charging case. Upon opening, users are greeted by Nike's "JUST DO IT" mantra printed inside



the lid. While the aesthetic is new, the internals are pure power: Pro-Level Sound: Adaptive Active Noise Cancelling (ANC) and Transparency mode Biometric Integration: Built-in Heart Rate Monitoring that syncs seamlessly with the Fitness app and Nike Run Club1 Athlete Endurance: Up to 45 hours of

battery life with the charging case and IPX4-rated sweat and water resistance2 Secure Fit: Signature wrap-around earhooks designed to stay put from the weight room to the 18th green "This isn't just a new colorway; it's a collision of two brands that define performance, culture, and sports - the attributes of today's athlete," said Chris

Thorne, CMO of Beats. "By placing the Swoosh on our hardware for the first time, we're honoring the shared DNA of Beats and Nike and celebrating ambassadors like LeBron James who embody both. It's a tribute to the grit, style, and sound that push people to their limits." To accompany the launch, Beats tapped longtime brand ambassador LeBron James for a comedic campaign that proves you don't need to be perfect to play. In "Keep Your Head in The Game," James hits the green with less-than-elite golf skills but with Powerbeats Pro 2, he tunes out the critics (played by professional golfer Tom Kim and actors Lionel Boyce and Travis "Taco" Bennett) and embraces the game on his own terms.

Senegal government alleges corruption over Afcon

The Senegalese government has called for an "independent international investigation" into "suspected corruption" at African football's governing body after it stripped Senegal of the 2025 Africa Cup of Nations title and awarded it to Morocco. Senegal beat Morocco 1-0 in January's final but the Confederation of African Football (Caf) overturned the result on Tuesday because Senegal's players walked off the pitch in protest when hosts Morocco were awarded a stoppage-time penalty. The players returned after a 17-minute delay, and Brahim Diaz's 'Panenka' penalty for Morocco was saved before Senegal's Pape Gueye scored an extra-time winner. Following an appeal by the Moroccan FA (FRMF), Caf ruled that Senegal had forfeited the match, with the "result being recorded as 3-0



in favour" of Morocco. In a statement the Senegalese government said the "unprecedented and exceptionally serious decision" was based on "a manifestly erroneous interpretation of the regulations, leading to a grossly illegal and deeply unjust decision". It said: "Senegal unequivocally rejects this unjustified attempt at dispossession." Earlier on Wednesday, the Senegalese Football

jury wasn't there to uphold the law, but to carry out an order. "We will stop at nothing. The law is on our side. The fight is far from over. Senegal will defend its rights to the very end." Some Senegal players have suggested they will not relinquish their winners' medals. "We know what we experienced that evening in Rabat. And no-one can take that away from us," Senegal and Everton midfielder Idrissa Gueye said on social media. The walk-off by Senegal prompted the International Football Association Board (Ifab), football's lawmaking body, to open a consultation on how to deal with situations when "players unilaterally decide to leave the field of play, or team officials instigate such action, as a means of protest against a referee's decision".

Padma Lhundup On Winning REIHL Season 3 And Ladakh's Next Wave Of Ice Hockey Talent

With the Royal Enfield Ice Hockey League Season 3 concluding in Ladakh earlier this winter, Sham Eagles' goalkeeper Padma Lhundup, one of the tournament's standout performers, reflects on her journey in the sport, the intensity of the competition, and what winning the League has meant for players emerging from the region's growing ice hockey community.



Padma Lhundup | Goalkeeper, Sham Eagles - Women's Champions Q. Goalkeeping is one of the toughest roles in ice hockey. How did you develop in Ladakh's conditions? A. From the beginning, I realised that goalkeeping is as much about mental control as physical skill. In

Ladakh, we train in very cold weather, and sometimes the ice conditions vary day to day. There aren't always specialised goalie coaches, so I learned a lot from watching senior goalies, practising positioning, and just repeating saves over and over until it started becoming natural. Sometimes training feels tough physi-

cally, but I try to practise with the same focus I would have during an important game. You can't allow one mistake as a goalkeeper, so you learn to stay focused even when the conditions are not perfect. That kind of focus did not develop overnight. It grew in those long hours on the ice where you keep telling yourself to stay ready.

Indian Women's Qualification In AFC Asian Cup Fuels Grassroots Ambition As Mina Eyes Big League

In the bustling lanes of Naka Bazaar in Zawar Mines, where homes sit shoulder to shoulder, and life spills into the narrow street, lives a family bound not just by the weak walls but by togetherness. Small, warm, and packed with stories, where 13-year-old Mina Kumari Meena is sitting with her family, watching the phone as the Indian women's football team plays in the historic AFC Women's Asian Cup after 23 years. Mina, who plays at the Zinc Football Academy, began her journey in these narrow lanes playing football, following the footsteps of her elder brother Nikhil, who once played there too before a health setback paused his journey. She always feels



inspired when she watches the Indian women's football team giving their all on the field. "I was happy when India qualified for the Asian Cup, and watching them play in the tournament always makes me feel like I want to wear that jersey and play for India as well. I will always work hard to fulfil my dream," says

Mina. Born in 2012, the youngest in a big joint family that shares everything... from meals to memories. Mina's father Arun Meena runs a small puncture repair shop just beside the house, a room just big enough for him to work with his hands and dignity. One uncle drives for a living, and others pitch in where they can.

Chandrika Clinches Gold, 3 Grab Silver As India Finish With 5 Medals At World Boxing Futures Cup 2026



India concluded their campaign at the World Boxing Futures Cup 2026 in Bangkok with a haul of five medals-one gold, three silver and one bronze-underlining the steady rise of the country's youth boxing programme on the international stage. Leading the charge was Chandrika Pujari, who delivered a commanding performance in the women's 51 kg final to defeat Uzbekistan's Mardonova Nazokat with a unanimous decision. Competing across the Youth Olympic weight categories, the Indian U-19 men's and women's team delivered a series of assured performances against quality international opposition, with half the contingent returning home with medals. With the World Boxing President, Mr Gennadiy Golovkin, and BFI President, Mr Ajay Singh, watching on keenly, the showing in Bangkok reflected the steady strengthening of India's youth boxing ecosystem, where structured pathways,

regular international exposure, and competitive and timely nationals are helping young athletes transition confidently onto the global stage, further reinforcing India's growing presence in world boxing. Three Indian boxers finished with silver medals after reaching the finals in their respective categories. Gunjan (48kg) went down to her opponent from England by a 5-0 decision, while Joyshree Devi (54kg) fought hard but lost 4-1 to a boxer from the United States. In the men's 50kg category, L. Ambekar Meetei also settled for silver in the men's section after losing his final bout to Ukraine. Earlier in the tournament, Radhamani Longjam (57kg) secured a bronze medal after bowing out in the semifinals following a closely contested bout against Ukraine's Yevanhelina Petruk. Held in Bangkok from March 8 to 15, the World Boxing Futures Cup featured some of the most promising young boxers competing in the Youth Olympic weight divisions.

Indian Stars Eye Home Success As JSW Indian Open Gets Underway In Mumbai

The stage is set for five days of high-intensity squash as the second edition of the JSW Indian Open gets underway at the iconic CCI Brabourne Stadium in Mumbai. Featuring a strong mix of India's top players and international contenders, the tournament will see 30 matches played across the men's and women's draws as players battle for PSA ranking points and the coveted title. Recognised by the Professional Squash Association (PSA) and held under the aegis of the Squash Rackets Federation of India (SRFI), the JSW Indian Open is a PSA Copper event featur-

ing equal prize money across both the men's and women's categories. The tournament continues to grow as an important platform for Indian players to compete against world-class opposition on home soil while gaining valuable competitive exposure. Much of the attention will be on top seed and defending champion Anahat Singh, who returns after a breakthrough year on the PSA Tour. She will be joined in the draw by leading Indian players Ramit Tandon, Veer Chotrani, Abhay Singh, and veteran Joshna Chinappa, all of whom will be looking to make a strong impact in front of the home crowd. The tour-

nament also features a strong international field, including Yahya Elnawasnay, Nadien Elhammam, and Enora Villard, setting up several exciting matchups across both the men's and women's draws over the course of the week. Ahead of the tournament, players Anahat Singh and Ramit Tandon shared their thoughts on the upcoming competition and the growing opportunities for Indian squash players to compete at home. Speaking on the magnitude of the tournament, Ramit Tandon said, "Players really enjoy coming to India because of the culture and hospitality, and last year

many players on the PSA Tour told me this was one of the best events of the year. The facilities provided at the tournament are exceptional and playing at home also brings a different kind of pressure with friends, family and Indian fans watching the action. The JSW Indian Open gives Indian players the chance to compete against the best and allows younger athletes to watch and learn from them." Looking forward to the tournament, Anahat Singh added, "I had a strong training period in the build-up to the tournament, which has helped me focus on improving different areas of my game.



Youthful entertainer “Youth” movie trailer has been released, and the film is gearing up for a grand theatrical release on March 26th



The Tamil film “Youth,” starring Ken Karunaas, Anishma Anil Kumar, Devadarshini Chetan, Suraj Venjaramoodu, Priyanshi Yadav, and Meenakshi Dinesh in lead roles, is being brought to Telugu audiences under the same title by Housefull Vineeth and Sandeep under the E2C banner. The film is directed by Ken Karunas and his team. It is set for a grand Telugu theatrical release on the 26th. The promotional campaign carries the slogan, “Come with your gang, no age limit.” The trailer for the film was released today. Going by the trailer, it showcases the colorful life of college days. The fun and chaos created by Praveen and his gang after joining junior intermediate will remind audiences of their own memories. Freshers’ Day celebrations, dances,

campus romances, and clashes with seniors are all presented in a highly entertaining way. Praveen is a student at Mother Mary Junior College and comes from a middle-class family. His mother dreams of him becoming a collector, while his father has no expectations from him. Even though the college principal insists that students focus on studies, Praveen’s mind is filled only with thoughts of love. Like many college boys, he idolizes film stars, chases love, and gets into fights with seniors. While Praveen is trying hard to win the love of at least one girl, he is unexpectedly pursued by three beautiful girls. As he enjoys this sudden attention, several twists unfold. Who among the three girls truly loves him, and whom Praveen actually loves, creates curiosity.

“It’s been a long time since the audience watched a film like Ustaad Bhagat Singh” – Director Harish Shankar at Pre-Release Press Meet

A good Telugu film is arriving this Ugadi in the form of Ustaad Bhagat Singh” – Actress Sreeleela After the sensational success of Gabbar Singh, Power Star Pawan Kalyan and Cult Captain Harish Shankar have teamed up once again for Ustaad Bhagat Singh. The film is produced prestigiously under the banner of Mythri Movie Makers by Naveen Yerneni and Yalamanchili Ravi Shankar.

The film stars Sreeleela and Raashii Khanna as the female leads. Music is composed by Devi Sri Prasad, while the background score is by S. Thaman. The songs, teaser, and trailer have already received a tremendous response, building huge expectations for



the film. With anticipation at its peak, Ustaad Bhagat Singh is set to hit theatres on March 19, coinciding with Ugadi, aiming to redefine mass entertainment. Ahead of the release, the team held a pre-release press meet on Wednesday morning.

Harish Shankar’s Speech

Director Harish Shankar said: “First of all, I would like to thank the media. It’s been a long time since I met you all like this, and I’m very happy. This Ugadi is going to be ‘Ustaad Ugadi.’”

In my opinion, it has been a long time since we’ve seen a full-fledged commercial entertainer from a big star. Not just fans, but even general audiences haven’t had a film recently that delivers all elements—songs, dances, dialogues, romance, come-

dy, and powerful villain moments—from a star hero. I may not be able to say what records Ustaad Bhagat Singh will create, but I can say one thing for sure—after watching this film, everyone will feel that it’s been a long time since they’ve seen such an entertaining movie. From hairstyle to dance, dialogues to humor—every-

thing that audiences expect from Pawan Kalyan Garu is present in this film.

It will give the satisfaction of watching a complete Pawan Kalyan film. We completed the film on time and delivered a strong output. With proper planning, we avoided wasting time and money. The biggest strength behind this was Pawan Kalyan Garu.

T20 WORLD CUP STAR TILAK VARMA VISITS THE SETS OF MEGA POWER STAR RAM CHARAN’S PEDDI

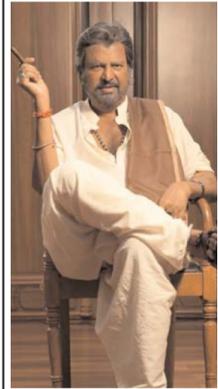
Mega Power Star Ram Charan’s much-awaited pan-India sports drama Peddi is gearing up for its grand worldwide release on April 30th, and the momentum around the film has climbed even higher thanks to a special visitor on set, Indian cricketer Tilak Varma who’s part of T20 World Cup winning team. Still riding the high of India’s global triumph, Tilak Varma dropped by the Peddi shooting location, turning an otherwise intense filming day into a celebratory moment for the entire team. The young cricket star was welcomed with warmth as



he toured the sets and witnessed some of the film’s high-voltage sports portions being shot. Tilak Varma was deeply impressed not just by the action but also by the emotional weight packed

into the sequences. His reaction reportedly reinforced the team’s confidence that Peddi is on track to deliver a sports narrative rooted in authenticity, grit, and strong human drama. Meanwhile, Peddi itself is racing through its final schedule and post-production. Adding to the excitement, musical promotions are also climbing. The two songs- Chikiri Chikiri, and Rai Rai Raa Raa, composed by AR Rahman, received exceptional response. The film brings together a strong cast with Janhvi Kapoor playing the leading lady. She is joined by senior actor Shiva Rajkumar, Jagapathi Babu, Divyenndu, and Boman Irani, all playing important parts in the story. On the technical side, the movie is backed by some of the best in the industry.

COLLECTION KING DR. MOHAN BABU’S BIRTHDAY: THE LIFE, LEGACY, AND UNMATCHED ACHIEVEMENTS



Legendary actor Mohan Babu, fondly known as the “Collection King,” is celebrating his birthday today — a special occasion that marks not just another year, but a glorious journey filled with success, discipline, and unwavering dedication. Over the decades, he has carved a unique place for himself in Indian

cinema with his powerful screen presence and versatile performances. Beyond films, Mohan Babu has made a significant impact in the fields of education, politics, and philanthropy, proving his commitment to society in multiple ways. His inspiring journey — from humble beginnings to becoming one of the most respected personalities in the Telugu film industry — continues to motivate generations of aspiring artists and fans alike. Mohan Babu began his film career in 1975 and continues to be an active and commanding presence on screen even today. Competing with young heroes and embracing challenging roles, he proves that true artistry knows no age. His unique dialogue delivery, commanding voice, and intense expressions redefined the portrayal of antagonists in Telugu cinema.



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