

**OM NAMO VENKATESAYA**



26-03-2026

Total pilgrims: 65,600

Tonsures: 24,292

Hundi kankal: 4.18CR

Waiting Compartments... Out side line at Krishna Teja Guest house.

Approx. Darsan Time for Sarvadarshanam (with out SSD Tokens) : 12 H

**TO BOOK YOUR ADS CALL**

99484 80279, 73307 78889

**JAPAN COMMITS RS 16,420 CRORE ODA LOAN TO INDIA FOR METRO, HEALTHCARE, AGRICULTURE PROJECTS**



**NEPAL SWEARS IN EX-RAPPER AS NEW PM**



**ARYNA SABALENKA SUBDUES ELENA RYBAKINA TO REACH MIAMI OPEN FINAL**



## IN BRIFS

**LPG PRODUCED IN BENGAL SHOULD NOT GO OUTSIDE: MAMATA BANERJEE**

Kolkata, March 27 (TSIT): West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Friday said that the LPG, which is produced in the state, should not be sent outside the state as long as the current crisis over LPG supply is resolved. At the same time, she also expressed apprehension that following the mass scale transfers, replacement, and deputations of bureaucrats and police officers from West Bengal to other states by the Election Commission of India (ECI), the possibilities are high that the LPG produced in the state is supplied outside the state. "Under no circumstances should the LPG produced in West Bengal go outside the state in the current period of crisis. The chances on this count remain because of the mass scale transfer, replacements, and deputations of the bureaucrats and police officers before the elections. At the same time, electoral officials and CAPF personnel will also come to West Bengal in huge numbers for the Assembly polls. The people of the state should not suffer because of the LPG supplied to them for their cooking," the Chief Minister told media persons outside the Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose International Airport in Kolkata before leaving for Andal in West Burdwan district to address different campaign rallies there.

**RETAIL PETROL AND DIESEL PRICES WON'T CHANGE, EXCISE CUT TO OFFSET OIL FIRMS' LOSSES: GOVT**

New Delhi, March 27 (TSIT): The government on Friday said retail pump prices of petrol and diesel will not change, and the excise reduction is not being passed on as a price cut at the pump. Instead, it directly reduces the under-recoveries being absorbed by public sector oil marketing companies (OMCs) — Indian Oil Corporation, Bharat Petroleum Corporation and Hindustan Petroleum Corporation — who have continued to supply fuel to Indian consumers at prices well below their cost of supply, the Petroleum Ministry said. At current international crude prices, under-recoveries stand at approximately Rs 26 per litre on petrol and Rs 81.90 per litre on diesel. The combined daily under-recovery being absorbed by OMCs is approximately Rs 2,400 crore. The excise reduction offsets Rs 10 per litre of these losses, ensuring OMCs can continue to supply fuel without disruption while keeping retail prices unchanged, said the ministry.

## State ensures smooth supply of petroleum products: CM Revanth



Hyderabad TSIT BUREAU: Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy has stated that the Telangana government is taking all necessary measures to ensure uninterrupted supply of petrol, diesel, and gas across the state.

Participating in a virtual video conference convened by Prime Minister Narendra Modi with Chief Ministers of all states on Friday evening, the Chief Minister apprised the Centre of the steps being taken in view of the prevailing tensions in West Asia.

He informed that a high-level committee under the Chief Secretary has been constituted to continuously monitor the situation. The committee is reviewing the supply and distribution of petroleum

products from the Command Control Centre in Hyderabad.

At the district level, committees have been formed in all 33 districts with designated nodal officers to oversee gas supply, petrol and diesel sales, and to prevent black marketing. The Chief Minister said priority is being given to supply commercial gas cylinders to hospitals, schools, orphanages, and old age homes. Officials are also closely monitoring stock levels and consumption patterns at petrol bunkers across the state.

He revealed that Telangana's average daily consumption of petrol and diesel stands at 36,189 kilo litres, while the current available stock is 1,88,210 kilo litres,

indicating adequate reserves.

Warning against misinformation, the Chief Minister said strict legal action is being taken against those spreading rumours and panic on social media regarding fuel shortages. Highlighting the state's long-term strategy, Revanth Reddy said Telangana is reducing dependence on fossil fuels such as coal, oil, and gas by promoting electric vehicles (EVs) and increasing renewable energy production.

He informed that 100% exemption on road tax and registration fees has been provided for EVs in the state. The government is also promoting EV manufacturing and battery ecosystem development on a large scale.

## PM Modi rallies states to tackle West Asia crisis with 'Team India' approach

New Delhi (TSIT): Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Friday chaired a video conference with Chief Ministers and Lieutenant Governors to review India's preparedness in light of the evolving situation in West Asia and its potential impact on the nation's economy, energy security, and supply chains. Expressing confidence that India will overcome the challenge by working together as "Team India", the Prime Minister stressed that the government's foremost priorities are to maintain economic and trade stability, safeguard citizens' interests, ensure energy security, and strengthen industry and supply chains. He urged states to ensure the smooth functioning of supply chains and to take strict measures against hoarding and profiteering.

The Prime Minister highlighted the need for advance planning in the agriculture sector, particularly in monitoring fertiliser storage and distribution to prevent disruptions during the upcoming Kharif season. He also called for robust coordination mechanisms at all levels of governance to enable swift responses to evolving situations.

Special attention, he said, must be given to border and coastal states to address challenges related to shipping, essential supplies, and mari-



time operations.

Cautioning against misinformation and rumours, the Prime Minister emphasised the importance of disseminating accurate and credible information to maintain public confidence. He urged states to activate control rooms, helplines, and nodal officers to ensure timely communication and support for citizens, including those with families in West Asia. Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, who was present at the meeting, noted that the government has already taken proactive steps such as reducing excise duty on petrol and diesel and ensuring timely availability of LPG.

Cabinet Secretary T.V. Somanathan presented a detailed assessment of the situation and out-

lined recommendations for states to strengthen preparedness. Union Home Minister Amit Shah and Defence Minister Rajnath Singh were among the senior leaders in attendance. Chief Ministers appreciated the Centre's measures under the Prime Minister's leadership, including diplomatic outreach to safeguard Indian citizens abroad.

They welcomed the reduction in fuel excise duty and the increase in commercial LPG allocations to states, which have now been raised to 70 per cent of pre-crisis levels. They expressed confidence that the situation remains stable, with adequate availability of petrol, diesel, and LPG, and reaffirmed their commitment to work in close coordination with the Centre.

## Trump claims victory over Iran, gives 10-day pause

Washington (TSIT): President Donald Trump said US forces have "totally won the war" against Iran, asserting that Tehran's military capabilities were largely destroyed, as he granted a 10-day window for negotiations before further action.

Speaking in a phone interview on Fox News' "The Five", Trump said the US military campaign had neutralised Iran's ability to wage war. "We've already won the war. Militarily, we've totally won the war," he said.



He said the strikes were aimed at preventing Iran from acquiring nuclear weapons, warning against allowing hostile regimes to gain such capabilities. "You can't let a madman,

or you can't let a mad ideology have a nuclear weapon," Trump said.

Trump detailed the scale of the US operation, claiming extensive damage to Iran's military infrastructure. "We've knocked out their Navy, we've knocked out their Air Force... we knocked out most of their missiles," he said, adding that missile launch systems and communications networks were also targeted. He further claimed that US forces had struck Iran's leadership structure.

## PARLIAMENT APPROVES FINANCE BILL 2026



New Delhi (TSIT): The Parliament on Friday approved the Finance Bill 2026 with the Rajya Sabha returning it to the Lok Sabha by a voice vote, com-

pleting the legislative process to provide the legal backing for the proposals of the Union Budget 2026-27 to kick in during the new financial year beginning from April 1. The Lok Sabha passed the bill on March 25, along with 32 amendments. The Rajya Sabha returned the bill after a brief discussion, and Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman's reply to questions raised by Members of Parliament on her budget proposals.

## SIX KILLED, 5 INJURED IN ZOJILA PASS AVALANCHE TRAGEDY

Srinagar (TSIT): At least six people were killed, and five others were injured when a massive avalanche hit the Srinagar-Leh highway on the Ladakh side of the Zojila Pass, trapping several vehicles under the snow, on Friday, officials said.

## India inks Rs 858 crore defence deals for Tunguska missiles, P81 aircraft inspection

New Delhi, March 27: The Ministry of Defence on Friday signed contracts, worth a total of Rs 858 crore, for the procurement of the cutting-edge Russian Tunguska Air Defence Missile System and a maintenance contract with Boeing for the depot-level inspection of P81 Long-Range Maritime Reconnaissance Aircraft of the Indian Navy. The agreements were inked at Kartavya Bhawan-2 here in the presence of Defence Secretary Rajesh Kumar Singh and senior officials.

The contract for the procurement of Tunguska Air Defence Missile Systems, valued at Rs 445 crore, for the Indian Army, was signed with Russia's JSC Rosoboronexport. These state-of-the-art missiles will enhance India's multi-layered air defence capa-



bilities against aerial threats, including aircraft, drones, and cruise missiles. The agreement will further strengthen the Indo-Russian strategic defence partnership, according to a statement issued by the Ministry of Defence.

The contract for the Inspection (Depot Level) of P81 Long-Range Maritime Reconnaissance Aircraft for the Indian

Navy under "Buy Indian" category with 100 per cent indigenous content, valued at Rs 413 crore, was signed with Boeing India Defense Private Ltd, a wholly owned Indian subsidiary of Boeing, in the presence of senior officials of the Ministry of Defence. This contract will ensure depot-level maintenance of the P81 fleet at the in-country MRO (Maintenance, Repair,

and Overhaul) facility, which is in line with the government's commitment to Aatmanirbhar Bharat and Make-in-India, the statement said.

The Boeing P-8I Poseidon is the Indian Navy's advanced, long-range maritime reconnaissance and anti-submarine warfare (ASW) aircraft. Known as the "guardian of the Indian Ocean," it operates 12 units for intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (ISR) and anti-ship missions, with plans to acquire six more to bolster maritime domain awareness and counter regional threats. The P-8I is a variant of the US Navy's P-8A Poseidon, with India being the first international customer, making it a critical asset in the Indo-Pacific region.

## India slams Pak Army Chief Munir's remarks on Shia community, highlights minority persecution in Pakistan

New Delhi, March 27: India on Friday sharply criticised the recent comments made by Pakistani Army Chief Asim Munir during a meeting with senior Shia clerics of the country, in which he reportedly stated that those sympathetic to Iran should relocate there. Addressing a weekly media briefing in New Delhi, Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal said that such remarks reflect Pakistan's long standing pattern of persecution against minorities, including the Shia community. "Such comments are not isolated incidents, but are part of Pakistan's systemic victimisation of its minorities, including the Shia minority in that country. The shrinking numbers of minorities in Pakistan over several decades reflect the kind of fear, persecution, oppression and neglect that they have had to endure at the hands of the Pakistani state. I need not elabo-



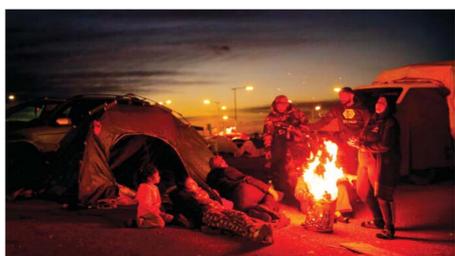
rate on the abysmal record of Pakistan when it comes to the protection of human rights of its minorities, which is also very well documented," said Jaiswal. A recent report highlighted that while Pakistan advocates against 'Islamophobia' abroad, the persistence of such conditions at home raises legitimate questions about the country's credibility. The recurring

claims of Islamophobia by Islamabad on the global stage, it cited, call for closer scrutiny, not unquestioned approval. According to a report in the European Times, the rhetoric of victimhood has become a diplomatic instrument, used to divert attention from Pakistan's troubling record toward Muslim communities within and outside its borders. "At the heart of the issue lies a contradiction that is increasingly difficult to ignore. A state that positions itself as a defender of Muslims worldwide continues to preside over systemic discrimination and violence against its own Muslim minorities. The persecution of Shia communities in Pakistan is neither incidental nor isolated. Sectarian attacks on Shia mosques, processions, and neighbourhoods have persisted for decades, often with inadequate accountability," the report detailed.

## LEBANON AT RISK OF HUMANITARIAN CATASTROPHE: UN refugee agency warns

Lebanon (TSIT) Lebanon is facing a heightening humanitarian crisis as Israeli invasion risks turning into a catastrophe, the United Nations refugee agency warned.

More than a million people, one in five citizens, have been forcefully displaced since Israel and the Lebanese militant group Hezbollah extended their offensive on March 2, said UNHCR. "The situation remains extremely worrying and the risk of a humanitarian catastrophe... is real," said Karolina Lindholm Billing, the agency's Lebanese representative. UNICEF also issued a



warning on the painful toll the Israeli invasion and ground invasion can have on children in Lebanon. At least 121 children have been killed and 399 others wounded, the organisation's representative in Lebanon,

Marcoluigi Corsi, said. Additionally, over 370,000 children have been forced to leave their homes as Israel issues displacement threats over 14 per cent of Lebanon's territory. Meanwhile, the Health

Ministry said an airstrike on the southern Lebanese village of Saksakiyeh killed four and injured eight people. Lebanon's state media reported airstrikes in other parts of south Lebanon, including the southern city of Nabatiyeh and villages close to it, as well as other towns and villages in the coastal Tyre region. The strikes came as other parts of South Lebanon witnessed intense clashes between Israeli troops and Hezbollah fighters. Hezbollah said its fighters fought fierce battles in the villages of Chamaa and Bayada near the Mediterranean coast.

# CM REVANTH OFFERS PATTU VASTRALU AT BHADRACHALAM SRI SITA RAMA KALYANAM



Hyderabad TSIT BUREAU: Chief Minister A.Revanth Reddy participated in the grand Sri Sita Ramachandra Swamy Thirukalyana Mahotsavam held at Mithila Stadium in Bhadrachalam on the auspicious occasion of Sri Rama Navami. On behalf of the State Government, the Chief

Minister offered pattu vastralu (silk clothes) and mutyala talambralu to the deity as part of the traditional rituals. The sacred celestial wedding of Lord Sri Rama and Sita Devi was conducted with great religious fervor amidst Vedic chants and traditional customs, creating a spiritually uplifting atmosphere.

Deputy Chief Minister Bhatti Vikramarka, along with ministers, Members of Parliament, MLAs, MLCs, senior officials, and a large number of devotees, took part in the ceremony. Thousands of devotees gathered at the venue to witness the divine making the celebrations a grand spiritual spectacle.

## VOTERS SATISFIED WITH GOVT SCHEMES: S. MANOHAR



Davanagere: KPCC General Secretary and Chairman of Mysore Electrical Industries, S. Manohar, said that voters are highly satisfied with the pro-people schemes implemented by the Congress government. Speaking during an election campaign for Congress candidate Samarth in the South Assembly constituency by-election at Shivajinagar and Ganesh Pete SKP ward, he stated that the positive response from voters indi-

icates a strong likelihood of victory for the party. He expressed confidence that the Congress candidate would secure a significant win, citing public appreciation for welfare initiatives and development programmes. Several party leaders and activists, including M.A. Salim, M.S. Anand Kumar, Kushal Haruvegowda, and local ward leaders, participated in the campaign and interacted with voters.

### The recent incident over Bali is unfortunate



Wanaparthy: the recent incident on Bali in the district is unfortunate. Minister Kammar Rahman said that we are taking this seriously. He said that the opposition leaders are using the incident of the girl for their political gain. MLA Megha Reddy, Chinna Reddy and the leaders of the Congress party visited the house of the victims. It is unfortunate that such incidents are happening in Wanaparthy. The police should take strict action against those who have committed such incidents and those who have contributed to them. Women leaders Chittamma and Kanthamma participated in this program.

## Grand Sri Sita Rama Kalyanam Held in Sangareddy with Rich Offerings and Devotion

Sangareddy: Sri Sita Rama Kalyanam was celebrated with immense religious fervour and grandeur at Ram Nagar Ram Mandir in Sangareddy on the auspicious occasion of Sri Rama Navami, drawing a massive turnout of devotees from early morning till late night.

The celebrations were organized under the leadership of T. Jagga Reddy, who made elaborate arrangements for the event. On the occasion, specially crafted gold ornaments weighing around 2.25 kg were offered to the deities. These ornaments were first at his residence and later taken in a grand procession with family members to the temple.

The idols of Lord Sri Rama and Goddess Sita were magnificently adorned with the gold ornaments, creating a spiritually vibrant atmosphere. In addition, offerings included a 10 kg silver Adishesha and a silver Kalyana Peeta.



The Kalyanam was conducted under the guidance of Pujya Sri Madhavananda Saraswati Swamy and led by Sri Maheshwara Siddhanti, with Vedic chants and traditional rituals marking the ceremony. The tying of the sacred knot created a deeply devotional atmosphere.

A unique highlight of the event was the offering of nearly three quintals of fine pearl talambralu, which were later distributed among devotees.

### TEMPLE UPGRADE PROMISED AS MINISTER KOMATIREDDY ATTENDS SITA RAMA KALYANAM IN NALGONDA

Nalgonda TSIT: State Roads & Buildings and Cinematography Minister Komatireddy Venkat Reddy on Friday announced that the historic Ramgiri Sri Sita Ramachandra Swamy Temple will be developed into a major spiritual centre with enhanced facilities by the next Sri Rama Navami.

Minister participated in the Sri Sita Rama Kalyanotsavam held at the temple as part of the festive celebrations and offered silk clothes and mutyala talambralu to the deity. Addressing devotees on the occasion, Komatireddy Venkat Reddy said that a comprehensive development plan has been prepared to upgrade infrastructure, considering the increasing number of pilgrims visiting the temple every year.



He stated that key initiatives include the construction of Vaikuntha Dwaram and Uttara Dwara Darshanam, along with expansion of existing darshan routes to facilitate smooth crowd movement. Land acquisition for the proposed works is currently underway, and registration is expected to be completed within a month, after which development activities will commence.

### Husnabad BRS Leaders Felicitate 3D Sand Artist Uma Ramadevi



The South India Times Husnabad | March 27: Marking the auspicious occasion of Sri Rama Navami, the Sita Rama Kalyana Mahotsavam (Divine Wedding Ceremony) held at the Sri Markandeya Swamy Temple in Husnabad town was celebrated with great grandeur, devotion, and reverence. The event was graced by the presence of renowned artist Uma Ramadevi, who rose to fame for creating a magnificent 3D sand sculpture of 'Kaliyuga Venkateswara Swamy' in Jagtial. On this occasion, Husnabad's former Municipal Chairman, Suddala Chandraiah, accorded a grand felicitation to Uma Ramadevi, honoring her with a traditional shawl. Praising her artistic prowess, he expressed his hope that she would continue to create many more magnificent sculptures in the future. The event was attended by BRS party leaders including Ayileni Mallikarjun Reddy, Mekala Vikas Yadav, Yasa Srinivas, Kandukuri Satish, and Chidurala Ashwini—along with leaders from the Husnabad Padmashali Seva Samithi and other prominent dignitaries.

### Grand Sitarama Kalyanam Held at Ram Mandir in Sangareddy under Jagga Reddy's Leadership

Hyderabad TSIT: On the auspicious occasion of Sri Rama Navami, a grand Sri Sitarama Kalyanam was conducted at the Ram Mandir in Ram Nagar, Sangareddy under the leadership of TPCC Working President Jagga Reddy. With the support of Jaggareddy, his associates, Ram Mandir Yuva Sena, and temple committee members, special gold and silver ornaments worth approximately 2.50 crore were offered to Lord Sri Rama and Goddess Sita. The ornaments included intricately designed crowns, ear ornaments, necklaces, waist belts, lotus feet, bow and arrow, yajnopaveetam, eyes, tilakam, nose ornaments, conch and chakra, mangal-sutra for Goddess Sita, lotus hand, and symbolic hands holding arrows for Lord Rama.

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## Sita and Rama's wedding in grand style

Mahabubabad District Correspondent (March 27): It is a tradition that every year, the wedding of Sita Rama is celebrated with grandeur at Gandhi Park in the Mahabubabad district headquarters on Friday. The wedding of Sita Rama was a feast for the eyes with great pomp and show, and the chief priests of Brahmarshri Temple Radhakrishnamurthy, MV Krishna Prasad, Kaushik and others conducted the wedding. MLA Dr. Bhukya Uma Murali Nayak, Municipal Chairperson Googulothu Jyoti Ramesh, 33rd Ward Councillor B Ajay Saradhi Reddy and his wife, 36th Ward Chidrala Aruna Gyaaneshwar and his wife, Padmam Praveen and his wife, Agricultural Market Vice Chairman Madan Gopal Loya and his wife, Chodavarapu Mohan Rao and his wife, Imadi Ravi and his wife, participated in the wedding ceremony. DCC President Jannareddy Bharat Chander Reddy participated as the chief guest. At the temple, local legislators Uma Murali Nayak and his



wife, chairperson Jyoti Ramesh, ward councillor B Ajay Saradhi Reddy, presented silk clothes and pearl necklaces to the bride and groom of Sitarama. The local MLA couple expressed great happiness by participating in the wedding, considering it a blessing from God to organize the wedding of the pious couple Sitarama. Speaking on the occasion, the MLA wished that the blessings of Lord Rama, who embodies the state, prosperity, work and morality, should be upon the people of Mahabubabad constituency in the state. Dr. Uma Murali Nayak extended Sri Ram Navami greetings to everyone. Later, the priests performed the wedding procession of the Swami. While the wedding of Sita Ram was going on, the Shiva Shakti Joginis

sitting in the middle of the devotees suddenly clapped their hands and poured talambaras, which attracted all the devotees. Devotees thronged this Sri Ram Navami which comes once a year. Devotees watched the wedding of Sita Ram without any difficulty. As per the instructions of the District SP, tight security was made under the supervision of Mahabubabad Circle Inspector Gattu Mahender Reddy SI Prashanth to ensure that the devotees did not face any inconvenience. Vasavi Club served cold butter-milk and Vadappu without any difficulty to the devotees. The holy water offerings prepared by the drinking water committee were distributed to the devotees. Later, the devotees were given talambaras.

## Sita-Rama Kalyanam Celebrated with Devotion in Sadashivpet



Sangareddy District, March 27 (TSIT): Sri Rama Navami celebrations were held with great devotion and spiritual fervour in Sadashivpet town, where the sacred Sita-Rama Kalyanam was observed as a symbol of Indian culture and values.

Local MLA Chinta Prabhakar participated in the and performed special prayers

to Lord Sri Sita-Rama following traditional Vedic rituals. He also took part in the Dolotsavam (Dolarohanam) conducted at the temple premises under the supervision of the temple committee. Speaking on the occasion, the MLA said that Sita-Rama Kalyanam reflects the ideals of truth, righteousness, and justice, and urged

people to follow the path of dharma shown by Lord Rama. He prayed for the health, peace, and prosperity of the people of the district. The temple reverberated with chants of "Jai Shri Ram," creating a deeply spiritual atmosphere. Devotees gathered in large numbers to witness the rituals and seek divine blessings. Several local lead-

### MINISTER PONNAM PRABHAKAR PARTICIPATES IN SRI RAMA NAVAMI CELEBRATIONS



Husnabad, March 27 (The South India Times): Sri Rama Navami celebrations were held with great devotion and grandeur at the Markandeya Swamy Temple in Husnabad town of Siddipet district, where the celestial Sita Rama Kalyanam was performed amid spiritual fervour. State Minister Ponnam Prabhakar attended the along with his family. On the occasion, he and his wife offered silk garments to the presiding deity, while senior journalist Konda Lakshman and his wife presented silk clothes to Goddess Sita, followed by special prayers. Speaking on the occasion, the minister expressed hope that the blessings of Lord Rama would bring timely rainfall, agricultural prosperity.

## Sri Bhaskar Reddy Vemireddy appointed as Vice President - GSTAT, Andhra Pradesh State Bench

Vijayawada, March 27: Sri Bhaskar Reddy Vemireddy, presently serving as Judicial Member of the Goods and Services Tax Appellate Tribunal (GSTAT), Vijayawada Bench, has been appointed as the Vice President of the GSTAT, Andhra Pradesh State Bench. The appointment has been made by the Hon'ble President of India as part of a nationwide designation of Vice Presidents for GSTAT State Benches.



The appointment forms part of Office Order No. 01/2026 dated March 23, 2026, issued by the Government of India under the authority of the President of India

in exercise of powers under Section 109(7) of the Central Goods and Services Tax Act, 2017. Under this order, 22 Judicial Members of GSTAT across the country have been designated as Vice Presidents for their respective State Benches to strengthen the institutional

framework of the Tribunal. Sri Bhaskar Reddy Vemireddy is a distinguished legal professional with vast experience in tax laws and litigation. He has built a formidable reputation in indirect taxation, with expertise spanning Goods and Services Tax (GST), Central Excise, Customs, Sales Tax and allied fiscal statutes. Prior to his elevation to the Tribunal, he had an extensive practice in tax litigation and appeared before various judicial forums including High Courts and Tribunals. In recognition of his professional excellence and standing at

the Bar, he was designated as a Senior Advocate by the High Court for the State of Telangana. The designation of Vice Presidents across India is aimed at ensuring smoother functioning of GSTAT benches, strengthening leadership at the State level, and facilitating expeditious disposal of GST disputes.

His appointment as Vice President of the Andhra Pradesh State Bench is expected to significantly contribute to the effective administration of justice in indirect tax matters and enhance the efficiency of appellate mechanisms under the GST regime.

## Lecture on Digital Intimacy Held at GITAM Hyderabad



Hyderabad: The Department of English and Other Languages at GITAM School of Humanities and Social Sciences organised a special lecture titled "Digital Intimacy: Young Women in Inter-Asia" on March 27, 2026. The session was delivered by Tejaswini Niranjana, Director of the Centre for Asian Studies at GITAM. Drawing from her

research across cities like Hong Kong, Singapore, Guangzhou, and Bengaluru, she explained how digital technologies are reshaping identity, relationships, and intimacy among young women. She highlighted how smartphones and digital platforms are redefining boundaries between public and private life, influencing communication patterns, and creating new forms of

social interaction. The lecture also explored evolving language practices and the interplay between online and offline experiences in shaping emotional expression. Faculty members and students attended the session. Shamu Tharu, Director In-Charge, was present, while Dr. Sayantan Mondal, Head of the Department, delivered the vote of thanks. Prof. Niranjana is also an Adjunct Professor at Lingnan University, Hong Kong, and an award-winning translator, recognised with the National Translation Prize for Fiction by the American Literary Translators' Association.

### Ensure Treated Water Supply to Bayaluseeme: MP Sudhakar



New Delhi: Chikkaballapur MP Dr. K. Sudhakar has urged that water supplied under the KC Valley and HN Valley projects must undergo three-stage treatment before being released into tanks and lakes in drought-prone Bayaluseeme districts.

Raising the issue in the Lok Sabha during Zero Hour, he highlighted the persistent water scarcity in regions like Chikkaballapur, Bengaluru Rural and Kolar, stressing the need for a long-term water security solution.

He expressed concern over the discontinuation of earlier plans for tertiary treatment and cited reports indicating possible health risks from currently supplied secondary treated water. He urged the Karnataka government to follow central guidelines mandating three-stage wastewater treatment.

Sudhakar also called for the early completion of the Yettinahole project and sought diversion of at least 15 TMC water from the Krishna River to ensure sustainable irrigation and groundwater recharge in the region.

### Congress government will face intense protests if it hikes fuel prices: Opposition Leader R. Ashoka warns



Bengaluru : The Central Government has taken steps to reduce petrol and diesel prices. However, if the Congress government tries to increase prices and make profits, we will have to launch intense protests, warned Opposition Leader R. Ashoka. Speaking to reporters, he said: "I thank Prime Minister Narendra Modi for reducing petrol and diesel prices during the time of Sri Ramanavami. Earlier, when GST on ghee was reduced, the Congress government had increased prices. If they now attempt to raise fuel prices, we will strongly oppose it. The price reduction should not be linked to elections. Elections happen throughout the year in the country. Whatever good measures are taken, Congress leaders criticise them. They are doing the same now as well."

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah has taken a loan of Rs.1.32 lakh crore, and from now on, one tax after another will begin. In the last three years, he alone has taken loans amounting to Rs.3.5 lakh crore. A detailed discussion on this has

taken place in the Assembly session.

He added that there was an attempt to close the Jakkur Air Training School and build a complex there. We spoke against it in the House and managed to save it. We also protested against the plan to encroach upon 6 acres of land belonging to the T. Narasipura silk reeling factory. The ministers have assured that it will not be closed. The government has announced sky tower (or elevated corridor)

projects in Bengaluru. First they called it a "brand" and ruined the existing Bengaluru. Even though there is no money, they are making tall claims. We have discussed this in the Assembly as well.

We have raised questions about the Rs.5,000 crore swallowed in Gruha Lakshmi, Rs.700 crore in Annabhagya, and irregularities in many other schemes. However, neither the Chief Minister nor the ministers have given proper answers. The Congress government is col-

lecting money by issuing bonds to the people. Since the treasury is empty, they are raising Rs.48,000 crore through bonds. People will not be able to repay this loan. They have divided the Bengaluru built by Kempegowda into five parts and destroyed it, he said.

Regarding the Metro project, an answer has come to the question raised by MP P.C. Mohan in the Lok Sabha. The state government has replied that the Centre has given only 12% share. But in reality, the grants are shared on a 50-50 basis. The entire responsibility of the Metro has not been handed over to the state government. If such responsibility is given, people will have to travel in tipper lorries. A utilisation certificate has been given for the funds used under the Jal Jeevan Mission, but the remaining funds have not been released. Lazy officials have not issued the utilisation certificates. We have also spoken about the misuse of SCSPT/TSP funds. We have taken all issues to their logical conclusion, he said.

### "I AM OPPOSED TO MLAS ASKING IPL TICKETS": VIJAYENDRA



Bengaluru : State BJP President B. Y. Vijayendra on Friday said that he was personally opposed to MLAs asking IPL tickets. "We legislators are not bigger or different from common man. We should not be asking for special privileges. I am opposed to this idea of legislators asking IPL tickets," Vijayendra said, in response to a question while speaking to reporters at Jagannath Bhavan's the party's state headquarters. According to Vijayendra the state government's "insensitivity, irresponsible attitude and carelessness" resulted in the loss of 11 innocent lives some time back.

### Puravankara to Launch 30 Projects Worth Rs.55,000 Crore; Pledges 1 Million Trees by 2030

Bengaluru: Puravankara Limited has announced plans to launch 30 new projects across South India and Mumbai over the next 24 months, with an estimated Gross Development Value (GDV) of over Rs.55,000 crore. The projects will cover around 51.14 million sq. ft. of developable area, marking a major expansion in the company's growth strategy.

As part of its Golden Jubilee celebrations, the company also reinforced its sustainability commitment by pledging to plant 1 million trees by 2030 under the World Economic Forum's 1t.org initiative. Additionally, 10,000 trees will be planted during the Puravankara 10K Run scheduled on March 29,

A significant number of these projects are already in the approval stage, while the rest are in the design phase. The company reported strong performance with pre-sales of Rs.3,859 crore and customer collections of Rs.3,045 crore as of 9MPY26, reflecting steady demand.

The upcoming developments are expected to generate nearly 8 million man-

days of direct employment annually and boost over 250 allied industries linked to real estate. Managing Director Ashish Puravankara said the company is entering a new phase of growth backed by strong capabilities and a robust project pipeline. CEO (South) Mallanna Sasalu highlighted the focus on creating integrated communities and supporting economic growth.

MODI GOVT. FLEECEED RS. 1,000 CR PER DAY BY TAXING PETROL-DIESEL!

BJP GOVT. READYING TO HIKE GDP (GAS-DIESEL-PETROL) PRICES ON 9TH/23RD APRIL!

RS.3,60,000 CR ANNUAL DUTY CONCESSION IS PROFITTEERING FOR PVT. OIL COMPANIES, ONLY DECEPTION, NO RESPITE FOR PEOPLE!

Bengaluru: Randeep Surjewala said that, As the West Asia Crisis looms large, Nayara Energy (Formerly Essar) has hiked price of Petrol by Rs.5.30 per litre and Price of Diesel by Rs.3 per litre. This is a prelude to the imminent hike in prices of Petrol-Diesel-Gas as the BJP Govt. awaits the conclusion of the 5 States elections on 9th and 23rd April, 2026. Speaking at a joint press conference in

## 11 Years of Modi Govt. = 4,30,00,00,00,00,000 Loot !



KPCC office, he said that In its well-known style of "DUPE-DECIEVE-DISTRACT" of the Modi Govt., they attempted to befool the people today by announcing reduction in excise duty on Petrol & Diesel, purely with a view to help Oil Companies to profiteer, without a paisa of relief for the Common man. This

is called 'Balance Sheet Management & Convenient Accounting', with a view to transfer the burden to the Govt. and finally onto the people of India. This is called; inflict a thousand wounds and then apply a "Band-Aid". The Modi Govt's devious and unrelenting Taxation of Petrol-Diesel over the last 11

years through its "Cycle of Loot" is clearly exposed by:-

Over the last 11 years, Modi Govt. has collected 43 Lakh Crores by taxing Petrol & Diesel. This comes to 1,000 Crore every single day since 2014. Copy attached as Annexure A1 of Petroleum Planning and Analysis Cell. The price of Petrol on 26th May, 2014 (Congress-UPA) was Rs.71.41 per litre, while the price of Diesel was Rs.56.71 per litre. Today, Petrol is selling at Rs.102.96 per litre and Diesel at Rs.90.99 per litre (Bengaluru). According to the crude oil prices in 2014 (USD 108 per barrel) to the price before the war in West Asia (USD 70 per barrel), the price of Petrol should be Rs.61.60 per litre and Diesel should be Rs.56.99 per litre, the rest is SHEER BJP LOOT.

### BASEU TO HOLD 2ND ANNUAL CONVOCATION ON APRIL 27

Bengaluru: Dr. B. R. Ambedkar School of Economics University (BASEU) will conduct its Second Annual Convocation on April 27, 2026, at the Administration Auditorium (BASEU Auditorium), starting at 11:30 AM. The convocation will confer Undergraduate and Postgraduate degrees to students who successfully completed their examinations up to August 2025. Students from the academic years 2023-24 and 2024-25 who are eligible have already been notified to apply. University authorities have advised candidates who have not yet submitted their applications for degree certificates to do so within the stipulated timeline. The last date for submission of applications is April 10, 2026. The university is expected to host the ceremony with participation from faculty, graduates, and distinguished guests.

### AKFI and Mashal Sports roll out elite strength & conditioning camp in preparation of Asian Games

Bellary : The Amateur Kabaddi Federation of India (AKFI), in collaboration with Mashal Sports, will commence a high-performance Strength & Conditioning Camp at the Inspire Institute of Sport (IIS), Bellary, bringing together the country's leading men's and women's kabaddi probable athletes for the Asian Games 2026. The camp, scheduled from March 27 to April 2, marks a significant step in strengthening India's kabaddi ecosystem, with a focused approach towards athlete development, fitness optimisation, and long-term performance excellence. This initiative reinforces Mashal Sports and AKFI's shared commitment to the holistic development and well-being of kabaddi athletes, while continuing to build a strong pipeline of talent for India ahead of major international competitions, including the Asian Games.



important step in our preparations as we continue to raise the standard of kabaddi in India. By collaborating with Mashal Sports, we are ensuring that our players benefit from modern training methodologies, scientific support systems, and a professional high-performance environment that is essential for success at the international level."

Mr. Vibhor Vineet Jain, President, Amateur Kabaddi Federation of India (AKFI), said, "This initiative is an

Mr. Anupam Goswami, PKL League Commissioner and Business Head of Mashal Sports, said, "Mashal and its PKL teams are passionately commit-

ted to enabling our country's kabaddi player pool to continuously improve their athletic capacity and performance, both for PKL and for representing Team India. In the year of the Asian Games, we take pride in collaborating with Amateur Kabaddi Federation of India to organise a strength and conditioning camp for the senior men's and senior women's probables for kabaddi at the Asian Games, which will be held in Japan later this year. Since we are working with 45 probables in each group, the benefits of this camp will extend to many more athletes beyond the final

Indian kabaddi squads for the Asian Games." The camp will be hosted at the Inspire Institute of Sport (IIS), Bellary; a world-class high-performance training facility offering cutting-edge infrastructure and a multi-disciplinary sports science ecosystem to prepare athletes for elite international competition, with specialised programmes tailored to contact-driven demands of kabaddi. IIS has also supported the Pre-season training of few PKL teams in the past, further reinforcing its expertise in developing top-tier kabaddi athletes.

Several prominent Pro Kabaddi League (PKL) stars - Naveen Kumar, Arjun Deshwal, Pawan Sehrawat, Aslam Inamdar, Sunil Kumar, Ashu Malik, and Bharat Hooda - are part of the camp, reflecting the league's strong talent pool.

From the women's contingent, leading athletes include members of the Indian squad that won the Women's Kabaddi World Cup, such as skipper Ritu Negi, as well as Sonali Vishnu Shingate, Pushpa Rana, Champa Thakur, Pinki Roy, Priya and Karthika R, reflecting a strong mix of experienced internationals and emerging talent from across the domestic circuit.

### Shadow of CM-DyCM power tussle looming over Davanagere bypoll, says MP Basavaraj Bommai

Davanagere: People have grown disillusioned with the two-and-a-half years of the state government's administration. The shadow of the power tussle between the Chief Minister and Deputy Chief Minister will impact the Davanagere by-election and a BJP victory in this bypoll will change the political direction of Karnataka in the coming days, said former Chief Minister and MP Basavaraj Bommai.



unexpectedly and that many political developments have taken place over the past two-and-a-half years. People are disap-

pointed and feel that the government is not functioning effectively in any sector. He alleged that it is an anti-farmer government

and that there is no one to listen to the problems of common people. Development has to be searched for with a magnifying glass. Corruption is widespread, and common people are struggling because of it. The former CM said in the previous election, the Congress had campaigned on AHINDA and caste census issues. Chief Minister Siddaramaiah used AHINDA communities for political gain, without providing any real benefits to them. The government has misused these communities and now lacks the courage to face them, yet continues to display arrogance. Criticizing the recent bud-

get presented by Siddaramaiah, the MP called it "a bundle of lies," accusing the Chief Minister of following the principle that repeating a lie loudly makes it appear as truth. Questioning what the state government has contributed to Davanagere in the past two-and-a-half years, Bommai said Rs.900 crore received under the Smart City project came from the central government, not the state. Apart from that, he claimed there has been no notable development. He described Davanagere as an important commercial hub in central Karnataka with a rich past, but said no visible development is seen in urban areas.

**Bajaj Finance Limited**  
 Registered Office: C/o Bajaj Auto Limited Complex, Mumbai - Pune Road, Akurdi, Pune - 411035, Branch Office: Bajaj Finance Ltd, Bajaj Finance Ltd, 1st Floor, Aurum Panikath Complex, Pattaraikal Junction, Trichur, Kerala-680022.

**POSSESSION NOTICE (FOR IMMOVABLE PROPERTY)**  
 (As per Appendix IV read with rule 8(1) of the Security Interest Enforcement Rules, 2002)

Whereas, the undersigned being the Authorized Officer of Bajaj Finance Limited (BFL), under the provisions of the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 and in exercise of powers conferred under Section 13(12) read with Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 issued demand notice under Section 13(2) of the Act by registered post ("Notice") calling upon the Borrowers/Co-borrowers mentioned hereunder to repay the amount mentioned in the notice U/s.13(2) of the said Act within a period of 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notice.

The Borrowers/Mortgagors/Guarantors named below having failed to repay the said amount, notice is hereby given to the Borrowers/Mortgagors/Guarantors and public in general that the undersigned has taken Physical Possession of the property described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on me under Sec.13(4) of the said Act read with Rule 8 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002. The borrowers in particular and public in general are hereby cautioned not to deal with the said property and any dealing with this property will be subject to the charge of the Bajaj Finance Limited, for the amount mentioned herein below along with interest thereon at contracted rate. The borrower's attention is invited to provisions of sub-section (8) of section 13 of the Act, in respect of time available, to redeem the secured assets.

Loan Account No./Name of the Borrower(s) Mortgagor(s) Guarantor(s)	Description of the Secured Immovable Property	Demand Notice Date & Amt.
4360HL30568820 & 436FHL30568875 ANISH BABU (BORROWER) & ANEKHA ANISH (CO-BORROWER) BOTH AT - KAVALOOR HOUSE SOUTH NADA, IRINJALAKUDA, IRINJALAKUDA, TRICHUR, KERALA - 680121	ALL THAT PIECE AND PARCEL OF THE PROPERTY BEARING SY NO 1373/4 ADMEASURING AREA 2.83 ARES (6.99 CENTS) AT KARALAM VILLAGE, MUKUNDAPURAM TALUK, THIRISSUR DISTRICT, ALONG WITH BUILDING BEARING DOOR NO. 11/42-A IRINJALAKUDA, KERALA-680121. BOUNDED AS - EAST - WAY, NORTH - PROPERTY OF MOHANAN KARINGAMANGAM, WEST - PROPERTY OF VARGHESE KANNAMPARAMBIL, SOUTH - PROPERTY OF M.S. ANILKUMAR SPANZIO VILLA.	30/10/2024 & Rs. 39,75,797/- (Rupees Thirty-Nine Lakh Seventy-Five Thousand Seven Hundred and Ninety-Seven Only) as of 02/11/24  POSSESSION DATE - 25/03/2026

Date - 25.03.2026, Place - TRICHUR Authorized Officer, For M/s BAJAJ FINANCE LIMITED

**ICICI Home Finance** Corporate Office: ICICI Home Finance Company Limited ICICI HFC Tower, Andheri - Kurla Road, Andheri (East), Mumbai - 400059, India  
 Branch Office: 1st Floor, Prasad Arcade, Building No. 283 / 127 / 5, Pattaraikal Junction, Shornur Road, Thirissur - 680022  
 Branch Office: 1st Floor, Sundar Tower, 24/868(3), Opp. Nissam Pinnacle, Kunnothumkadu Post, Palakkad - 678013

**Notice for sale of immovable assets through Private Treaty**  
 Sale Notice for Sale of Immovable Assets through Private Treaty under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 read with Rule 8(B) r/w Rule 9 (1) of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002.

ICICI Home Finance Company Limited (ICICI HFC) conducted several e-Auctions for the sale of the mortgaged property mentioned below, however, all such e-Auctions failed. Now, an interested buyer has approached ICICI HFC with an offer to purchase at Reserve Price (Please refer below table). Notice is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the Borrower(s) and Guarantor(s) that the below-described immovable property mortgaged/charged to the Secured Creditor, the Possession of which has been taken by the Authorized Officer of ICICI Home Finance Company Ltd., will be sold on "As is where is", "As is what is", and "Whatever there is", by way of Private Treaty as per the brief particulars given hereunder:

Sr. No.	Name of Borrower(s)/ Co Borrowers/ Guarantors/Legal Heirs. Loan Account No.	Details of the Secured asset(s) with known encumbrances, if any	Amount Outstanding	Reserve Price/ Earnest Money Deposit	Date and Time of Property Inspection	Date & Time of Auction	One Day Before Auction Date	Sarfaesi Stage
1.	Suresh K R (Borrower) Sumitha Suresh (Co-Borrower) Loan No. LHTRH00001313779	Sy No 975/7 975/1 Parappukara Village Mukundapuram Taluk Thirissur Trichur- 680317	Rs. 25,35,968/- March 23, 2026	Rs. 9,00,000/- To Rs. 90,00,000/- 03:00 PM	April 06, 2026 11:00 AM To 03:00 PM	April 13, 2026 02:00 PM To 04:00 PM	April 10, 2026 before 04:00 PM	Physical Possession
2.	Suneer Ka (Borrower) Sunitha V A (Co-Borrower) Loan No. LHCC000001551011	Door No. 12/926, Re Sy 103/4-2, Karimba Po Karimba I, Village Mannarkkad, Taluk Palakkad Kerala- 678597.	Rs. 82,22,814/- March 18, 2026	Rs. 40,00,000/- To Rs. 4,00,000/- 03:00 PM	April 06, 2026 11:00 AM To 03:00 PM	April 13, 2026 before 04:00 PM	April 10, 2026 before 04:00 PM	Physical Possession

The online auction will be conducted on website (URL Link - https://BidDeal.in) of our auction agency Value Trust Capital Services Private Limited. The Prospective Bidder(s) must submit the Earnest Money Deposit (EMD) RTGS/ Demand Draft (DD) (Refer Column E) at ICICI Home Finance Company Limited, Branch Office Address mentioned on top of the article on or before April 10, 2026 before 04:00 PM. The Prospective Bidder(s) must also submit a signed copy of the Registration Form & Bid Terms and Conditions form at ICICI Home Finance Company Limited, Branch Office Address mentioned on top of the article on or before April 10, 2026 before 05:00 PM. Earnest Money Deposit Demand Draft (DD) should be from a Nationalized/Scheduled Bank in favor of "ICICI Home Finance Company Ltd. - Auction" payable at the branch office address mentioned on top of the article.

The general public is requested to submit their bids higher than the amount being offered by the interested buyer mentioned above. It is hereby informed that in case no bids higher than the amount being offered by the aforementioned interested buyer is received by ICICI HFC, the mortgaged property shall be sold to the said interested buyer as per Rule 9(B) r/w Rule 9 (1) of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002.

For any further clarifications with regards to inspection, terms and conditions of the sale or submission of bids, kindly contact ICICI Home Finance Company Limited on 9920807300.

The Authorized Officer reserves the right to reject any or all the bids without furnishing any further reasons. For detailed terms and conditions of the sale, please visit https://www.icicifhc.com/

Date : March 28, 2026  
 Place : Thirissur, Palakkad  
 Authorized Officer, "ICICI Home Finance Company Limited"  
 CIN Number- U65922MH1999PLC120106

# EDITORIAL

## Iran War Is Now All About Future Of Hormuz

If Iranian leaders are, as Donald Trump says, "begging" him for terms to end the war, they have a very odd way of showing it. The negotiations he announced to soothe markets at the start of the week amounted to an exchange of demands that neither side could expect the other to accept. Factor in what both are actually doing - the US deploying a small ground force to the Persian Gulf and Iran legislating to turn the Strait of Hormuz into a permanent toll booth - and it seems we are in for a longer conflict.

A lot has been said, including by some of America's most storied generals, about how the US administration went into this fight: over-confident in its conventional military advantage, over-reliant on airpower and fundamentally misunderstanding the nature and asymmetric strengths of its enemy. As a result, it now has few good options.

At this juncture, though, it's probably more important to understand how the Iranians view their situation. And judging by the response Tehran sent to Trump's 15-point peace offer, Iranian leaders believe they're in a stronger position to see this out - and they don't trust Trump enough for a quick settlement to be feasible, anyhow.

Both Iranian beliefs are well-founded. From what we know of Trump's 15-point peace proposal, it offers to end air strikes and lift sanctions in exchange for Tehran returning the Strait of Hormuz to its status as open seas; ending and demolishing its entire uranium enrichment program, civilian or otherwise; opening up to inspections that achieve complete transparency; accepting limits on the numbers and types of ballistic missiles it can have, configured for defense only; and ending all support for proxy militias abroad.

In other words, it demands the capitulation the Iranians refused to accept in talks before the US and Israel launched air strikes on Feb. 28, but with the additional requirement that it reopen Hormuz, which became a problem in need of a solution only because of the war. The regime would accept such terms only if it had no hope of survival, which is not the case. The Iranians shot back with five conditions they say the US must meet before it will talk. These consisted of a halt to all US-Israeli hostilities against Iran, including assassinations; a halt to attacks on its regional proxies; concrete guarantees that none of these hostilities are renewed; war reparations; and - the big one - international recognition of Iran's sovereign control over Hormuz.

Yes, these are starting positions. On Thursday, Trump extended his ultimatum threatening to bomb Iran's energy infrastructure by a further 10 days. He said this was due to an Iranian request, and that talks were going "very well." That's all conceivable, but also uncorroborated and unlikely to produce a result so long as both sides believe they have the upper hand, which it seems they do.

It's pretty clear why Trump would think so. He's apparently getting a two-minute daily video that shows him the things the US blew up in Iran the day before. The combined American-Israeli force has sunk Iran's conventional navy, destroyed much of its missile launching and manufacturing capacity and decapitated the Islamic Republic's leadership. At least 7,000 Marines and troops from the 82nd Airborne are on their way to the Gulf to add some of the missing land dimension to US airpower. The Iranian case is more complex and militarily weaker, but it has a clearer path to strategic success. The most commonly cited aspect of this asymmetrical advantage is that all the Islamic Republic needs to do to win this war is to survive, a low bar against airpower alone. Harder for outsiders to grasp is that the two US attacks on Iran - in June and again now - have also resolved a decades-long debate between regime hardliners and pragmatists as to whether the US was trustworthy enough to make normalization worth pursuing. It has also ended tactical restraint over issues such as closing Hormuz. I asked Seyed Hossein Mousavian, a former Iranian diplomat and member of its nuclear negotiating team, how he thought the regime saw Trump's overtures. I first met Mousavian in Tehran in 2004, when he was still a government official and a member of the regime's pragmatist camp, after which he left to join the Program on Science and Global Security at Princeton University as a researcher.

## Have US And Iran Already Gone Past The Point Of 'Negotiation'?

The US has reportedly proposed a 15-point plan to Iran for ending the US-Iran war. Iran has made its own conditions for an agreement known. It is evident that these are maximalist positions on both sides, and any eventual agreement would involve compromises. But if one side or the other lays out its positions in public through background briefings or in reaction to the proposals aired through the media, it raises suspicions about the seriousness of the negotiation exercise. Serious negotiations need to be held behind the scenes with as much confidentiality as possible. If the maximalist positions are publicised for whatever reason in advance, then the text of the final agreement will be assessed by the public on the basis of how much either side was forced to make concessions on core issues of difference. The governments concerned will then have to offer explanations. This public diplomacy only complicates the search for a balanced negotiating outcome in actual negotiations.

In May 2025, the US had proposed a 15-point plan, which gives a clue to what the US might be seeking. It promised an end only to nuclear-related sanctions, not all sanctions, including human rights sanctions. The funds released could not be used to fund Iran's ballistic missile programme. All uranium stockpiles would be down-blended to 3.67 % and shipped out of Iran immediately. All enrichment facilities of Iran would be made unusable within a month, and centrifuges would be rendered inoperable. The US would help fund a new Iranian civil nuclear programme with a fuel facility located outside Iran and subject to International Atomic Energy Agency inspection. A regional enrichment consortium would be established involving Iran, the US, the UAE, Qatar and Saudi Arabia under external management. The US wants to ensure that Iran's nuclear programme is not revived, and for that, it would want to have



oversight over it beyond that of the IAEA. It wants to carve out a role for itself in Iran's peaceful nuclear programme, as we have seen. One cannot see Iran giving any supervisory role to the US or agreeing to its participation in its nuclear programme in any form. Or agreeing to shut down its nuclear sites at Natanz, Fordow or Isfahan, as sought by the US.

**A Gradual Breakdown**  
In the JCPOA, Iran had made a clear and firm commitment that it would not acquire nuclear weapons. In the talks mediated by Oman in Geneva, Iran seemed to have made major concessions on the nuclear front that it had not made before, but Trump chose to attack Iran nevertheless. It is most unlikely that Iran will go beyond what it was willing to concede in the talks at Geneva. So, when Trump keeps saying that the US would not allow Iran to become nuclear, it is not clear what exactly the terms are that he thinks he can force Iran to accept. Seeking curbs on Iran's missile programme, which has shown its potency in the ongoing conflict, is an old US demand. Iran has rejected this

demand before and will no doubt oppose it even more forcefully today. Without a nuclear shield and also a missile shield that provides it some deterrence capability, Iran would render itself defenceless. Iran has no worthwhile air force or a robust air defence system. It is unlikely to accept any binding limits to the range of its missiles, as missiles and drones give it a credible retaliatory capability. Much has been made about Iran unveiling its missile with an IRBM range by attacking Diego Garcia. Iran has developed its missile capability independent of the G-7-initiated Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR), which has 35 members today. Iran is not a member. Pakistan, too, is not. A sovereign country may have self-imposed limits on the range of its missiles, keeping in mind the source of threats to it or to avoid creating misgivings in other countries about its strategic intentions. It is most unlikely that Iran will accept any binding limits on the range or the technical capabilities of its missiles after the two US-Israeli attacks against it and the assassination of its top leadership.

**The Question Of Proxies**  
On Iran's regional role, which means its anti-Israel policies and concomitant support for Hezbollah, Hamas or the Houthis, Iran, again, is unlikely to bind itself to any understandings with the US. It is a fact that Iran's support for its so-called proxies in the region has been diminished. That this Iranian regional role is linked to perceived US-backed Israel's expansionist policies in the region should not be ignored. So long as Israel's policies against the Palestinians in Gaza and the West Bank, its rejection of a two-state solution, its policies in Lebanon, occupation of territory in Syria, and the Greater Israel project of the country's extremists are not revised, the region will remain unstable and conflict-ridden. On the other hand, Iran's demands would be humiliating for the US to accept. Iran wants the US to remove all its bases from the region, agree to reparations for the destruction caused, lift all sanctions, and commit itself to not reimposing sanctions. Iran would want international guarantees against any future aggression. Iran would also exercise control over the Strait of Hormuz.

## WHAT THE '90% DEGRADED' HEADLINE MISSES

US officials say Iranian ballistic missile and one-way drone attacks are down roughly 90 per cent since the war began on 28 February. Secretary Hegseth stated this publicly at a Pentagon press conference on 13 March. It has since become the dominant frame in Western capitals and broadcast media globally. That figure is accurate. But it describes attack tempo - how much Iran is firing now compared with the opening phase of the war. It says nothing definitive about campaign capacity - what Iran can still do, across multiple theatres, over time, with the forces and options it has left. Those are two different questions, and the public debate has collapsed them into one.

The more important question is the second one. Iran is not a spent force. It is a rationing force - executing a deliberate long-war strategy from a significantly degraded but still functional arsenal. And since Israel struck its Caspian Sea naval infrastructure at Bandar Anzali around 18-19 March, disrupting the Russia-Iran logistics corridor that has been running since 2022, it is doing so entirely on its own reserves.

**RATIONING IS A CHOICE, AND CHOICES REVEAL INTENT.**  
MRBMs - Israel Theatre: The Deterrence Reserve  
Iran entered this war with approximately 2,000 medium-range ballistic missiles capable of reaching Israel, and a total ballistic missile arsenal - combining both medium and short-range systems - estimated by the IDF at approximately 2,500 (JINSA, March 2026; Alma Research Centre). Within the first ten days, open-source assessments suggest that between 60 and 90 per cent of Iran's MRBM inven-

tory had been fired or destroyed - with the IDF's own figure at the upper end of that range. Alma Research Centre's mid-March assessment recorded over 700 ballistic missiles destroyed in storage before launch, and assessed that approximately 70 per cent of Iran's pre-war launcher fleet of around 480 had been eliminated. Calculations derived from Alma's February baseline imply the figure may be closer to 79 per cent - the honest answer is somewhere in that 70-79 per cent range, depending on the assessment window used.

**ROUGHLY 100 FUNCTIONAL LAUNCHERS REMAIN.**  
The binding constraint is not missiles - it is launchers. Every launch exposes a launcher to coalition ISR and a follow-on strike. At a launcher attrition rate of 2-3 per day from ongoing operations - not a confirmed operational timetable - suggests Iran reaches effective operational zero against Israel somewhere around late April to mid-May, a 30 to 50 day window from today. A single mass salvo of 50-plus missiles would collapse that window in days. Iran's leadership understands this arithmetic. The current trickle of 1-5 MRBM launches per day is assessed as a rational conservation decision, not evidence of incapacity. These missiles have become Iran's deterrence reserve - the instrument that keeps the coercive threat against Israeli population centres credible through the negotiation window. Spending them prematurely means losing the only card that forces Israeli planners to calculate the cost of continued escalation. But as argued below, that reserve serves a second strategic

purpose that Western coverage has almost entirely missed.

**SRBMS - GULF STATES THEATRE: THE SUSTAINED PRESSURE CAMPAIGN**  
This is the category the MRBM narrative obscures, and it matters more for regional stability than anything happening in the Israel theatre right now. Iran opened this war with 6,000-8,000 short-range ballistic missiles (JINSA, March 2026). Concentrated in western Iran on mobile platforms with short logistics tails, they are structurally harder to hunt than the fixed MRBM infrastructure the coalition has been systematically destroying. Current fire rate: 5-15 per day in deliberately disaggregated small waves against Saudi Arabia's Eastern Province, Kuwait, the UAE and Bahrain. Foundation for Defense of Democracies tracking for the week of 20-23 March shows sequential interceptions of groups of 2, 2, 1, 5, 5, 4, 2, 4 - a pattern too structured to be random residual capability. This is inventory management, not desperation. At this tempo, Iran's SRBM capability is assessed as sustainable for approximately 8-12 weeks from today. Iran has explicitly prioritised this category. The strategic logic is clear - keep Gulf states sufficiently uncomfortable that they push Washington toward de-escalation, while the MRBM reserve is held for the two higher-value contingencies described below.

**CRUISE MISSILES - THE PRECISION LAYER**  
Iran's cruise missiles are not being fired in volume. The Soumar at approximately 2,000-2,500km range, the Hoveyeh at 1,350km and the Ya-Ali at 700km (CSIS

Missile Threat database) are deployed selectively in mixed packages alongside drones - forcing layered air defences to respond simultaneously to low-altitude terrain-hugging threats and ballistic trajectories. The operational objective is not mass destruction but cognitive compression of the defender's decision cycle. At current selective-use rates, this category lasts for months.

The Abu Mahdi anti-ship cruise missile, with an assessed range exceeding 1,000km (CSIS), serves a distinct and more strategically significant role - addressed in the next section.

**THE CARRIER BATTLE GROUP - THE SECOND PURPOSE OF MRBM RATIONING**  
Western analysis has framed Iran's MRBM trickle exclusively as an Israeli deterrence signal. That reading is analytically incomplete, and it may be the most important gap in current public assessment. Iran has demonstrated a clear intent to strike the US carrier battle group. President Trump stated publicly that Iran fired 101 missiles targeting the USS Abraham Lincoln, all of which were intercepted. Iran's Navy chief, Admiral Shahram Irani confirmed the intent explicitly - stating that the carrier group's movements are "constantly being monitored" and will be struck "as soon as this hostile fleet comes within range". What Iran has historically lacked is the ISR capability to reliably target a moving carrier battle group operating at 250-300km range in the North Arabian Sea. That gap is assessed as narrowing. Three senior US officials confirmed to the Washington Post that Russia has been providing Iran with the precise locations of American warships and aircraft across the Middle East.

## Iran May Be Far More Prepared For A 'Ground Invasion' Than Trump Thinks



The past week has not gone well for Donald Trump. He was forced to back down from his threat to attack Iran's power plants if the Strait of Hormuz was not reopened within 48 hours. Tehran firmly rejected his plan to end the war and denied Trump's claims that the two sides were engaging in negotiations. Trump's approval ratings dropped to their lowest level since he returned to the White House. Additionally, Democrats gained two legislative seats in Florida, including one in Palm Beach County, which covers Trump's Mar-a-Lago resort. As the Iran war approaches its second month, Trump has insisted that talks are ongoing and that Iran was "begging for a deal" while US troops continue to build up in the Gulf. Some messages have been exchanged between the two sides, but there is no evidence that any bilateral discussions have taken place. Iran has not only rejected the 15-point US plan, which mostly favoured Israel and the US, but also put forward its own alternative plan. Iran's counterproposal outlined five "conditions for

ending the war": the acts of "aggression" coming to an end, ensuring the war will not recur, payment of war damages and reparations, the ending of the war across all fronts, and Iranian sovereignty over the Strait of Hormuz. Previously, it also demanded an end to all US bases in the Gulf.

**Trust Deficit**  
The maximalist demands from both sides indicate that there is little genuine effort to reach a negotiated settlement to end the conflict. Iran doesn't trust the Trump administration, which has attacked it twice in less than a year while negotiations were ongoing. There is no doubt that the war has not gone according to Trump's wishes, and he seems desperate to end it by any means. Iran believes that Trump is using the pretext of negotiations to buy time to prepare for a ground invasion. "Iran's enemies, with the support of a country in the region, are preparing an operation to occupy one of Iran's islands," warned Mohammad Bagher Ghalibaf, the speaker of Iran's parliament, in a post

on X on Wednesday. Therefore, instead of entering into negotiations, Iran has decided to prepare to defend its territory against the suspected US plan.

**Fear In The Gulf**  
Interestingly, the Gulf countries, which have previously been involved in negotiations, have not shown any interest in the US peace plan despite suffering the most from Iran's retaliatory attacks. Oman, which mediated earlier and even reported progress in the talks on the eve of the US and Israeli attack, has been quiet. Qatar has even distanced itself from Trump's claims of negotiations with Iran. "Qatar was not involved in any mediation efforts," said government spokesperson Majed al-Ansari at a briefing on Tuesday, before making a startling addition: "If they exist." Saudi officials are reported to be in favour of continuing the war. Trump has even claimed that Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman (MBS) "is fighting with us". That may not be true, but some Gulf States, such as Saudi Arabia, the UAE and Bahrain, would

not like Iran's current hard-line Islamic regime to survive, which could pose them an even bigger threat in the future.

**The Build-Up Of Troops**  
It's unclear whether Trump has approved a ground operation in Iran, but there are signs he is considering it, which would significantly escalate the conflict. Thousands of American troops are being deployed to the region. Around 2,000 soldiers from the 82nd Airborne Division have already departed for the Gulf. These paratroopers can be deployed worldwide within 24 hours of notification and conduct parachute assaults, including against a "defended airfield", to prepare for further ground operations. The 82nd Division has been deployed in almost all conflicts involving the United States since the Second World War. Its troops will be joined by the Japan-based amphibious assault ship USS Tripoli and the amphibious landing dock USS New Orleans. The deployment means nearly 7,000 additional US soldiers in the Gulf.

# Israel targets Iran missile site as oil prices climb after Trump pauses energy strikes

**AGENCY**  
**Tehran:** Eighteen people have been killed in an overnight attack on the Iranian city of Qom, local media has reported. IRGC-backed Fars news agency and Tasnim report the attack hit the Pardisan area of the city early this morning, with an initial death toll of six being later updated. According to reports, 10 people were also injured. The Iranian Red Crescent Society said rescue workers attended the scene, which it described as a residential area. US President Donald Trump has claimed that Iran allowed "10 boats of oil" - which he described as a "present" - to pass through the Strait of Hormuz earlier this week. "They said, to show you the fact that we're real and solid and we're there, we're going to let you have eight boats of oil, eight boats, eight big boats of oil. This was two days ago... and they'll sail up tomorrow so it's three days ago. I guess they were right, and they were real, and I think they were Pakistani-flagged... it ended up being 10 boats," Trump said during a cabinet meeting at the White House yesterday. BBC Verify has checked through publicly available ship-tracking data to see which vessels



crossed the Strait with their location transmitters between 23 and 25 March - the period Trump mentioned. Over that period we have identified five vessels carrying oil through the Strait, none of which were Pakistan-flagged. Five other ships made the journey, but none of these were listed as carrying oil. Ship-tracking would not pick up any vessels that passed through the Strait without publicly broadcasting their locations. Earlier Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps said it had turned back three ships trying to transit the Strait which it said was closed to vessels travelling to

and from ports "belonging to allies and supporters" of the US and Israel. The UN Human Rights Council has been holding an emergency debate on the strike on a primary school in Minab, southern Iran, at the start of the war. Iranian authorities say 168 people were killed, mostly children. Here's a round-up of what we've heard today at the UN: UN human rights chief Volker Türk called for an investigation into the school strike to be concluded "as soon as possible", adding that it sparked "visceral horror". Separately, he also said US-Israeli strikes have increasingly "destroyed civilian infrastructure" as the

war has progressed, and called the targeting of nuclear facilities "reckless beyond comprehension". Earlier, the UN's nuclear watchdog urged "maximum restraint" to avoid a nuclear incident in Iran, after a reported strike near Iran's Bushehr Nuclear Power Plant on Tuesday. Appearing at the UN via video link, Iran's Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi called the conflict an "illegal war imposed by two bullying nuclear armed regimes". He called the strike on the school a "calculated, phased assault" and a "war crime". The mother of two children killed in the strike told the UN her home is

now silent, "much more silent than any home should ever be" - see our post below. We didn't hear from the US in the debate. It has not accepted responsibility for the strike and has said it does not target civilians - it has previously said it is investigating the incident. US media has reported that US military investigators believe American forces were likely responsible for hitting the school unintentionally - but that they have not reached a final conclusion. The mother of two children killed in a strike on a girls' school in Iran at the outset of the conflict says the "truth must be brought to light". The woman, speaking during a UN Human Rights Council debate on the Minab bombing, blamed the US and Israel as "the cause of this suffering" and said both nations must be held accountable. Israel's military has previously said it was "not aware" of any operations in the area, and while the US has not accepted responsibility, it has said it is investigating. US media has reported that US military investigators believe American forces were likely responsible for hitting the school unintentionally - but that they have not reached a final conclusion.

## Hyderabad Emerged as a High-Growth Residential Market Following Stagnation: CREDAI-Liases Foras Report

**Hyderabad, 27th March 2026:** Hyderabad's residential real estate market recorded strong growth momentum in 2025, driven by sustained demand in premium and upper mid-income housing segments, according to the CREDAI-Liases Foras Report.

Hyderabad has emerged as one of the leading housing markets in the country, recording a total sales value of 1,08,406 crores. The city recorded a 5.7% CAGR in housing prices and continues to benefit from its position as a major IT and business hub, attracting both end-users and investors.

Demand remained concentrated in higher-value segments, with the 1 crore-1.5 crore category emerging as the dominant contributor to overall sales, followed by the 2 crore-5 crore and 1.5 crore-2 crore segments. This trend highlights a clear shift toward premiumisation in the city's housing market.

Supply trends indicate a strong preference for larger configurations, with 3BHK units leading new launches, particularly in the 1 crore-2 crore range. 4BHK units follow as the second-largest con-



### Highlights

Hyderabad's residential real estate market recorded strong growth momentum in 2025, driven by sustained demand in premium and upper mid-income housing segments, according to the CREDAI-Liases Foras Report.

tributor, reflecting growing demand for spacious homes in premium categories.

Hyderabad's residential market comprises 1,217 projects by 797 builders, with an estimated 21 months of inventory, indicating a balanced demand-supply environment. Price appreciation remained steady in 2025, with the House Price Index (HPI) rising to 3.3%, marking a recovery from the earlier period of stag-

nation and reflecting renewed demand, economic stability, and increasing investor confidence.

The report attributes Hyderabad's sustained growth to continued expansion of IT and business hubs, improving infrastructure, and strong economic fundamentals, which are driving both end-user demand and investment activity, positioning the city among the fastest-growing real estate markets in India.

## Premium Homes Gain Ground in Hyderabad, Form 39% of Sales: BankBazaar



**Hyderabad, March 27, 2026:** Hyderabad continues to emerge as one of India's most aspiration-driven housing markets, with a strong preference for homeownership translating into increased demand for premium housing, according to insights from BankBazaar's Aspiration Index 2025-26. The city recorded a Homeownership Importance Index score of 94.9, among the highest in the country, indicating a strong preference for asset ownership. This is reflected in market activity. In Q3 2025, Hyderabad recorded over 8,400 residential unit sales, with 39% in the ₹1-1.5 crore segment, highlighting

the growing share of premium-mid housing in overall demand. Income growth continues to drive this trend. Expansion of Global Capability Centres (GCCs), along with sustained hiring across IT, pharma, and financial services, is strengthening salaried income profiles. This is improving mortgage eligibility and enabling access to higher-value housing. The lending ecosystem reflects similar trends. Average home loan ticket sizes are estimated in the ₹70-95 lakh range, indicating rising property values and higher borrowing capacity. Buyers are also entering the housing mar-

ket earlier in their earning lifecycle, with a preference for larger homes, improved connectivity, and integrated amenities. Hyderabad's Overall Aspiration Index score of 87.5 points to a financially progressive consumer base, with increasing focus on long-term asset creation. Housing demand is gradually shifting from affordability-led purchases to aspiration-led upgrades, supported by stable income visibility and structured borrowing. On the supply side, developers are responding with calibrated project launches, with a higher share of premium configurations. Controlled inventory additions are sup-

porting price stability and steady absorption levels. Commenting on the trend, Adhil Shetty, CEO, BankBazaar, said, "Hyderabad is witnessing a transition from affordability-led buying to aspiration-led ownership. Rising incomes, stable employment ecosystems, and improved access to credit are enabling consumers to upgrade their housing choices in a measured manner." With continued GCC expansion and infrastructure development, Hyderabad is expected to sustain this premiumisation trend, reinforcing its position as a key urban housing market.

## Trump's signature to appear on US dollars in first for sitting president

**AGENCY**  
**Washington:** Donald Trump is set to become the first sitting US president to have his signature on US banknotes, the treasury department has announced. Trump's signature will appear alongside Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent, an unprecedented move that the department said would mark America's 250th anniversary. "There is no more powerful way to recognize the historic achievements of our great country and President Donald J Trump than US dollar bills bearing his name," Bessent said. US banknotes have traditionally carried the signatures of treasury officials. It is the latest move by the administration to associate Trump's name with a range of government programmes and public buildings. The first \$100 (£75) bills with the signatures of Trump and Bessent will be printed in June, with others to follow. Notes currently being printed bear the signatures of former President Joe Biden's Treasury Secretary, Janet Yellen, and Treasurer Lynn Malerba. It has been tradi-



tion since 1861 for the US treasurer's signature to appear on bank notes, a tradition that would end under the Trump administration's plans. Ahead of the 250th anniversary, Bessent said printing currency bearing Trump's name would be a "powerful way to recognize the historic achievements of our great country" and the president. Current US Treasurer Brandon Beach vowed the country's currency will "continue to stand as a symbol of prosperity, strength, and the unshakable spirit of the American people". This year sees the 250th anniversary of the formal declaration when the 13 original American colonies, later states, declared their inde-

pendence from Britain. The Democratic Party governor of California and long-time Trump critic Gavin Newsom responded to the announcement with an attack on the president's economic record. "Now Americans will know exactly who to blame as they're paying more for groceries, gas, rent, and health care," he posted on social media. Earlier this month, a federal arts commission approved a commemorative 24-karat gold coin bearing the image of Trump, also to celebrate America's 250th birthday. During his first term in office, President Trump's name appeared on paper support cheques sent to millions of Americans during the Covid-19 pandem-

ic. In honor of the 250th anniversary of the United States of America, President Donald J. Trump's signature will appear on future U.S. paper currency along with the Secretary of the Treasury, marking the first time in history for a sitting president. "Under President Trump's leadership, we are on a path toward unprecedented economic growth, lasting dollar dominance, and fiscal strength and stability," said Secretary of the Treasury Scott Bessent. "There is no more powerful way to recognize the historic achievements of our great country and President Donald J. Trump than U.S. dollar bills bearing his name, and it is only appropriate that this historic currency be issued at the Semiquincentennial." "As the 250th anniversary of our great nation approaches, American currency will continue to stand as a symbol of prosperity, strength, and the unshakable spirit of the American people under President Trump's leadership," said Treasurer Brandon Beach.

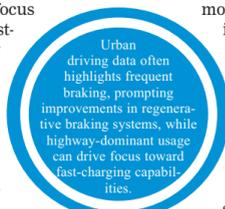
### BEYOND RANGE AND CHARGING:

## How Real-Time Telematics Is Shaping the Next Generation of EVs

Attributed to: Mr. Anand Kulkarni, Chief Products Officer, Head of HV Programs and Customer Service, Tata Passenger Electric Mobility Ltd. Electric vehicles are no longer just modes of transport; they have evolved into sustainable, intelligent, and connected mobility platforms. Through telematics, EVs continuously generate data on driving behavior, energy usage, charging patterns, and component performance. Analyzing this real-time data allows manufacturers to refine vehicle design based on how customers actually use their vehicles. Earlier, EV development relied on simulations, test tracks, and predicted usage scenarios. Telematics has fundamentally changed this approach. Charging data, for example, may reveal that most users charge overnight at home, encouraging optimization of home-charging efficiency. Urban

driving data often highlights frequent braking, prompting improvements in regenerative braking systems, while highway-dominant usage can drive focus toward fast-charging capabilities. Such precision is previously unattainable. Connected EVs now provide detailed insights into how drivers accelerate, brake, and charge during daily routines. These insights enable manufacturers to align product development more closely with real-world usage rather than assumptions. Telematics has also transformed customer-centricity. Instead of relying on delayed signals such as warranty claims or service visits, manufactur-

ers can detect issues within days or weeks. Real-time insights allow rapid corrective action through over-the-air updates or timely design changes for future models, especially important in markets with diverse driving and geographic conditions. However, the success of telematics depends on consumer trust. Manufacturers must clearly communicate what data is collected, how it is used, and how it benefits customers. When transparency, data security, and privacy are prioritized, telematics becomes a partnership that delivers safer, more efficient, and better-designed EVs. With advancements in AI and analytics, the vehicles of today are actively shaping the mobility solutions of tomorrow.



## Union Minister Piyush Goyal Unveils Malabar Gold & Diamonds' Rs. 200 Crore CSR Initiative for FY 2026-27

**New Delhi, March 2026:** Malabar Gold & Diamonds, the world's fifth-largest retail jewellery group and a responsible jewellery brand, has today announced their CSR initiatives worth INR 200 crore for the financial year 2026-27 held at Dr. Ambedkar International Centre in New Delhi in the presence of Shri Piyush Goyal, Union Minister for Commerce and Industry. At the CSR initiative, the Union Minister inaugurated the distribution of educational scholarships for 33,000 girl students across India. The event was attended by Malabar Group Chairman Mr. M.P. Ahammad, Managing Director - India Operations Mr. O. Asher, Executive Directors Mr. Nishad A.K. and Mr. Abdulla Ibrahim, Kerala House Resident Commissioner Mr. Puneet Kumar, IAS, Pratham CEO Ms. Rukmini Banerji, and Thanal Chairman Dr. Idris, among others. Union Minister Piyush



Goyal stated that the initiatives of the Malabar Charitable Trust align closely with Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision of empowering India's daughters through programs like Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao. He added that "Malabar Gold & Diamonds' decision to allocate INR 200 crore towards CSR will further strengthen the nation's progress," emphasizing that India's growth is rooted in the empowerment of its people - especially women and girls and appreciating the

company's efforts in driving meaningful change through education. "He also encouraged students and young citizens to dream big, aspire beyond limitations, and seize the vast opportunities India offers, urging them to contribute actively to the nation's growth story". Malabar Group, Chairman, Mr. M.P. Ahammad highlighted "Human resource development is the backbone of national growth. He noted that nurturing talent through quality education

is essential, and that the scholarship programme enables students to achieve academic success and contribute to the country's development. He added that the group remains committed to creating sustainable, long-term societal impact through significant CSR investments." During 2026-27, CSR projects worth INR 200 crore will be implemented across more than 3,000 locations in 19 states, covering 15 major initiatives. These programmes are expected to

benefit over 2 lakh people. A significant focus is on education with INR 114 crore allocated to initiatives such as micro-learning centres for street children and national scholarship programmes for girls. INR 30 crore has been earmarked for food distribution under the Hunger Free World project, and INR 14.2 crore for healthcare initiatives. Housing projects, including the 'Grandma Home' initiative for destitute mothers, will receive INR 25 crore. Additionally, INR 6.8 crore will be allocated for other humanitarian activities and INR 10 crore for environmental protection. As part of the Malabar Group's 33rd anniversary, scholarships will be awarded this year to 33,000 girl students from 284 districts across 18 states. Since its inception, the programme has benefited over 1,15,000 girls. All CSR initiatives are implemented through the Malabar Charitable Trust.

# NEPAL SWEARS IN EX-RAPPER AS NEW PM

**AGENCY**  
**NEPAL** : Rapper-turned-politician Balendra Shah has been sworn in as Nepal's prime minister after a landslide victory in the country's first election since last year's youth-led protests. The 35-year-old's rise marks an important shift in Nepali politics. His promise of change resonated with an electorate that was angry at corruption, nepotism and elite rule. Before taking office on Friday, Shah, popularly known as Balen, released a song filled with optimism about Nepal's future. "Undivided Nepali, this time history is being made," he rapped in a track that garnered more than two million views within hours of its release. The song harks back to his roots in the underground rap scene, where he used music to call out corruption and other social problems in Nepal. After just three years as mayor of the capital Kathmandu, Shah teamed up

with the Rastriya Swatantra Party (RSP) as its prime-ministerial candidate, scoring a decisive victory in general elections this month.

**"This mandate is for change. I will work to end corruption and rebuild trust in governance."**

*-Balendra Shah*



His supporters see him as a symbol of change and a break from the failings of Nepal's old guard. But some question whether the four-year-old RSP is capable of making good on its bold pledges. The rebellious rapper Shah was born in 1990 in Naradevi, Kathmandu, and is his par-

ents' youngest son. His father is an Ayurvedic practitioner and his mother stayed at home to bring up the family. Shah is married and lives with his wife and daughter. After leaving school he graduated with engineering degrees in Kathmandu and later in the southern Indian state of Karnataka. In 2013, he shot to

fame after winning a popular rap battle in Nepal, with sharp verses that carried the frustration of a generation that felt suppressed and abandoned. Shah went on to release several popular songs which criticised corruption and social inequality in the Himalayan nation. He cut a distinctive figure in the music videos with his trademark square black sunglasses, a black blazer and black trousers. One of his best-known hits, Balidan, has amassed 14m views on YouTube. The song title means sacrifice, and part of its lyrics go: "While we sell our identity abroad government employees get 30k salary and have properties in 30 different places. Who will pay the debt of people working seven seas away?" In 2022, the political newbie won Kathmandu's mayoral race by a landslide as an independent candidate, triumphing over parties which had dominated elections for decades.



## Oscars ceremony moving to new home outside Hollywood



The Oscars will leave their longtime home in the heart of Hollywood and relocate to a more central Los Angeles venue beginning in 2029 - the same year its broadcast is set to move to YouTube. The globally watched Academy Awards will now be held at the Peacock Theater, a venue with greater seating capacity than its current home, the Dolby Theatre. Perched across town on Hollywood Boulevard, the Dolby Theatre (formerly the Kodak Theatre) has hosted the Oscars since 2002 surrounded by the Hollywood Walk of Fame. The Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences said the move was part of a multi-year partnership with AEG, the owner of the LA Live complex that also hosts the Emmy and Grammy Awards. "L.A. LIVE was built to host the moments that define culture, and there is no greater global stage than the Oscars," said Todd Goldstein, AEG's chief revenue officer. Goldstein also pledged to create an environment "that celebrates creativity, honors excellence, and delivers an unforgettable experience for movie fans everywhere". The eight-mile (12km) move to the Peacock Theater, which will host the event until at least 2039, will push the ceremony away from the iconic Hollywood sign.

## MARCO RUBIO MEETS G7 COUNTERPARTS AMID IRAN WAR



US Secretary of State Marco Rubio has joined a meeting of G7 foreign ministers in France for talks in which the US-Israeli war with Iran will be the main focus. Rubio is expected to face pressure to de-escalate the conflict as concerns continue to grow over its impact on the world economy. The other G7 countries - the UK, Canada, France, Germany, Italy and Japan - are wary of being drawn in militarily. The group will also discuss the war in Ukraine. As he headed to France, Rubio said it was in the "interest" of G7 nations to "step up" and help with the Strait of Hormuz, which Iran has effectively blockaded, causing fuel prices to soar. "I'm not there to make them happy," he told reporters. "For all the countries who care about international law, they should be doing something about it." As they went into the meeting, UK Foreign Secretary Yvette Cooper told the media: "We need to see a swift resolution to this conflict that restores the regional stability, that needs to include the Strait of Hormuz." About 20% of the world's oil and liquefied natural gas typically passes through

the strait and the war has caused concern over price rises and potential shortages. Ministers from the G7 have previously said they are ready to take "necessary measures" to support the global energy supply. At a meeting of the ministers on Thursday, German Foreign Minister Johann Wadepuhl said the group should develop a "common position" with the US to help bring the war to a swift end. He added that the talks with Rubio would be important, and that France and Britain share the same position. Hours before Rubio headed to France, US President Donald Trump again criticised Nato, of which all G7 countries except Japan are members, and said allies in the military alliance had "done absolutely nothing to help with" the situation. Discussions about Iran may overlap with talks about Russia's war in Ukraine. Ukraine's Foreign Minister Andrii Sybaha said he met Rubio on Friday morning on the sidelines of the G7 meeting, writing that America's role in "advancing peace efforts remains critical". "We also spoke about the developments in the Middle East.

## Two Cuba-bound aid ships missing after leaving Mexico



A search and rescue operation is under way in the Caribbean for two missing sailboats filled with humanitarian supplies travelling from Mexico to Cuba. Mexico has deployed naval teams and military search aircraft to locate the Friendship and Tigger Moth, which were carrying at least nine crew members, the Mexican navy said in a statement. The vessels had been expected to arrive in

Havana on Tuesday or Wednesday, but there has been no communication from them and no confirmation of their arrival, the navy said. The Mexican navy said it was committed to using all of the resources at its disposal to locate the boats and ensure the safety of the crews. The two missing ships departed Isla Mujeres, in the Mexican state of Quintana Roo on 20 March.

## 'MY DAUGHTER IS UNDER THE RUBBLE': INSIDE TEHRAN AS CIVILIAN TOLL OF STRIKES RISES

A mother stands by the rubble, crying out for her daughter. For days she has been waiting for rescue workers to dig through the flattened remains of what was once her daughter's flat in Resalat, a residential district in eastern Tehran. "They don't have the manpower to get her out," the woman says. "My daughter is under the rubble... she's afraid of the dark." For a month, Iran has been at war with the United States and Israel, who have been carrying out strikes across the country at targets linked to the regime. But these attacks are also having a devastating impact on civilians living nearby. They are now being caught between bombardment from the skies and a repressive regime that responded to anti-establishment protests with a deadly crackdown in January. Since



the start of the war, BBC Eye has gathered exclusive footage from independent journalists inside Tehran. The BBC is rarely allowed into Iran and has not been given access since the war began. We've gathered eyewitness testimony, filmed the aftermath of strikes and analysed footage from social media and satellite imagery. Our analysis shows there has been a series of attacks on state-linked targets that are

embedded in civilian neighbourhoods in Tehran, with deadly consequences for those living around them. Dozens of families had lived in the multi-storey apartment building in Resalat before it was destroyed by an Israeli air strike on 9 March. The woman trapped in the rubble had been living in the complex with her husband and young daughter. Days after the strike, she and her daughter were found dead

under the rubble. The husband survived. Another apartment building, across the road, was also destroyed in the air strike. A man, 55, living in an apartment there, said the strike was "so sudden" and he was "thrown across the room". He says everything he owns is now buried beneath the debris. "I don't have anything now... All my documents, everything, it's gone." Local authorities and residents say between 40 and 50 people were killed in this single attack. Those made homeless are currently staying at a hotel nearby. "This was our life," the man adds. The Israel Defense Forces told the BBC World Service it had targeted a military building used by the Iranian Basij, a paramilitary force linked to Iran's Revolutionary Guards.

## PANIC BUYING PROMPTS PM TO REASSURE AUSTRALIANS OVER FUEL SUPPLY

Prime Minister Anthony Albanese has sought to reassure Australians that the country's fuel supply remains "secure" as prices soar and following reports of panic buying and petrol stations running dry since the start of the Iran war. "The longer this war goes on, the greater the impact will be. But we continue to act to prepare and shield Australians from the worst of it," Albanese told reporters on Friday. There have been reports of truck drivers and other motorists stranded, while businesses say rising costs are affecting their viability. The government says demand and distribution issues have caused short-



ages rather than supply, which it says remains at the same level as before the war began. "For the next few weeks, Australia's supply of petrol and diesel and oil will be the same, if not higher, than it normally would be," Energy Minister Chris Bowen said alongside

Albanese. In Cairns, Queensland, the BBC found a small independent garage that tells a pretty typical story in Australia. It has run out of unleaded petrol and the price of diesel is 85% higher than it was before the war in Iran started. In New South Wales, Australia's

most populous state, one in seven retailers say they are out of at least one type of fuel. Australia has experienced steep price rises since the US and Israel attacked Iran and the Strait of Hormuz was closed, causing the price of oil to jump. The average retail price of petrol reached 238 Australian cents (\$1.64; £1.23) a litre as of Sunday compared to 171 cents four weeks earlier, according to the Australian Institute of Petroleum. The price of diesel in Sydney has meanwhile risen to the 314.5 cents a litre as of Thursday, according to the National Roads and Motorists' Association (NRMA), its highest ever price.

## US Senate votes to fund most of Homeland Security to end airports chaos - but ICE excluded



The US Senate has voted to end a partial 40-day government shutdown, approving funding for the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) - with the exception of immigration enforcement. The almost six-week funding lapse has seen knock-on disruption at US airports. Security workers' salaries are paid by the DHS, and hundreds have quit since the shutdown began. Democrats had refused to agree a funding deal without reforms to the US Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agency, but the Senate reached unanimous agreement in the early hours of Friday after stripping ICE and parts of border protection out of the measure. The funding measures now face a vote in the House of Representatives. It is hoped that package can bring an end to widespread disruption at airports across the US, where travellers have faced hours-long queues due to a shortage of Transportation Security Administration (TSA) officers at security check-

points. Around 50,000 agents at the TSA - which sits under the DHS - have been working without pay since mid-February due to the shutdown. This has reduced the number turning up to work each day and led to hundreds quitting. A BBC reporter at Houston airport on Thursday night reported that after waiting about two hours in a winding queue across one floor, frazzled travellers went up an escalator thinking they had reached the end - only to find another long line stretching towards security. The airport is currently operating just one-third to 50% of its TSA checkpoints, said Jim Szczesniak, director of aviation for the Houston Airport System. A few hours before the Senate vote, US President Donald Trump said on Truth Social that he would sign an executive order "to immediately pay out TSA Agents". "President Trump should never have had to step in to rescue TSA workers and US air travel," said Senate Majority Leader John Thune, addressing the chamber after the vote.



Belarus leader gifts rifle to North Korea's Kim as they sign friendship treaty

## SARAH FERGUSON'S 'CLOSE EPSTEIN TIES' SCRUTINISED IN US LAWMAKER'S LETTER



A US lawmaker has made a direct plea to Sarah Ferguson to testify about her "close personal and business ties" to Jeffrey Epstein, according to a letter seen exclusively by the BBC. Congressman Suhas Subramanyam urged her to provide information to the US congressional committee investigating the late sex offender. He also asked for any knowledge she had of her ex-husband

Andrew Mountbatten-Windsor's involvement in Epstein's operations. The letter represents the most direct pressure on the former duchess to testify since the start of the Epstein scandal. Ferguson's representatives have been approached for comment. Mountbatten-Windsor has denied any wrongdoing in relation to Epstein. Mountbatten-Windsor has not responded to the BBC's requests for comment on the specific allegations in relation to the release of millions of Epstein files in January. At the weekend, the BBC first revealed that some US lawmakers were calling for Ferguson to give evidence concerning her links to Epstein.



# IPL Players Are Underpaid?

The IPL saw a mega windfall as champions Royal Challengers Bengaluru (RCB) and former champions Rajasthan Royals (RR) got new owners. The Aditya Birla Group-led (ABG) consortium acquired a 100 percent equity stake in RCB for a whopping USD 1.78 billion (approximately Rs 16,706 crore) from its current owner, United Spirits Limited. RR was acquired by a US-based Kal Somani-led consortium for USD 1.63 billion (approximately Rs 15,290 crore). The Somani-led consortium includes Rob Walton from the Walmart family and the Hamp family (Ford Motor Company). Combined, the teams are now valued at over Rs 31,000 crore. However, according to former India and IPL player Abhinav Mukund, the players are still underpaid. Speaking on The Great Indian Cricket Show on Doordarshan, former India opener Abhinav Mukund argued that IPL players are



grossly underpaid given the league's massive valuation. Mukund said, "I feel IPL players are grossly underpaid. Listen, hear me out. Because the valuation of the league is so high. And if you look at other leagues around the world - the economics of it - you take base-

ball, you take F1, you can take any of these guys. In comparison to that, 20 crores or 25 crores is actually not that much, if you look at it in that way." Mukund continued: "If you are saying IPL is one of the top 4-5 leagues in the world, your players should also be paid like the top 4-5. It's not

even in the top 10 or top 20. And if a player is in the top 10, that is because of all the other endorsements, not because of the IPL salary. So the salary should not be capped. I feel that IPL players could be paid more." He suggested, "An IPL team gets about 400 to 500 crores a year, from what I have

read in reports. I think that of the 100 to 120 crore they are currently spending, there should be a little more - maybe double that - as the salary cap. Maybe 200-250 crores." This bold opinion highlights the growing debate on IPL economics and player compensation.

## INDIAN FOOTBALL HITS NEW LOW. COACH, PLAYERS DENIED ENTRY IN STADIUM OVER PAYMENT ISSUE

Indian football continues to find ways to trigger new controversies. Still recovering from last year's Indian Super League drama, a fresh off-field row erupted ahead of the national team's AFC Asian Cup qualifier against Hong Kong, after head coach Khalid Jamil and several players were denied entry into the Jawaharlal Nehru International Stadium in Kochi. The reason: a payment dispute. The unprecedented scenes in Kochi caused major disruption to pre-match media duties, raising serious questions about administrative coordination. The team had arrived at the stadium in Kochi for a scheduled press conference ahead of their match against Hong Kong. It was the national team's first game in Kochi in nearly a decade. But what transpired as the coach and players attempted to enter the stadium left everyone stunned. Jamil, along with Ashique Kuruniyan, Sahal Abdul Samad and Bijoy Varghese,



was prevented from entering the stadium by security staff of the Greater Cochin Development Authority (GCDA). Even journalists were denied access, triggering complete chaos. After non-payment was cited as the reason behind the incident, Kerala Football Association (KFA) president Navas Meeran attempted to downplay the situation, calling it a minor technical problem. He also assured that the match against Hong Kong,

scheduled for 31 March, would go ahead as planned. "The Asian Cup qualifier will go ahead as planned. What happened on Thursday was a minor technical problem, and it will be sorted out soon," Meeran said. According to reports, the GCDA demanded a security deposit of Rs 20-25 lakh and an additional Rs 3 lakh as rent to make the stadium accessible again. GCDA officials refused entry without full payment, while the KFA requested more time.

## "Better For MS Dhoni To Retire": R Ashwin Ends Debate Around CSK Icon After AB de Villiers' Remarks

Is MS Dhoni still as relevant for Chennai Super Kings (CSK) as he was over the last couple of years? The arrival of wicketkeeper-batter Sanju Samson has certainly made the debate more interesting. With Samson, CSK finally have a wicketkeeper who can replace Dhoni. But does that mean the 'Thala' will find no place in the team's playing XI? Many feel that the Indian Premier League (IPL) 2026 season might see Dhoni being used as an Impact Substitute. However, Ravichandran Ashwin isn't on board with the idea. For him, it's better for Dhoni to retire than play as an Impact Player. Since retiring from international cricket in 2020, Dhoni has remained active only in the IPL. He begins practising



early, sometimes alone in Ranchi. At 44, Dhoni is already among the oldest players to feature in the IPL, closing in on Brad Hogg's record of 45. Former South Africa captain AB de Villiers said that Dhoni isn't a 'top 6 batter' for CSK anymore. For him, either Dhoni bats higher in the squad or doesn't play at all. While the

Impact Substitute rule does make it easier for Dhoni to manage his workload, at this age, Ashwin feels Dhoni has given enough signs that he wants to play, and not just as an Impact Player. "I do not agree that he has to stay on the impact list. If he is in the squad, he has to play. If he does not want to, he should not play the entire

season, that is it. I am not in agreement with him being an impact player," Ashwin said in a video on his YouTube channel Ash ki Baat. "If you are making a CSK XI, and Dhoni is in the squad, the debate ends right there. He has to be in the XI. If he does not want to play, he would retire. He has 100 per cent belief that he can play. He has been practising for the last three months. He is giving the message that he wants to play. If he wants to play, it is not possible to tell him he cannot play," he added. More than Dhoni's skills with the bat, Ashwin feels his presence on the field is crucial to help skipper Ruturaj Gaikwad. "He is not your number six batter, that I will agree. But he can play a double role.

## PSL INTRODUCES NEW RULE TO OFFSET DEW FACTOR IN DAY/NIGHT MATCHES

In order to offset dew factor in day/night matches, Pakistan Super League (PSL) has introduced a new rule, allowing the captains to submit two team sheets and pick one after the toss of coin. The 11th edition of the PSL which began on Thursday in Lahore now requires captains to submit two separate team sheets, including playing elevens and four substitute fielders, to the match referee before the toss. After the toss, captains can choose either one of the two teams they have submitted to the referee. A PCB official said the rule had been introduced to ensure fair competition, especially when the dew factor is prominent at either of the two venues (Lahore and Karachi). Sometime back, the Pakistan Cricket Board



(PCB) had also introduced a rule in domestic first class matches of doing away with the toss and allowing the visiting captain to make a call on whether he will bat or

bowl first. The PCB said on Sunday that because of the conflict in the region and the austerity and revenue saving measures announced by the government, the PSL match-

es would be held without spectators. The Board also cancelled the opening ceremony and restricted the event to just two venues - Lahore and Karachi.

## Ex-Pakistan Star Takes Hilarious Dig At PSL 2026 'Pink Ball' Drama: "Dupatta Gali"

The first match of the Pakistan Super League (PSL) 2026 between Lahore Qalandars and Hyderabad Kingsmen saw a major controversy as the contest suddenly turned into a 'pink-ball' encounter. The fans were left stunned after Australia all-rounder Marnus Labuschagne, representing Hyderabad Kingsmen, lodged a complaint with the umpires after noticing that the colour from his team's jersey was bleeding on the white ball. As a result, the ball turned pink and that led to a lot of criticism from both fans as well as experts. During his analysis on YouTube, former Pakistan cricketer Kamran Akmal took a hilarious dig at the entire situation and even suggested that the jer-



seys' colours came from the traditional ways of dyeing. "Every city has a dupatta gali where you can colour your dupatta. It looks like the kits have come fresh from that place. At first, I thought that the ball is appearing pink because of the camera. But it could also be from the sponsorship boards," Akmal said. Meanwhile, Labuschagne

admitted he had never experienced colour transfer from clothing onto the ball in his professional career. "I did say to the umpires after the second over, 'What's going on? The ball is red.' It must be from the clothes or something like that. I haven't seen anything like this before," Labuschagne told reporters at the post-match press conference.

## Olympic women's sport limited to biological females: Olympic president Kirsty Coventry

The women's category of Olympic sports will be limited to biological females from 2028. The International Olympic Committee (IOC) says eligibility will be determined by a "once-in-a-lifetime" sex test, which would prevent transgender women and those with differences in sexual development (DSD) who have gone through male puberty from competing. It will take effect from the Los Angeles Olympics. IOC president Kirsty Coventry said the policy, external was the result of a review "led by medical experts". "At the Olympic Games even the smallest margins can be the difference between victory and defeat," she said. "So it is absolutely clear that it would not be fair for biological males to compete in the female category. In



addition, in some sports it would simply not be safe." The IOC said eligibility for the female category would be determined by a screening to detect the SRY gene - the sex-determining region Y gene - which is part of the Y chromosome and causes male characteristics to develop. "The IOC considers that SRY gene screening via saliva, cheek swab or blood sample is un-

intrusive compared to other possible methods," it said. The IOC said athletes who fail the test would "continue to be included in all other classifications for which they qualify. For example, they are eligible for any male category, including in a designated male slot within any mixed category, and any open category, or in sports and events that do not classify athletes by sex." Until this announcement, the IOC left sex eligibility regulations to the governing bodies of individual sports, rather than applying a universal approach. While athletics, swimming, cycling and rowing have brought in bans, many others allowed transgender women to compete in female competition if they lowered their testosterone levels.

## Aryna Sabalenka Subdues Elena Rybakina To Reach Miami Open Final



World number one and defending champion Aryna Sabalenka powered past second-ranked Elena Rybakina 6-4, 6-3 on Thursday to line up a Miami Open title clash with Coco Gauff. Sabalenka, who fell to Rybakina in the Australian Open final before turning the tables on the Kazakh in the Indian Wells title match this earlier this month, broke the big-serving Rybakina twice in each set to come out on top in the blockbuster semi-final and keep her bid for the "Sunshine Double" of Indian Wells and Miami on track. "I think I did everything right," said Sabalenka, who applied ruthless pressure on Rybakina's serve while delivering a sterling service performance that featured the nine aces - including four in a row across the seventh and ninth games of the opening set. "She's an incredible player, always pushes me to the limit," Sabalenka said. "With her, you have to bring

your best tennis and that's why I was able to pull out such great tennis today." Sabalenka had to save a match point to beat Rybakina in Indian Wells, but she was on the front foot on Thursday, seizing a break for a 3-1 lead in the opening set. Rybakina recouped the break immediately, but Sabalenka broke again to pocket the set and took command in the second with a break for 2-0 in a game which Rybakina led 4-0. Trailing 0-4, Rybakina clawed back a break for 4-1 but Sabalenka wouldn't flinch again. Rybakina saved one match point on her own serve before Sabalenka served it out with a love game punctuated by a fierce forehand winner. The match marked the first time outside the WTA Finals that the world's two top-ranked players met before a final since Martina Hingis and Jana Novotna in the 1998 US Open semi-finals.

## F1'S JAPANESE GRAND PRIX WILL BE THE LAST FOR 5 WEEKS AMID MIDDLE EAST UNREST

The Japanese Grand Prix is only the third race of the new Formula 1 season, but it will be last one for five weeks with events in Bahrain and Saudi Arabia called off because of the war in Iran. The next F1 race is not until May 3 in Miami. Here's what we've learned so far from races in Australia and China with the Japanese GP set for Sunday: Mercedes and Ferrari have adapted best to Formula 1's most radical change in power and chassis in more than a decade. George Russell and Kimi Antonelli have won each of the first two races, and

Ferrari's Lewis Hamilton and Charles Leclerc have flip-flopped finishing third and fourth. Mercedes and Ferrari are the favorites on Suzuka's figure-eight circuit, located in central Japan and among F1's most storied venues. Suzuka is a vastly different circuit from Australia - a street course in Melbourne - and Shanghai, which resembles many of the newer Formula 1 venues. Suzuka is old-school - narrow, twisting with only one major straightaway for passing. Hamilton has won the Japanese GP five times, four times at Suzuka

as he surges back near the top of the standings after two races. McLaren has struggled after winning last season's drivers' championship with Lando Norris, and adding the constructors' title for good measure. But McLaren failed to even start the race two weeks ago in China with engine and electrical faults. Asked on Thursday if the problem had been resolved, Norris replied: "I think it took a little bit of time to figure things out, but yes. Of course it hurt us as a team, certainly didn't make us look good to have two cars not starting a race."



## Shine Screens Announces Venkatesh Daggubati–Nandamuri Kalyan Ram–Anil Ravipudi Film for Sankranthi 2027

Sahu Garapati of Shine Screens to Produce Victory Venkatesh, Nandamuri Kalyan Ram, Anil Ravipudi's #VenkyAnil5 #NkrAR2, Presented By Suresh Productions, Co-Produced By Zee Studios, Theatrical Release For Sankranthi 2027. The successful production house Shine Screens recently announced a major cinematic collaboration featuring Victory Venkatesh, Nandamuri Kalyan Ram, and blockbuster Hit Machine Anil Ravipudi. Planned as a massive festive entertainer, the film-#VenkyAnil5 & #NkrAR2, is gearing up for a grand Sankranthi 2027 release. The project will be bankrolled by Sahu Garapati under the Shine Screens banner, which has delivered consecutive hits such as Bhagavanth Kesari and the regional industry blockbuster Mana ShankaraVaraPrasad Garu. Suresh Productions and Smt Archana will present the film, while Zee Studios joins as co-producer, making this a robust partner-



Planned as a massive festive entertainer, the film-#VenkyAnil5 & #NkrAR2, is gearing up for a grand Sankranthi 2027 release.

ship of prominent production houses coming together for a high-value commercial entertainer. This film carries added significance as it is Anil Ravipudi's fifth outing with Venkatesh, after delivering crowd-pleasers like F2, F3, Sankranthiki Vasthunam,

and MSG. It also marks his second collaboration with Kalyan Ram, following the blockbuster success of his debut film Pataas. This new film also marks the banner's third association with director Anil Ravipudi, further cementing their successful collaboration. Anil Ravipudi is mounting this project as a clean, family-friendly entertainer with a fresh, relatable narrative that resonates with audi-

ences across all age groups-an attribute that has become a hallmark of his filmmaking style. With a perfect blend of humour, emotions, and festive spirit, the team is designing the film to be a wholesome Sankranthi treat. Pre-production is currently underway, with Anil Ravipudi fine-tuning the script to match the heightened expectations. The makers will begin the film with a

grand pooja ceremony soon, followed by the announcement of the official title and other key details. With a stellar cast, a proven blockbuster director, and strong backing from leading production houses, this project is already shaping up as one of the biggest and most awaited entertainers of Sankranthi 2027, promising yet another memorable festive season at the box office.

## 1 BILLION VIEWS: SPIDER-MAN: BRAND NEW DAY BECOMES FIRST FILM TRAILER TO HIT MILESTONE!

Building on Spider-Man's enduring global legacy, Brand New Day is already making history before it even hits theatres. The film's trailer surpassed 1 billion views within days of its debut, an unprecedented milestone in cinematic history, underscoring the franchise's unmatched worldwide fanbase and the extraordinary anticipation surrounding this new chapter. For decades, Spider-Man has stood as one of the most beloved superheroes across generations, continuously evolving in storytelling, scale, and cultural resonance. Spider-Man: Brand New Day promises to honour that legacy while boldly charting new territory — and the world is already watching. Directed by Destin Daniel Cretton, Tom Holland returns as Spider-Man alongside Zendaya, Jacob Batalon, Sadie Sink, Jon Bernthal, Mark Ruffalo, Michael Mando and Tramell Tillman in pivotal roles. Produced by Sony Pictures Entertainment India, Spider-Man: Brand New Day swings into theatres on 31st July 2026 in English, Hindi, Tamil, Telugu, Kannada, and Malayalam across all premium formats.



## "Podagantimayya Ninnu Purushothama" Motion Poster is Out



On the auspicious occasion of Sri Rama Navami, the motion poster for the upcoming film "Podagantimayya Ninnu Purushothama" was officially unveiled. Several prominent directors released the Motion Poster. The film is being produced by Surekha Kolachela under Kolachela Dream Works banner. Directed by A. Phaneendra, the film is described as a gripping comedy-drama featuring Yatindra and Ramya Dinesh in the lead roles. The narrative is uniquely structured to unfold over the course of a single night, primarily set within the confines of a hospital, promising a high-stakes and different expe-

rience for the audience. During the launch, the film unit shared that lead actor Yatindra will be seen in a distinctive Brahmin avatar, a characterization that stands out as a major highlight of the movie. The makers expressed their excitement about the unconventional look and the intensity of the script, which blends humor and drama with a thrilling storyline. The production team also announced their upcoming shooting schedule, stating that principal shoot is set to commence after April 15th. The team plans to complete the entire shoot in a single 40-day stretch across the scenic locations of Amalapuram and its surrounding areas.

## KRITHI SHETTY TURNS GLAM QUEEN IN GREEN



## Ram Charan impresses as a mace-wielding wrestler in 'Peddi Pehelwan'

The makers of director Buchi Babu Sana's eagerly awaited rural action drama 'Peddi', featuring actor Ram Charan in the lead, released a glimpse video titled 'Peddi Pehelwan Glimpse' from the film to mark the birthday of actor Ram Charan on Friday. "Vridhhi Cinemas, the production house which is producing the film, took to its social media timelines to release the glimpse video. It wrote, "His GRIT. His GAME. His PRIDE. Happy Birthday, PEDDI PEHELWAN, aka Mega Power Star @AlwaysRamCharan. #PeddiPehelwanGlimpse out now #HDDRamCharan. #PEDDI WORLDWIDE

RELEASE ON 30th APRIL, 2026." The glimpse video that was released on Friday showcased another completely different facet of the actor in the film, much to the delight of fans and film buffs. While a clip from the film that was released some months ago had showcased Ram Charan's skills with a cricket bat, leading many to believe that he could be playing a cricketer in the film, the glimpse video released on Friday showed Ram Charan as a menacing wrestler as well. The glimpse video begins with a voiceover that says, "Kusti (wrestling) is not a sport where you carry a bat and face an oncoming ball. This is a sport where you

## With a Strong Audience Connect, 'Hey Balwanth' Heads to ZEE5 for Its Digital Premiere on March 31

After its theatrical run and positive audience reception for its humour and emotional depth, the Telugu film Hey Balwanth is all set to reach a wider audience with its exclusive digital premiere on ZEE5 from March 31. Directed by debutant Gopi Atchara, Hey Balwanth stars Suhas and Shivani Nagaram in the lead roles, with Naresh, Vennela Kishore, Ajay Ghosh, and Sudarshan playing key supporting characters. The film is produced by B. Narendra Reddy under the banner of Trishul Visionary Studios. The music is composed by Vivek Sagar, with cinematography by Mahi Reddy Pandugula and editing by Viplav Nyshadam. Hey Balwanth unfolds as a quirky comedy drama rooted in a strong emotional and moral conflict. The story follows a young man who aspires to step into his father's world, only to discover that the family busi-



ness carries unexpected ethical complications. As he navigates love, responsibility, and personal values, the narrative evolves into a blend of humour, emotional tension, and situational chaos, anchored by a compelling father-son dynamic. The film's trailer generated notable curiosity among

audiences for its unique premise and clean comedic tone. The interactions between Suhas and Vennela Kishore, along with the underlying emotional thread, emerged as key highlights, helping the film build steady traction across digital platforms. Its positioning as a slightly offbeat

yet accessible entertainer set it apart from more conventional releases. Upon its theatrical release, Hey Balwanth received positive responses from audiences, particularly for its engaging first half, effective humour, and relatable character arcs. Viewers appreciated the film's ability to balance light-hearted moments with emotional depth, making it a breezy yet meaningful watch. The performances, especially by Suhas and Naresh, were widely noted for bringing authenticity and nuance to the narrative. Critically, the film has been recognised as a clean, feel-good entertainer that blends humour with emotional storytelling. Its grounded approach, combined with a character-driven narrative, allows the film to connect with audiences without relying on exaggerated scale or formulaic elements. The father-son relationship, in particular, stands out as an emotional anchor that adds weight to the otherwise playful narrative.

