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VIJAY TO FILE NOMINATION ON MARCH 30; FLAGS BIAS ALLEGATIONS WITH CEO AHEAD OF CAMPAIGN



NEPAL'S EX-PM ARRESTED OVER FATAL PROTEST CRACKDOWN



JANNIK SINNER OUSTS ALEXANDER ZVEREV TO BOOK MIAMI OPEN FINAL WITH JIRI LEHECKA



IN BRIFS

IPL OPENER IN BENGALURU; 2,000 POLICE DEPLOYED

Bengaluru (TSIT): The famous M. Chinnaswamy Cricket Stadium in Bengaluru has been turned into a police fortress as the stage is set for the IPL inaugural match between defending champions Royal Challengers Bengaluru (RCB) and Sunrisers Hyderabad on Saturday evening.

TRUMP TOUTS IRAN WAR GAINS, SAYS 'CUBA IS NEXT' IN MIAMI SPEECH

Miami (TSIT) US President Donald Trump on Friday declared that "Cuba is next" while highlighting what he described as American military gains in the conflict with Iran, while speaking at a Saudi-backed business forum in Miami.

CM Revanth launches sports meet, announces infra boost



Hyderabad (TSIT): Chief Minister A.Revanth Reddy on Saturday announced that LB Stadium and Gachibowli Stadium will be upgraded to international standards to host major global sporting events in the future.

Addressing the gathering Chief Minister said the State Government is committed to transforming sports infrastructure and promoting a strong sporting culture across Telangana.

Chief Minister remarked that sports were neglected during the previous BRS regime and that LB Stadium was often used for political events instead of sports development.

Chief Minister noted that a new sports policy has been introduced and initiatives like

the CM Cup sports competitions are being organized to identify and nurture young talent.

Drawing a comparison, he pointed out that despite India's large population, the country has lagged behind in Olympic achievements, while nations like South Korea have excelled due to focused sports education and infrastructure.

The CM also responded strongly to criticism over the proposed visit of international football star Lionel Messi to Hyderabad, stating that such global events enhance the city's prestige.

Reaffirming the government's commitment, he said efforts are being made to revive Hyderabad's sporting legacy and support athletes to achieve excellence at national and international levels.



Jairam Ramesh slams govt's silence as West Asia conflict deepens

New Delhi (TSIT) Senior Congress leader Jairam Ramesh on Saturday issued a sharp statement criticising the Indian government's stance amid the escalating conflict in West Asia, linking recent geopolitical developments to what he described as a broader and troubling regional strategy by Israel.

JEWAR AIRPORT SYMBOLISES THE SPIRIT OF 'NEW INDIA': PM MODI

Jewar (UP), March 28 (UNI) Inaugurating the Noida International Airport in Jewar on Saturday, Prime Minister Narendra Modi stated that this project symbolises the "spirit of New India."

Referring to the ongoing conflict in West Asia, the Prime Minister noted that it has dis-

rupted the global supply of essential resources—particularly crude oil and natural gas.

He expressed that he had the privilege of participating in both the laying of the foundation stone



He gave an assurance that the government is tackling this crisis with full vigour and will ensure that its burden does not fall upon farmers or the common people.

He stated that the Jewar Airport would bring immense benefits to the entire region of Western Uttar Pradesh, including Ghaziabad, Meerut, Etawah, Bulandshahr, Agra, and Mathura.

and the inauguration of this airport—an occasion that fills him with pride. Furthermore, he invited the public to share in this achievement and consider themselves partners in this success.

During his address, the Prime Minister also orchestrated a unique visual spectacle. He called upon the audience to switch on their mobile phone flashlights to actively participate in the inauguration ceremony.

OBJECTIONABLE ADS LIKE ALCOHOLIC DRINKS, SMOKING PROHIBITED IN RAILWAYS: ASHWINI VAISHNAW

New Delhi (TSIT): Indian Railways has formulated policies to earn non-fare revenue through advertisement and branding initiatives but advertisements objectionable in the eyes of law like alcoholic drinks, tobacco and smoking are prohibited for display in Railways, Union Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw has said.

For advertisements displayed in trains, prior approval to every advertising plan is mandatory and has to be submitted to the office of Divisional Authority of the concerned Railway Division.



tionable in the eyes of law are prohibited," the minister said in a reply to a question in Rajya Sabha. Under the Out-of-Home (OOH) advertising policy, there are opportunities for advertising in circulating areas of stations.

20 Indian-flagged vessels with 540 seafarers remain in Persian Gulf region: Govt

New Delhi, March 28 : Twenty Indian-flagged vessels with 540 Indian seafarers remain in the western Persian Gulf region and are being actively monitored, the government said on Saturday.

The Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways has put in place necessary measures to safeguard Indian vessels and seafarers operating in the region "All Indian seafarers in the region are safe; no incident involving Indian-flagged vessels reported in the past 24 hours," the ministry said.



DG Shipping has facilitated safe repatriation of over 938 Indian seafarers so far, including 25 in the last 24 hours.

Moreover, port operations across India remain normal with no congestion. State Maritime Boards of Gujarat, Maharashtra, Goa, Kerala, Andhra Pradesh and

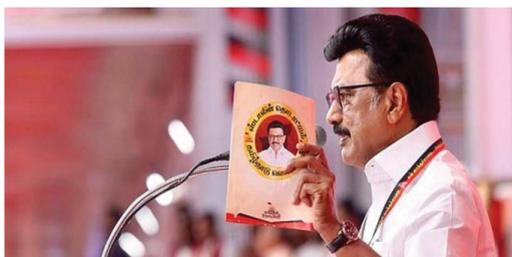
Puducherry have confirmed smooth functioning.

"Coordination continues with the Ministry of External Affairs, Indian Missions and maritime stakeholders to ensure seafarer welfare and uninterrupted operations," said the ministry. Since February 28, around 4,97,000

passengers have returned to India from the war-affected region. "Indian Missions and Posts remain in touch with the Indian community and continue to extend assistance, along with issuing necessary advisories for their safety and well-being," according to the Ministry of External Affairs.

DMK releases full list for TN polls; CM Stalin to contest from Kolathur

Chennai, March 28 : With the Tamil Nadu Assembly elections scheduled for April 23, the ruling Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK) has unveiled its complete list of candidates for all constituencies it will contest, marking a crucial milestone in its poll preparations.



field candidates in the remaining 70 seats. With the alliance partners having already released their lists, Chief Minister M. K. Stalin on Friday announced the party's full slate of 164 candidates. Stalin will once again contest from his stronghold, Kolathur constituency. His

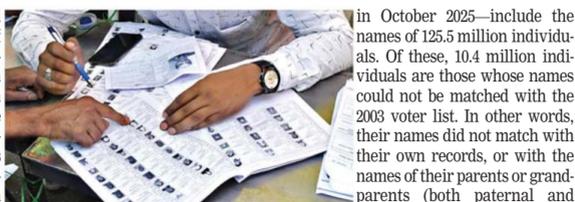
son and Deputy Chief Minister Udhayanidhi Stalin will seek reelection from Chepauk-Triplicane, the seat he currently represents. In a notable political development, veteran leader O. Panneerselvam, who was expelled from the AIADMK and later aligned with

the DMK, will contest from Bodinayakanur in Theni district—a constituency he has won multiple times in the past.

Several senior leaders and sitting ministers have been retained in their traditional constituencies, underlining the party's strategy of continuity and incumbency strength. Among them are Duraimurugan, P. K. Sekar Babu, E. V. Velu, K. N. Nehru, Anbil Mahesh Poyyamozhi, Raja Kannappan, Anitha Radhakrishnan, Geetha Jeevan, Masthan, and Senthil Balaji, all of whom will contest from their respective sitting seats. However, in a key seat-sharing adjustment within the alliance.

ECI to release final SIR list in UP on April 10, total voters likely to be over 132.5 million

Lucknow (TSIT) Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of voter list in Uttar Pradesh conducted by Election Commission of India (ECI) on verification of names in the electoral rolls have been completed. According to sources here, final publication of electoral rolls will be made on April 10. As per the assessment, the final list is expected to contain over 132.5 million voters which will be less by around 20 million voters. Before the state of the SIR there were around 152 million voters in UP.



UP Chief Electoral Officer Navdeep Rinwa said on Saturday that final publication of voter list would be made on April 10. He said preparations are currently underway to finalise the list following

document verification and hearings. The CEO said the process of conducting hearings for the 32.6 million voters who received notices during the SIR of the voter list was completed on Friday.

According to the Chief Electoral Officer, hearings regarding 100 per cent of the issued notices have now concluded. The final voter list is expected to comprise more than 132.5 million names. Under the SIR, the voter lists—which were frozen

in October 2025—include the names of 125.5 million individuals. Of these, 10.4 million individuals are those whose names could not be matched with the 2003 voter list. In other words, their names did not match with their own records, or with the names of their parents or grandparents (both paternal and maternal). The Chief Electoral Officer's office had requested documents from these individuals. The strategy of holding hearings close to the voters' homes—and allowing other family members to attend the hearings on their behalf with the necessary documents—proved effective. Meanwhile, Block Level Officers (BLOs) conducted door-to-door hearings for 22.2 million voters whose entries contained "logical discrepancies."

DMK, AIADMK spar in RS ahead of Tamil Nadu polls

NEW DELHI: The battle for Tamil Nadu played out in the Rajya Sabha on Friday with arch-rivals DMK and AIADMK claiming victory for their parties in the April 23 state assembly polls.

While DMK leader P Wilson blamed the ruling NDA for not doing anything for the state and depriving its people of their share in central funds, AIADMK leader M Thambidurai accused the ruling DMK of indulging in corruption and not allowing the implementation of central schemes in Tamil Nadu. The two leaders were speaking on the Finance Bill in the Upper House, which returned it to the Lok Sabha after a brief discussion. In her reply to the Bill, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman also attacked the DMK for depriving the people of the state of the benefits of many central schemes.

She also criticised the DMK for the plight of women in the Southern state.

Wilson said the Union government collected over Rs 5.99 lakh crore in tax returns from Tamil Nadu

during the three financial years from 2022-23 to 2024-25. For every one rupee collected, the state received only about 23 paise from the central divisible pool of taxes.

"This is nothing short of fiscal injustice. A comparison with other states reveals the magnitude of this imbalance," Wilson alleged.

Drawing a comparison with other states, he said that while Uttar Pradesh contributed Rs 3.62 crore in taxes to the Union government over the same three-year period, the funds devolved to the state from the central taxes amount to over Rs 6.03 lakh crore. This means that for every one rupee of tax revenue collected by the Centre from UP, it receives Rs 1.66 back from the share of central taxes.

He said the disparity becomes even more striking in the case of Bihar. The taxes collected from Bihar during the three years total to over Rs 49,200 crore, while the funds devolved to the state from the Central taxes amount to over Rs 3.38 lakh crore. In ef-



fect, for every one rupee of tax collected by the Union government from Bihar, the state receives Rs 6.9 back from the share of the central taxes. "Tamil Nadu, one of the country's strongest economic contributors, receives only a fraction of what it contributes. Meanwhile, several states that contribute far less receive significantly larger transfers. The people of Tamil Nadu deserve a fair and equitable share of the resources they helped generate."

"If the principle of cooperative federalism is to

have any real meaning, the Union government must address this glaring disparity and ensure that the distribution of the national resources does not systematically disadvantage high-performing states like Tamil Nadu or penalise them for the same," Wilson alleged. He said if the Union government truly believes in cooperative federalism, it must answer a simple question. Why is Tamil Nadu paying one rupee and getting 23 paise from the Central divisible pool of taxes?

Accusing the Centre of withholding the state's rightful funds and then turning around to preach fiscal morality, Wilson said all this is while the Centre's own debt continues to balloon and its interest burden tightens like a noose.

"Several crucial central scheme funds owed to TN remain pending. According to a detailed representation made by the TN government, the Union government owes more than Rs 10,000 crore across various schemes," the DMK MP said.

Bihar Gov, CM, BJP national president attend Ram Navami Shobha Yatra in Patna

PATNA: Bihar Governor Syed Ata Hasnain, Chief Minister Nitish Kumar and BJP national president Nitin Nabin attended the Ram Navami Shobha Yatra in Patna.

The CM inaugurated the programme by lighting the ceremonial lamp.

A total of 52 Ram Navami tableaux were felicitated by the CM and other leaders at Patna's Dak Bungalow Chauraha here.

Deputy Chief Minister Samrat Choudhary, Nitish Kumar's son Nishant Kumar, Rajya Sabha MP Sanjay Jha, Lok Sabha MP Manoj Tiwari and senior Bihar ministers, including Vijay Choudhary and others, were also present during the occasion.

A massive crowd gathered to watch the tableaux in the procession.

Earlier in the day, devotees thronged temples across Bihar on the occa-



sion, offering prayers and celebrating the festival with religious fervour.

BJP president Nitin Nabin offered prayers at several temples in the state capital Patna, including the famed Mahavir temple.

Speaking to reporters, Nabin extended greetings to people across the country and said the values embodied in Lord Ram's life should guide everyone.

Recalling his association with the Mahavir temple, Nabin said he has been vis-

iting the shrine since childhood and described it as a major centre of faith.

He also paid tribute to his teacher, the late Acharya Kishore Kunal, for his role in developing the shrine.

The chief minister extended greetings to the people on the occasion.

He said Lord Ram's life symbolises love for humanity, harmony, tolerance, sacrifice and righteousness, and wished people a joyful and peaceful celebration.

Himachal govt mulling to reintroduce lottery to shore up revenues: CM Sukhu

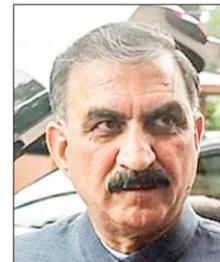
SHIMLA: In view of the state's financial situation, the Himachal Pradesh government is considering reintroducing lottery within the state to create new sources of revenue generation, Chief Minister Sukhvinder Singh said during the Budget session of Assembly on Friday.

In a written reply to a query by BJP legislators Rakesh Jamwal and Sudhir Sharma, Sukhu said that Goods and Service Tax (GST) is levied on lottery ticket sales at a rate of approximately 40 per cent of the ticket's face value.

The state is suffering a loss not only in the revenue derived from levying GST but also due to the illicit sale of lottery tickets from other states within its territory, the reply said.

A positive outcome of the lottery business is its potential to generate employment alongside revenues, and therefore, a proposal to reintroduce the lottery in Himachal Pradesh is currently under the government's consideration, Sukhu said.

Lotteries are being operated smoothly in other states such as Kerala, Punjab, Maharashtra, Goa and Arunachal Pradesh, with no major adverse social effects, he said.



The lottery system was discontinued in Himachal Pradesh via a notification issued by the finance department on February 28, 2004.

The department, however, no longer possesses records of the specific reasons that led to its discontinuation.

Before the ban, lotteries involving fewer than three digits were prevalent in the state. However, in light of the adverse social effects associated with such schemes, the Centre, in compliance with Supreme Court directives, has since amended the relevant regulations.

Consequently, single-digit or double-digit lotteries can no longer be operated, reducing the likelihood of the adverse effects associated with the previous system.

EC suspends Basanti PS officer for failing to tackle BJP-TMC clashes

KOLKATA: In a first this election season in West Bengal, the EC on Friday ordered immediate suspension of Basanti Police Station Inspector-in-Charge Avijit Paul for allegedly failing to tackle BJP-TMC clashes on March 26, according to a notice issued by the poll panel. The poll panel described it as "serious negligence and dereliction of duty" on the part of the officer. Several people, including police personnel, were injured in the clash at Basanti Bazar under Baruripur Police District.

"It has been observed that the officer failed to make adequate police arrangements despite having prior information regarding public programme of two political parties," the notice said.

"Further, the Central Armed Police Force has been made available for the last few days. Despite this, he did not requisition CAPF for maintenance of law and order," the notice added in justification of the EC's action. Directing departmental proceedings against Paul, the poll body also ordered his replacement and sought a compliance report, it said.

Dust-mitigation measures in Delhi-NCR from April 1

NEW DELHI: Installation of low-cost air quality sensors, dust screens, wind barriers, spraying of water mist and covering of construction material and waste are among stronger dust-mitigation measures laid down by the Commission for Air Quality Management (CAQM) for construction and demolition projects in Delhi-NCR, officials said on Friday.

The statutory direction number 97 by the CAQM to strengthen dust mitigation in construction and demolition projects and to streamline management of demolition waste in the region is set to be implemented from April 1.

The direction was first issued on February 20 after the commission noted that dust from construction and

demolition remained a consistent contributor to elevated particulate matter (PM10 and PM2.5) levels in the ambient air quality across NCR.

Addressing a press conference, SD Attri, technical member of the CAQM, said despite the existing statutory guidelines and periodic inspections by state pollution control boards, there were gaps in compliance of dust mitigation norms.

"Road dust and dust from construction and demolition activities are an important source of pollution in Delhi-NCR... Dust contributes 15 per cent to pollution during the winter season, and 27 per cent during the summer season. That is why it is important to control such activities to improve the air quality in the region," he said.

"The statutory direction has six key mandates, such as municipal corporations/development authorities in the region have to establish construction and demolition water collection points, intermediate waste storage facilities, and processing facilities with at least one collection point per 5 km by 5 km grid," he added.

Another mandate is that building plan approving authorities have to obtain a declaration of estimated demolition waste for projects, involving more than or equal to 200sq m area, where demolition prior to construction or re-construction is involved.

Municipal corporations and development authorities have to ensure that the proponents of such projects deposit the demolition

waste at the designated collection point or stage/processing facility and obtain a receipt for it.

Agencies responsible for issuing completion certificates/occupation certificates in the cities concerned have to verify the receipt of deposit of demolition material submitted by the project proponent, prior to the issuance of these certificates.

There must be safe transportation and disposal of the construction and demolition waste under the statutory direction.

Also, governments of the Delhi-NCR region have to establish an integrated web portal, geo-tag waste collection points and storage and processing facilities, and carry out GPS tracking of transportation of construction and demolition waste.

Vehicle carrying 20 illegal LPG cylinders seized in Maruti Kunj

GURUGRAM: A vehicle carrying 20 illegal LPG cylinders allegedly for black marketing was seized, and the driver was arrested during a raid in the Maruti Kunj area on Friday, an official said. The joint operation of Haryana's chief minister flying squad and the Food and Civil Supplies Departments led to the recovery of 20 domestic LPG cylinders, including 18 filled and two empty cylinders, he added. Acting on the information received by the CM Flying Squad, the team stopped a vehicle at Maruti Kunj for inspection, officials said. After the driver, Ankush Yadav, a resident of Uttar Pradesh's Sultanpur, failed to provide a satisfactory answer about the cylinders. The officials arrested him and seized the gas cylinders and the vehicle, they said.

Delhi Police, C-DOT sign MoU to boost smart policing capabilities

NEW DELHI: The Delhi Police has signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with the Centre for Development of Telematics to enhance technology-driven policing and strengthen operational capabilities, an official said on Friday.

The collaboration aims to leverage indigenous and secure telecom solutions developed by C-DOT to improve communication systems, surveillance, cybersecurity and emergency response mechanisms within the force.

According to a statement, the partnership will facilitate the deployment of advanced applications tailored for modern policing needs. Among the key technologies is a Facial Recognition System (FRS), which will assist in identifying suspects, missing persons, and repeat offenders by matching images with existing databases.

"A unified communication platform, SAMVAD, will enable secure messaging, audio and video calls, and data sharing among various police units, while

SAMVAD Prime -- a handset-based secure messaging system -- will be used for sensitive communications among senior officers and operational teams," read the statement.

C-DOT Meet, a web-based video conferencing solution, will support briefings, coordination and training sessions, while the Mission Critical Services (MCX) platform will ensure secure and low-latency communication during emergencies, disaster response and large-scale law-and-order situations.

Sopana Sangeetham artiste joins IUML

MALAPPURAM: Sopana Sangeetham artiste Njeralth Harigovindan joined the IUML here on Friday.

IUML state president Sayyid Sadiq Ali Shihab Thangal welcomed him into the party at Panakkad.

Speaking to reporters, the Kerala Sangeetha Nataka Akademi award winner said he was drawn to the IUML's ideology that values humanity.

He said that at a time when people are being divided in the name of caste and religion, he, as a responsible artiste, stands against such divisive tendencies.

He added that he would take part in UDF election campaigns across the state during the election period.

Sopana Sangeetham is a form of devotional music traditionally performed near the sanctum sanctorum of temples.

No deadlock in DMK alliance, seat-sharing talks over: VCK chief Thirumavalavan

CHENNAI: VCK chief Thol Thirumavalavan on Friday said seat-sharing talks within the DMK-led alliance have been concluded and dismissed reports of any deadlock or internal friction.

Addressing reporters after signing the formal agreement, Thirumavalavan said, "There is no such deadlock as is being projected. When more than 10 political parties are in an alliance and individual discussions are held, delays are natural when multiple parties express interest in the same constituencies. That is the reality."

The VCK leader stated that the official announcement regarding the specific constituencies allotted

to each partner would be made by DMK president M K Stalin.

The DMK has allotted 8 seats to the VCK for the upcoming assembly election.

Thirumavalavan noted that the discussions were held in a cordial atmosphere and his party has secured the constituencies it desired.

The VCK chief further stated that Chief Minister Stalin is expected to officially announce the full list of constituencies for all alliance partners either on Friday night or Saturday morning once the remaining minor discussions are completed.

He took a swipe at critics and rival camps, suggesting that those

waiting for a conflict to erupt within the DMK alliance would continue to be disappointed.

Responding to queries about the opposition alliances, Thirumavalavan claimed that parties in the AIADMK-led NDA were facing pressure to contest under BJP's symbol.

He alleged that parties like the Tamil Maanila Congress (M) were being coerced into contesting on the lotus symbol despite being allotted seats.

"We do not point out such issues in their camps, but even a slight delay in our alliance is labeled as a deadlock by some," he remarked.

Common man to benefit with reduction in petrol and diesel excise duty: Delhi BJP Chief

NEW DELHI: Delhi BJP chief Virendra Sachdeva welcomed the reduction in excise duty on petrol and diesel by the central government, and has described it as a people-centric decision that will provide significant relief amid the global instability in the energy sector.

Sachdeva said that presently in the energy sector, fluctuations in crude oil prices, disruptions in supply chains and inflationary pressures are being witnessed in countries across the globe.

He further said that during such a challenging international scenario, this decision by the centre to

reduce excise duty reflects that the government places interest of citizens at top priority.

The BJP leader said that the reduction in excise duty on petrol and diesel will benefit millions of people across the country, by saving the impact on factors like transportation costs, costs of important commodities, fruits, vegetables, grains, milk and others.

He further noted that farmers, small traders, auto-rickshaw drivers, taxi drivers, truck operators, and millions associated with the logistics sector will particularly benefit from this decision.

'Coal scam': Delhi court acquits Vijay Darda, former coal secretary HC Gupta

NEW DELHI: Holding that the allocation of coal blocks was part of a "policy decision" of a high-powered panel and the PMO, a special CBI court on Friday acquitted former MP Vijay Darda, his son Devendra Darda, and former coal secretary HC Gupta in a case related to alleged irregularities in allocation of the Bander coal block in Maharashtra.

Bringing down the curtains on the oldest pending coal block allocation case registered on March 27, 2014, Special Judge Sunena Sharma also acquitted M/s AMR Iron and Steel Private Limited, Manoj Kumar Jayaswal, Santosh Bagrodia and LS Janoti.

The judge cleared all accused of charges including criminal

conspiracy (Section 120-B IPC), cheating (Section 420 IPC), and various sections of the Prevention of Corruption (PC) Act.

The verdict said the evidence adduced by the CBI was "highly insufficient to conclusively establish any of the essential ingredients like deception, inducement, dishonest intention or wrongful gain for the alleged offence of cheating punishable under Section 420 (cheating) of the IPC".

Trashing the charge of criminal conspiracy against all the accused, the judge, in the 287-page verdict, said, "Even for the offence of criminal conspiracy, the prosecution case is based only on conjunctures and surmises without there being any direct or indirect

evidence sufficient to draw anything reasonable, rational or conclusive."

"Moreover, the decision to carry out the exercise of allocating coal blocks was a policy decision, which was taken in accordance with the specific instructions of the 7th Energy Coordination Committee (ECC) and the PMO."

"In accordance with the extant guidelines, the Screening Committee recommended the allocation of Bander Coal Block to AMR (for its 0.3 MTPA capacity) jointly with M/s Century Textiles & Industries Ltd and M/s JK Cement Ltd and the said decision was unanimously taken after due deliberations on the information furnished by the applicants and

the feedback received from the State Governments and the Ministry of Steel," the verdict said.

"The decision to allocate the coal block, by no stretch of the imagination, can be said to be a decision taken 'without any public interest' especially, when there is no allegation of quid pro quo," it said.

The CBI alleged that M/s AMR Iron & Steel Pvt Ltd, represented by Manoj Jayaswal, had fraudulently obtained the Bander coal block by misrepresenting its financial strength and concealing previous coal block allocations.

The case rested heavily on the claim that Vijay Darda used his position as a Member of Parliament to influence the PMO

through recommendation letters. In exchange for this alleged influence, the CBI claimed that Rs 24.60 crore was routed from Jayaswal's Abhijeet Group to a company owned by the Dardas (Asera Banka Power Ltd) under the guise of high-premium share purchases.

The verdict found a special mention of former coal secretary HC Gupta, a co-accused, and said, "However, before parting with this judgment, this court owes a duty to mention that HC Gupta... who had been summoned by the court on a closure report filed by CBI qua him, has been honourably acquitted for lack of any evidence for the alleged charges framed against him."

EDUCATION IS TRUE POWER OF TRANSFORMATION: MP DR. C. N. MANJUNATH AT MYSURU GRADUATION CEREMONY



Bengaluru: Member of Parliament Dr C N Manjunath delivered an inspiring address at the graduation ceremony of SBRR Mahajana First Grade College, Mysuru, urging students to dream big and embrace education as a transformative force. Addressing the graduates, he said that education is a continuous journey rather than a destination, emphasizing that the direction of learning matters more than speed. Referring to advancements in Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning, he highlighted the need to balance knowledge with values and social responsibility. Encouraging students to acquire multiple skills, he stressed that no job is small if performed with sincerity and dignity. He underlined the importance of self-belief, discipline, and humility, stating that success is built over time through consistent effort rather than instant results. He also cautioned against measuring life solely by marks and warned students about ego and unhealthy comparisons. Dr. Manjunath drew attention to increasing lifestyle diseases among youth and advised maintaining a balance between education, health, and career choices. He encouraged students to explore diverse opportunities beyond government jobs.

KSRTC Wins Prestigious SKOCH National Award – 2025



New Delhi : The Corporation has been conferred the prestigious SKOCH National Award for its initiative on “Transparent Recruitment and Training Programme.” KSRTC has ensured transparency and uniformity throughout the recruitment process—from application submission to final selection and unit allocation—by minimizing human intervention. Through a technology-driven recruitment system, including automated driving tests, online examinations, digital verification of documents, webcasting, and auto-generated scorecards, the Corporation has successfully recruited 2,000 drivers/conductors,

300 technical staff, and 441 candidates under compassionate grounds.

In addition, over the last six months, more than 12,000 employees have been provided with effective training, contributing significantly to overall organizational development and improved performance.

The Delhi-based SKOCH Group, an independent think tank established in 1997, has been presenting the SKOCH Awards since 2003. These awards recognize excellence in governance, finance, technology adoption, transparent policies, project implementation, and institutional growth, based on measurable outcomes and impact.

The award was presented at a ceremony held today at the Silver Oak Hall, India Habitat Centre, New Delhi, where Sri Akram Pasha, IAS, Managing Director, KSRTC received the award from Sri Sameer Kochhar, Chairman, SKOCH Group and Dr. Gursharan Dhanjal, Vice Chairman, SKOCH Group.

Tumakuru set for historic ITF Women’s W35 debut; Logo unveiled by Dr. G. Parameshwara



Tumakuru : In a significant step towards strengthening Karnataka’s presence on the international tennis circuit, the official logo of the upcoming ITF Women’s World Tennis Tour W35 Tournament in Tumakuru was unveiled by Dr. G. Parameshwara, Home Minister of Karnataka and Tumakuru District In-charge Minister, at a formal press conference held in the district.

The tournament, scheduled from 4 to 10 May 2026, will be held at the Tumkur District Tennis Stadium within the Tumkur University campus, marking the return of international tennis to the region after

more than two decades. The event forms part of the ITF Women’s World Tennis Tour, conducted by the International Tennis Federation, and serves as a key platform for players to earn professional ranking points and progress to higher-tier events, including the WTA Tour.

Classified as a W35 event, the tournament will offer USD 30,000 in prize money along with valuable 35 WTA ranking points. It is expected to attract a strong field of emerging and established players from across the world. Events at this level typically feature a 32 player singles main draw, qualifying

rounds and doubles competition providing valuable opportunities for players.

The unveiling ceremony was attended by senior district officials including Smt. Subha Kalyan IAS, Deputy Commissioner of Tumakuru; Sri K. V. Ashok IPS, Superintendent of Police; Sri Ashwija IAS, Chief Executive Officer of the Zilla Panchayat; and Sri G. R. Amarnath, Tournament Director, highlighting strong institutional backing and a coordinated approach to delivering an event of international standards.

Addressing the gathering, Dr. G. Parameshwara said, “This is more than just a tournament for Tumakuru—it is an opportunity. By bringing an international women’s event here, we are taking sport beyond major cities and opening doors for young athletes, especially girls, to aim higher. Events like these provide valuable exposure while also strengthening the local economy and sporting culture.”

SIDDARAMAIAH GOVT RUINED STATE ECONOMY: MP BASAVARAJ BOMMAI



Bagalkote: Former Chief Minister and MP Basavaraj Bommai launched a sharp attack on the Siddaramaiah-led government, alleging that it has “completely damaged” the state’s economy and failed to meet public expectations. Addressing a press conference in Bagalkote, Bommai criticized the government over the implementation of the Upper Krishna Project, stating that while an annual allocation of Rs.18,000 crore was promised, only Rs.3,000 crore has been provided in the budget, causing injustice to the people of the region. He further alleged that the state’s financial condition has deteriorated significantly, with debt rising to nearly Rs.4 lakh crore. He warned that continued borrowing could further burden the people in the coming years. On Centre-State relations, Bommai claimed that Karnataka has received increased funding under the NDA government compared to the UPA era, citing higher allocations for railways and national highways, along with GST reductions benefiting the public. Criticizing the Chief Minister’s conduct, he said Siddaramaiah showed “arrogance” by not attending meetings convened by Narendra Modi and instead sending ministers. He pointed out that leaders from other states, including M K Stalin, attended such meetings, while Siddaramaiah also skipped NITI Aayog discussions. Bommai also alleged lapses in implementing schemes like the Jal Jeevan Mission and accused the government of failing to provide its

Sri Shankara Cancer Hospital Inaugurates Advanced CT Scan & Heart-Lung Machines in Bengaluru

Bengaluru, March 28, 2026: Sri Shankara Cancer Hospital & Research Centre (SSCHRC) inaugurated two advanced life-saving technologies — the Philips CT 3500 (64-Slice CT Scan Machine) and a state-of-the-art Heart-Lung Machine — strengthening its diagnostic and surgical capabilities. The equipment has been generously donated by the LIC Golden Jubilee Foundation and Life Insurance Corporation of India. The inauguration ceremony was held at the Sri Sri Abhinava Vidyarthirah Mahaswamiji Auditorium in Basavanagudi. The event was inaugurated by R Doraiswamy, CEO & MD of LIC, in the presence of senior officials including Puneet Kumar, Ashis Kumar, and Paras Nath Jha. As a not-for-profit institution that has treated over 1.1 lakh patients, SSCHRC continues its mission of delivering world-class care with compassion. The newly installed 64-slice CT scan machine



enhances diagnostic precision and speed, especially for oncology patients, while the Heart-Lung Machine significantly strengthens the hospital’s capacity to handle complex surgical procedures. Speaking on the occasion, Dr B S Srinath, Founder & Managing Trustee of the Sri Shankara Cancer Foundation, said the contribution reflects the transformative impact of institutional philanthropy in healthcare. He noted that these advanced machines will serve as instruments of hope, enabling accessible and high-quality treatment for thousands of patients.

Royal Challengers Bengaluru to Honour Fans with Special Tribute

Bengaluru: Royal Challengers Bengaluru will pay tribute to the eleven members of the RCB family who tragically lost their lives in the unfortunate incident on June 4. As a mark of respect, players will wear practice jerseys bearing the number 11 during the warm-up, followed by black armbands during the match. In a lasting gesture of remembrance, eleven seats at the M. Chinnaswamy Stadium will remain unoccupied, serving as a permanent tribute to the fans whose unwavering support will always be a part of the RCB family.



Students’ Health is Paramount: Dr. R. Vijayasarthi Launches Free Health Camp

Vijayanagar: A free health check-up and blood donation camp was inaugurated at Vasavi Jnanapeetha First Grade College in association with the National Service Scheme (NSS), benefiting students and their families.

The programme was inaugurated by Dr R Vijayasarthi, Secretary of Vasavi Group of Educational Institutions, who emphasized that students’ health is of utmost importance and plays a key role in effective learning.

Highlighting modern lifestyle challenges, he pointed out that pollution, contaminated water, and processed food habits are contributing to rising



health issues. He stressed the importance of regular health check-ups, a balanced diet, along with yoga and meditation to maintain well-being.

The camp aimed to provide free health screening facilities not only to students but also to their family members, promoting overall community health. Medical teams from Sapthagiri Hospital

and Mediscope Blood Bank conducted comprehensive check-ups covering heart, kidney, neurological, eye, gynecological, bone-related issues, diabetes, and blood pressure.

Organizers also highlighted that the blood donation drive was intended to raise awareness about the importance of donating blood to save lives during emergencies.

HOSMAT Launches Golden Hour Network at Traumacon 2026 to Strengthen Trauma Care in India

Bengaluru, March 28, 2026: In a significant step towards strengthening trauma care systems in India, HOSMAT Hospitals, a leader in orthopaedics and trauma care, in collaboration with the Bangalore Orthopaedic Society, successfully hosted HOSMAT Traumacon 2026, a first-of-its-kind, practice-driven trauma conference, marked by the formal launch of the HOSMAT Alumni Association, and Golden Hour Network (GHN). Positioned as a pioneering initiative, the Golden Hour Network is a structured, professional trauma care community that brings together surgeons trained within the HOSMAT ecosystem under a shared commitment to rapid, precise, and outcome-driven trauma care.

More than an alumni collective, GHN is designed as a co-governed clinical and academic network, with a defined programme of monthly clinical rounds, quarterly specialty-focused discussions, and an annual TraumaCon gathering as its apex platform. Named after the critical “golden hour”, the first hour following injury where timely intervention determines survival, the network reflects a deeper philosophy: that trauma care is not defined by institutions, but by the urgency, precision, and shared responsibility of the clinicians delivering it. Over the next six months, the network will establish its governance structure, onboard senior alumni, and initiate its first clinical engagements. The launch of GHN underscores HOSMAT’s evolution beyond a high-volume clinical institution into a research-led and academically driven centre of excellence in orthopaedics and trauma care. Over the past 33+ years, HOSMAT has built one of the



country’s most significant trauma ecosystems, performing 25 to 30 trauma surgeries daily, placing it among India’s highest-volume trauma centres. The institution has also contributed extensively to academic medicine, leading over 300 research initiatives, with more than 80 publications in internationally indexed journals, and playing a key role in shaping clinical practice in orthopaedics and trauma. Its impact on medical education is equally significant. According to Orthopaedic Society of India estimates, nearly 10% of Bengaluru’s orthopaedic surgeons have trained at HOSMAT, reinforcing its role as a major training hub for the next generation of specialists. Over the decades, HOSMAT has also touched nearly one-third of Bengaluru’s population through trauma care, reflecting both its scale and community trust.

Held at the ITC Welcome Hotel, Richmond Road, Traumacon 2026 brought together 150+ leading ortho-

paedic surgeons, trauma specialists, and clinicians from across India, creating a platform for real-world learning, surgical innovation, and collaborative problem-solving. The event was held in memory of Late Dr Thomas Chandy, a globally respected orthopaedic surgeon and pioneer in trauma care, whose legacy continues to guide the institution’s clinical and academic philosophy. India continues to face one of the highest trauma burdens globally, with over 4.8 lakh road accidents annually and nearly 1.7-1.8 lakh deaths each year, making trauma one of the leading causes of mortality among young adults. Against this backdrop, Traumacon 2026 was conceptualised to address a critical gap - the need for practice-led, experience-driven learning platforms that directly impact patient outcomes. The conference featured a comprehensive, full-day scientific agenda with over 25+ expert-led sessions, covering upper limb trauma, complex lower limb injuries, paediatric trauma, non-union surgeries,

complication management, medico-legal aspects, and orthopaedic practice efficiency. A defining feature of the conference was its case-based and discussion-led format, enabling clinicians to engage with real-world scenarios and refine decision-making in high-pressure environments. Reflecting on the significance of the conference and the launch of GHN, Anisha Chandy Eckardt, Managing Director, HOSMAT Hospitals, said: “Trauma care in India does not suffer from a lack of clinical expertise - it suffers from gaps in time, training, and integration. At HOSMAT, this is a reality we have long recognised, guided by the enduring belief of Dr Thomas Chandy that every patient deserves timely, precise, and compassionate care without compromise. Through Traumacon 2026, we are bringing together some of the finest minds in the field to address these critical gaps - not just through discussion, but through driving real, practice-led change that can improve outcomes where it matters most in the golden hour of care. At the same time, we are very consciously investing in transforming HOSMAT into a high-end orthopaedic and trauma research institute. That is the direction we see for ourselves in the years to come - where clinical excellence is deeply integrated with academic leadership, research, and innovation.” Dr Ravishankar M R, Head of Orthopaedic Trauma, HOSMAT Hospitals and Chairman of Traumacon 2026, added: “At HOSMAT, trauma care is built on a strong foundation of clinical volume, academic rigour, and continuous research. Managing 25 to 30 trauma surgeries every day gives us a unique depth of

real-world experience, while our academic and training programmes ensure that this experience is translated into knowledge. Traumacon reflects this balance - where clinical practice, research, and collaboration come together to create more consistent, evidence-based trauma care systems.” Adding perspective on the legacy behind the institution, Dr Subodh M Shetty, President, Orthopaedic Society of India, said: “Dr Thomas Chandy was not just a surgeon - he was a mentor who shaped generations of orthopaedic and trauma specialists in this country. Many of today’s leading surgeons carry forward his approach to precision, discipline, and patient-first care. What we see today in Traumacon is a reflection of that legacy - a commitment to learning, sharing, and continuously improving. The Golden Hour Network, in that sense, is a powerful extension of his vision. It has the potential to bring together expertise across the country and significantly strengthen trauma response systems where it matters most.” With strong participation, high engagement, and a uniquely practical approach, HOSMAT Traumacon 2026, along with the launch of the Golden Hour Network, marks a significant step towards building a more integrated, collaborative, and research-driven trauma care ecosystem in India. Building on the success of its inaugural edition, Traumacon is expected to evolve into a national platform for trauma education, research, and clinical collaboration, bringing together clinicians, institutions, and innovators to shape the future of orthopaedic and trauma care in India.

From Collection to Deletion: Businesses Rethink Data Lifecycle Under DPDP



Bengaluru : In the wake of the Digital Personal Data Protection Act (DPDP), businesses are re-evaluating how they manage data across its entire lifecycle—from collection to deletion—moving beyond traditional practices of indefinite storage. In an article, Yuvraj Shidhaye, Founder and Director of TreadBinary, highlights that organisations are shifting from excessive data collection to a more purpose-driven approach. Companies are increasingly asking critical questions about why data is collected, how long it should be retained, and when it must be deleted. This transformation is evident at the data collection stage, where businesses are adopting more measured practices. Nearly half of organisations have begun conducting gap assessments and documenting data processing activities, ensuring clarity and accountability. Consent is also gaining importance, now treated as a specific and informed agreement rather than a routine checkbox.

The DPDP framework is also prompting organisations to define clear data retention timelines. Instead of storing data indefinitely, companies are evaluating its actual utility and removing it once its purpose is fulfilled, while retaining essential records like processing logs for limited durations. To manage this complexity, many organisations are turning to Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) systems, which help integrate and track data across processes. These systems enable better visibility, consistency, and control over how data flows through various stages. The article concludes that the DPDP regime is driving a subtle but significant shift—encouraging businesses to treat data as a continuously managed resource rather than a static asset. Organisations that adopt this lifecycle-based approach will be better positioned to handle growing data volumes while staying compliant with evolving regulatory expectations.

EDITORIAL

When Supply Chains Break, Waste Can Fill the Gap

What if the solution to rising fuel and fertiliser costs is already in our bins? LPG cylinders are running dry in our favourite food establishments. A few more weeks and they will squeeze our household budgets as well. Some 90% of India's LPG imports come through the Strait of Hormuz. The International Energy Agency will release 400 million barrels of oil from emergency reserves, which would cover four days of global consumption. India claims to have more than 60 days of oil reserves, but only two days of LPG reserves. The other impending crisis few people are talking about is fertilisers. The Kharif sowing season is soon upon us and urea and phosphates will be critical ingredients for a hearty crop. Interestingly, these too depend on natural gas. India's fertilisers also predominantly come from the Gulf. Freight rates have reportedly risen ten-fold to account for the risk of passing through the Strait. Remember when Sri Lanka banned costly chemical fertilisers to save money? It cost them over USD 400 million in tea export, nearly half their food production and arguably led to the fall of the government as shortages sparked public anger. You may say we will get our gas and fertilisers from elsewhere. Russia is offering alternatives, after all. Yes, but this will be much more expensive than what we have had so far. Typically, when energy prices rise, anger grows against the government. Will the current government withstand rising food and fuel prices? Or will it strongly subsidise fuel and fertiliser and reverse its hard-earned gains in reducing India's fiscal deficit? I would argue the current crisis may be an opportunity in disguise. We have long struggled to manage our wet waste. Kitchen scrapings, animal dung, sewage water, agricultural waste have long polluted our soil, water and air. Many programmes attempt to salvage value out of organic residues through conversion to biogas or compost. Yet none of these programmes have taken off or sustained momentum after the initial impetus. Consumers are often to blame for this. We are locked into familiar patterns and reluctant to try something new. The stigma of waste-derived material is an added deterrent. I would urge those so inclined to visit some oil dumps or at least look them up on the internet. Given the right infrastructure and human attention, anything can be transformed into a finished product. After all, the most important discovery that boosted food production was a pile of bird guano off the Latin American coast. And of course, animal dung is the oldest fertiliser known to man. Is it all worth it though? Spending thousands of crores from the government exchequer to subsidise biowaste transformation for a passing storm? "This too shall pass," right? Wrong, most likely. This war has been forty years in the making, with all sides declaring it a holy war. There is an adage in foreign policy: "Allies are temporary, interests are permanent." Unfortunately, conflict appears inevitable in this region with ethnic and religious divides. Since we have entered a new state of disorder in geopolitics, supply shortages will be a recurring theme. Two more straits in the South China Sea and the Red Sea are also chokepoints that are likely to be held hostage at some point. Besides war, long-term strategy dictates a transition to renewable sources of energy and fertiliser. Firstly, oil imports may be a much bigger drain on India's finances than subsidies for renewable energy. Moreover, special economic zones and other incentives support India's petroleum industry. India also has strong decarbonisation targets dependent on weaning off of fossil fuels. Decarbonisation would be best done quickly as exports to European countries will soon include a carbon tax. So what needs to be done? Major challenges include inconsistent market prices, lack of adequate storage and transport for feedstocks and products such as biogas and compost. Backyard biogas plant subsidies are set to expire in March 2026. These should be extended. Offtake agreements must be prioritised to ensure steady prices and limit uncertainty. Capital expenditure for storage and transport infrastructure for biogas and compost must be sanctioned. Research into best practices in treatment processes and operations should be incentivised.

How the NEP is Reshaping Autonomy for Minority Institutions

As India's higher education system reorganises itself under the National Education Policy 2020, a quieter constitutional question is taking shape: what happens to institutional autonomy when governance is redefined through standardisation, metrics and centralised regulation? However, most of the public debate on the policy has focussed on its other aspects - curriculum reform, multidisciplinary expansion and institutional consolidation. The Union Budget 2026-27 increased education allocation to Rs 1,39,289 crore, an 8.27% rise that signals NEP implementation has entered its operational phase. Less examined, however, is a constitutional question: how does a governance model built on standardisation, performance metrics and regulatory restructuring interact with the autonomy granted to minority educational institutions? The NEP preserves constitutional protections on paper. Article 30(1) affirms that minorities based on religion or language have the right to establish and administer educational institutions of their choice. Yet when oversight shifts from political discretion to technocratic standardisation, the meaning of autonomy can change. The policy proposes replacing the UGC, AICTE and NCTE with a unified Higher Education Commission of India. The Cabinet's approval of the Viksit Bharat Shiksha Adhishthan Bill in December 2025 advances this framework, bringing all non-medical, non-legal higher education institutions under a single regulatory body. Alongside institutional consolidation, graded autonomy tied to accreditation marks a decisive turn towards performance-based governance. Under existing UGC regula-

tions, universities with high NAAC scores receive greater flexibility in admissions and curriculum design, while those with lower scores face tighter oversight. Institutions are evaluated through common benchmarks: governance structures, faculty qualifications, research output, infrastructure and financial transparency. These metrics operate through a points-based system that privileges certain institutional models. A university that publishes frequently in indexed journals and maintains state-of-the-art labs will score well; one that invests primarily in community outreach or trains teachers for underserved regions may not. Budgetary priorities reinforce this orientation, linking increased allocations to measurable outcomes and employability. In this framework, autonomy becomes something earned and retained through compliance. Quality assurance regimes promise transparency and accountability. Yet standardisation inevitably favours institutional forms aligned with measurable research productivity and infrastructure expansion. Evaluation systems assume that all institutions share the same purpose, and they reward outputs that regulators can easily count and compare. A college that prioritises community access, teaches in a regional language or organises its mission around service to a particular population may find that these commitments carry little weight in the scoring rubric. Minority institutions occupy a distinctive place in India's constitutional design. In T.M.A. Pai Foundation v. State of Karnataka (2002), the Supreme Court affirmed that Article 30 grants minorities substantial autonomy in administration, admissions

and fee structures, subject to reasonable regulation. Crucially, the Court cautioned that regulation cannot "whittle down" the right itself. Autonomy, therefore, has historically meant more than non-interference. It has signified the capacity to preserve institutional character while participating in the national system. When recognition and status are tied to uniform benchmarks, structural tension emerges. Institutions must align internal processes with externally defined criteria to retain accreditation grades, expand programmes or secure funding. NAAC criteria emphasise indexed research publications, UGC-aligned faculty qualifications and infrastructure standards. While these metrics suit research-intensive universities, institutions oriented towards community service, cultural preservation or teaching in regional languages may struggle to perform comparably. Over time, compliance cultures reshape priorities. Hiring committees begin to favour candidates with strong publication records over those with deep community ties. Curricula tilt towards subjects that produce quantifiable research. Governance procedures converge towards models more compatible with prevailing evaluation systems. Recent budgetary decisions illustrate how fiscal design shapes this environment. While overall education spending has risen, allocations for minority-targeted scholarship schemes have been sharply reduced. The Merit-cum-Means Scholarship for professional and technical courses fell from Rs 7.34 crore to Rs 0.06 crore. The Maulana Azad National Fellowship declined from Rs 42.84 crore to Rs 36.14 crore. In 2025-26, the Post-Matric Scholarship

carried a Budget Estimate of Rs 413.99 crore but a Revised Estimate of Rs 0.06 crore before being nominally restored the following year. These figures do not merely signal allocation shifts. They are representative of changing priorities within an outcome-driven framework. What is lost sight of in such a system is that allocation alone does not determine impact. Execution, administrative prioritisation and alignment with dominant performance frameworks matter just as much. Each of these factors determines which schemes gain traction and which languish. In a system increasingly organised around measurable outputs, targeted equity programmes that do not directly contribute to an institution's accreditation score risk becoming peripheral, regardless of their social significance. This is not about overt encroachment on constitutional rights: No provision in the NEP explicitly revokes Article 30 protections, and minority institutions remain free to exist and govern themselves. The pressure is subtler. Institutions that score well on NAAC parameters gain access to greater funding, research grants and programmatic flexibility. Those that do not must submit to closer regulatory scrutiny. In practice, this means that a minority college whose mission centres on community education or vernacular instruction faces a choice: reshape its priorities to match accreditation benchmarks, or accept a lower institutional standing that limits growth. The legal right to operate is never formally challenged. What shifts is the practical capacity to sustain a distinctive institutional identity within a system that rewards a particular model of academic performance.

AGENTIC AI IN WAR: FROM IRAN TO UKRAINE

Minutes before the airstrike, the only thing that had changed was a number on a screen. A young Gazan man was sleeping in a crowded apartment with his parents and younger siblings. Across the border, an Israeli intelligence officer sat in a darkened command center, staring at a list of AI-ranked targets. The system known as 'Lavender' had flagged the man as a "likely militant" and spat out a coordinate. The officer, under pressure and staring at a long list of similarly ranked targets, hit approve in seconds. Minutes later, the building collapsed. The man, his parents, and the children did not survive. On paper, the AI had simply "cleared" another target. In the street, there was a crater and a family erased by a decision made in moments and never revisited. When news broke of the missile strike that obliterated the Shajareh Tayyebeh girls' elementary school in Minab, southern Iran, killing 175 people - over 100 of them schoolchildren - fingers immediately pointed to AI as the villain. Emerging reports now blame outdated human intelligence for the disaster. But the Minab tragedy is a perfect window into the slippery, terrifying world of AI in warfare we have just stumbled into: a place where algorithms promise precision, but human error - or worse - still turns schools into craters. This is agentic AI in war: not a distant sci-fi experiment, but the quiet hand that helps pick a street, a face, a home, and then hands that choice to a human who has just enough time to say yes. The technology is no longer just a lab curiosity. It is now embedded in the very machinery that decides who lives, who dies, and who disappears from the records as if they were never there.

Wars Find New Forms

Wars never really end. They just find new forms and new frontiers. Today, the battlefield is not just trenches, tanks, and infantry; it is also server racks and software. Artificial intelligence has slipped into the ranks of modern warfare, not as a side project,



but as a quiet co-pilot in the chain of killing. In the war with Iran, we are seeing AI used at scale for the first time, a brutal, systematized version of the battlefield automation that first flickered across Ukraine's skies. Agentic AI isn't creeping onto the battlefield; it's kicking down the door to the command center, quietly taking over how modern militaries see, decide, and kill. It promises something chillingly simple: let software do what humans do too slowly, watch every camera, scrape every feed, sift every intercept, and then lean in to whisper to power: "Here is the target. Here is the timing. Here is what happens next." For decades, intelligence work was defined by scarcity: too few analysts, too little time, too many dots to connect. Now the problem is abundance. Armies drown in satellite imagery, drone video, social media chatter, and sensor data. Agentic AI turns that flood into something like a weaponized recommendation engine, ranking threats instead of Netflix shows and turning "collect - analyze - warn" from a bureaucratic cycle measured in weeks into an automated loop measured in minutes.

Maven, Palantir, And The Privatized Kill Chain

Nowhere is that transformation more visible than in the recent confrontation with Iran. According to a leaked Pentagon memo and subsequent reporting, the Maven Smart System, a command-and-control AI platform built by Palantir, has effectively become the US military's central brain for target selection. It ingests surveillance feeds, battlefield reports, and classified intelligence, then evaluates that information to pinpoint targets and generate prioritized strike lists. US officials openly credit Maven with enabling a wave of precision strikes on Iranian assets in a matter of days, not months. Crucially, Maven is no longer a quirky pilot project run out of a Pentagon lab. The Defense Department is moving to designate it a "program of record," locking Palantir's system into the long-term force structure and guaranteeing sustained funding.

Gaza And Iran: AI's Human Toll

The same logic plays out in Gaza, where the human cost is far more visible. Injuries, grief, and rubble do not rate well on a screen, but they are the real outcome of the "efficiency" Israel has termed its AI-assisted systems like "the

Gospel" and "Lavender." These tools analyzed data on most of Gaza's 2.3 million residents, assigned them probabilities, and at one point marked around 37,000 people as potential militants. Iran is no innocent bystander. Tehran's operators use the same AI logic - automate, personalize, and scale to generate fake personas, multilingual disinformation, and synthetic media aimed at shaping narratives in Israel, Europe, and North America. If Palantir's Maven is the flagship of kinetic AI warfare, Iran's campaigns prove the same machinery works just as well when the targets are minds and newsfeeds.

Ukraine's Live-Fire AI Lab

Then there is Ukraine, where AI is less a prestige project than a survival mechanism. Ukrainian officials say their forces now receive over 50,000 drone video feeds from the front every month, an impossible volume for human teams to process without help. AI systems classify vehicles, trenches, and movements, rapidly mapping targets for artillery or loitering munitions. Ukrainian and Russian units alike are fielding drones that can lock onto the image of a target and continue the attack even if the communication link is jammed.

WHEN THE CLOCK RUNS OUT:

A WARGAMER'S GUIDE TO THE NEXT 10 DAYS IN IRAN



Most conflict analysis explains what just happened. Wargaming does something different. Before events occur, you define the specific observable signals that will tell you which war you are actually watching - so that when something happens, you are reading it, not reacting to it. That discipline is not about predicting the future. It is about knowing, the moment a specific signal fires, exactly what it means for what comes next. Four weeks into the 2026 Iran War, the analysis behind this article has been running that wargame in real time. What it has identified is a ten-day window - expiring April 6 - that will determine the shape of this conflict for months. There are specific things to watch that will tell you which future is arriving before it gets here.

The Clock

On March 26, President Trump announced a ten-day pause on strikes against Iranian energy infrastruc-

ture, pushing his deadline to April 6. Before that date, one of these three things can happen: a framework for de-escalation emerges; the deadline passes without one and Trump extends again, further draining whatever credibility his ultimatums still carry; or the pause ends and the US strikes Iranian power plants - triggering what Tehran has publicly committed to, a large-scale counter-attack against Gulf energy and water infrastructure. The third path is the default if the first two fail. That is not a rhetorical warning. It is the structural logic of the situation. Six Things To Watch - And What Each One Means Pakistan has confirmed it is relaying messages between Washington and Tehran. Pakistani Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar stated publicly that the US has shared a 15-point peace proposal, currently being deliberated by Iran. Iran has reportedly responded through unnamed intermediaries and is now awaiting

Washington's reply. Watch for one specific thing: does Iran send back a formal counter-position, or does it return silence while the IRGC continues firing? A counter-position - even a maximalist one - means a live diplomatic back-channel exists. Silence plus continued escalation means it does not. Iran's publicly stated five conditions include war reparations and formal sovereignty over the Strait of Hormuz. Neither is acceptable to Washington. But an opening position in diplomacy is not a final one. The question is whether there is a conversation at all. Tripwire 2: What happens to Iran's naval operations in the next 96 hours? | Window: 72-96 hours | On March 26, Israel killed Admiral Alireza Tangsiri - the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) Navy commander who personally designed and ran Iran's maritime strategy in the Strait of Hormuz. He controlled which ships could pass, where mines were laid, and

which vessels were targeted by drone boats. The Israel Defense Forces (IDF) subsequently stated that all of his key senior commanders were killed in the same strike. Watch whether Iran's maritime operations continue at the same tempo and structure, or whether they stutter and reconfigure. If they continue without a visible gap, Iran pre-positioned a parallel command structure - meaning the institution is more resilient than any individual. If they pause or reconfigure, the strike achieved genuine disruption. Either reading changes what comes next in the waterway through which one-fifth of the world's oil normally flows. Iran's parliament is drafting legislation to formally establish Iranian sovereignty over the Strait of Hormuz and create a legal basis for charging ships passage fees. The Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) Secretary-General has confirmed Iran is already collecting this fee, in violation of international law.

Rupee slumps 89 paise to record low of 94.85 against US dollar

Mumbai: The rupee slumped by a massive 89 paise to close at a historic low of 94.85 against the US dollar on Friday, March 27, as concerns of higher crude oil prices weighed heavily on the currency and overall macroeconomic outlook. Forex traders said the rupee is succumbing to the pressure exerted by continued sales by foreign investors and a stronger greenback amid uncertainties over the West Asia conflict. Sustained dollar demand and energy-led inflation risks are keeping the rupee under stress, they said, adding that bias remains weak unless crude prices show a meaningful correction. At the interbank foreign exchange, the rupee opened at 94.18 and breached the 94.50-mark for the first time. The domestic unit settled for the day at 94.85 against the US dollar, down 89 paise from its previous close. The rupee had slumped 20 paise to close at a record low of 93.96 against the US dollar on Wednesday. Stock, forex, commodity, and bullion markets remained closed on



Thursday on account of Ram Navami. Rupee continued its sharp weakness, as rising crude prices intensify pressure on India's import bill. The concern of higher crude for a prolonged period is weighing heavily on the currency and overall macro outlook, said Jateen Trivedi, VP Research Analyst - Commodity and Currency, LKP Securities. "Sustained dollar demand and energy-led inflation risks are keeping the rupee under stress. Technically, 94.00 now acts as key resistance, while the next crucial

support is seen near 95.00. Bias remains weak unless crude prices show a meaningful correction," Trivedi added. Meanwhile, the dollar index, which gauges the greenback's strength against a basket of six currencies, was trading 0.04 per cent higher at 99.94. Brent crude, the global oil benchmark, was trading at USD 110.92 per barrel, up 2.69 per cent, in futures trade. On the domestic equity market front, the Sensex crashed 1,690.23 points, or 2.25 per cent, to 73,583.22 points, while the Nifty fell

486.85 points, or 2.09 per cent, to 22,819.60. Foreign institutional investors sold equities worth Rs 4,367.30 crore on a net basis on Friday, according to exchange data. India's forex reserves dropped by USD 11.413 billion to USD 698.346 billion during the week ended March 20 due to a sharp decrease in gold reserves, the RBI said on Friday. In the previous reporting week, the overall reserves had dropped USD 7,052 billion to USD 709,759 billion. The Centre is planning to mobilise Rs 8 lakh crore

Highlights
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through dated securities during the April-September period of 2026-27 to fund the revenue gap, the finance ministry said on Friday. Gross Market Borrowings in BE 2026-27 were Rs 17.20 lakh crore. Since the Budget presentation, switches of G-Sec were conducted, reducing Gross Market borrowing to Rs 16.09 lakh crore, it said. Forex traders said the rupee is succumbing to the pressure exerted by continued sales by foreign investors and a stronger greenback amid uncertainties over the West Asia conflict.

HOW TRUMP AND THE OIL MARKETS MOVE IN SYNC: A TANGO IN FIVE CHARTS

It can be hard to pin down what is guiding Donald Trump a month into US and Israel's programme of strikes on Iran. But it is clear he has an eye on the oil markets. A word - or social media post - from the US president about his plans used to spark big moves in prices, as investors leaped on signs the conflict could escalate or come to an end. But in recent days, traders appear to be growing more sceptical about the value of his comments. Oil was trading at around \$72 (£54) a barrel before 28 February, when the strikes on Iran began. Last week it peaked at \$118 a barrel on 19 March and as of Friday afternoon was sitting at just below \$112 - significantly up from its pre-war price. Here are some moments from the last month where Trump and the markets appear to have bounced off each other with varying effects. Jonathan Raymond, investment manager at Quilter Cheviot, says energy prices have become a proxy for wider geopolitical and economic risks, spiking when Trump's language grows aggressive and easing when his rhetoric de-escalates. He says markets are rightfully sensitive to those signals, given the big economic risks



that come with rising oil prices. "Investors are trying to price genuine uncertainty," he says. "Markets can look skittish or confused, but what they're really doing is managing event risk in real time, with oil sitting right at the centre of that." But it can be difficult for investors to figure out how to trade, especially since some of Trump's comments seem aimed at influencing oil prices, rather than communicating policy, says Brian Szytel at the Bahnsen Group. "As they say, the first casualty of war is truth," he says. "I suspect some of the rhetoric back-and-forth around productive talks, and the opposite, very much are centred around just moving the price of oil." On Thursday, minutes after US stock markets saw their biggest drop since the start of the Iran war, Trump said

talks with Iran were going "very well" and he was delaying military strikes on Iran's energy infrastructure until at least 6 April. But the oil price continued to rise. Jane Foley, head of FX strategy at Rabobank, says market reactions are "becoming more muted" because of the "huge gap" between Trump's reassurances and the lack of acknowledgement from Tehran. "Given the optics, many investors can not see an early end to the conflict and markets remain anxious." Russ Mould, investment director at AJ Bell, says markets have also become accustomed to Trump "often changing tack at signs of political or stock market or economic trouble". "There is a degree of scepticism, or even downright cynicism, creeping in at the edges," he says.

SRM University-AP Inaugurates Singularity Student Advanced Lab, Launches

India's Biggest Student-Led Hackathon SRM University-AP, Amaravati, marked a significant milestone in student-driven innovation with the official inauguration of the Singularity Student Advanced Lab, followed by the launch of MISSION: Schrödinger's Cat, a 36-hour national-level hackathon. The landmark occasion underscores the university's commitment to fostering cutting-edge research, interdisciplinary collaboration, and experiential learning. The inauguration ceremony was graced by Chief Guest Mr Rambabu Vasupilli, Founder and CEO of NCP, along with Prof. Ch. Satish Kumar, Vice Chancellor; Prof. C V Tomy, Dean - School of Engineering and Applied Sciences (SEAS); Dr Murali Krishna Enduri, Founding Faculty Advisor of the Lab and HoD-CSE; Dr Priyanka, Associate HoD-CSE and Faculty Advisor of the Lab; and Mr Pankaj Belwarar, Director-Communications. The lab is led by student innovators Jayanth Ramakrishnan and



Parvandan Rangasamy from the Department of Computer Science and Engineering. The Singularity Student Advanced Lab has been established as a dynamic, student-led innovation hub focused on emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence, quantum computing, cybersecurity, robotics, blockchain, and AR/VR. Designed to bridge the gap between theory and real-world application, the lab enables students to engage in research-driven learning, prototype development, and collaborative problem-solving. In a short span, the lab has demonstrated remarkable achievements, includ-

ing international conference presentations, multiple hackathon victories, and patent filings—reflecting its growing impact in the innovation ecosystem. Delivering the inaugural address, Dr Priyanka described the lab as a powerful platform that empowers students to explore advanced technological domains through interdisciplinary collaboration. She highlighted its vision of nurturing innovation and commended the student leadership for building a vibrant ecosystem that encourages experimentation and creativity. Chief Guest Rambabu Vasupilli congratulated the team on the successful launch

of the lab and acknowledged the growing momentum of student innovation at the university. He encouraged students to actively engage in such platforms, emphasising that participation and persistence are key drivers of long-term success. Vice Chancellor Prof. Ch. Satish Kumar highlighted the rapid growth of SRM University-AP, Amaravati, as a multidisciplinary institution and lauded the establishment of the lab as a significant step towards strengthening research and innovation culture. He remarked that such initiatives not only enhance technical capabilities but also foster creativity, collaboration, and problem-solving skills. Prof. C. V. Tomy emphasised the importance of institutional support in enabling such initiatives, noting that the university provides an environment where student-led ideas can flourish. He appreciated the efforts of the lab team in conceptualising and establishing a platform of this scale, reinforcing the institution's commitment to experiential learning.

Two Brothers Organic Farms Expands Retail Presence in Hyderabad with Launch at Ratnadeep Stores, Joined by Siri Hanumanthu

Hyderabad, 28th March 2026: Farmer-led regenerative food brand Two Brothers Organic Farms (Two Brothers) officially launched its range of clean, traditionally crafted food products at a special brand event held on Saturday, 28th March 2026, at the Ratnadeep store on Road 12, Banjara Hills, Hyderabad. The launch was marked by the presence of actress Siri Hanumanthu, adding to the brand's effort to bring together conscious food choices and a growing cultural shift towards mindful living. The event also saw the presence of Ajinkya Hange, Co-founder of the brand, who engaged with attendees and shared the philosophy behind Two Brothers' farm-first approach to food. As part of the launch event, consumers got an opportunity to explore a curated showcase of Two Brothers' best-selling products and experience the brand's clean-label philosophy firsthand. Guests also enjoyed popcorn drizzled with Two Brothers A2 Cultured Ghee, offering a



simple yet memorable way to experience one of the brand's signature products. The showcased range included favourites such as A2 Gir Cow Cultured Ghee, Khapli (Emmer) Wheat Atta, Cold Pressed Oils, and Chemical-Free Jaggery, products that have gained popularity for their purity, traceability, and adherence to traditional processes. Founded by farmers and brothers, Two Brothers is rooted in a larger mission, to fix the broken

food system by reconnecting consumers with the source of their food. The brand works closely with indigenous seeds, promotes regenerative agriculture, and revives forgotten grains like khapli, ensuring that nutrition, soil health, and farmer livelihoods are restored together. "At Two Brothers Organic Farms, we believe that good food begins at the farm. Our focus is on bringing back heritage grains, traditional recipes, and clean-label prod-

ucts that are honest, traceable, and nourishing. We are excited to bring our products to Hyderabad and look forward to building stronger connections with consumers here," said Satyajit Hange, Co-founder. "We were truly excited to launch in Hyderabad and connect with a community that values mindful and clean eating. Interacting directly with consumers and understanding their feedback is an important part of our journey as farmers and food producers," added Ajinkya Hange, Co-founder. With this launch, Two Brothers Organic Farms' products are now available across all Ratnadeep stores in Hyderabad, as well as in two Ratnadeep stores in Bengaluru, making the brand's clean products more accessible to conscious consumers while continuing to build awareness around mindful eating and sustainable food systems. Consumers can now visit Ratnadeep stores to discover and shop the range firsthand.

AIR CANADA CEO 'DEEPLY SADDENED' HIS ENGLISH-ONLY MESSAGE DISTRACTED FROM VICTIMS OF CRASH

The CEO of Air Canada has apologised after he was criticised for not speaking French in a condolence video message he released after a collision at LaGuardia Airport that killed two pilots. In a statement, Michael Rousseau said he was deeply saddened that his inability to speak French "diverted attention" from the pilots' grieving families and Air Canada staff. Rousseau said he was unable to express himself "adequately" in French - an official language in Canada, despite taking lessons over the years. He has faced calls to resign for failing to deliver his condolences in both English and French. One of the pilots who died - Antoine Forest - is French Canadian. Prime Minister Mark Carney said Rousseau's English-only message showed "a lack of compassion", while Quebec's Premier François Legault said he believed Rousseau should step down if he is unable to speak French. In a written statement, released in both English and French

on Thursday, Rousseau admitted that his French remains weak "despite many lessons over several years." "I sincerely apologize for this, but I am continuing my efforts to improve," he said. His statement did not address the calls for him to resign. Forest and the other pilot, Mackenzie Gunther, were killed when an Air Canada plane operated by Jazz Aviation collided with a fire truck on Sunday night at LaGuardia Airport in New York shortly after landing. The flight had come from Montreal, Quebec. Dozens of passengers were injured, and four remain in hospital, Air Canada said on Wednesday. Shortly after the accident, Rousseau released a video statement on X expressing "deepest sorrow for everyone affected". The message was delivered in English, and the video included subtitles in English and French. The statement caught the attention of Canada's parliamentary Committee on Official

Languages, which summoned Rousseau to "explain himself" before MPs on why his message was released in English only. Rousseau lives in Montreal, but is an anglophone. He has come under fire in the past for his inability to speak French, including shortly after he was appointed as CEO of Air Canada in 2021. At the time, Rousseau apologised and committed to improving his French. Air Canada began as a federal public corporation and has been private since 1988. It remains subject to Canada's Official Languages Act, however, and announcements on board planes are made in both English and French. Investigators are still working to determine the circumstances that led up to the fatal crash on Sunday. Authorities on Tuesday released details from the final three minutes of cockpit voice recordings and tower communications, including that controllers had cleared both the plane and a fire truck to cross the runway.

ASBL GRANDLY HOSTS SRIRAMA NAVAMI KALYANAM MAHOTSAVAM

Hyderabad, March 28, 2026: Bringing together devotion, culture, and community spirit, ASBL successfully hosted a magnificent Srirama Navami Kalyanam Mahotsavam on the evening at ASBL RTC X Roads. Spearheaded by ASBL Founder and CEO, Mr. Ajitesh Korupolu, the event was designed as an immersive spiritual experience that left attendees deeply moved. From the sacredness of the Sita Rama Kalyanam to the beauty of the cultural performances, every part of the evening made the celebration of Lord Rama feel alive and memorable. ASBL Founder and CEO, Mr. Ajitesh Korupolu, expressed his joy over the celebrations. "We are incredibly happy to celebrate the Rama Navami festivities so grandly," he said. "Celebrating traditional festivals collectively like this fosters a strong sense



of community among our residents. We look forward to hosting many more such vibrant celebrations in our communities in the future." The evening commenced with traditional lamp lighting and Vedic chants, setting a deeply reverent tone for the festivities. A major highlight of the gathering was an ambitious and historic attempt to write over

one crore Rama Namas, a profound initiative that stood as a testament to the love and faith the devotees hold for Lord Rama. Adding to the spiritual atmosphere, a captivating 15-minute Sita Swayamwar act from the Ramayana was performed, beautifully bringing the beloved epic to life on stage. The cultural richness of the celebration was further

enhanced by a graceful Kuchipudi performance by Nriya Priya, complemented by soulful musical renditions from the students of Ramachari Garu. As the night progressed, the energy of the crowd peaked during interactive Bhajan Jamming sessions. Renowned playback singer Sunitha Upadrashta and her team also took the stage, elevating the spiritu-

al aura with a deeply emotional and melodic devotional performance. Following the kalyanam, attendees participated in the Darshan, receiving blessings and partaking fully in the spiritual joy of the occasion. The grand event was graced by several prominent personalities, including Suma Kanakala, Aishwarya Rajesh, Lasya Manjunath, Gali Maheshwari, Siva Jyothi, Himaja Mallireddy, Vishnupriya, Pooja Vegesna, Nikhil Vijayendra Simha, and Alekhya Harika, who joined the devotees in the celebrations. Ultimately, the Srirama Navami Kalyanam Mahotsavam stood out for its seamless blend of sacred rituals, classical arts, visual spectacles, and a record-breaking attempt rooted in pure faith, making it a truly unforgettable evening for everyone present.

Yemen's Iran-backed Houthis launch missile at Israel for first time since war began

Missile and drone strikes continue across the Middle East as Saudi Arabia, UAE, Iran, Lebanon, Kuwait and Israel all report attacks overnight. In the backdrop to the conflict, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky has signed a deal with Saudi Arabia to share its drone defence expertise and technology. Ukraine's president has also met with military leaders in the UAE, before landing today in Qatar. He says Saudi Arabia is facing the same type of ballistic missile and drone attacks from Iran that Ukraine had been resisting for more than four years from Russia. Several Ukrainian drone companies tell the BBC they have been approached by Gulf states for help. "We are ready to share our expertise and systems with Saudi Arabia and to work together to strengthen the protection of lives," Zelensky says. We're now seeing reports that Iran has



destroyed a Ukrainian air defence depot in Dubai, Kyiv denies this. In our next few posts we'll shift our attention to this development - stay with us. The United Arab Emirates (UAE) has intercepted 20 ballistic missiles and 37 drones, its defence ministry says. It adds the country's air defences have now intercepted 398 ballistic missiles, 15 cruise missiles and 1,872 drones since the

start of "the blatant Iranian attacks". The defence ministry says attacks have led to 11 deaths, including two members of the armed forces as well as a Moroccan civilian contracted by the armed forces. As we reported earlier, five people were injured after a missile was intercepted in Abu Dhabi - the capital of the UAE. It was always expected that Yemen's Houthis would join this war

if it dragged on. Their ties to Iran don't run as deep as Lebanon's Hezbollah. But if Tehran asked for assistance, they couldn't say no to an ally which has armed and trained their forces in recent years. The Houthis, who hold sway in north west Yemen, have so far not wielded their most potent weapon - their ability to disrupt traffic through Bab al-Mandeb, the maritime chokepoint linking the Red

Sea to global trade routes. Opening up this front would pose risks for the Houthis too. Bab al-Mandeb is now the main route for neighbouring Saudi Arabia's oil exports and the kingdom is the main backer of the Houthis' rivals in southern Yemen. But the Houthis see themselves as a pivotal player in what Iran and its allies call their "axis of resistance" against Israel and the US. Their attacks on Red Sea shipping from 2023 to 2025 put them on the world stage. Air strikes by the US, UK and other countries inflicted damage on their forces but also sparked even greater defiance. Turkey's foreign minister has reaffirmed the country's readiness to play a "constructive role" in resolving the Middle East war, the Iranian foreign ministry says. It says that the foreign ministers for Turkey and Iran held a phone call in which Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi

thanked his counterpart for Ankara's efforts to try and end the war so far. Turkey has been one of the nations pursuing diplomatic methods to end the conflict. Earlier, Pakistan said that Turkey - alongside Saudi Arabia and Egypt - would attend talks on de-escalation in Islamabad on Monday. Turkey has a delicate path to tread in this conflict - as a Nato member but also a neighbour of Iran, sharing a more than 300-mile border. Iran's military says it has targeted a US support boat near an Oman port. A logistics vessel was targeted "a considerable distance" from the port of Salalah, says the Tasnim News Agency, which is linked to the IRGC (Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps). It comes after two drones targeted the port in the south of Oman, injuring a foreign worker. Yemen's Iran-backed Houthis have launched a missile at Israel for the first time in the month-long war.

Woods bailed after arrest following crash



Golf legend Tiger Woods has been released on bail following his arrest on charges of driving under the influence after rolling his car in a crash in Florida. The Martin County Sheriff's Office said the 15-time major champion was also charged with property damage and refusal to submit to a lawful test. Woods, 50, rolled his Land Rover after clipping a truck in Jupiter Island on Friday afternoon, according to Sheriff John Budensiek, who said officers had not suspected him of impairment by alcohol but possibly by an unknown substance. Woods, who had to crawl out of the passenger door,

passed a breathalyser test after the crash before refusing a urine test. No-one was injured. He was kept in jail for eight hours - the minimum allowed under state law - before being released on bail. Budensiek said the crash happened after Woods allegedly attempted to overtake a pressure cleaner truck at a "high rate of speed". DUI investigators came to the scene and "Mr Woods did exemplify signs of impairment", Budensiek said. "They did several tests on him," Budensiek said. "He did explain the injuries and surgeries that he's had and we did take that into account, but they did some in-depth roadside tests."

GAZA PEACE DOUBTS DEEPEN AS ATTENTION SHIFTS TO IRAN



Nearly six months after a fragile ceasefire came into force in Gaza, Palestinians in this war-torn territory are still struggling. In the markets, there are again shortages of some goods and rising prices - with merchants saying supplies brought in from Israel have been disrupted by the new war in the region. "What does the war between Iran and Israel have to do with us? Prices have doubled here. Goods aren't coming in like before," says a shopper, Hassan Faqawi, despairingly. "In this situation, the whole world is focused on Iran, America and Israel, and Gaza is forgotten." While world attention has turned to the Iran war, there is increasing uncertainty about what happens in Gaza at a crucial stage in President Trump's 20-point peace plan, which halted the fighting in October last year. In the past week at the UN Security Council, the High Representative for Gaza on the US-led Board of Peace, Nickolay Mladenov, laid out a detailed plan for Palestinian armed groups to decommission their weapons - linking compliance to the start of recon-

struction. But a Palestinian official familiar with Hamas affairs told the BBC it was likely that Hamas, whose October 2023 attack on Israel triggered the war, would reject the proposals. That raises the prospect of a return to a full-force military offensive with Israel's prime minister demanding that Hamas disarms "either the easy way or the hard way." Although the Trump plan pledged the immediate resumption of "full aid" to Gaza, with rehabilitation of essential infrastructure - for water, sewage and electricity - as well as the equipment needed to clear rubble, humanitarian agencies say much more needs to be done. Reconstruction materials are not yet allowed by Israel to enter, on the grounds that they could be used by Hamas to build tunnels and weaponry. "You know a huge amount of our effort is spent negotiating for the smallest crumbs, like a crossing to reopen or a few litres of fuel. So, progress towards recovery is limited and almost not there, really," says Bushra Khalidi, Policy Lead for Oxfam, based in Ramallah.

House Republicans reject Senate deal, prolonging partial US government shutdown



Republicans in the US House of Representatives have rejected a bipartisan deal to reopen the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and instead approved a different plan, prolonging the shutdown that has caused huge delays at airports. Their Senate colleagues backed a bill that would have reopened most of DHS but excluded funding for immi-

gration agencies to garner support from Democrats. House Republican leaders rejected this, with Speaker Mike Johnson labelling the Senate bill a "joke". TSA agents, who manage US airport security, have not been paid in more than a month due to the impasse. Congress is now heading on a two-week break. House Republicans are demanding that the legislation includes money for immigration enforcement, and their plan would mean funding DHS at current levels - including for Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) - for 60 days. "Republicans are not going to be any part of any effort to reopen our borders or to stop immigration enforcement.

Iran war splits older and younger conservatives - as pressure builds for Trump to find exit ramp

A majority of the American public, polls suggest, have been against the ongoing US-Israeli military campaign in Iran from the day it started. Republicans, however, have largely stuck by their president as the war approaches the end of its fourth week. But that may be changing. At the annual Conservative Political Action Conference (CPAC) in Texas, some of the party faithful expressed concern about why the US started this war, how Donald Trump is going to end it and whether the effort has been worth the costs. "I just wish that there was more transparency on why we're doing what we're doing, that way you could send your loved one overseas and be OK with that," said Samantha Cassell. "I hope it comes to an end quick, because it's the cost of living, the oil and gas, the



prices are only going to keep going up." Cassell, who lives in Dallas, and her friend Joe Bolick were attending their first CPAC conference. He also had his doubts about the war. "I don't see an endgame yet," he said. "What are we actually trying to achieve? Is it true regime change? What does that look like? Who to replace them? I think we kind of got ourselves stuck." CPAC has been welcoming ground for Trump for a

decade, shifting from a libertarian-leaning gathering to one dominated by Make America Great Again loyalists. The conservative conference has traditionally been held just outside Washington DC, but this year it moved to a sprawling hotel complex near Dallas, Texas. The atmosphere at this year's conference was similar to the past. A cavernous main auditorium offered days full of panels and speakers. A floor

below, the exhibit hall featured plenty of conservative kitsch - a bus with the president's face on it, Trump 2028 T-shirts and glasses commemorating the 2024 attempted assassination of Trump with "bulletproof" written on it and a faux bullet embedded in its side. Some things were different, however. Even more than a thousand miles from Washington DC, the war in Iran was a common topic of conversation. And if there has been a recurring theme among the dozens of people interviewed by the BBC, it is that the conflict is creating a generational divide within conservative ranks. Toby Blair, a 19-year-old college student at the University of South Florida, travelled to Dallas for CPAC with his friend Shashank Yalamanchi, a first-year law student.

'The gravest crime against humanity': What does the UN vote on slavery mean?

The United Nations General Assembly this week overwhelmingly backed a resolution declaring the transatlantic slave trade "the gravest crime against humanity". Welcoming the vote, UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres said that the wealth of many Western nations was "built on stolen lives and stolen labour". Noting the "barbaric punishments that maintained control - from shackles and iron collars to flogging and sexual violence", he said it "was not simply forced labour". "It was a machinery of mass exploitation and deliberate dehumanisation of men, women and

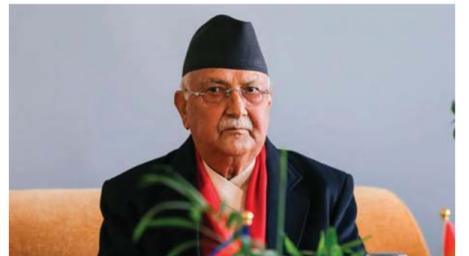


children. The wounds run deep and often go unrecognized." The resolution, backed by African and Caribbean countries, is not legally binding but analysts say it sends a powerful message. "It is already a huge and significant step in political terms to have this

debate at the UN, even when it has a more symbolic value," Almaz Teffera, a senior researcher on racism at Human Rights Watch, told the BBC. She says it could increase the chance of progress on discussions about reparations, or some form of compensa-

tion. The resolution was adopted by 123 votes to three, while 52 countries abstained, including the United Kingdom and EU member states. The United States, Argentina and Israel voted against it. Dr Erika Bennett, who leads the Ghana-based Diaspora African Forum, told the BBC the vote had a personal meaning for the descendants of people who were enslaved, like her. "It means that I'm acknowledged, it means that my ancestor finally rests. For me personally as an African American I'm overwhelmed - until you've been a part of what happened, it's very difficult to understand what this really means."

NEPAL'S EX-PM ARRESTED OVER FATAL PROTEST CRACKDOWN



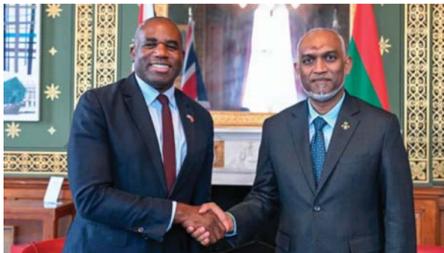
Nepal's former prime minister KP Sharma Oli has been taken to hospital following his arrest over his alleged involvement in a deadly crackdown on protests last year. Oli was admitted to a clinic in Kathmandu as a part of routine police procedure soon after his arrest at his home early on Saturday morning, officials say. More than 70 people were killed, many of them protesters shot by police, during an uprising in September - which was sparked by a social media ban but fuelled by anger over corruption and economic conditions. Ex-home minister Ramesh Lekhak was also arrested on Saturday, after a panel appointed to investigate the unrest recommended the pair be prosecuted for criminal negligence. Oli was admitted to hospital pending results from medical tests and given his age and medical history of two kidney transplants, the hospital's information office told BBC Nepali. The arrests come a day after the nation's new prime minister, 35-year-old rapper-turned-politician Balen Shah, was sworn in following an election triggered by

the crisis. "They were arrested this morning and the process will move forward according to the law," Kathmandu Valley police spokesman Om Adhikari told news wire agency France-Press. Oli, 74, and Lekhak, 62, have not been charged. Oli has previously rejected the findings of the commission, which also recommended the arrest of former police chief Chandra Kuber Khapung, telling them "character assassination and hate politics". His lawyers told Reuters his detention was unwarranted at this point in the investigation. "It is illegal and improper because there is no risk of him fleeing or avoiding questioning," he said. Supporters of Oli's CPN-UML party have begun protests in Kathmandu after the party's secretariat decided to launch nationwide demonstrations. On Instagram, new Home Minister Sudan Gurung, who was a key figure in the protests, welcomed the arrests. "No one is above the law... This is not revenge against anyone, just the beginning of justice," he wrote.



'Memory of a generation': China mourns the sudden death of a controversial education influencer

MALDIVES TELLS UK IT DOES NOT RECOGNISE CHAGOS ISLANDS DEAL



The president of the Maldives has formally told the UK that it does not recognise the deal to hand over the Chagos Islands to Mauritius. President Mohamed Muizzu's office told the BBC the Maldives had expressed its opposition to the "deeply concerning" deal in two written objections and a phone call with Deputy Prime

Minister David Lammy. The nation of tropical islands in the Indian Ocean is asserting sovereignty over the Chagos Islands and is threatening international legal action to press its claim. UK Foreign Office minister Stephen Doughty has said the sovereignty of the Chagos Islands is a matter for Britain and Mauritius.

Hardik Pandya Keeps His Word, Wins Hearts With Gesture For Wankhede Ground Staff

Indian cricket team all-rounder Hardik Pandya won hearts with a brilliant gesture towards the ground staff at the Wankhede Stadium in Mumbai. The Mumbai Indians captain spent a significant amount of time at the ground during his preparation for the T20 World Cup, during which he promised to reward the ground staff upon his return from the competition. Hardik kept his word, rewarding the MCA ground staff on Thursday and acknowledging their role in helping him train. Hardik enjoyed a stellar run of form, playing a major role in guiding the Indian cricket team to the 2026 T20 World Cup title. Earlier, legendary India spinner Ravichandran Ashwin stated that Mumbai Indians (MI) should make Suryakumar Yadav the captain of the franchise, ahead of Hardik Pandya. He was India's vice-captain in white-ball cricket when



he took over MI's captaincy in 2024 from Rohit Sharma. However, now not only is Pandya no longer in any captaincy role in international cricket, but Suryakumar is also India's current T20I captain and recently led them to the T20 World Cup 2026 title. Ashwin said that it is "con-

cerning" that MI have yet to make Suryakumar their permanent captain. "Suryakumar Yadav being the captain of the Mumbai Indians is a no-brainer. Usko captaincy dena hi chahiye (He should definitely be the captain). And the fact that it isn't happening, I'm sure, is a bit of a

concern," Ashwin said, speaking on his Hindi YouTube channel 'Ash ki Baat'. Ashwin, however, acknowledged Pandya's captaincy credentials and reflected on his struggles as MI captain. "We should also look at Hardik's captaincy credentials. Hardik Pandya, as the Gujarat

Titans captain, won a title in his first season, and the team was the runner-up in the second. "When he came to Mumbai, the expectation was that he would be the captain and continue that trend. However, his first year was spent just dealing with the Rohit Sharma saga," Ashwin said.

Lucknow Super Giants Full Schedule, IPL 2026: Date, Time, Venue And Other Details Of LSG Matches

With huge expectations on their shoulders, Lucknow Super Giants step into the new season of the Indian Premier League (IPL) with a fresh sense of purpose, determined to shake off the inconsistency of the past two years. Under Rishabh Pant's captaincy, the franchise is banking on a mix of youthful energy and seasoned performers to reignite their playoff ambitions. The batting unit looks balanced, with Pant expected to anchor at No. 3 while Nicholas Pooran, Aiden Markram, and Mitchell Marsh provide explosive top-order options. Bowling remains the key area of concern after last season's struggles with economy rates. The inclusion of Anrich Nortje and Mohammad Shami alongside Mohsin Khan promises sharper pace options, while Wanindu Hasaranga's spin offers control in the middle overs. But, the likes of Nortje and Shami have



proven to be quite costly in the IPL, in recent times. The two veterans, hence, need to reinvent themselves if they are to become match-winners for the Lucknow franchise. The fitness of fit-again Mayank Yadav would also be key to the team's ambitions this season. With Pant's aggressive leadership

style and a squad that blends flair with experience, Lucknow have the ingredients to mount a serious challenge. The question is whether they can finally convert potential into silverware and deliver a breakthrough campaign for their loyal Ekana Stadium supporters.

Delhi Capitals Star Mitchell Starc 'Apologises' To IPL Team For Missing Matches, Then Hits Out At 'Misinformed Opinions'

The IPL 2026 has many teams missing their top players. The problem has been particularly acute for those reliant on Australian pacers. Josh Hazlewood, Mitchell Starc and Pat Cummins are all missing the initial phase of their respective franchises' campaigns. There have been calls to deduct salaries from the players. In the midst of this, Starc has spoken out to clarify his circumstances and counter the false reports circulating in the media. Starc, who is contracted to play for Delhi Capitals, has been sidelined with shoulder and elbow injuries and he only fully understood after the Australian summer. His absence from the team's early matches has fuelled rumours and harsh



judgments from fans and the media alike, with some questioning his commitment and whether he was prioritising the IPL. In a candid yet straightforward statement, Starc expressed frustration with the narratives being spread about his fitness and availability. "Despite the opinions and views of certain individuals

with their platforms in and through the Indian media, I'm currently rehabbing and managing an injury in my shoulder and elbow, the extent of which I didn't know during the Australian summer. These individuals have made some strong statements around involvement in the IPL and provided heavily misinformed

opinions of players, preached them as facts, and claimed to know my body better than me. "With that said, I do acknowledge this injury setback and that the timing is disruptive to the Delhi team, and I apologise for that and to the fans for not being available for the early part of this season. I remain committed to joining DC, am in continual communication with the team, and will continue to do what I can to be available for DC as soon as possible," Starc wrote in a statement shared on his Instagram story. On Friday, a fan criticised Starc in a social media post about his unavailability and was met with a response from Alyssa Healy, Starc's wife and a former Australian player.

"Lack Of Manners": Pakistan Great Slammed For 'Embarrassing' Ex-England Star During PSL Match

Former Pakistan spinner Mushtaq Ahmed found himself in the headlines for all the wrong reasons after publicly embarrassing former England pacer Dominic Cork during the ongoing Pakistan Super League (PSL). During the build-up to the game, Mushtaq took a cheeky dig at Cork by saying that he got the former England international out on multiple occasions during their playing careers. Cork was taken aback by the sudden taunt and, despite trying to change the topic, Mushtaq kept repeating the same claim. Social media users were not happy with how the ex-Pakistan cricketer behaved with his co-expert and said that there was no need for such behaviour.



Mushtaq was also criticised for lacking "basic manners" by some users. A look at the conversation between Mushtaq Ahmed and Dominic Cork - Cork: You were a genius, turned the ball both ways. Adam

es, ODIs, and first-class matches. You remember that? I have got a great memory, let me tell you that. Cork: Mushtaq, you got me out once. Mushtaq: I think many times. Cork: But I couldn't bat. Don't worry about getting me out. Get that top order out. Mushtaq: I think you're being modest here, Dom. You used to play for England as an all-rounder. Cork: Less about me, more about this surface. I want to know about Adam Zampa. Cork played 37 Tests and 32 ODIs for England where he took 172 wickets. Meanwhile, Mushtaq was one of the celebrated spinners of Pakistan who took more than 300 wickets in 52 Tests and 144 ODIs.

Jannik Sinner Ousts Alexander Zverev To Book Miami Open Final With Jiri Lehecka

World number two Jannik Sinner of Italy stretched his win streak over fourth-ranked Alexander Zverev to seven matches on Friday, advancing to a Miami Open men's final against Czech Jiri Lehecka. The 24-year-old Italian fired 15 aces in beating Germany's Zverev 6-3, 7-6 (7/4) after an hour and 53 minutes - boosting his streak of consecutive sets won at the elite Masters 1000 level to 32. Sinner is trying to become the first man since Roger Federer in 2017 to complete the "Sunshine Double" by winning titles at Indian Wells and Miami in the same year. "Standing here again in a final means very much to me," Sinner said. "We'll try to push in a couple of days but in any case it has been an incredible swing." Reigning



Wimbledon champion Sinner, a four-time Grand Slam winner, also beat Zverev two weeks ago in the Indian Wells semi-finals and seeks his second Miami crown in three years. "Coming here, trying to produce some good tennis, that was my main goal," Sinner said. "Trying to play as many matches as possible. I couldn't do better. I'm very happy."

Also attempting a "Sunshine Double" is world number one Aryna Sabalenka of Belarus, who defends her Miami crown against American fourth seed Coco Gauff in Saturday's WTA final. Lehecka, seeded 21st, dominated 28th-seeded Arthur Fils of France 6-2, 6-2 in the other semi-final at Hard Rock Stadium, home of the NFL's Miami Dolphins.

Yograj Singh Sparks Row With 'Sexist' Remark: "Women Shouldn't Come In Between"

Yograj Singh, father of legendary Indian cricket team all-rounder Yuvraj Singh, sparked a major controversy after making a sexist remark while talking about retirements of certain players. Yograj said that it is mainly because of women and kids that some players decide to retire from cricket. He pointed out that fitness has nothing to do with retirement and claimed that women should not come in between a player and his career. "I have seen people in India going, 'we are getting old after turning 40'. Women go out of shape when they turn 30, saying our kids have grown up. What can we do? I started this regimen in my gym, where I am a director, and I consciously decided to bring the senior citizens into shape. How can one relate playing the game to



the age?" Yograj told InsideSport. "You know what happens: your ladies of the house, your wives, they start coaching you, telling you it's time to retire, time to look after the family, the kids. So I believe women should not come in between the legendary prospect of an athlete, fakir aur player yeh dono ka koi dharam nahi hai, warg nahi hai (Noble men and players don't have

any religion), they belong to God. As long as they live, they can do a lot of things," he added. Earlier, Yograj slammed any critic who was calling for Dhoni's retirement and claimed that the ex-India captain should play for another decade considering his fitness levels. He said that Dhoni has proven his fitness and even praised him for maintaining his dedication and discipline.

WHY HAS MITCHELL STARC NOT JOINED DELHI CAPITALS YET? WIFE ALYSSA HEALY REVEALS REASON



Injuries to players have badly hit Indian Premier League franchises ahead of the 2026 season. Australian pacers Mitchell Starc, Pat Cummins and Josh Hazlewood are the major absentees. All the players are set to miss at least the initial phase of the edition. While Hazlewood has already joined Royal Challengers Bengaluru, Cummins has also shared an update on his fitness. As per SRH head coach Daniel Vettori, a call on Cummins' availability will be taken in about 10 to 12 days. Amid all this, the case of Starc is quite different. The date of Starc's return is still unknown, with Delhi Capitals still waiting for a green signal from Cricket Australia. On Saturday, a fan blasted Starc on a social media post regarding his unavailability and received a response from Starc's wife and former Australia player Alyssa Healy. In the post, Starc was

seen standing with Healy and some other athletes on a golf course. "This is so unfair to us Delhi Capitals fan that Hazelwood and Cummins despite being injured will be available for their teams but you won't be," commented a fan. To this, Healy said, "Probably cause he's injured mate...if he can't bowl how's he supposed to play?" She added, "If he was fully fit he'd be there." Delhi Capitals had structured their bowling attack around Starc's pace and new-ball threat, but this has forced them to rethink. Banking on a mix of familiar players and fresh recruits, Delhi Capitals look stronger than ever to end their long wait for an IPL title. Despite a strong start last year by winning their first four matches, DC faltered in the second half of the campaign and finished fifth to miss out on the playoffs for the fourth successive time.

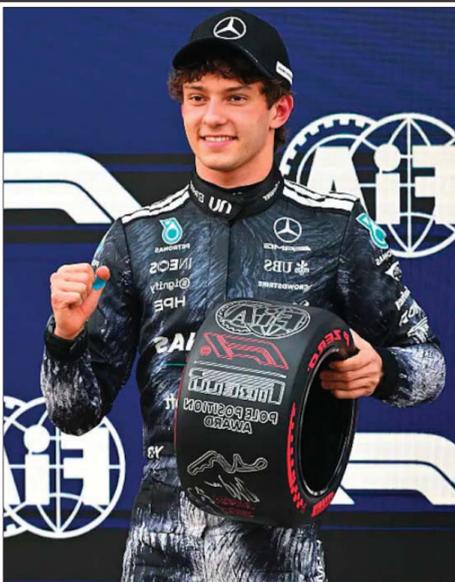
Kimi Antonelli, George Russell 1-2 On The Pole For Japanese Grand Prix

Mercedes driver Kimi Antonelli took the pole for Sunday's Formula 1 Japanese Grand Prix, just two weeks after he led qualifying and won the first race of his career in China. Antonelli's top qualifying time Saturday was 1 minute, 28.778 seconds on the 5.8-kilometer Suzuka circuit. Teammate George Russell will start alongside him. Russell won in Australia in the first race of the season and also took the pole, the start of Mercedes' early dominance in 2026. McLaren's Oscar Piastri, who has yet to start a race this season, will start alongside Charles Leclerc of

Ferrari in the second row, and Lando Norris of McLaren starts on row three next to Lewis Hamilton of Ferrari. Two weeks ago in China, neither McLaren car took part in the race because of electrical problems. And in Australia, Piastri sat out after crashing his car before the race even started. Four-time champion Max Verstappen of Red Bull will start 11th after struggling and complaining on his radio about his car. "I think there is something wrong with the car, mate. It was completely undrivable," he said. Saturday's qualifying was run on a sunny spring

day with the same predicted for Sunday. Mercedes driver Kimi Antonelli took the pole for Sunday's Formula 1 Japanese Grand Prix, just two weeks after he led qualifying and won the first race of his career in China. A despondent Max Verstappen labelled his Red Bull car "undriveable" after the four-time world champion qualified a lowly 11th for Sunday's Japanese Grand Prix. The Dutchman, who has won at Suzuka for the past four years, dropped out in Q2 in another qualifying nightmare to compound a difficult start to the season. He crashed out in Q3 in the season-opener in Australia

and has consistently railed against new Formula One regulations that see a 50-50 split between conventional and electrical power. "The car never turns mid-corner, but at the same time this weekend, it's just oversteering a lot on entry. It's really difficult, unpredictable," Verstappen, who took pole last year with a track-record lap time, told Sky Sports F1. "We thought we'd fixed it a little bit in FP3 (third practice), I mean there was still a lot of understeer in the car, but now in qualifying for me it was again undrivable, so that's something that we need to look at."



Mega Prince Varun Tej's 'Bhari' Launched Grandly with Andhra Pradesh Deputy CM Pawan Kalyan Garu as Chief Guest

A new film titled 'Bhari', starring Mega Prince Varun Tej and produced by Niharika Konidela under the Pink Elephant Pictures banner, is being directed by Yadu Vamsi. The film officially launched with a grand pooja ceremony on Saturday. Andhra Pradesh Deputy Chief Minister Pawan Kalyan attended the event as the chief guest.

For the muhurat shot, Deputy CM Pawan Kalyan gave the clap, while Mythri Movie Makers producer Naveen Yermeni switched on the camera. Director Merlapaka Gandhi and producer Rajeev Reddy handed over the script. After the pooja ceremony, the team shared details about the film.

Varun Tej said: After my film Mukunda, my uncle Pawan Kalyan garu has once again attended the launch of my film 'Bhari'. It's a Happiness to have the film begin under his blessings. It feels very special to work as a hero in a film produced by Niharika. We never actually planned to do a film together, but Vamsi's script brought us together. I really liked the story he narrated. I agreed to the film because of my confidence in the team. Pre-production is



already complete, and I've started volleyball practice as well. We are planning to release 'Bhari' next to Sankranti."

Niharika Konidela said: My father has made films with our family members, including his brothers." Today I understand how

special that feeling is. Launching this film with my brother Varun Tej is very special to me. I'm also happy that my uncle Pawan Kalyan garu attended the launch. We are planning to release the film next to Sankranti. This is a village drama with a sports back-

drop, and Vamsi has come up with another wonderful story. I'm happy to collaborate again with the 'Committee Kurrollu' team. My aim is that whenever audiences see the Pink Elephant Pictures name on a poster, they feel confident that the film will be good.

This movie will definitely impress everyone.

Director Yadu Vamsi said: After 'Committee Kurrollu', I worked on a story for a year, but it didn't materialize. During that time, I got an idea with a volleyball backdrop. As soon as I thought of volleyball, Varun garu came to mind. After developing the idea, I approached Niharika again and narrated the story, requesting Varun garu for the role. After completing the full script in three months, we narrated it to Varun garu, and he loved it. Pre-production is complete, and we aim to wrap up shooting quickly and release the film next to Sankranti. Last night, Varun garu surprised me by saying a guest would attend, and when I heard it was Pawan Kalyan garu, I was shocked. It's a great encouragement for a young team like ours to have him here, along with the support of Varun and Niharika.

Music Director Anudeep Dev said: The music in 'Bhari' will have ten times more impact than 'Committee Kurrollu'. Vamsi garu also has great taste in music. There is significant scope for music in this film, and it's going to be amazing.

TFJA DIARY, INSURANCE, AND ID CARDS LAUNCHED BY MEGASTAR CHIRANJEEVI



The Telugu Film Journalist Association has been continuing the tradition of releasing a diary for journalists and renewing the insurance plan every year on the occasion of the Telugu New Year.

On this occasion, the 2026-2027 diary and insurance renewal were formally launched by Megastar Chiranjeevi. This year, the insurance coverage for each film journalist's family (2+2) has been increased from 5 lakhs to 10 lakhs. Additionally, a special accident policy has been introduced to provide financial support to journalists during emergencies. In case of an accident requiring bed rest for 2 to 12 months, a

weekly assistance of 10,000 will be provided under this policy. To ensure proper identification for Telugu film journalists, ID cards are being issued by the association. These ID cards were also distributed to the Executive Committee members by Chiranjeevi.

On this occasion, Megastar Chiranjeevi appreciated the initiatives taken by TFJA and contributed a cheque of 5 lakhs, suggesting that it

On this occasion, the 2026-2027 diary and insurance renewal were formally launched by Megastar Chiranjeevi.

used for the welfare of the association members. The event was attended by TFJA President Y.J. Rambabu, General Secretary Prasadam Raghu, Treasurer Naidu Surendra, Politburo Convener Varanasi Lakshminarayana, along with Executive Committee and Politburo members.

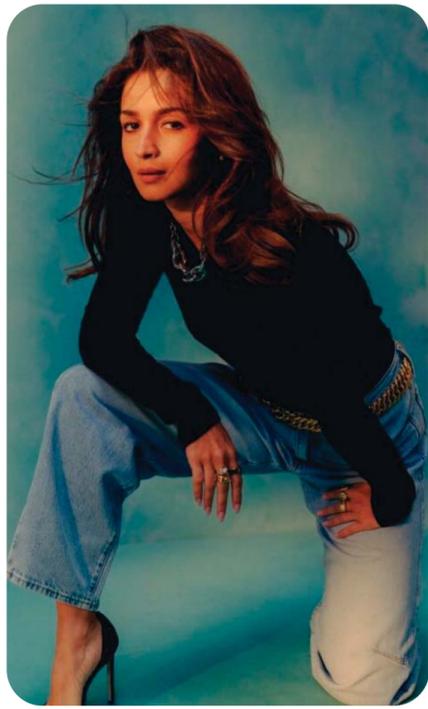
"VICHITRA" WILL HIT THEATERS ON MAY 22ND



The family emotional horror-thriller 'Vichitra' film, Jyothi Purvaj plays the lead role, with Ravi and Shreya Tiwari as the hero and heroine. Baby Yaseek, Ravi Prakash, Surya, Chatrapathi Shekhar, and Meena Vasan play other key roles. Produced and directed by Saifuddin Malik under the Sis Films banner, the film has completed post-production and censor formalities and is ready for release on May 22. "Vichitra" is a story centered on mother-child emotions. A woman without children considers other children around her as her own, exploring

complex feelings of motherhood and parental love. The music, composed by Nizani, adds depth to the film, with the mother-sentiment song being a major highlight. The actors have delivered strong performances, bringing their characters to life. Editing is done by Kadimi Shetty Lakshminarayana, with PR support from Kadali Rambabu. Director and producer Saifuddin Malik has guided the project from start to finish. The director said, "We hope the media and audience support our small film. It is made to be enjoyed with family." "Vichitra" will release in theaters on May 22.

HOT MOM ENERGY TAKES OVER FASHION SCENE



Sharwa took a 6-month break for the biker and lost 23 kg

Biker is a movie that gives a 100% theater experience.

Both racing and family emotion will connect with the audience: Director Abhilash Reddy

Charming star Sharwa is all set to entertain with the high-octane racing drama 'Biker', directed by Abhilash Reddy and produced by UV Creations. Touted to be India's first motocross adventure film, Biker will be released in premium formats like Dolby Cinema, EPIQ, 4DX, PCX. Glimpses, songs, teaser and trailer have already created a huge buzz about the film. The film will be grandly released in theaters on April 3. On this occasion, director Abhilash Reddy shared the features of the film at a press conference.

WHAT KIND OF EXPERIENCE DOES THE BIKER GIVE TO THE AUDIENCE?

Biker is a movie that gives 100% theater experience. We have also shot in Dolby Vision. Everyone who has seen the trailer is talking specifically about the sound design of this movie. This movie will definitely be a very good experience in the theater.

INSPIRATION FOR WRITING

THIS STORY?

Bike is an emotion for everyone. I personally love that emotion. Along with racing, there is a very good family emotion in it. The emotion between father-son will definitely connect with the audience.

WHAT WERE THE CHALLENGES YOU FACED WHILE SHOOTING?

We shot the racing sequences in this film with real racers. There were many accidents during the shoot. We had to take a two-hour break after each shot. The action alone took more than 60 days.

The film takes place in two timelines. There were two-stroke bikes in the 90s, but they don't exist anymore. It took a long time to design them. We shot the racing in Indonesia. Bringing all those bikes back to India was also a big process. We also brought racers from New Zealand and Australia for this film.

DOES THIS SPORT EXIST IN INDIA?

There is. But it did not get the popularity it should have. In this, we are presenting the same topic with the char-



Premier Energies Presents Lakshmi Manchu's Teach For Change Annual Fundraiser 2026 Held in Hyderabad to support Education for children in Government Schools

In support of teach for change Telangana irrigation and CAD minister Uttam Kumar Reddy, minister for women and child welfare seethakka, principal IT secretary Telangana state Jayesh Ranjan were present as a guest. Over the years, Teach For Change has positively impacted over 300,000 children and supported 1,549 government schools across multiple states in India Hyderabad (Telangana), India - March 27, 2026: Premier Energies presented the Teach For Change Annual Fundraiser 2026, hosted by actor and philanthropist Lakshmi Manchu, at the Novotel Hyderabad Convention Centre (HICC), bringing together leaders from government, corporate, education, and the film fraternity to support quality educa-



tion for children studying in government schools. The annual fundraiser focused on the importance of strengthening government schools and improving learning outcomes for children from under-

served communities. The event highlighted the need for partnerships between government, corporates, civil society, and individuals to ensure that every child, regardless of their socio-economic back-

ground, has access to quality education and better learning opportunities. The evening also featured a special showcase where members of the Indian film fraternity walked the ramp in support of the

cause of education. The showcase featured exclusive collections by ace designer Raamz, along with Sakhi Heritage ensembles and Rose Jewellery, symbolizing the coming together of cinema, fashion, and philanthropy for a meaningful social cause. Actors who walked the ramp in support of the initiative included Lakshmi Manchu Garu, Seerat Kapoor, Akshara Gowda, Paayal Rajput, Hebah Patel, Tejaswi Madivada, Faria Abdullah, Manvitha Kamath, Teju Ashwini, Rashi Singh, Shivani Nagaram, Daksha Nagarkar, Abhignya Vuthaluru, Pavani, Nanditha Swetha, Suhasini Garu, Charita Varma, Rithika Nayak, Amritha Aiyer, Aishwarya Arjun, Sridevi Court, Jaya Prada, Avantika Sundar, Sandhya

Raju, Raftaar, Shiva Kandukuri, Aravind Krishna, Prince, Viraj Ashwin, Saurabh Dhingra, Vishwanth, Adith, Roshan K, Arjun Zander Lama, Nandu, Nikhil Vijayendra Simha, Priyadarshi Pulikonda, Roshan, and Priyatham, among others. Teach For Change is a non-profit organization founded in 2014 by Lakshmi Manchu with the mission of strengthening government schools and improving the quality of education for children from underserved communities. The organization works closely with government schools to support smart classrooms, ICT-enabled learning, teacher training, volunteer programs, and foundational literacy and numeracy initiatives for primary school children.