

INDIA'S ENERGY POLICY IS WRITTEN IN NEW DELHI, NOT WASHINGTON, SHOWS DATA



IRANIAN CLERICS CLOSE TO NAMING NEW LEADER AS SMOKE CHOKES TEHRAN AFTER OIL DEPOT



TELANGANA, ANDHRA CMS CONGRATULATE TEAM INDIA ON T20 WORLD CUP



IN BRIFS

CBI BOOKS ANIL AMBANI IN RS 1085 CR PNB LOAN FRAUD CASE

New Delhi, March 8 (TSIT) In a fresh trouble to Anil Ambani, the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) has registered another case against him under Sections 420 (cheating) and 120B (criminal conspiracy) of the IPC based on a complaint filed by Santoshkrishna Annavarapu, Chief Manager of Punjab National Bank (PNB). The UNI is in the possession of the FIR copy lodged by the CBI. According to the FIR, between 2013 and 2017, Anil Ambani, along with other then officials of Reliance Communications, allegedly cheated PNB of Rs1,085 crore. The bank has alleged that Reliance Communications obtained the loan of Rs1,085 crore with the intention of not repaying it. PNB has further claimed that the company deliberately diverted the funds obtained from the bank to other purposes. The accused are alleged to have misused the bank's money, amounting to cheating and criminal breach of trust.

Telangana Govt Celebrates International Women's Day; Women Journalists Felicitated

International Women's Day; Women Journalists Felicitated



HYDERABAD, MARCH 8 (TSIT): The Government of Telangana celebrated International Women's Day with great enthusiasm at Praja Bhavan in Hyderabad, where several women journalists were felicitated for their contributions to media. Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy, Deputy Chief Minister Bhatti Vikramarka Mallu, Ministers Ponguleti Srinivasa Reddy, Konda Surekha and Mohammed Azharuddin attended the programme along with officials and media representatives. The leaders felicitated senior women journalists from leading newspapers and television channels.

Speaking on the occasion, Chief Minister Revanth Reddy appreciated the role of women journalists and said their voices carry credi-

girl college students and create a platform to report misinformation on social media. Later, the participants visited the Indira Mahila Bazaar at Shilparamam, where women journalists interacted with self-help group members and purchased handloom and handicraft products.

The journalists thanked the state government for recognizing



bility in society. He also announced that the government plans to provide EV scooters to

their services and organizing the programme.

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T20 WC

India Make History, Clinch 3rd Title After Beating New Zealand

Ahmedabad (TSIT): A dominant India became the first team to retain the ICC Men's T20 World Cup title, win three world crowns, and clinch the trophy on home soil after defeating New Zealand by 96 runs in the final played in front of 86, 824 fans at the Narendra Modi Stadium in Ahmedabad on Sunday.



Captain Suryakumar Yadav will now lift the trophy and be the fourth Indian to lead the side to a men's cricket World Cup title after having not lost a single series since taking charge in July 2024 - a remarkable record that highlights India's dominance in the shortest format.

Though the massive win, India broke two hoodoos - of having never previously beaten New Zealand in a Men's T20 World Cup match, and winning in

Ahmedabad after their last two ICC white-ball defeats - the 2023 ODI World Cup final loss to Australia and a Super Eights defeat to South Africa earlier in this tournament - came at the venue.

Sanju Samson's blistering 89 off 46 balls, laced with five fours and eight sixes, led India's charge to posting a massive 255/5 - the second highest total of the tournament and the

most posted by a team in the World Cup - before their bowlers dismantled New Zealand inside the powerplay to seal a comprehensive victory, as the visitors were bowled out for 159 in 19 overs.

Samson, in the form of his life, having struck 97 not out and 89 in his two previous innings, shared an opening stand of 98 with Abhishek Sharma, who saved his best for the

title clash by hitting 52 off 21 balls, while Ishan Kishan hit 54 off 25 balls to extend the carnage.

James Neesham briefly checked India's momentum with three wickets in a single over before Shivam Dube plundered an unbeaten 26 off eight balls to take India past 250. Local lads Jasprit Bumrah and Axar Patel then wrecked New Zealand's top order, reducing the challengers to 52/3 and extinguishing any realistic hope of a record chase, as India lived up to their pre-tournament hype and made history.

Brief scores: India 255/5 in 20 overs (Sanju Samson 89, Ishan Kishan 54; James Neesham 3-46, Rachin Ravindra 1-32) beat New Zealand 159 all out in 19 overs (Tim Seifert 52, Mitchell Santner 43; Jasprit Bumrah 4-15, Axar Patel 3-27) by 96 runs.

TELANGANA SHOCKER: MAN KILLS THREE DAUGHTERS BY THROWING THEM INTO LAKE

Hyderabad (TSIT) : In a shocking incident, a man in Telangana's Kamaraeddy town killed his three daughters by throwing them into the lake as he was unable to raise them due to financial problems, police said on Sunday. The bodies of Ayat (7) and Mariyam (5) were recovered from the lake on Saturday night, while the body of Shifat (8) was pulled out on Sunday morning. Police have arrested Ismail, an autorickshaw driver, who was remanded to judicial custody on Sunday. The accused had approached the police to lodge a missing complaint after throwing them into the lake. On suspicion, police interrogated him, during which he confessed to the crime. Assistant Superintendent of Police Chaitanya Reddy on Sunday revealed the details of the case at a news conference. She said that the parents of the three children came to the police station at 3.30 p.m. on Saturday to complain that the children had not been seen since 10 a.m.

Women entrepreneurs to drive economic empowerment in Andhra: CM Naidu



Amaravati (TSIT): Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu on Sunday said that women entrepreneurs will play a key role in strengthening economic empowerment in the state.

Addressing International Women's Day celebrations at Amaravati Parade Grounds here, the chief minister greeted women across the country and described them as the embodiment of hard work, love and sacrifice. The TDP supremo said that societies prosper when women are respected and empowered, affirming that he will continue making every effort, both as the chief minister and personally, to support women's

Women entrepreneurs will play a key role in strengthening economic empowerment in the state, he added.

upliftment. Naidu noted that International Women's Day began in 1911 and is celebrated every year on March 8, adding that this year's theme focuses on rights, justice and action.

Highlighting leadership roles, the TDP supremo said India has a tribal woman as

President and a woman serving as finance minister, reflecting growing recognition of women's capabilities.

He observed that women are natural financial managers who efficiently manage income in households, likening their role to that of finance ministers handling budgets responsibly.

He also encouraged women to prepare for future opportunities in politics, noting that 33 per cent reservation in legislatures will create greater representation for women. Naidu said the government had set a target of creating one lakh women entrepreneurs and has already surpassed it with over 1.1 lakh women establishing Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs). Women entrepreneurs will play a key role in strengthening economic empowerment in the state, he added.

He further noted that nearly 34,000 enterprises were set up by women in urban areas, reflecting growing participation of women in entrepreneurship across Andhra Pradesh.

Stalin hits out at BJP, AIADMK says Bihar CM Nitish fate will befall on EPS

Chennai (TSIT) Hitting out at the BJP which had made Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar to quit after picking him as a Rajya Sabha nominee, Tamil Nadu Chief Minister and ruling DMK President M K Stalin hit out at the saffron party and its ally, the main Opposition AIADMK, and said AIADMK General Secretary Edappadi K Palaniswami (EPS), the CM face of the NDA in the ensuing Assembly polls, would meet the same fate as that of Mr Nitish Kumar. In his address at a public meeting in Madurai on Sunday night to formally induct ousted AIADMK leader and three time CM O Panneerselvam and his supporters in the DMK, Mr Stalin claimed that according to the information he had received, the BJP could replace Mr Palaniswami with someone as the AIADMK General Secretary. Alleging that the BJP would "suck the blood" of AIADMK as it had done with Mr Nitish Kumar, the Chief Minister said the same fate would befall on EPS. Had he not accepted the BJP's offer to forge electoral ties with the NDA, in which the AIADMK had returned after walking out of it in 2023, the saffron party would have orchestrated the replacement a while ago, Mr Stalin claimed.



CM REVANTH INAUGURATES RESTORED LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL BUILDING



Hyderabad: Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy on Sunday inaugurated the restored Telangana Legislative Council building, along with Roads & Buildings and Cinematography Minister Komatireddy Venkat Reddy. Speaking on the occasion, Komatireddy Venkat Reddy said it was a proud moment to be part of the historic milestone in the rebuilding of Telangana. He said that overseeing the restoration works of the Council building as the R&B Minister gave him special satisfaction.

The minister stated that the government believes meaningful and lasting solutions to

public issues can be achieved only when the Legislative Assembly and the Legislative Council work in close coordination.

He expressed hope that the renovated building would serve as a platform for constructive debates, intellectual discussions and historic decisions in the public interest in the coming years.

Komatireddy Venkat Reddy added that restoring the prestigious Council building has brought new dignity to the Upper House, reflecting the government's commitment to strengthening parliamentary traditions and democratic values in the state.

KHARGE INVOKES AMBEDKAR, CALLS WOMEN THE 'DRIVING FORCE' OF DEVELOPMENT ON INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

New Delhi (TSIT) Marking International Women's Day, Congress President Mallikarjun Kharge, said women are the "driving force" of development and stressed that true progress would be achieved only when gender equality becomes a lived reality for every woman.

In a message posted on X on Sunday, Kharge invoked the words of social reformer and constitutional architect B R Ambedkar to highlight the importance of gender equality. "You are not born to suffer. You are born to rise," Kharge wrote, quoting Ambedkar while reflecting on the continuing struggle for equal rights and opportunities for women. The Congress president

said women's role in society extends far beyond participation in development processes. "Women are not merely participants in development. They are its driving force," he said.

"Through their wisdom, resilience, compassion, and determination, women strengthen communities, and build stronger nations."

Highlighting the significance of the day, Kharge said International Women's Day is an opportunity to recognise the contributions of women across sectors and renew the commitment to equality. "On International Women's Day 2026, we celebrate the courage, leadership, and countless contributions of women everywhere," he wrote.



PM Modi extends International Women's Day greetings, highlights role of 'Nari Shakti' in India's progress

New Delhi, March 8 (TSIT) Marking International Women's Day, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday extended greetings to women across the country and praised their contributions to India's development, saying the achievements of "Nari Shakti" continue to inspire the nation and strengthen its journey towards a developed India. In a series of posts on X on Sunday, the Prime Minister said women are playing a transformative role across sectors and are central to the country's progress.

"On International Women's Day, I extend my greetings to all our Nari Shakti," Modi wrote. "Across every field, women are shaping India's

progress with determination, creativity and unmatched zeal. Their achievements inspire our nation and strengthen our collective resolve to build a Viksit Bharat."

Highlighting the government's focus on women's empowerment, Modi said several initiatives and schemes launched over the past decade have been aimed at expanding opportunities and enabling women to realise their full potential.

"Empowerment of women is at the core of our various schemes and initiatives," he said. "We remain committed to creating opportunities that enable every woman to realise her full potential and contrib-



ute to India's journey of development."

In another post, the Prime Minister said the accomplishments of women across the country continue to shape India's path forward. "The achievements of India's Nari Shakti are a source of pride and a powerful reminder of the transformative role in nation building," Modi wrote. "As

India progresses further, the aspirations and contributions of women will continue to guide our collective journey towards a strong and prosperous nation."

Sharing a video highlighting stories of women at the grassroots level, Modi said it offered "a glimpse of how the lives of women have been transformed over the past decade," using the hashtag #NayeBharatKiNariShakti.

The central government has in recent years highlighted several programmes focused on women's empowerment, including initiatives aimed at financial inclusion, entrepreneurship, health, education

and sanitation.

The government has also emphasised women's participation in sectors such as science, technology, governance and the armed forces.

International Women's Day, observed globally on March 8 each year, celebrates the social, economic, cultural and political achievements of women while also serving as a call to accelerate gender equality and expand opportunities for women worldwide. Leaders from across the political spectrum in India marked the occasion with messages acknowledging the contributions of women and reiterating commitments to empowerment and equal opportunity.

Women are strong, no less than others: President Murmu on International Women's Day

NEW DELHI: President Droupadi Murmu on Sunday lauded women's strength and achievements, and exhorted them to realise their full potential, saying, "We are no lesser beings."

Addressing an event organised here by the Ministry of Women and Child Development to mark the International Women's Day, the president said the occasion was not only to honour women's achievements but also to reaffirm the nation's commitment to their empowerment. Murmu highlighted women's pioneering roles in education, administration, judiciary, armed forces, medicine, science, tech-

nology, arts, entrepreneurship and sports. She noted that rural women are becoming economically self-reliant through self-help groups and providing leadership in village development, while women continue to emerge as leaders in employment, start-ups, and the corporate sector.

"With opportunity and support, women can excel in every sphere," she said, adding, "Mahilao mei dam hai, hum kisi se kam nahi. Hum mei bhi dam hai (Women are powerful, we are no less than others. We, too, have strength)." The president underscored that while many achievements have been made,

several obstacles still exist in ensuring women's equal participation in society. "These challenges cannot be resolved by law alone. It is necessary to change our mindset," she said.

She emphasised that parents must not discriminate between daughters and sons at home. She said mothers-in-law should not discriminate between their own daughters and daughters-in-law, and daughters-in-law should be treated as daughters. "True equality begins with recognising every woman as a daughter, irrespective of her role in the family," she added.

She congratulated the Ministry of Women and



Child Development for organising the 'Shakti Walk - SheLeadsBharat' on Sunday as part of the International Women's Day celebrations. The event featured a walk from India

Gate to Vijay Chowk. Murmu also lauded the dedication of women from across the country who participated in the event, highlighting their commitment to India's progress

and the empowerment of women nationwide. Recalling Dr B R Ambedkar's words, she said, "I measure the progress of a community by the degree of progress women have achieved."

The president expressed satisfaction that the government of India has taken significant steps to prioritise women's empowerment, highlighting various programmes including Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao; Sukanya Samridhi Yojana; Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana; Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojana; Mission Shakti and the Viksit Bharat - Employment and Livelihood Mission (Rural), which

includes women-focused provisions. She also spoke about expanding women's participation in STEM education, leadership roles in rural and urban sectors and initiatives such as Skill India and Startup India.

"...Women are increasingly becoming job creators. More than half of the start-ups supported under Startup India have at least one woman director. On the government e-Marketplace, over two lakh women-owned MSMEs are currently active," Murmu said.

To provide better market access for products made by self-help groups and rural women, the SHE-Mart

initiative was launched in the 2026-27 Budget, which will establish community-run retail outlets in every district, she said.

Last year, labour codes were implemented to ensure a more inclusive, safe and empowering work environment for women workers," she added.

President Murmu concluded by urging citizens to pledge to provide education, respect, and opportunities to every girl child to "prioritise women's safety and respect, and to strive to eliminate all forms of discrimination in society".

"By doing so, we can present an ideal model of women's empowerment to the world," she added.

Doctors save 11-year-old by performing rare diaphragmatic hernia surgery at Jaipur hospital

JAIPUR: Doctors at the state-run Sawai Man Singh hospital here have successfully performed a complex laparoscopic surgery on an 11-year-old boy suffering from a rare congenital diaphragmatic hernia, hospital authorities said.

The child, a resident of Alwar, had been suffering from breathlessness and chest pain for the past two months, with symptoms worsening while walking or running.

He visited the hospital's outpatient department (OPD) around two weeks ago for consultation, following which a detailed investigation revealed that he had a congenital diaphragmatic hernia - a condition present since birth.

Due to a defect in the di-



aphragm, the muscle that separates the chest and abdominal cavity, nearly 70 per cent of the liver, along with the gallbladder and a large portion of the intestines, had shifted into the right side of the chest cavity, the hospital said in a statement.

"As a result, the right lung had become severely com-

pressed, preventing adequate expansion. The child had effectively been living with the function of only one lung," it said.

Congenital diaphragmatic hernia is a rare condition, and is usually found on the left side of the body. Right-sided cases are extremely uncommon, making this case particularly

challenging from a surgical perspective, it added. "Considering the severity of the condition, surgery was planned. Conventionally, such cases require large surgical incisions by opening the abdomen and chest, or through a large incision in the back (via laparotomy or thoracotomy)," the statement said.

However, in this case, the surgical team decided to perform the procedure laparoscopically, which is technically much more demanding, it added.

The entire surgery was performed through only three small incisions, and all the displaced organs were carefully repositioned into the abdomen. "Seven days after the operation, the child is completely healthy," the statement said.

Nearly 40 lakh beneficiaries to get Rs 9,000 next week: Himanta on Women's Day

GUWAHATI: Emphasising that women empowerment has been central to Assam's growth story, Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma on Sunday, on the occasion of International Women's Day, said that nearly 40 lakh 'Orunodoi' beneficiaries will receive Rs 9,000 each next week.

The consolidated payment comprising grants for four months along with an additional amount will be made on Tuesday, making it a record bank transfer of Rs 3,600 crore on a single day under a government scheme, he claimed.

The single-day transfer to women beneficiaries comes as the state gears up for Assembly elections, when the BJP-led government will seek a third straight term.

"On March 10 at 10.30 am, 40 lakh Orunodoi families

will receive Rs 9,000 each," Sarma said in a Facebook Live.

Orunodoi is a flagship poverty alleviation scheme of the current government, under which eligible women beneficiaries receive Rs 1,250 per month.

On the occasion, meetings will be held at the local level across the state, and the CM invited the beneficiary families to attend those, maintaining that it was the support of the people which has been the strength of the government.

"On a single day, Rs 3,600 crore will be transferred to the beneficiaries, it will also be a record," he claimed.

Sarma had announced earlier that payment for four months from January this year, along with an additional amount for Bohag Bihu celebration (marking the Assamese New

Year in mid-April), will be paid together in March.

Highlighting his government's focus on women's development, Sarma said in a post on X: "Empowering women has been central to Assam's growth story. From financial security to education, healthcare and entrepreneurship, our initiatives are helping lakhs of women step forward with confidence and independence."

"Today, we celebrate the strength and spirit of Assam's #NariShakti," he added.

In another post seeking support for the party in the coming elections, Sarma said, "One right vote can change the voice inside every home. The focus of @BJP4Assam has been to empower Assam's #NariShakti and every action of ours has reflected this belief." Asserting that the effort to empower women will con-

tinue with more rigour, he appealed all to "Choose wisely, choose BJP".

The Chief Minister's Office (CMO), also in a post on the social media site, maintained that major strides have been made for the women of the state.

Under Central and state governments initiatives that have helped women, over 59 lakh tap water connections and more than 51 lakh Ujjwala gas connections for smoke-free kitchens have been provided. Over 5.5 lakh 'Lakpati Didis' have been created in the state, more than 900 women-led start-ups have been opened and 56,000 Anganwadi workers trained. "On #WomensDay, we celebrate Assam's unstoppable #NariShakti, who are securing futures, leading enterprises & shaping a #ViksitAssam," the CMO added.

Bishnoi among three discharged by Delhi court in extortion call case

NEW DELHI: A Delhi court has discharged gangster Lawrence Bishnoi and two others in a case related to an alleged Rs 1 crore extortion call, saying the prosecution failed to place sufficient material on record to establish the essential ingredients of the offences.

Chief Judicial Magistrate Nupur Gupta discharged Haren Sarapadhiya, Lawrence Bishnoi and Ashish Sharma in a case registered at the Sunlight Colony police station under Section 387 (putting a person in fear of death or grievous hurt in an attempt to commit extortion) of the Indian Penal Code (IPC) on a complaint by Raman Deep Singh.

The complainant alleged that between the midnight of April 23 and 24, 2023, he began receiving calls

from an unknown number threatening his life and demanding Rs 1 crore. After investigation, the police filed a chargesheet against the accused under Sections 386 (extortion by putting a person in fear of death or grievous hurt to themselves or another person) and 387 read with Section 120B (criminal conspiracy) of the IPC.

The court, however, noted that the offence of extortion under Section 386 IPC requires actual delivery of property induced by fear of death or grievous hurt, which was absent in the case. "Neither the complainant has alleged any delivery of property under threat nor the same has been alleged in the entire charge-sheet," the court said in its order dated February 20. It further

observed that even for the offence under Section 387 of the IPC, the prosecution failed to show any "overt act" indicating that the accused had put the complainant in fear of death or grievous hurt.

"The complainant has merely alleged that he received calls from an unknown number demanding an amount of Rs 1 crore. On personal of the complaint itself, it can be said that nothing has been mentioned at all about the physical act, rather it has simply been said he was asked to pay a particular sum of money," the court said. The judge also pointed out that investigators did not procure call records or collect other material evidence and that the case primarily relied on disclosure statements of the co-accused persons.

'Grew up in a family where women were bosses': Rahul tells students

NEW DELHI: "I grew up in a family where the women were the bosses," Congress leader Rahul Gandhi told students during an interaction in Kerala recently, while asserting that women are generally more intelligent than men.

On International Women's Day, Gandhi posted a video of his interaction with the students on his YouTube channel on Sunday and said that a few days ago, he met some young women students in Kerala during a lunch interaction and had a very interesting conversation with them.

"I was deeply impressed by each student's dreams, curiosity, and confidence. Such conversations remind us that when women recognise their potential and move forward with an open mind, they can bring about extraordinary change," the Leader of Opposition in the



Lok Sabha said. "Every woman is unique. Their sensitivity, understanding, and emotional intelligence provide balance and direction to society. Women also wield power in their own unique ways - with patience, long-term vision, and empathy," Gandhi asserted in his post in Hindi, accompanying the video.

"Therefore, they should have every right to move forward according to their identity,

personality, and aspirations, rather than being bound by society's restrictive norms," he said.

"Heartiest greetings to all women on International Women's Day. May your strength, courage, and dreams continue to propel society toward a positive future," Gandhi said.

Posting the video on X, Gandhi said interacting with some young students in Kerala was incredibly inspiring.

"Their confidence and belief in their dreams demonstrate that women are the ultimate force for change," he said.

In the video, Gandhi is seen having a free-wheeling chat with the women students.

"I grew up in a family where the women were the bosses. So the boss of my family was my grandmother and I have always in my family, like on this table, been outnumbered by women," Gandhi tells the students.

"Women are generally more intelligent than men for the most part. Men are in a hurry and men get blinded by silly things. Women think longer term, they don't apply direct power they apply indirect power, it is more effective," he says.

Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge shared on X a quote by BR Ambedkar on gender equality - "You are not born to suffer. You are born to rise"

"Women are not merely participants in development. They are its driving force. Through their wisdom, resilience, compassion, and determination, women strengthen communities, and build stronger nations," Kharge said on X.

"On International Women's Day 2026, we celebrate the courage, leadership, and countless contributions of women everywhere. True progress will come when equality is not an aspiration, but a lived reality for every woman," the Congress chief said.

Congress general secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra also greeted women on International Women's Day.

"On this Women's Day, may every woman realise her strength, her rights and her power to shape the future. You matter. Your voice matters. Your dreams matter," she said on X.

International Women's Day: Leaders nationwide exalt women's contribution, role in development

NEW DELHI: Leaders across the country on Sunday lauded the growing contribution of women across sectors on International Women's Day, which was also marked by announcements by state governments focused on financial assistance for women.

President Droupadi Murmu exhorted women to realise their full potential, while Prime Minister Narendra Modi emphasised that empowerment of women is at the core of his government's various schemes and initiatives.

Several programmes were organised and initiatives undertaken on the occasion to celebrate women and their achievements in diverse ways. An all-women crew -- comprising the loco-pilot, assistant loco-pilot, train manager, ticket checkers and personnel of the Railway Protection Force -- operated a passenger train on the Ranchi-Ir-gaon. In Thane district's Dombivli, meanwhile, a 'lezim' dance performance by 9,111 women created a new Guinness World Record, officials said.

Murmu praised women's strength and achievements, and exhorted them to realise their full potential, saying, "We are no lesser beings."

Speaking at an event organised here by the Ministry of Women and Child Development, the president said the occasion was not only to honour women's achievements but also to reaffirm the nation's com-



mitment to their empowerment. She noted that rural women are becoming economically self-reliant through self-help groups and providing leadership in village development, while women continue to emerge as leaders in employment, start-ups, and the corporate sector.

Conveying greetings to all women, Modi said the achievements of India's 'Nari Shakti' are a source of pride.

He said empowerment of women is at the core of his government's various schemes and initiatives, and it remains committed to creating opportunities that enable every woman to realise her full potential

and contribute to India's journey of development.

"On International Women's Day, I extend my greetings to all our Nari Shakti. Across every field, women are shaping India's progress with determination, creativity and unmatched zeal. Their achievements inspire our nation and strengthen our collective resolve to build a Viksit Bharat," he said in a message.

Union Minister for Women and Child Development Annpurna Devi, who participated in the women-led walk -- titled 'Shakti Walk - She Leads Bharat' -- along with the president and Delhi chief minister,

said women's leadership is moving from "women's development" to "women-led development". Referring to government initiatives, Devi said over Rs 5 lakh crore was allocated in the 2026-27 gender budget for women's empowerment.

Noting that today's woman is both a homemaker and a nation-maker, she said that as a result of the government's policies, women's participation in the workforce has risen over the past six years from 22 per cent to more than 41 per cent. Speaking at the event, Delhi Chief Minister Rekha Gupta said the event reflected the spirit of women's empowerment and their role in nation-building.

"Today, through this Kartavya Path, we are reminded that our responsibility is not only towards ourselves or our families but also towards society and the country," Gupta said while addressing participants.

Meanwhile, at the first national conference of Indian Women in Law, Chief Justice of India Surya Kant batted for greater institutional reforms in the judiciary to bring more women into the legal field and said that high court collegiums should consider meritorious women members of the Bar for judgeship as a norm and not as an exception.

The CJJ asserted that members of the Bar must acknowledge and ac-

Plans afoot to have world's tallest national flag at iconic Haji Ali Dargah: Trustee

MUMBAI: A proposal has been submitted to the Maharashtra government for installation of the world's tallest national flag at the iconic Haji Ali Dargah off the coast of Mumbai, trustee Suhail Khandwani said on Sunday.

Khandwani said the dargah on an islet some 500 metres off the Worli coast, which is the final resting place of revered 15th century Sufi saint Pir Haji Ali Shah Bukhari, is one India's foremost spiritual landmarks visited by several lakh people annually.

"It has a very importance place in the history of India and continues to stand as a beacon of faith, inclusivity, and communal harmony. This small islet will now have the world's tallest national flag. We have submitted a proposal to the Maharashtra gov-

ernment for permission," said Khandwani, Trustee of the Haji Ali Dargah and the Mahim Makhdoom Shah Baba Dargah.

The flag, which will come up near the shrine, is envisioned as a landmark symbol of patriotism, unity, and the shared identity of the nation, he added.

"Special piling and quality metal would be used for the flagpole and special fabric for the flag. We have to take into account that it is located along the sea," Khandwani informed.

The announcement was made during the weekend coinciding with the holy month of Ramzan. A special 'sehri' was organised by the two Dargah trusts in association with the Legend group that saw Hindu, Muslim, Christian, Parsi, Sikh and Buddhists priests taking part.

Memorial of reformist poet Kardak will be an inspiration for future generations: Athawale

NASHIK: Union Minister Ramdas Athawale on Sunday said the upcoming memorial of Lokkavi Vamandada Kardak will serve as an inspiration for future generations.

Addressing a gathering at the Bhoompujan ceremony of the memorial in Sinner taluka, Athawale recalled Kardak's contribution to society as an effective thinker who spread Dr Babasaheb Ambedkar's ideas of equality, brotherhood and justice through his poetry and songs. "His songs inspired social change by creating confidence in society. Now, his memorial will prove an inspiration for future generations," said Athawale.

Born on August 15, 1922, at Desh-wandi in Nashik district, Kardak lit the flame of self-respect and social awareness in the Bahujan society through his poetry, songs and writings. He has written more than 10,000 songs dedicated to Ambedkarite ideology.

State school education minister Dada Bhuse said a proposal to provide separate study rooms for students in the area is under consideration while constructing the memorial.

Social Justice Minister Sanjay Shirsat said the memorial will serve as a lighthouse of ideas for social change.

The memorial is being built at a cost of Rs 13.67 crore by the Social Justice Department on 21 acres of land.

Bhumi Puja for ISKCON Cyberabad Temple Held at Nallagandla



Hyderabad, March 8: The Bhumi Puja ceremony for the construction of the ISKCON Cyberabad Temple was held with spiritual fervour at Nallagandla-Gopanpalli in Hyderabad on Sunday. Minister for Endowments and Forests Konda Surekha attended the event as the chief guest. The Government of Telangana has allocated 6,000 square yards of land near Sri Ranganatha Swamy Temple for the construction of the temple. The ceremony began early morning with rituals including Bhumi Puja, Go Puja, Guru Puja and Sudarshan Narasimha Homa. Speaking on the occasion, the minister said the temple would serve as a centre for spirituality, culture and youth development. On the occasion of International Women's Day, the "Nari Puraskar 2026" awards were also presented to 20 women. The programme was attended by MLA Arekapudi Gandhi, former corporator Gangadhar, government officials, ISKCON representatives and devotees.

PRSI Hyderabad Women's Wing Celebrates International Women's Day



Hyderabad, March 8: The Women's Wing of the Public Relations Society of India (PRSI), Hyderabad Chapter, celebrated International Women's Day at St. Joseph's Degree and PG College with participation from PR professionals, women leaders, and students. Chief Guest G. Pushpa Chakrapani, Director (Academics) of Dr. B. R. Ambedkar Open University, highlighted the importance of education and awareness in empowering women and building a progressive society. Special guests Yesaswini, International Yoga Trainer and founder of Kalakriti Yoga, and Shaik Husna Sameera, a Guinness World Records holder in carrom, inspired participants with messages on health, discipline, and national responsibility. PRSI Hyderabad Chapter Chairman Yadagiri Kambhampati said the Women's Wing plays a key role in promoting women's empowerment and professional growth. The event was attended by several PR professionals, faculty members, and a large number of women students.

IT Department Raids 'Celebrations' Restaurant Branches Simultaneously in Visakhapatnam

The South India Times, Visakhapatnam: Income Tax (IT) department officials launched a crackdown on the city's popular restaurant chain, 'Celebrations', on Sunday morning. Amid allegations of tax evasion, simultaneous searches were conducted at four major centers in the city, which has become a significant topic of discussion among business circles. The raids, which began around 11:00 AM on Sunday, continued late into the night. Special IT teams carried out inspections at the Akkayapalem, Madhurawada, NAD Junction, and Pendurthi branches of Celebrations Restaurant. Officials are scrutinizing not only physical records but also the billing software and a specific app server used by the restaurant. It is reported that startling facts have



emerged during the investigation. Despite a massive volume of food deliveries and sales, officials identified that digital data related to these transactions was intentionally deleted from the records. Preliminary findings suggest that while online payments from customers were accounted for, income received directly in the form of cash was diverted without being shown in the accounts. Officials have gathered evidence indicating significant evasion of GST and Income Tax

Employees should also take up farming: Bandi Sanjay

Hyderabad, Mar 8: union Minister of State for Home Affairs Bandi Sanjay Kumar on Sunday said employees should also come forward to take up farming and support agriculture, stressing that farmers are the backbone of the country. He was speaking after inaugurating a newly built farmers' hostel and the "Farmers Value Addition and Food Processing Laboratory" at the Krishi Vigyan Kendra Tuniki run by the Eklavya Grameen Vikas Foundation in Tuniki village of Medak district under the aegis of the Indian Council of Agricultural Research. The Minister praised the foundation and Krishi Vigyan Kendra for providing training to farmers on value addition, processing and marketing of agricultural produce so that they can earn better profits and become self-reliant. Bandi Sanjay said the Narendra Modi government is implementing several programmes to

strengthen farmers and make them economically prosperous. He highlighted initiatives such as the formation of 10,000 Farmers Producer Organisations (FPOs), which have brought together more than 56 lakh farmers across the country, including about 22 lakh women. He also spoke about major central schemes for farmers, including the PM-Kisan Samman Nidhi that provides Rs 6,000 annually to farmers, soil health cards for scientific farming, micro-irrigation under the Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana, crop loans through Kisan Credit Cards and fertiliser subsidies. The Minister said nearly 60 crore people in the country depend on agriculture for their livelihood, while around 60 lakh farmers in Telangana rely on farming. Despite challenges and natural calamities, farmers continue to produce food for the nation, he said, calling on society to support them.

SRI VENKATESWARA VEDA SASTRA AGAMA VIDWAT SADAS COMMENCES AT DHARMAGIRI VEDA VIGNANA PEETHAM



Tirumala, 08 March 2026: The 29th Sri Venkateswara Veda Sastra Agama Vidwat Sadas commenced on a grand note on Sunday at Dharmagiri Veda Vignana Peetham in Tirumala. The six-day conference will be conducted under the guidance of eminent scholars and will continue until March 13. With the divine blessings of Sri Venkateswara, this prestigious Vidwat Sadas was initiated in 1969 with the objective of identifying and honouring scholars of Vedas, Shastras, Agamas, Smartha traditions and Prabandhas from across India. The selected scholars are examined by TTD and honoured with cash awards, shawls and certificates of merit. Until 2020, the conference had been conducted successfully for 28 times. From its inception till now, around 4,000 scholars from various Vedic disciplines have appeared for examinations and qualified through this Vidwat Sadas. This year, more than 800 candidates from across the country are participating in the Sadas. Over 100 eminent scholars are serving as examiners to assess the candidates. During the inaugural session, HH Sri Sri Sri Chinnam Jeeyar Swamy of Tirumala and Sri Datta Vijayananda Teertha Swamiji, successor of Mysuru Datta Peetham, attended the programme and delivered Anugraha Bhashanam addressing the participants.



TIRUPATI DISTRICT COLLECTOR S. VENKATESWAR AND PARASARATHNAM, DEPUTY MAYOR R. C MUNIKRISHNA PARTICIPATED IN THE INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY CELEBRATIONS ORGANIZED AT PADMAVATI WOMEN'S UNIVERSITY.

BLESSING FOR FARMERS: 'AGRI AI' DEVICE - A NEW INVENTION BY ANDHRA UNIVERSITY AMBEDKAR CHAIR



THE SOUTH INDIA TIMES, VISAKHAPATNAM: Visakhapatnam's Andhra University Dr. B.R. Ambedkar Chair has developed an innovative device to bring modern technology closer to common farmers. Developed under the name "Agri AI Device - Adaptive AI Pest Control

System with LLM Integration," the device was formally launched on Sunday in the agricultural fields of Pinagadi village, Pendurthi mandal, Visakhapatnam district. The device, developed with financial assistance from the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, Government of India, was inaugurated by IPS officer and Director of the Dr. Ambedkar Foundation, Manoj Tiwari. Speaking on the occasion, Manoj Tiwari praised the efforts of the Ambedkar Chair in working towards the empowerment of marginalized sections in the spirit of Digital India. He described the adaptation of technology to meet social needs as true 'Ambedkarism.' He further congratulated Professor M. James Stephen and his team for achieving such a wonderful invention during the centenary celebrations of Andhra University. Project Principal Investigator, Professor M. James Stephen, demonstrated the device's functionality on the field. This device identifies pests attacking the crop and analyzes their intensity. The analyzed details, along with photos, are sent directly to the farmer's mobile phone in Telugu. By suggesting scientific preventive measures, it reduces the unnecessary use of pesticides and provides financial relief to farmers. Professor Stephen stated that the device was designed in line with Babasaheb's vision of viewing agriculture as an industry, with the specific goal of increasing the yield for small-scale farmers. Village leaders Reddy Narayana Rao, B. Jairam, research scholar E. Anirudh, and a large number of local farmers participated in the event. Subsequently, a special training workshop was organized for farmers on the usage of this device.

'PINK SARI WALK' HELD IN VIZAG TO PROMOTE BREAST CANCER AWARENESS

[Visakhapatnam: With the objective of creating awareness about the rising cases of breast cancer among women, a "Pink Sari Walk" was organized grandly on Sunday morning at Vizag Beach Road under the aegis of the Rohit Memorial Trust. Noted film actress and founder of the Life Again Foundation, Gautami, attended the event as the chief guest and flagged off the walk.



Addressing the gathering, Gautami highlighted the importance of awareness and early detection in the fight against cancer. She urged women not to fear the disease but to focus on timely screening and maintaining good health. Sharing her personal journey as a cancer survivor, she encouraged women to stay strong and positive, stating that cancer can be completely cured if diagnosed at an early stage. As part of the initiative, hundreds of women dressed in pink saris walked from RK Beach to Kalimata Temple, carrying placards and raising slogans promoting cancer awareness and health. The walk aimed to spread the message of early detection and prevention among the public. Representatives of Rohit Memorial Trust said the organization has been conducting awareness campaigns and providing medical support to cancer patients, particularly the underprivileged, for several years. Doctors, social activists, voluntary organizations, and a large number of college students participated, making the event a grand success.

PURPLE RIDE RALLY PROMOTES PREVENTIVE HEALTHCARE FOR WOMEN

Hyderabad, March 8: Marking International Women's Day, the fourth edition of the Purple Ride - a motorcycle rally aimed at promoting women's preventive healthcare - was held in the city on Saturday in collaboration with Apollo Hospitals. The rally, founded by Dr. Roshan Reddy Nadikattu, brought together over 1,000 motorcyclists who rode through the city to spread awareness on the importance of early health screening and preventive care for women. The ride began at Apollo Hospitals, Jubilee Hills, and was flagged off by Dr. Sangita Reddy, Joint Managing Director of Apollo Hospitals. The rally concluded at Apollo



Hospitals, Financial District, with participants wearing white T-shirts carrying the message "Healthy Women, Healthy Nation". Addressing participants, Dr. Sangita Reddy emphasised that women often prioritise their families' health while neglect-

ing their own well-being. She said regular preventive screenings for heart disease, breast and cervical cancers, diabetes and anaemia are crucial, adding that early detection through routine check-ups can save lives. Tejesvi Rao Veerappalli, Regional CEO of Apollo Hospitals for Telangana and Andhra Pradesh, said the collaboration reflects the hospital group's commitment to strengthening awareness on women's health and preventive care. Doctors from Apollo Hospitals also interacted with riders and volunteers at the concluding venue, offering guidance on lifestyle diseases, early diagnosis and the importance of routine health check-ups. The event saw participation from members of the Deccan Moto Collective (DMC), independent riders, riding clubs, healthcare professionals and volunteers, all coming together to support the cause of women's preventive health awareness.

International Women's Day Celebrated by AVV Walkers Association, Women Achievers Felicitated

Warangal: On the occasion of International Women's Day, the AVV Walkers Association organized a special program to honor women from various fields and extend greetings to all women and mothers for their contributions to society. During the event, several distinguished women were felicitated with shawls and mementos in recognition of their service and achievements. Among those honored were Gynecologist Dr. Varalakshmi, Ayurveda Doctor Rakham Shruithi, Warangal Bhadrakali Temple Endowment Officer Ramala Sunitha, Warangal Corporator Devarakonda Vijayalakshmi, Warangal Public Prosecutor Santoshi, Government Teacher K. Karuna, and catering entrepreneurs Roja and Chandrakala, who have provided employment opportunities to many people. Speaking on the occasion, AVV Walkers Honorary President Mattapalli Hari Ayya, President Pabba Vishwaprasad, Secretary Pola Dhananjay, Treasurer Ananthula Venu, along with members B.



Gopi, Rakham Manohar Babu, Jandhyam Karnakar, Erram Srinu, Dhanunjay, Dachehalli Shyam, Meru Lakshman, Srinu, Sargapani, Yamasani Chandrayya, and Srikanth Sharma highlighted the vital role of women in family and society. They stated that women serve as guiding forces not only within families but also in shaping society. From education and healthcare to politics, business, and sports, women are excelling in every field. Ensuring equal rights, respect, and safety for women is essential for the true progress of society, they added. The program concluded with heartfelt wishes to all women on the occasion of International Women's Day.

WITH FAMILY SUPPORT, WOMEN CAN EXCEL IN ANY FIELD



ROSHINI APARANJI KORATI, IAS - DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON, VISAKHAPATNAM PORT AUTHORITY

The statement "With family support, women can excel in any field" perfectly reflects the journey of Smt. Roshini Aparanji Korati, IAS, the Deputy Chairperson of Visakhapatnam Port Authority. Her inspiring career stands as a symbol of determination, dedication, and leadership. With a glorious history spanning more than 92 years, the Visakhapatnam Port Authority has been one of the leading ports in India, consistently setting new benchmarks in cargo handling and maritime operations. In this prestigious institution, Roshini Aparanji created history by becoming the first woman IAS officer to assume the post of

Deputy Chairperson, marking a significant milestone in the port's legacy. Her appointment not only represents administrative excellence but also highlights the growing role of women in leadership positions within India's maritime and infrastructure sectors. Roots and Inspiration Roshini's upbringing played a crucial role in shaping her ambitions. Her father, Sri Subhakara Rao, started the Port High School as a single teacher and eventually retired as the Headmaster of the same institution. Her mother, Smt. Hemalatha, served as the Head Nurse at King George Hospital (KGH), Visakhapatnam. It is indeed a rare and proud moment for the family that the daughter now holds a prestigious administrative position in the very port ecosystem where her father once served in the education sector. Education and Academic Excellence Born and brought up in Visakhapatnam, Roshini completed her schooling at

Timpany School, pursued her intermediate studies at Bullayya College, and continued her higher education at Andhra University. She completed her B.Sc. in Biotechnology, but her passion for communication and public affairs led her to pursue Post-Graduation in Journalism and Mass Communication, where she secured a Gold Medal for academic excellence. Despite being the only child and receiving immense affection from her parents, Roshini remained focused and disciplined in her studies, laying a strong foundation for her future. Dream of Civil Services Interestingly, Roshini's dream of entering the Civil Services began as early as her sixth standard. Growing up in a household where newspapers and magazines were a regular part of daily life, she developed a habit of reading about governance and public administration. Stories about District Collectors solving public issues and bringing develop-

ment to society deeply inspired her. From that moment, she nurtured the dream of becoming a civil servant. Her interest in reading news also sparked her curiosity towards journalism, which is why she chose journalism for her postgraduate studies. When she expressed this decision to her father, he supported her wholeheartedly. After completing her PG in 2007, she moved to Hyderabad to prepare for the Civil Services. Leaving her hometown Visakhapatnam was emotionally challenging, but she pursued her dream with determination. IAS Journey - Assam-Meghalaya Cadre Her perseverance paid off when she cleared the Civil Services Examination and was selected into the 2011 batch of the Indian Administrative Service (IAS) under the Assam-Meghalaya cadre. During her career in the northeastern states, she held several key positions including:

- Collector of Jorhat
 - Additional Deputy Commissioner, Jorhat
 - District Collector of Dhemaji
 - Secretary for Primary Education, Government of Assam
 - Mission Director, Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan
 - Project Director, ARIAS Society
 - Secretary, Agriculture Department
- Her contributions to governance and public service were widely appreciated. In 2018, she received the Prime Minister's Award for Excellence in Public Administration, recognizing her outstanding work and commitment to public service. Returning to Her Roots Later, on Central Deputation, she returned to her hometown Visakhapatnam and served as the Joint Development Commissioner of Visakhapatnam Special Economic Zone (VSEZ). Her journey eventually led her to the Visakhapatnam Port

Authority, where she now serves as Deputy Chairperson, contributing to the growth and modernization of one of India's premier ports. Family Life Roshini Aparanji's husband serves in a senior position in the Central Industrial Security Force (CISF). Recently, he was transferred from Visakhapatnam to Rajasthan. Despite the demanding nature of public service, she balances her professional responsibilities with family life. The couple is blessed with two sons. Message to Women Roshini strongly advocates financial independence for women. She believes that women should not only earn but also develop the habit of investing their income wisely. She emphasizes that the success of working women depends greatly on support from family members. When family responsibilities fall entirely on women, it can affect their professional growth. Therefore, she believes that shared responsibilities within families are

essential. Message to Youth and Parents Roshini also stresses the importance of responsible use of social media, especially among children and young people. After the COVID-19 pandemic, mobile phones have become essential for education, making it impossible to completely avoid them. However, she encourages parents to monitor usage carefully and spend quality time with their children. When parents maintain strong communication with their children, youngsters feel secure and confident in sharing their problems. An Inspiration for the Next Generation From a young girl in Visakhapatnam reading newspapers about district administration to becoming a senior IAS officer leading one of India's major ports, Roshini Aparanji's journey is truly inspiring. Her story is a powerful reminder that with determination, education, and family support, women can achieve excellence in any field.

EDITORIAL

GODDESSES OF SMALLER FOLK

A weird scene is going viral on social media today. The boss is sitting in the White House surrounded by what appears to be a group of evangelists fervently praying to God for wisdom, grace and strength for the man who leads this one nation under God. Is it AI, you wonder?

"Sometimes the broiling sea of imbecility gets too much. Wave upon wave of cretins," notes Edward Luce elsewhere about Trump's America. Sadly such a mindset is not limited to one country. A new wave of conservatism – political, religious, and deeply hostile to liberals, peace-lovers and feminists – seems to be sweeping across the world as the shadows of war grow larger. Ever since it began, mankind has seldom been so oblivious to the International Women's Day being observed today and the threat that wars pose to the existence of women and children already struggling with major changes in their lives and environment. In India it is an under-reported fact that both in cities and villages, large joint families are giving way to smaller nuclear units. The young families are migrating with their children, leaving the vulnerable elderly behind.

But even after the nuclear families have migrated out of their villages or small towns, there are practically no signs that the ideology of the patriarchal socio-political system has given way to a more gender-balanced outlook. Marriages are mostly being fixed along clear caste and community lines and celebrated with even more ritualistic fervour. Inter-faith marriages are even more heavily frowned upon and often undone by family-led violence.

Besides this, both available data and social media messages show that even after half a century of Mandalisation, India's democratic institutions are being led mostly by upper castes from the majority community. As they reap the benefits of all governmental schemes, the poor, especially our marginalised minorities, women and children are increasingly becoming invisible and largely irrelevant to the growth story. As proof of the above, look at the image of a working mother promoted by governmental agencies and mainstream dailies. Most are smartly attired urban women striding along confidently or standing out in a crowd of scowling men, in work scrubs or helmets. Even the lower governmental functionary didis dress well and carry smart bags and clipboards. Working women in rural areas are shown clustered around self-run shops selling fresh produce or hand-made goods in front of gaily decorated walls or outside thatched huts.

In the meanwhile most homes, workplaces and boardrooms remain female-deficient and the latest statistics say only 7% of outstanding credit for MSMEs reaches women. The loquacious PR lady from Galgotias University seen defending charges of technical plagiarism against her institution was an arch-example of the gap between perception and reality.

Imagine this spectrum. At one end are rural landless families desperately trying to make sense of and access VB-G RAM G, the new avatar of MGNREGA. They subsist on daily earnings. At the other end stands a powerful political lab run by males with deep pockets creating educational facilities and medical colleges. They are funded by the new billionaires with political links and get to display their 'products' in international seminars.

And at the same time political leaders who have never married, some in orange garbs of childless ascetics, tell women in all seriousness that each of them must produce at least five children or their race may soon be obsolete!

Rallies then turn into prayer meetings and bhajan-clubbing, whipping up fervour and lies about race, purity and vegetarianism. In the meanwhile it remains undeniable that most of the labour in the country is still done by women – overworked, underpaid, under-represented in unions or boardrooms and seldom included in planning panels.

This International Women's Day, Let's Fund Care Like We Fund Highways



This International Women's Day, India needs to confront its national care crisis. India's female labour force participation stands at just 33% – one of the lowest rates in the world. Reaching Viksit Bharat's goal of 70% by 2047 will require addressing the barriers that keep women out of work. The most significant of these barriers is care work. Indian women spend significantly more time, on average around five hours a day on unpaid work, far more time than men who spend on average around two hours on the same activities. Time spent by women on unpaid care and domestic work is time unavailable for them to engage in paid work, skill development, or entrepreneurship. This reality remains across both rural and urban India. Looking after children, ageing parents and family members with disabilities, domestic chores like cooking and cleaning are still culturally coded as the responsibility of women alone. In rural areas, caregiving also includes collecting water and firewood, tending to livestock. In the corporate world, this translates into career breaks, reducing women's lifetime earnings and curbs them from growing into leaders. Many women do not return to the workforce at all. India now stands at a demographic inflection point. It is racing to create jobs for a young population where nearly a third of young

people in India are not in employment, education, or training, many of whom are women. At the same time, projections suggest that close to 20% of India's population will be elderly by 2050, which will increase care demands exponentially. The pressure on women to take on caring for the elderly will intensify precisely at the moment when the country needs more women in the workforce, not fewer. Care is critical infrastructure, just like highways. We treat roads as economic multipliers. We finance freight corridors and industrial corridors. Why not finance childcare centres? Why not invest in eldercare systems with the same seriousness we reserve for physical infrastructure? Evidence suggests investing in care is a strong employment stimulus to spur job creation and increase women's labour force participation. Every rupee spent expanding care services including early childhood care and long-term care, could create substantial employment opportunities, particularly for women. Studies also show that equivalent public spending on care services can create far more jobs than the same spending on construction because care services are highly labour-intensive and generate broad labour demand. We do not ask whether highways "pay for themselves" in isolation. Their value lies in the ecosystem they make

possible. They reduce transaction costs, expand labour mobility, and stimulate private investment. Care functions in much the same way. Over time, jobs created in the care sector and related support services will lead to higher employment, expand consumption, raise aggregate demand, and strengthen the national tax base, reinforcing fiscal sustainability. The Nordic economies have long invested in universal childcare systems as part of their social and economic model. These countries have also consistently achieved some of the highest female LFPRs worldwide, where providing universal or low-fee childcare has been correlated to over 70 per cent employment rates for women. Few investments offer such strong dividends, yet care continues to lack commensurate fiscal recognition in India. Fragmented spending across the Union Budget 2026-27 National care-related expenditures remain dispersed across ministries as diverse as Women and Child Development, Health, Social Justice, Rural Development, Jal Shakti, Labour & Employment, as isolated schemes rather than as a coordinated system. This year's Union Budget saw increases in gender budget allocations, expanded nutrition and childcare spending and announced plans to train 1.5 lakh caregivers. Yet it stopped short of

recognising care as economic infrastructure or creating a dedicated financing architecture. Saksham Anganwadi and POSHAN 2.0 indicated a budget estimate of Rs 23,100 crore, but is still focused largely on nutrition, not universal full-day childcare. Allocations towards Mission Shakti Samartha including working women's hostels and creches and the National Social Assistance Programme for basic pensions to the elderly, widows and persons with disabilities remain relatively modest. The Union Ministry of Health & Family Welfare was allocated around Rs 1 lakh crore, a significant increase from the previous year, yet it lacks explicitly earmarked allocations for structured community based long-term elder or disability care services. In total, identifiable care allocations amount to roughly Rs 25,000 crore, likely still under only 1% of total Union expenditure. By contrast, roads and highways command roughly over 5% of the Budget. This sharp difference is not an argument against roads. There is a need for consistency in how we define economic infrastructure. A national care infrastructure mission: Contours of a care budget. The 2024 National Care Strategy too notes the current state of fragmented care spending on welfare and skilling, rather than being one strategic investment.

Modi Demeans PM's Office

Let's recall what Narendra Modi said on May 23, 2016 during his first visit to Iran: "Shakkar-Shikan Shavand Hame Bulbulane-azam/ Je in qade-Hindi ki be-Tehran mee rasad." This means: All the nightingales of Iran get this fresh sweet arriving in Tehran from India. Can Modi now hear the nightingales of Iran sobbing in grief as bodies of young naval officials return to Tehran from India? The Iranian ship was returning after participating in an exercise in Visakhapatnam on Indian Navy's invitation when an American submarine drowned it. The question is not whether India can be held responsible for this illegal attack. What will definitely bruise India's image is the ominous silence of the Modi Government. Modi, who chose not to offer condolences to Iran on the murder of its supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, remained silent on this heinous crime in the Indian Ocean. India doesn't have the tradition of treating her guests with such apathy. What would be Modi's response if Pakistan bombed our guests just outside our territorial control? Will Modi choose to ignore the tragedy if over 100 American or Israeli soldiers are gunned down while returning from India? Modi's designation, doubtless, is the Prime Minister. But does he behave like the Prime Minister of India? Several recent incidents have given birth to this unusual query. Prime Ministers aren't free to act on personal whims and fancies. They operate within an institutional framework; they are duty-bound to represent India's constitutional majesty and socio-cultural traits. Iran is an old and trusted friend and no Indian Prime Minister enjoys any personal choice to violate that national obligation towards an ally. The least Modi could have done was to express sorrow at Khamenei's assassination and regret the killing of Iranian naval officials. This human courtesy doesn't entail a revolt against Modi's, not India's, best friends – the United States and Israel. The institutional dignity of the office of the Prime Minister doesn't allow any individual occupant to show cowardice, so distressing as to demean our national pride. India's credentials as a trusted partner now lie in



tatters. Modi himself asserted during his 2016 trip: "In the world of today, political pundits talk of strategic convergence. But, India and Iran are two civilisations that celebrate the meeting of our great cultures. India and Iran are not new friends. Our dosti is as old as history. Through centuries, our societies have stayed connected through art and architecture, ideas and traditions, and culture and commerce. As friends and neighbours, we have shared interest in each other's growth and prosperity, and joys and sorrows." Was this rhetoric totally delinked from reality? If not, Modi should have expressed sorrow for Khamenei's murder even as he didn't have the courage to condemn the murderers. Modi wrapped up his 2016 speech saying: "Zunoonat garbe nafse-khud ast/ Je-Kashi pa-be Khashan neem gaam ast (Once we make up our mind, the distance between Kashi and Kaashan is only half a step). India wants to know when did Modi "make up his mind" to burn the bridges with Iran? He called the neighbouring countries to enquire about the damages caused by Iranian strikes. He didn't call Iran to ask about the damages inflicted by the ferocious US-Israeli attack. Which friend was grappling with a greater tragedy – Iran, or Qatar, Kuwait and Oman? Modi condemned violation of sovereignty and territorial integrity of all these countries except Iran. Modi, whom the opposition parties describe as "compromised", has acted in a man-

ner that belittles India as well as the office of the Prime Minister. Iran's sovereignty Donald Trump and Benjamin Netanyahu could have unleashed the unjust attack on Iran without the smokescreen of freeing people from the oppressive regime. Iranian women, they said, needed freedom. Women in hijab are doubtless better than women in the Epstein gutter. Forces that bomb schools to kill 165 little girls do not have the credentials to talk about gender justice. Nobody wants any sermons on liberalism from the protagonists of Gaza carnage. The world now understands the charade of freedom that the United States peddles to legitimize its illegal imperialist designs. How they served humanity in the garb of changing evil regimes over the past many decades is not a secret. America and Israel were itching to dance on the ruins of Iran for a long time. Israel wanted to force America into this unjust war for the last 15 years but Barack Obama and Joe Biden refused to take the plunge. Israel continued its evil designs all these while. A famous book – Mossad – published in 2016 says, "Waging a stubborn shadow of war against Iran by sabotaging nuclear facilities, assassinating scientists, supplying plants with faulty equipment and raw materials via bogus companies, organising desertions of high-ranking military officers and major figures in nuclear research, introducing ferocious viruses into Iran's computer systems.

Iran, Palestine and India in the New 'Span' of History

The genocide in Palestine and the war against Iran are creating new spatial and temporal forms that will shape the history of our region in the coming months. In historiography, the concepts of space and time are neither scientific nor transcendental, but relational, as was thought deeply by Leibniz. Historians come to historiography with a concern for the constitution of "the span" that precedes history and activates it from below – the capability of relations and actions which is the invisible pandemonium that stirs the earth above. We have to commence with what is apparent, namely, the cracks on the surface of the world opening towards the span beneath. Last June, the US and Israeli attack on Iran's nuclear installations was in violation of the principles of human co-existence, and a crime according to international law and was condemned by three dozen United Nations special rapporteurs: "These attacks violate the most fundamental rules of world order since 1945 – the prohibition on the aggressive use of military force and the duties to respect sovereignty and not to coercively intervene in another country [...] The responsible U.S. political and military leaders may also be liable for the international crime of aggression. The ongoing war against Iran waged by the US and Israel, too, is in violation of several international laws and conventions for safety, as well as being utterly immoral. Netanyahu, who is partnering the US in this aggression, is an indicted war criminal wanted by the International Criminal Court. According to the ICC, Netanyahu, has committed the war crimes of starvation as a method of warfare and of intentionally directing an attack against the civilian population; and the crimes against humanity of murder, persecution, and other inhumane acts from at least October 8, 2023 until at least May 20, 2024. He is also undergoing trial for corruption charges – breach of trust, fraud, bribery – within Israel, and has been using the genocide against the



Palestinian people to postpone his trial. Israel can get away with all of it because of the very fact that any legitimate retaliation will result in a 'western' aggression led by the USA. However, this "West" is also in rapid decline: the proxy war against Russia has exhausted the arsenals and strained the economies of many EU countries; educational institutions are failing to provide a classical education while remaining resistant to developing new capabilities or engaging with advances in science and technology; populations are ageing; and political elites are growing increasingly distant from public concerns. One leadership after another has shown itself to be in decline – in both acumen and probity. US President Donald Trump is no less decorated; he is a convicted felon, for "falsifying business records". The Trump family and the US administration are indistinguishable and are approaching the conflicts of the world with a view to extortion, bribery and embezzlement. The parallel monetary system controlled by this family ("Donald Trump has turned the Oval Office into the world's most corrupt crypto startup operation, minting staggering personal fortunes for him and his family in less than a year") is also seeking to control the fate of the world as a fiefdom through the the 'board of

peace'. Trump is also battling the released, unreleased and unredacted portions of the 'Epstein files'. Many of these trends were incrementally developed in India through the 'Gujarat model', which involved corporations like Adani and Ambani growing in correlation with the increase of the power of the RSS through the BJP, in the enterprise of nationalism as pure business. These corporations are today the equivalent of the former 'Russian oligarchs' in malice and avarice, who have begun hosting the visiting leaders of foreign countries, which is undermining the state of India. Similar to Trump, ambiguous financial entities are also operating in India. Through the destruction of education, educators, and the universities the RSS mafia famiglia has accomplished the creation of a people without memories at the plane of history. The enslavement of India is underway one TV news show at a time. It must become obvious to the WhatsApp communities of Indians that the Modi government's alignment under Israel and the US in the genocide in Palestine and the war against Iran is truly the alignment of the lowest potential of humanity – illiteracy, avarice, corruption of all kinds, apathy to all and, in effect, a certain hatred to the idea and the people of India.

There's an inflation wave coming. How worried should we be?

Up until late on Thursday the rise in global oil markets appeared to be more of an unfortunate bump than imminent oil shock. The immediate response to the closure of the Strait of Hormuz, a 10% price increase, appeared rather benign for what was long-assumed to be the oil market's nightmare scenario. On Friday the situation changed, pennies started to drop. The intervention from the Qatari Energy minister Saad al-Kaabi that all Gulf energy providers were likely to halt export in days, and \$150 a barrel of oil was coming, sparked oil markets into life. Crude oil ended up 27% since the conflict began. Derivative petrochemical products vital for livelihoods, and industrial supply chains that are also dependent on free passage in the Gulf, from jet fuel, to urea, are also spiking in price. While this is not yet an energy shock, the markets are starting to assume worse scenarios if not yet the worst case. It won't take much for oil to breach the \$100 barrier next week. Iran has not actually formally closed the Strait.



They have de facto been closed voluntarily as insurance costs soar, and sailors fear for their safety. The net result is a wave of inflationary pressures emanating from the conflict zone, and upsetting global markets for energy, fuel, food, industrial chemicals, and credit. On Monday night I gently suggested that forecasts from the Office for Budget Responsibility, the UK government's independent forecaster, could prove rather out of date even before publication on Tuesday. The extent of that

mismatch has surprised me, four days on from the Spring Statement and a week into this conflict. On Tuesday the price of a barrel of crude oil was assumed to be \$63. It closed at \$94 on Friday. A therm of gas delivered to the UK was assumed to cost 74 pence. It is £1.35, and got as high as £1.70 this week. The gilt rate, the effective interest rate on 10-year government borrowing was assumed to be 4.4%, it ended the week at 4.6%, having nearly hit 4.7%, a significant difference. The UK's bonds have been hit

more than other countries as traders recall the UK's sensitivity to energy price inflation during the Russia-Ukraine crisis. The essential bet is that the Bank of England (BoE) will rein in interest rate cuts as inflation stays sticky. All this came just at the moment when the markets had started to give credit to the government for the speed of its planned fall in borrowing. There is immediate feed through into the mortgage market. Home mortgages are being repriced by banks who had just started to show some

confidence that rates were coming down. There will be no mortgage price war while all this is going on. The BoE, which had been heavily backed to cut rates this month, is now expected to wait and see. Of course, these clouds might lift, but US President Donald Trump seems to be suggesting a conflict of weeks or months. Some of the economic warnings from the Gulf may be a way to focus his mind. It isn't just about the stoppage in the flow of energy through its most important artery. From Bahrain's oil facilities, to Qatar's gas processing, the port near the Dubai Palm, or tankers near Kuwait, there have been a pattern of attacks that raise questions about a conscious Iranian strategy to up the economic price for the US-Israeli attacks. The economic consequences are not an accidental byproduct of this conflict, they are an intrinsic aspect of the war. This makes the precise consequences very difficult to predict, but this new wave of inflation from the Gulf will wash up on the shores of the rest of the globe, including here in the UK.

FOREIGN INVESTORS PULL OUT RS 21K CRORE FROM INDIAN EQUITIES AMID IRAN TENSIONS

New Delhi: Foreign investors pulled out Rs 21,000 crore (around USD 2.3 billion) from Indian equities over the last four trading sessions amid deteriorating global risk sentiment triggered by the West Asia crisis. The latest sell-off comes after foreign portfolio investors (FPIs) infused Rs 22,615 crore into Indian equities in February, the highest monthly inflow in 17 months. Prior to that, FPIs had been net sellers for three consecutive months. They withdrew Rs 35,962 crore in January, Rs 22,611 crore in December, and Rs 3,765 crore in November, according to data from the depositories. The latest outflows occurred during March 2-6, when FPIs sold equities worth about Rs 21,000 crore in the cash market. March 3 was a trading holiday on account of Holi. Market experts attributed the pullout primarily to the rising geopolitical tensions in West Asia. The US and Israel launched a major attack on Iran on February 28 which killed Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, triggering conflict in the region. Vaqarjaved Khan, Senior Fundamental Analyst at Angel One, said fears of



potential disruptions in the Strait of Hormuz pushed Brent crude prices above USD 90 per barrel, triggering a global risk-off sentiment. Other factors contributing to the outflows include rupee depreciation beyond the 92-per-dollar level, elevated US Treasury yields drawing capital back to safe-haven assets, and mixed early outlook for Q4 FY26 corporate earnings, particularly margin pressures in the IT and consumption sectors, he added. VK Vijayakumar, Chief Investment Strategist at Geojit Investments, said "uncertainty surrounding the Middle East conflict, the recent market correction, the Indian economy's vulnerability to a sharp rise in crude prices, and the depreciation of the rupee have all contributed to sustained

FPI selling in the cash market". Himanshu Srivastava, Principal Manager Research at Morningstar Investment Research India, noted that higher crude prices increase risks related to inflation, the current account deficit, and currency stability, which typically weigh on foreign investor sentiment toward emerging markets. He added that global investors have also shifted towards safer assets such as the US dollar amid rising uncertainty. The recent uptick in US Treasury yields during the week further contributed to capital outflows from emerging markets. Going ahead, Vijayakumar said FPIs are unlikely to return as buyers until there is greater clarity on the geopolitical situation and crude prices moderate.

Escalating tensions in Middle East to impact steel markets: BigMint

Highlights
The global steel industry, including India, is expected to face multiple market-related issues in the coming days as the escalating crisis in the Middle East impacts fuels cost that has led to increased freight rates, according to BigMint Research.



New Delhi: The global steel industry, including India, is expected to face multiple market-related issues in the coming days as the escalating crisis in the Middle East impacts fuels cost that has led to increased freight rates, according to BigMint Research. Military tensions in the region are increasing as both Iran, and the US, along with Israel, continue to attack each other. BigMint analysts said crude oil, LNG, and freight costs are rising

simultaneously, transmitting cost pressure directly into steel and steel-related commodity markets. From an average of USD 70 a barrel before the war, crude oil prices have risen to about USD 90/per barrel, an analyst said, adding that the cost is expected to continue to rise in the coming days. War has also impacted freight cost, which jumped almost 40 per cent in recent times. In the absence of insurance cover, marine operators

are also offering freight at non-negotiable prices as per the availability of the vessel. On the impact of the US-Iran conflict on steel markets, including India, they said the industry would face sustained input cost inflation across coal, scrap and ore, with freight and energy reinforcing one another. "The players are expected to pass on the increased cost to customers. However, if market is not ready to absorb the cost, steel demand can also

be affected," an expert said. Extended disruption could push prices of coking coal — a key steel making raw material — from major supplying markets such as Australia, Russia, and the US. Increased input cost, coupled with higher freight cost, will also put pressure on the margins, the analysts added. Military tensions in the region are increasing as both Iran, and the US, along with Israel, continue to attack each other.

Gold poised for volatile week as Middle East tensions roil markets: Analysts

New Delhi: Gold prices are expected to remain volatile next week as investors track geopolitical developments in the Middle East and key macroeconomic data releases that could shape the sentiment in the domestic market, analysts said. "Focus will again be on the developments in the Middle East and further escalation would be positive for gold prices, but a sign of de-escalation may trigger sharp selling," Pranav Mer, Vice President, Commodity & Currency Research, JM Financial Services Ltd, said. Mer added that silver is also undergoing a consolidation phase but remains highly volatile. "Silver too is passing through a consolidation phase but trading with high volatility as gains are capped by consolidative moves in gold and industrial metals like Copper and Zinc," he said. During the past week, bullion futures witnessed sharp movements in the domestic market. On the Multi Commodity Exchange, sil-



ver plunged Rs 14,359, or 5.08 per cent, while gold slipped Rs 470, or 0.3 per cent. "Gold prices consolidated in a broad range last week, in a range of Rs 1.59 lakh-1.70 lakh per 10 grams," Prathamesh Mallya, DVP - Research, Non-Agri Commodities and Currencies, Angel One, said. He added that geopolitical tensions, Asian demand, strong central bank purchases, elevated US Treasury bond yields and a firm dollar remain the key factors influencing price dynamics in the bullion market. Globally, silver futures on the Comex slumped USD 8.98, or near-

ly 10 per cent, while gold prices fell USD 89.2, or 1.7 per cent, during the past week. Gold has closed in the negative territory on a weekly basis amid rising demand for alternative safe-haven assets such as the US dollar, Franc, and Bonds, though the downside remains capped by ongoing geopolitical escalation in the Middle East, Mer said. Geopolitical tensions remained elevated after the Israeli military said it is moving to the "next phase" of its campaign against Iran. Meanwhile, Defence Secretary Pete Hegseth said the amount of firepow-

er in the region "is about to surge dramatically," following Britain's decision to allow the US armed forces to use its military installations. Analysts noted that major global Exchange Traded Funds (ETFs) are witnessing outflows as traders, especially from the Middle East region, look to book profits or raise liquidity amid the escalating conflict. At the same time, surging energy prices have reduced expectations of a near-term interest rate cut by the US Federal Reserve at its June meeting. Investors will watch key releases, including China's inflation and trade data, and inflation readings from the US, Germany, and India. Later in the week, provisional Personal Consumption Expenditures (PCE) price index and US consumer sentiment will guide the global growth and monetary policy outlook, they added. During the past week, bullion futures witnessed sharp movements in the domestic market.

Mcap of 8 of top-10 most valued firms erodes by Rs 2.81 lakh cr

New Delhi: The combined market valuation of eight of the top-10 most-valued firms eroded by Rs 2,81,581.53 crore last week, with the State Bank of India taking the biggest hit, in tandem with a weak trend in equities. Last week, the BSE benchmark tanked 2,368.29 points, or 2.91 per cent. "Markets ended the holiday-shortened week with steep losses as escalating geopolitical tensions in West Asia and a sharp spike in crude oil prices weighed heavily on investor sentiment," Ajit Mishra, SVP, Research, Religare Broking Ltd, said. From the top-10 pack, Reliance Industries and Infosys were the only gainers. The market valuation of State Bank of India tumbled Rs 53,952.96 crore to Rs 10,55,567.27 crore. ICICI Bank's valuation eroded by Rs 46,936.82 crore to Rs 9,40,049.82 crore and that of HDFC Bank dived Rs 46,552.3 crore to Rs 13,19,107.08



crore. The valuation of Larsen & Toubro tanked Rs 45,629.03 crore to Rs 5,43,208.36 crore. The market capitalisation (mcap) of Bajaj Finance dropped by Rs 28,934.56 crore to Rs 5,91,136.03 crore and that of Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) diminished by Rs 28,492.44 crore to Rs 9,25,380.15 crore. Hindustan Unilever's mcap declined by 26,350.67 crore to Rs 5,23,042.51 crore and that of Bharti Airtel edged lower by Rs 4,732.75 crore to Rs 10,67,120.50 crore.

However, the market valuation of Reliance Industries jumped Rs 14,750.39 crore to Rs 19,01,583.05 crore. The mcap of Infosys climbed by Rs 3,459.99 crore to Rs 5,30,546.54 crore. Reliance Industries remained the most valued domestic firm followed by HDFC Bank, Bharti Airtel, State Bank of India, ICICI Bank, TCS, Bajaj Finance, Larsen & Toubro, Infosys, and Hindustan Unilever. Last week, the BSE benchmark tanked 2,368.29 points, or 2.91 per cent.

SWIGGY, MAGICPIN, ZOMATO SEE FOOD DELIVERY REGAIN GROWTH MOMENTUM IN DEC QTR

New Delhi: India's top three food delivery players — Swiggy, magicpin and Zomato — regained growth momentum in the October-December period after a period of slower expansion, on strong order volumes led by festive demand, affordability-focused offerings and expanding user bases. With continued investments in marketing, product innovations, and value-led propositions, industry executives said the sector expects the momentum in order growth to sustain in the coming quarters. "It has been a phenomenal October-November-December quarter for us, marked by strong growth and sharper execution across markets. Our unit economics at an order level have improved by over 60 per cent, reflecting greater efficiency and improved monetisation," magicpin Founder and CEO Anshoo Sharma told PTI. While mature markets such as Delhi-NCR remained steady, the company report-



ed more than 40 per cent growth in gross order value in cities, including Bengaluru, Hyderabad, and Mumbai. The magicpin CEO said affordability-led consumption is a key growth driver, with an average order value of Rs 150-Rs 300 encouraging frequent ordering among users. According to Swiggy's Q3 FY26 shareholder letter, the company's gross order value (GOV)

grew 20.5 per cent year-on-year to Rs 8,959 crore, marking the fastest growth in the last three years. Swiggy said the acceleration was driven by stronger adoption of new propositions across speed, selection and affordability. Its average monthly transacting user (MTU) base grew 22 per cent year-on-year to 24.3 million during the quarter from 17.8 million a year ago, while total orders rose

to 294 million from 234 million during the period. Zomato's food delivery business also reported improving growth trends during the quarter under review. The company posted 16.6 per cent year-on-year net order value (NOV) growth at Rs 9,846 crore in the December quarter translating into 21.3 per cent growth in GOV. This marked an acceleration from 13.8 per cent growth in

Highlights
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the September quarter. Its average monthly transacting users grew 21 per cent year-on-year to 24.9 million during the December quarter. Executives also said the growth was increasingly coming from smaller cities as affordability-led offerings resonated strongly with consumers in tier-II and III markets. Zomato's food delivery business reported improving growth trends during the quarter under review.

Iranian clerics close to naming new leader as smoke chokes Tehran after oil depot strikes

I've been looking at the latest situation regarding some of the major commercial airlines in the Middle East - all of which are operating significantly reduced services. Qatar Airways says it has a limited number of flights leaving Doha today and tomorrow - you can read more here - and below are the latest details from Etihad Airways and Emirates. According to Etihad's website, flights resumed on Friday with a "limited commercial flight schedule". In the coming days Etihad intends to operate 20 flights each on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday subject to all safety criteria being met. Destinations include: Jeddah, Toronto, New York, Riyadh, Seoul, Malé, Bangkok, Phuket, Hanoi, Colombo, London, Moscow, Paris, Milan, Zurich, Delhi, Mumbai, Hyderabad and Bengaluru. Etihad stresses that passengers should check before they travel as the situ-



ation is being closely monitored and could change. Emirates says it will operate a reduced flight schedule in the coming days, following the partial re-opening of regional airspace. Tickets for the commercial airline went on sale a few hours ago and I have had a look at Emirates' website for the earliest dates that Brits in Dubai can find a flight back to the UK. They include 9 March for Gatwick and Heathrow; 10 March for

Glasgow and Newcastle; 11 March for Edinburgh; 12 March for Birmingham. Similar to Etihad Airways, Emirates notes the airline will continue to monitor developments in the region and "will develop our operational schedule accordingly". Passengers are advised to keep checking before travelling. US Central Command (Centcom) is urging Iranians to stay home as it claims the Islamic Republic's regime is

carrying out military operations from densely populated civilian areas. Iran has used "crowded areas surrounded by civilians in cities such as Dezful, Isfahan and Shiraz to launch attack drones and ballistic missiles", Centcom says in a statement released on X. It adds that this behaviour puts the lives of civilians at risk "since locations used for military purposes lose protected status" and can become legitimate targets. "Iran's ter-

rorist regime is blatantly disregarding civilian lives by attacking Gulf partners while compromising the safety of their own people," says Centcom commander Adm Brad Cooper. Since the start of the strikes on 28 February, Iran has also accused the United States of hitting civilian infrastructure. BBC Verify has documented damage to a hospital, sporting centres, a Unesco world heritage site and two schools - one of which saw 168 people killed on Saturday morning, according to Iranian officials. People in Iran have been sending messages to BBC Persian's Ghoncheh Habibi, after several oil refineries in Tehran were targeted in Israeli strikes overnight. A man in his 30s from Karaj, in the west of the Tehran province, said: "It started with a red light that lit up everything followed by a wave that jolted the door. Then the sky was lit again and a huge red cloud appeared." A woman in her

20s said the city was covered in smoke. "You can smell the burning," she said. "I can't see the sun. There is a horrible smoke. It's still there. I'm very tired." Another woman in her 20s described opening the window "for a moment and it smelled like a pump station [burning]". After the Karaj depot was hit, another man in his 20s described a "huge explosion and it was on fire for hours". BBC Persian is the Persian language service of BBC News, used by 24 million people around the world - the majority in Iran - despite being blocked and routinely jammed by Iranian authorities. These are the latest pictures coming to us from Tel Aviv, Israel. Smoke and vapor trails are visible in the sky over the city, and smoke has been seen rising. This follows a report from the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) that missiles had been launched towards Israel from Iran. The IDF said that "defensive systems are operating to intercept the threat."

Rapper-politician Balendra Shah unseats Nepal's ex-PM as he heads for victory



Rapper Balendra Shah has defeated the former Nepalese Prime Minister Sharma KP Oli in his parliamentary constituency, as he takes a step closer to becoming Nepal's next prime minister. Nepal's Election Commission confirmed on Saturday that Shah, 35, received 68,348 votes compared to Oli's 18,734 to unseat the former leader in his constituency. Thursday's general election - the first since violent youth-led protests toppled the government in September - pitted the establishment against a new generation of politicians advocating for angry, young Gen Z voters

hungry for change. Shah's Rastriya Swatantra Party (RSP) is now seemingly on course to win the general election. The party has a majority in directly elected seats in the general election counted so far, according to partial official results on Sunday, and could be heading for a landslide, official trends suggest. The 35-year-old is also leading in the proportional representation vote count so far, according to the election commission. For more than two decades, Nepal has seen a revolving door of coalition governments, largely dominated by three parties, two of them communist.

Explosion at US embassy in Oslo may have been terrorism, Norway police say



An overnight explosion at the US embassy in Oslo may have been an act of terrorism, Norway's police have said. The embassy in the Norwegian capital sustained minor damage after the blast in the early hours of Sunday - but no one was injured. "One of the hypotheses is that it is an act of terrorism, but we are not completely locked into it," Frode Larsen, the head of police joint investigation and intelligence unit, told Norway's public broadcaster NRK. Norwegian authorities say they are in contact with US diplomats, and an investigation into the incident is now under way. US diplomats have not commented. Speaking to NRK later on Sunday, Larsen stressed that "we have to be open to the possibility that there may be other causes behind what has happened". In an earlier statement, Norway's police said that "large resources" were sent to the area around the US embassy at about 01:00 local time on Sunday (00:00 GMT). "The police

are in dialogue with the embassy and no injuries have been reported," the statement added. Michael Dellemyr, who is leading the police response, told NRK that the explosion was at the public entrance to the building. He said police officers had conducted searches in the area around the embassy in the Morgedalsvegen district of Oslo, about 7km (4 miles) outside the city centre. He said the police had also issued an appeal for information from anyone who may have seen or heard anything about the incident. Photos posted on social media later showed shattered glass in the snow outside the entrance to the consular section of the building, cracks in a glass door as well as dark marks on a tiled floor. Norwegian authorities described the incident as "unacceptable", with Foreign Minister Espen Barth Eide stressing that "the security of diplomatic missions is very important to us". He added that he had contacted US embassy chargé d'affaires Eric Meyer regarding Sunday's incident.

Irish government chartered flight from Oman arrives in Dublin



The first Irish government chartered flight to bring home stranded Irish citizens from the Middle East has landed at Dublin Airport. The flight carrying 194 passengers left Oman on Saturday afternoon (local time) and arrived in Dublin at about 05:00 (local time). The Irish embassy in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) said earlier this week that elderly citizens or those with medical conditions would be prioritised and that children under 16 years would

be able to travel for free. Thousands of people from the UK and Republic of Ireland have been unable to leave the region after US-Israeli strikes on Iran prompted retaliatory strikes by Tehran across the region. The Irish Foreign Affairs Minister, Helen McEntee said it was a "challenging journey", but she was "glad that we have been able to directly facilitate the return of nearly 200 people, including a number of children and infants".

War fuels debate in Cyprus over UK military bases

A drone strike on a British airbase in Cyprus has reignited an enduring debate about the UK's presence on the island. It's a week since the drone punched a hole in a hangar at RAF Akrotiri. That hole, for some in Britain, symbolises embarrassing gaps in UK hard power. For some in Cyprus, it's another unwelcome result of British military overreach. "We just want to have an independent Cyprus," said local business owner Natasha Theodotou. She was holding a banner that read "British Bases Out" at a demonstration outside the presidential palace in the capital, Nicosia. "Just as we're occupied by the Turkish government," said Natasha, "we are occupied by the UK." She wants to see a unified country where Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots live



together. Britain retained two major sovereign bases in Cyprus' south and south east, Akrotiri and Dhekelia, as part of a 1960 treaty that established the island's independence and ended its status as a British colony. In 1974 Turkey invaded and took control of Cyprus' northern third in response to a Greece-backed military coup. Not far from the protest tourists queue up at a checkpoint allowing pas-

sage into the Turkish-controlled part of Nicosia. The city, which sits on the UN-patrolled buffer zone known as the Green Line, is sometimes called the world's last divided capital. British military officials' best assessment is that the drone that hit RAF Akrotiri was launched in Lebanon by the Iranian-backed militia Hezbollah. The UK government has said its bases in Cyprus are not among those that could be utilised

by US bombers for "defensive" strikes on Iranian missile sites. But the reported use of the base by American U-2 spy planes may explain why RAF Akrotiri was a target, as Iran and its proxies retaliated against US-Israeli strikes. The UK has not taken part in any direct attacks on Iran itself. Roughly 200 to 300 protesters joined the march on Saturday, carrying signs that were also pro-Palestine and critical of the US and Israel. Chants included: "Say it loud, say it clear, British bases out of here." The territory, kept by the UK, covers about 98 sq miles (254 sq km) and is even patrolled by a separate, special police force. These Sovereign Base Areas (SBAs) are a lingering point of contention while also being highly interwoven into the island and a source of employment.

Dancers loved practising in this Singapore walkway. Then the complaints came

With its wide floors, floor-to-ceiling mirrors and a ready audience, the underground passage connecting a train station to Singapore's iconic Gardens by the Bay had served as a practice ground for aspiring dancers for years. Until 1 January, when they showed up as usual only to find the mirrors frosted. Hundreds of commuters and tourists walk through the spacious tunnel every day, many of them on their way to the city's number one attraction. People had complained that the dancers were "blocking pedestrian flow at this high-traffic area", local media reported. So, the mirrors



were frosted, triggering a debate - not just about space, but also Singapore's fixation with orderliness, the low bar for people to complain, and its many, many rules. All of which arguably stifle the abandon, or even the havoc, that is often characteristic of the

world's biggest cities. This is not the first time Singaporeans have crossed swords over how common spaces should be used in the land-scarce country, where more than 8,300 people jostle for each kilometre. From whether frisbees should be allowed in parks, to bench-

es fitted with dividers to deter rough sleepers, Singaporeans are often split on whose needs come first. Additional restrictions are not the problem, says urban planning expert Tan Shin Bin from the National University of Singapore. "[What should] give us pause is really whether the decision was a well-considered and fair one... Whose needs are being prioritised as legitimate, and whose desires are deemed secondary?" In the case of the walkway, it is one of many owned and maintained by private developers to "facilitate all-weather, safe and convenient connectivity", authorities told.

UK OPENS CHARTER FLIGHTS BOOKING PORTAL FOR BRITONS IN DUBAI



The Foreign Office has opened a booking portal for British nationals in Dubai who wish to access government charter flights to leave the Middle East region. Thousands of Britons have been stranded in the region, including in Dubai, after the US and Israel's conflict with Iran led to widespread airspace closures and cancelled flights. The most vulnerable will be prioritised for booking onto charter flights and the Foreign Office has said it will contact those who have registered their presence in the region. The government began operating flights out of the region earlier in the week from Muscat, Oman. Two have returned to the UK so far and a flight from Dubai is scheduled for early next week. The BBC's Nick Beake, who was at Dubai Airport on Friday morning, said it will contact those who have registered their presence in the region. The government began operating flights out of the region earlier in the week from Muscat, Oman. Two have returned to the UK so far and a flight from Dubai is scheduled for early next week. The BBC's Nick Beake, who was at Dubai Airport on Friday morning, said it will contact those who have registered their presence in the region. The government began operating flights out of the region earlier in the week from Muscat, Oman. Two have returned to the UK so far and a flight from Dubai is scheduled for early next week. The BBC's Nick Beake, who was at Dubai Airport on Friday morning, said it will contact those who have registered their presence in the region.

On Saturday, the government announced it will run a commercial charter flight from Dubai, available for a charge. British nationals, their spouse or partner and children under the age of 18 are eligible to register. Earlier, Emirates airline said it had carried about 30,000 passengers out of Dubai on Thursday and had operated 35 flights to the UK since resuming services. The BBC's Nick Beake, who was at Dubai Airport on Friday morning, said it will contact those who have registered their presence in the region. The government began operating flights out of the region earlier in the week from Muscat, Oman. Two have returned to the UK so far and a flight from Dubai is scheduled for early next week. The BBC's Nick Beake, who was at Dubai Airport on Friday morning, said it will contact those who have registered their presence in the region.



Dozens killed as Israeli special forces raid Lebanese village in search of 40-year-old remains

Boy, 12, among six dead as tornadoes hit Michigan and Oklahoma

At least six people have died and more than a dozen others injured after tornadoes struck Michigan and Oklahoma, in severe storms that swept across parts of the US. Officials said four people were killed in southern Michigan, including a 12-year-old boy, and two died in Oklahoma on Friday, with rescue workers continuing to assess the damage. The storms uprooted trees, downed power lines, damaged buildings and ripped the roofs off some houses on Friday. The National Weather Service (NWS) said the severe weather could continue into the weekend, warning of thunderstorms and flash flooding from the Great Plains to Texas. In Michigan, the Branch



County sheriff's department said three people were killed and 12 others were injured near Union City after a tornado hit on Friday. Power outages and road closures are expected this weekend, they added. About 50 miles (80km) away in Cass County, Michigan, authorities reported one one death and several injuries.



Gilgeous-Alexander closes in on Chamberlain record

Shai Gilgeous-Alexander moved to within two games of breaking a decades-old NBA record as he scored 27 points to help the Oklahoma City Thunder to a 104-97 home win over the Golden State Warriors. He has scored at least 20 points in 125 consecutive games for the defending champions, a sequence that began on 1 November 2024. The legendary Wilt Chamberlain holds the record of 126 games - set between October 1961 and January 1963. The Thunder host the Denver Nuggets on Monday and the Boston Celtics on Thursday. Victory at Paycom Center was the Thunder's fifth in a row. They became the first side to 50 wins this season and sit top of the Western Conference.



Gilgeous-Alexander said: "If we were the best team last year, all year, we win a championship, and we get better, we should put ourselves in

great position to repeat. "This year's had a little bit more ups and downs for us, but I think we've done a pretty good job keeping that front of mind." The Warriors - again missing the injured Stephen Curry - scored seven unanswered points to reduce the

Thunder's lead to 99-97 before a three-pointer from Gilgeous-Alexander in the final minute. Michael Porter Jr scored 30 points as the Brooklyn Nets came from 23 points down to win 107-105 at Eastern Conference leaders Detroit Pistons and end a 10-game

losing streak. Giannis Antetokounmpo scored 27 points as the Milwaukee Bucks beat the visiting Utah Jazz 113-99. Jalen Johnson's 35 points, 10 rebounds, and seven assists helped the Atlanta Hawks to a 125-116 home win over the Philadelphia 76ers. Kawhi Leonard scored 28 points as the Los Angeles Clippers overturned a 19-point first-half deficit to win 123-120 at the Memphis Grizzlies. The Orlando Magic won 119-92 at the Minnesota Timberwolves despite Anthony Edwards' 34 points for the hosts.

Rohit Sharma Reveals Chat With Sanju Samson Over Non-Selection In T20 World Cup

One of the finest to play for India in white-ball cricket, Rohit Sharma knows what it means to wear the India shirt in a World Cup. Rohit wasn't picked for India's squad for the 2011 World Cup, the last 50-over World Cup that the country won. Earlier in his career, he too had to warm the bench, be ignored by selectors in a number of tournaments and series. Seeing India wicket-keeper batter Sanju Samson face selection snubs for a spot in the playing XI early in the ongoing T20 World Cup, Rohit had a heartwarming chat with him. Samson was a part of the Indian team in the T20 World Cup 2024 but didn't get to play a single game. The opening batter might have feared that the 2026 campaign could turn out to be the same for him, as he was snubbed early on in the tournament. But, Rohit urged him to not lose hope as opportunities can come any time in a tournament like this, like this. "Dukhi mat ho bhai. It is a long tourna-



ment, kabhi bhi mauka aa sakta hai. ("Don't be disheartened. It is a long tournament. You'll get your chance. The opportunity can come anytime)," Rohit said in a video shared by ICC on Instagram. Sharing some words of wisdom from his own experience, Rohit said that he can sometimes "feel the pulse of a player" and understand what they are going through. "I can sometimes feel the pulse of the player. I have been myself in that place where, you know, when I've been in a tournament like this, and my chances haven't come, it's important to stay

focused and try and do the right things and not get frustrated with you not getting the opportunity, and that's what I felt with him," said Rohit in a video. "Because he was consistently playing for India and then was dropped just before the World Cup started, you know, I just wanted to tell him that it's a long tournament and funny things have happened in the past, so I just wanted to reassure him that your chance would come. So it happened in the game where it was a crucial game for India, and he played a blinder," said Rohit.

"OFF-SPINNER NAHI HAI":

Suryakumar Yadav's First Reaction On Seeing New Zealand's Playing XI In T20 World Cup Final

Finals are all about strategy and perfect execution. Making changes to the playing XI for a title clash is often a tough call. India did not walk that path in the T20 World Cup 2026 final against New Zealand. However, New Zealand took the big call by dropping Cole McConchie and introducing Jacob Duffy for the title clash in Ahmedabad on Sunday. India captain Suryakumar Yadav was intrigued when he received New Zealand's team sheet from Mitchell Santner right before the toss. He noticed that the Blackcaps were not fielding specialist spinner Cole McConchie. Yadav then signalled towards the team dugout: "Off-spinner



nahi hai" (there is no off-spinner). Earlier, legendary cricketers MS Dhoni and Rohit Sharma brought out the 2026 ICC Men's T20 World Cup trophy together ahead of the final between India and New Zealand at the Narendra Modi Stadium on Sunday.

The sight of the duo carrying out the glittering silverware generated a thunderous roar of delight from the packed crowd. Dhoni, who captained India to the title in the inaugural 2007 edition, joined Rohit, who led the team to the trophy in 2024. Apart from

Dhoni and Rohit, tournament ambassador and ICC chairman Jay Shah, along with JioStar vice-chairman Uday Shankar, also walked out with the trophy, which was placed on the pedestal before both teams lined up for the national anthems. Legendary playback singer Kavitha Krishnamurthy delivered a soaring rendition of the Indian national anthem. Coming to the match, New Zealand captain Mitchell Santner won the toss and elected to bowl against defending champions India. The Blackcaps made one change, drafting in pacer Jacob Duffy in place of off-spin bowling all-rounder Cole McConchie.

White House To Host First Professional Sporting Event As UFC Announces Title Bouts

The UFC (Ultimate Fighting Championship) has announced two championship fights for its upcoming event at the White House in Washington, DC, scheduled for June 14. The card, called UFC Freedom Fights 250, will be led by a lightweight title clash between Ilia Topuria and Justin Gaethje. The event will take place on the South Lawn of the White House and is being organised as part of celebrations marking 250 years of American independence. The date also coincides with US President Donald Trump's 80th birthday. UFC officials confirmed the matchups during the broadcast of UFC 326. Topuria vs Gaethje headlines card Topuria (17-0), a 29-year-old Spanish-



Georgian fighter, will defend his lightweight belt against Gaethje in the main event. Widely regarded as one of the sport's most dangerous knockout artists, Topuria captured the 155-pound (70 kg) title last June with a first-round knockout of Charles Oliveira after moving up from featherweight. Later in 2025,

Topuria announced he would step away briefly to deal with personal matters. With those issues resolved, he now returns for his first title defence and could consider a future move to welterweight. Gaethje (27-5), 37, will get his third chance to win the UFC's undisputed lightweight title. He previously fought for the belt in

2020 and 2022 but lost to Khabib Nurmagomedov and Oliveira. In January, Gaethje captured the interim championship by defeating Britain's Paddy Pimblett via unanimous decision in Las Vegas while Topuria was inactive. A two-time interim champion and 18-year veteran of the sport, Gaethje trains in Denver and grew up in Safford, Arizona. Pereira eyes historic third belt The co-main event features Pereira (13-3) taking on Gaethje (13-2) for the interim heavyweight title. Pereira will attempt to become the first fighter to win UFC championships in three different weight divisions. The Brazilian fighter previously held titles at middleweight and light heavyweight.

BORTHWICK BACKED BY RFU DESPITE RUN OF DEFEATS

Steve Borthwick's boss has given the England coach his backing, but says there will be a full examination of the woeful Six Nations campaign after the team's final-round match against France on Saturday. England are fifth in the table and well out of the title running after successive defeats by Scotland, Ireland and Italy - which was the first loss to the Azzurri - ruined their ambitions and prompted questions over Borthwick's future. "After a 12-match winning run, these past three results have been hugely disappointing, and we feel that just as much as everyone else," said Rugby Football Union chief executive Bill Sweeney. "Steve



and his coaching team are working tirelessly to make improvements, and we remain fully committed to supporting them and the players as they face France this weekend and then look ahead to the Nations Championship. "Part of that support is being open about what hasn't gone right during this Six

Nations and making sure everyone has a clear sense of how we move through those challenges together. "That's something we'll be talking through and working on in the days and weeks ahead. "We will work together to understand and rectify why we have been unable to meet the expectations and anticipation going into these games. "England fans rightly expect a team that learns and grows through adversity, and we're confident this group will do everything they can to deliver that." Borthwick defended his record and the direction of the team after Italy, who had lost their previous 32 games against England, ran out 23-18 winners in Rome.

James Anderson Reveals Jasprit Bumrah's Act Against England That Left Him Stunned

England great and one of the legends of the game, James Anderson, has been left in awe of India pacer Jasprit Bumrah's bowling precision. It was Bumrah who turned the game on its head as India beat England in the T20 World Cup 2026 semifinal on Thursday. For Anderson, the manner in which Bumrah executes his yorkers with inch-perfect accuracy sets him apart from the rest of the bowlers in the world, whether in men's or women's cricket. "The thing about Bumrah is, I look at him and think, I don't think you can learn anything from him. He's an absolute freak. There's not one bowler in the world, in any format, men or women, who can bowl six yorkers



out of six and absolutely nail it every time. Even one of the yorkers he bowled [vs England] in his last over was a slower ball. So he nailed five fast yorkers and one slower-ball yorker-you just can't hit them anywhere," Anderson said on the BBC podcast. England had their task cut out in the semifinal against India as they chased a gigantic total of 254. Yet, Jacob Bethell

showed exemplary determination and desire to fight on. He scored a breathtaking century, taking all Indian bowlers to the cleaners-except Bumrah. For Anderson, if it hadn't been for Bumrah, England might well have chased down the target. "England did really well to get six [runs] off the hole, like they squeezed the ball out.

McLaren's Oscar Piastri Involved In Ugly Crash At Australian Grand Prix



The mood at Albert Park changed suddenly from joy to shock when Oscar Piastri crashed during the warm-up lap of the Australian Grand Prix. In a cruel twist, the McLaren driver lost control of his MCL38 coming out of Turn 4, a fast part of the Melbourne track that has troubled many experienced racers before.

The crash was heavy. Piastri's car spun across the track and slammed into the barriers, badly damaging the suspension and bodywork. Thankfully, he climbed out on his own and looked unhurt, but the heartbreak of missing his home race was clear on his face. "Marshals rushed to clear the wreck, but Piastri's dream of a podium finish in front of a record home crowd ended in the run-off area.

For McLaren, this is a big blow. With Piastri out, all hopes now rest on Lando Norris, who must fight alone against the leaders. The race starts at 3 p.m. local time, leaving the engineers no choice but to focus fully on Norris's race plan. At the front, Mercedes are stealing the spotlight. George Russell grabbed pole position, showing the team finally has the speed to win regularly. Alongside him is teenage rookie Kimi Antonelli, starting on the front row. The battle between Russell, the team leader, and Antonelli, the fearless newcomer, will be one of the main stories in the opening laps, especially with strong rivals chasing close behind. As fans come to terms with Piastri's absence, the stage is set for a tense and tactical race under the Australian sun.

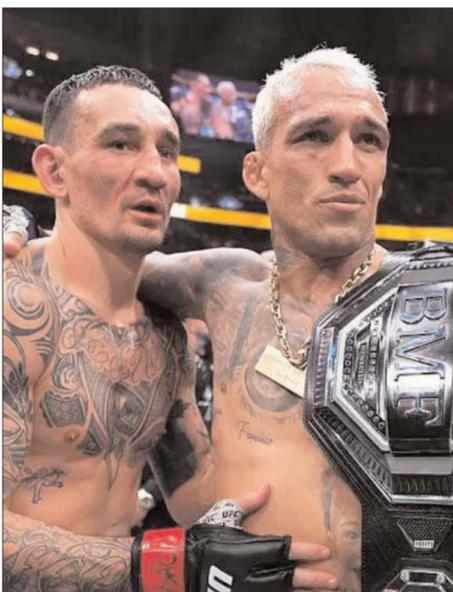
Oliveira dominates Holloway to win BMF title

Charles Oliveira dominated Max Holloway from start to finish to win the BMF title by unanimous decision at UFC 326 in Las Vegas. Defending champion Holloway had no answer to Oliveira's grappling as the Brazilian took him down at will in the lightweight main event at the T-Mobile Arena. Although Holloway defended against submissions admirably, the American failed to mount any significant offence as Oliveira added the symbolic BMF belt to the lightweight world championship he won in 2021. The BMF title was

first introduced by the UFC in 2019 to commemorate the promotion's 'baddest' fighter. "I respect you so much, we're different to other people," Oliveira told Holloway after being crowned champion. "These dudes come here and talk a lot, we come here and do a lot of beautiful things for our family and this sport. There are two BMFs who are Charles Oliveira and Max Holloway." Holloway, 34, and Oliveira, 36, went into the contest as two of the most popular fighters on the UFC roster and two future Hall-of-Famers. Former

featherweight champion Holloway holds the record for the most significant strikes in UFC history with 3,681 and became the first fighter to defend the BMF belt when he defeated Dustin Poirier last year. Oliveira came into the bout as the fighter with the most finishes in UFC history with 21, and the most submission wins with 17. The pair fought previously in 2015 with Holloway winning via stoppage, but Oliveira said in the build-up to the rematch he was a "jiu-jitsu fighter" then, compared to an "MMA fighter" now.

From the first round, Oliveira demonstrated his evolution as a fighter as he put Holloway on the back foot, before securing an early takedown. For over four minutes Oliveira searched for submissions on the ground and although Holloway defended resolutely, it would be a pattern which would repeat itself throughout the fight. On the feet Holloway landed sparingly and when he did, Oliveira paid little respect to the Hawaiian's power as he marched forward before securing multiple take-downs.



VISHAL AS HERO, SUNDAR. C DIRECTED 'MOGUDU'



Vishal and Sundar C. C's previous films, 'Ambala' and 'Madha Gada Raja', have been blockbusters. Now, in order to score a hat-trick, these two are making a movie called 'Mogudu' together. Tamannaah is playing the heroine in this movie. Dr. A.C. Shanmukham's blessings are being given to this movie by Arun Kumar and Khushboo Sundar under the banners of Avani Cinemas Pvt. Ltd. and Benz Media Pvt. Ltd. Navdeep, Sampath, Ajay Ghosh, Garuda Ram, VTV Ganesh, and Yogi Babu are playing the lead roles in this movie. It is known that the title promo of the movie 'Mogudu' has already been released. Vishal, while doing all the housework like a normal

Mogudu, beats up the rowdies like an undercover policeman. This movie, which has added all kinds of elements, has been made in a full mass commercial angle by Sundar C. He has already said in the title promo that he is making this movie. Everyone knows about the craze among the mass audience for more than 40 films made by Sundar. C till now. They are planning to make this 'Mogudu' movie no less than them. The 'Mogudu' team has currently completed the first schedule. The next schedule has been planned in Kolkata, Goa, and Chennai. Hip-hop Tamil music is being provided for this movie. Rodger is working as the editor, Gopi Amarnath is working as the cameraman, and Guru Raj is working

"I Really Wish The Award Should Have Gone to My Director Instead of Me, Dhandoraa's Powerful Writing Will Bring Many More Awards," Says Sivaji at the Dhandoraa's Thank You Meet

The team of Dhandoraa came together for a heartfelt Thank You Meet after the film earned three honours at the Telangana Gaddar Film Awards, further strengthening its reputation as a contentful blockbuster. The gathering turned emotional as the cast and crew reflected on the journey of the film - from its making to the overwhelming recognition it received from audiences, officials, and the media. Director Muralikant Devasoth thanked the Telangana Government and the jury for encouraging meaningful cinema. "Thanks to everyone for attending this event. I'm glad that my film has earned this recognition, and I would like to thank the jury and the Government of Telangana. By creating such a platform, you are boosting the right motivation," he said, admitting that speaking about the film now felt deeply emotional. Recalling the creative process, he spoke warmly about music director Mark K Robin, saying they spent many sleepless nights composing. "He used to pour tea for me and we would continue composing sessions. This award has given him the right recognition for our very own Hyderabad talent," he said. Muralikant Devasoth also reserved special praise for Sivaji, calling him the backbone of



the film's production. "For me he is the best actor, there is no two ways about it. Completing this film in such a short span was possible only because of him. He never demanded anything and was extremely cooperative," he noted. The director also shared how the film's subject resonated strongly with people across Telangana. "Some people told me that in their community there are around 1,000 to 2,000 members, yet they only have three to five cents of land for cremation. They thanked us for making a film on this issue because it makes them feel represented. That is the biggest award I could receive," he said, adding that he was overwhelmed by the response from audiences and officials who promoted the film on social media.

Actor Bhaskar expressed happiness that the film brought such recognition to a debut director. "Needless to say, the film has earned three awards, and what more could a debut director ask for than this?" he said, also appreciating Sivaji's support during their scenes together. "These awards and encouragement are very important for good films and actors," he added. Actor Rajasekhar said the recognition matched what the team had believed from the beginning. "Although it received the Second Best Feature Film award, we are happy for it - of course, we wished for the first," he said, noting that positive media coverage and a tweet from Jr. NTR helped the film reach a much wider audience. He also credited Mark K Robin's score for elevating

the emotional intensity of the story. Actor Suresh described the moment as a proud one for the entire team. Thanking Chief Minister Revanth Reddy, Cinematography Minister Komatireddy Venkat Reddy, and the jury, he said the recognition was especially meaningful as a state honour. "Everyone says such stories usually come from other languages, but now one such story has come from Telugu and even bagged an award," he remarked. Actor Poorna shared that the film had given him a memorable character. "Even though every film is special, this one is even more special because people are recognizing me through the character from this film," he said while congratulating the entire team.

For costume designer Rekha, the recognition felt almost inevitable from the moment she heard the story. "The belief I had when I first listened to the narration has been rewarded today," she said, recalling how listening to the title song composed by Mark K Robin moved her to tears. She also praised Sivaji's performance and described the award as a result of the honesty with which the film was made. Actress Manika Chikkala said she felt fortunate to have played a role that connected strongly with audiences. "When I was returning from my grandparents' village, everyone recognized me as the daughter of Sivaji from the film," she said, adding that the experience was deeply gratifying. Music director Mark K Robin thanked the media for supporting the film from the start and expressed gratitude to Chief Minister Revanth Reddy and Deputy Chief Minister Bhatti Vikramarka for the recognition. Reflecting on the award being named after the legendary Gaddar, he said, "I've grown up listening to Gaddar's songs. They are not just songs - they are fire that shook the whole of Telangana. Receiving an award in his name is a great honour." He also thanked producer Benny Muppaneni for trusting him and recalled how emotional the experience was when Muralikant Devasoth first narrated the

story. Actor Sivaji, whose performance earned one of the awards, spoke with humility and deep admiration for the director. "I strongly wish the award could have been given to the director instead of me," he said. Thanking Jr. NTR for boosting the film through his tweet, Sivaji emphasized that the award belonged to the entire team. "This award is for every technician who worked on this film," he said, praising cinematographer Venkat R. Shakamuri and editor Srujana Adusumilli for their work. Sivaji also revealed the dedication behind his performance. "I never had a full sleep during the entire shoot of this film, because the character needed that tired, worn-out look," he shared. Calling the film a showcase of acting talent, he added, "This film is like a library of terrific acting. Some of the finest actors in this country are Telugu actors." Confident about the film's future recognition, he said the strength of its writing would ensure it continued winning more awards. Producer Benny Muppaneni concluded the event by thanking the Telangana Government, the jury, and the entire team for their efforts. "This film is truly a teamwork movie," he said, also acknowledging the support he received from the press and fellow producers Sahu and Naga Vamsi.

VIJAY BREAKS SILENCE ON RUMOURS

Hyderabad: Actor and politician Vijay recently addressed the rumours and controversies surrounding his personal life. The star spoke briefly during a Women's Day event organised by his political party, Tamilaga Vettri Kazhagam, in Chennai and urged his fans to stay calm. A video from the event quickly went viral on social media. During his speech, Vijay reassured supporters that they should not worry about the issues being discussed online. "Please don't worry about the recent problems surrounding me. Those issues are not worth

your time. I will take care of them myself," he said. The actor also shared that seeing his fans stressed about his personal life hurts him the most. He asked them not to carry that burden and instead focus on public welfare and social issues. Divorce rumours bring personal life into the spotlight Vijay's comments come at a time when his personal life has become a major topic of discussion in the media. Reports recently suggested that his wife, Sangeetha Sornalingam, has filed for divorce after nearly 27 years of marriage. The



couple married in August 1999 and have two children.

YOUTUBER ANURAG DOBHAL'S LIVESTREAM ENDS IN SHOCKING CRASH



PRANITHA SUBHASH PROVES MOM LIFE STILL GLAMOROUS



At 33, Pranitha Subhash has already spent around 15 years in films. Over time she has worked in several South movies and built a steady fan base. In the last few years life changed a lot for her as she became a mother to two sons. Still, the actress looks ready to step back into the spotlight. Her latest pictures online show that she hasn't lost that glamorous charm people remember her for. In the photos, Pranitha is seen wearing a deep blue off shoulder gown. The dress fits neatly and has a high slit that shows one leg as she stands beside a tall window. Natural light from outside falls across the room, giving the pictures a calm and stylish feel.

Her hair is tied up loosely and the makeup is kept simple. She leans against the wall in a relaxed pose, looking straight at the camera, letting the outfit and attitude speak for themselves. What many fans notice right away is how well she has maintained her figure even after becoming a mother of two. She carries the look with ease, almost like she never stepped away. Pranitha was last seen on the big screen two years ago in the Kannada film Raman Avatara. The movie didn't do well at the box office, but that hasn't stopped her from staying visible. With these fresh photos doing the rounds, there's a feeling she could land a new film soon and return to screens again.

'GAYAPADDA SIMHAM' IS AN OUT AND OUT ENTERTAINER THAT CONNECTS WITH EVERYONE: HERO TARUN BHASKAR AT THE SONG LAUNCH EVENT

Sweekar Agasthi, rapper Asura release satirical rap song from Tarun Bhaskar's 'Gayapadda Simham' Tarun Bhaskar, who is making different entertainers, is going to entertain with 'Gayapadda Simham' along with writer-director Kashyap Srinivas. This film is being produced by Saptaswa Media Works, POV Stories, and Zee Studios. Pawan Sadineni is presenting this film. The recently released Fun Filled Treasure has received a wonderful response. The makers have recently released a fun promotional rap song related to the film. This song presents the satirical tone of the film wonderfully. The song shows how the hero's American dream suddenly turns upside down. The song playfully depicts the chaos that ensues in the hero's life after the deporta-



tion decision announced by US President Donald Trump. This rap song, made with trendy beats, was sung by music director Sweekar Agasthi himself, while the rap parts were sung by Asura. The lyrics were also written by Sweekar Agasthi, while Asura provided the rap

verse. The song is entertaining with fun scenes like rejection stamps falling on passports, Trump statues, and "Happy Deportation" cake cutting. The video features energetic dance moments and fun visuals. Tarun Bhaskar brings out the laughter with his deadpan

humor, while Vishnu brings out the buddy vibe. True to the title, a lion is also visually present, symbolizing the "Gayapadda Simham" in the story. Sweekar Agasthi and Asura also appear in the video, adding to the fun. The film stars Manasa Chaudhary and Faria

Abdullah as the female leads, while Harshvardhan and Shubhlekha Sudhakar will be seen in key roles. Cinematography is by Vidya Sagar Chinta, editing by Viplav Naishadam, production design by Chandrika Gorrepati, and story by Surya Prakash Jyosula. The film is scheduled to be released in theaters in the summer of 2026. At the song launch event, hero Tarun Bhaskar said.. Hi everyone. I am very happy to see your energy. I am getting a lot of energy seeing this vibe. I am happy that you all like this song. Kashyap Srinivas has made a name for himself by making short films since his college days. He is making his debut as a director with this film. The real hero of this film is him and his story. He is a hardworking lion. I am the lucky lion. Thank you to our produc-

ers. Make sure to watch this film with your friends and family. Producer Bhanu Kiran said.. Our director has made this film as an out and out entertainer for all of you. The film has done very well. All the songs have also been well done. We all like Tarun as a director. The actor will like this film. His acting will be at the next level in this film. There are many surprises in this film. We will be revealing each and every one. We want to release it in April. I definitely want to share this song with everyone. Director Kashyap Srinivas said.. Everyone should reach their dreams. We will all get hurt in this journey. We will be wounded lions. This movie will be released soon. It will entertain you all. Tarun garu has given the best performance and will entertain you all.