



Rahul Gandhi attacks RSS-BJP, flags 'Run for Constitution' marathon

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After Iran talks falter, the big question is 'what happens next?'

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Samyuktha Menon's Cutout Dress Reveals What Words Never Could

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SCAN FOR E-PAPER



OM NAMO VENKATESAYA



11-04-2026

Total pilgrims: 81,288

Tonsures: 34,882

Hundi kankaku: 3,43CR

Waiting Compartments: 27

Approx. Darshan Time for Sarvadarshanam (with out SSD Tokens): 12-15H

WEATHER

38 °C | °F

Precipitation: 0%

Humidity: 34%

Wind: 16 km/h

GOLD RATE

24K ₹ 1,55,180/-



INBRIFS

### INDIAN ARMY LAUNCHES FIRST BORDER COMMUNITY RADIO STATION IN SIKKIM

Gangtok, Apr 12: In a notable initiative aimed at strengthening communication in high-altitude border regions, the Indian Army has launched Sikkim's first border village community radio station, 88.4 FM Radio Sikkim Sundari, in eastern Sikkim. The station has been set up under the Trishakti Corps and is designed to address the long-standing information gap in remote villages that often face harsh weather conditions and limited access to mobile and internet connectivity. The initiative aims to ensure that residents in isolated border areas receive timely and reliable information. The community radio will broadcast local news, weather updates, government welfare schemes, and public service messages, helping residents stay informed and better connected with administrative services. Beyond information delivery, the station will also focus on preserving and promoting the region's cultural identity. Programs featuring local traditions, folk music, and community discussions will be aired, giving indigenous voices a dedicated platform and encouraging cultural engagement.

### 163 minor boys rescued from trafficking attempt on train in Madhya Pradesh

Katni, Apr 12: In a major anti-trafficking operation, as many as 163 minor boys were rescued from an express train in Madhya Pradesh's Katni district, officials said on Sunday. The children, aged between six and 13 years, were allegedly being trafficked from Bihar to Maharashtra for labour work. Acting on a tip-off from the Child Welfare Committee (CWC), personnel of the Railway Protection Force (RPF) and Government Railway Police (GRP) intercepted the group on Saturday night. During the joint overnight operation, eight persons accompanying the children were detained onboard the Patna-Purna Express at Katni railway station. Officials found that the accused were travelling without proper tickets and valid documents, raising suspicion.

## Uttam orders fast-track rehabilitation of Kaleshwaram barrages

Hyderabad TSIT: Telangana Irrigation Minister N.Uttam Kumar Reddy has directed officials to expedite the rehabilitation of the three key barrages of the Kaleshwaram Lift Irrigation Project Medigadda, Annaram and Sundilla and make them operational at the earliest.

At a high-level review meeting held at the Secretariat, the Minister stressed that the repair works must be completed under a strict time-bound programme. He said the next two working seasons would be crucial and expressed confidence that Annaram and Sundilla barrages could be fully restored within the timeline, while Medigadda could be made partially operational.

He noted that agencies like



the National Dam Safety Authority and Vigilance Commission had flagged serious defects in the barrages, including issues related to design, foundations, and execution. The government has

appointed AFRY India in partnership with IIT Mumbai to prepare fresh designs. The Minister directed the consultants to work round-the-clock and complete designs at the earliest for approval from the Central

Water Commission. He also instructed that all required geo-technical and hydraulic studies be taken up on priority. A high-powered Steering Committee has been constituted with Col. Parikshit Mehra as convener to oversee the rehabilitation works. The committee will review progress regularly, while daily monitoring will also be carried out.

Executing agencies, including L&T, have been asked to immediately mobilise resources, reactivate camps, and ensure smooth execution of works without delays. Minister reiterated that the government is committed to restoring the Kaleshwaram project to full functionality at the earliest.

## Asha Bhosle passes away at 93

last rites to be held on Monday at Shivaji Park

Mumbai (TSIT): Legendary playback singer Asha Bhosle passed away at the age of 93 in Mumbai on Sunday. The singer was admitted to the Breach Candy Hospital on Saturday. Ashish Shelar, the Culture Minister of Maharashtra made the announcement outside the hospital. Her last rites will be held at Shivaji Park on Monday at 4:00 pm. On Saturday, her granddaughter, Zana Bhosle had revealed that her grandmother was admitted to the hospital due to extreme exhaustion and a chest infection.

She requested privacy during such times. Dropping a photo with Asha Bhosle on her official Instagram handle, Zana wrote, "My grandmoth-



er, Asha Bhosle due to extreme exhaustion and suffering a chest infection has been admitted to hospital and we request you to value our privacy. Treatment is ongoing and hopefully everything will be well and we shall update you positively (sic). (Folded hands emoji)."

## Many people will lose shelter in Bengal if BJP comes to power: Mamata

Kolkata (TSIT): West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee said on Sunday that several people will lose their shelters if the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) comes to power in the state after the elections this month. "In the coming days, there will be no address, no shelter and no family. BJP will take away everything," the Chief Minister said while addressing a campaign rally at Khandagosh in East Burdwan district while addressing a campaign rally there amid the crucial two-phase Assembly elections in the state on April 23 and April 29. Speaking on the occasion,



she also targeted the Prime Minister, without directly naming him, over his promise at a campaign on Saturday that if the BJP comes to power in West Bengal, the state government employees would be granted pay as per the 7th Pay Commission. "They are liars. They are

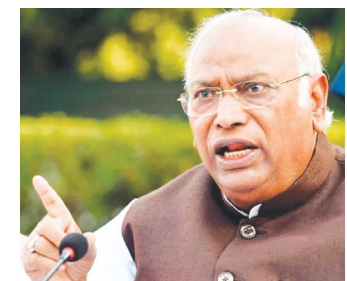
promising to grant pay as per the 7th Pay Commission. He should have enquired first and given respect to his chair. We have already announced the 7th Pay Commission in our state budget in February this year. West Bengal is the only state where the state government employees get a pension. This facility is not available in any other state," the Chief Minister said.

Without directly naming the Prime Minister, she also said that he made a vague promise that popular food products and sweets from West Bengal would be exported worldwide if the BJP comes to power in West Bengal.

## Convene all-party meeting to discuss delimitation after April 29: Kharge to Modi

NEW DELHI (TSIT): Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge has conveyed to Prime Minister Narendra Modi that it would be "impossible" to have any useful discussion on the women's quota law without details of delimitation and other aspects, and demanded that an all-party meeting be called on the matter after the current round of state polls are over on April 29.

In his letter to PM Modi, Kharge said that calling Parliament's special sitting amid state polls reinforces the belief that the government is hurrying the implementation of women's reservation law for "political mileage". Kharge reiterated the demand that an all-party meeting



be called to discuss the delimitation issue, which is being linked to the amendments to the Nari Shakti Vandan Adhiniyam, 2023, after April 29.

Kharge's letter came in response to a missive from the prime minister on the special sitting of Parliament for a discussion on the Nari Shakti Vandan

Adhiniyam from April 16. "I have just received your letter on the special session of Parliament for a discussion on the Nari Shakti Vandan Adhiniyam from the 16th of April," the Leader of the Opposition in Rajya Sabha said in his letter to Modi dated April 11.

From fake PAN cards to forged passports: JK police unravels LeT's pan-India logistical web "As you are aware, the Nari Shakti Vandan Adhiniyam, 2023 was passed by Parliament unanimously in September 2023. At that time, on behalf of the Indian National Congress, I had demanded that this important law should become effective immediately," Kharge said.

## Trump orders Hormuz blockade after Iran talks fail

Washington (TSIT): US President Donald Trump on Sunday announced a sweeping naval blockade of the Strait of Hormuz, accusing Iran of refusing to abandon its nuclear ambitions despite nearly 20 hours of talks mediated in Pakistan.

In a series of lengthy posts on Truth Social, Trump said negotiations "went well" and "most points were agreed to", but asserted that Tehran remained "unyielding as to the single most important issue", adding: "IRAN IS UNWILLING TO GIVE UP ITS NUCLEAR AMBITIONS!"

The US President added that

he had been "fully debriefed" by Vice-President JD Vance, Special Envoy Steve Witkoff and Trump's son-in-law Jared Kushner following the Islamabad meeting, which Trump said was facilitated by Pakistan's leadership. He also accused Iran of reneging on assurances to keep the Strait of Hormuz open, saying the situation had caused "anxiety, displacement, and pain to many people and Countries throughout the World".

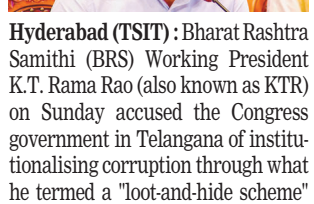
"They say they put mines in the water," Trump wrote, adding that uncertainty over maritime safety had effectively deterred shipping.

He also urged the cadre to work not just for DMK candidates but for the entire alliance, stressing coordination with partners to secure a comprehensive victory across all constituencies.

Calling for united efforts, Stalin said sustained ground-work over the next few days would help the alliance achieve a record mandate for a second consecutive term.

## Cong institutionalised corruption in T'gana, alleges KTR

Hyderabad (TSIT): Bharat Rashtira Samithi (BRS) Working President K.T. Rama Rao (also known as KTR) on Sunday accused the Congress government in Telangana of institutionalising corruption through what he termed a "loot-and-hide scheme" across the state. Addressing party leaders and workers at the BRS office in Mancherial district after felicitating elected representatives of Kyathanpalli municipality, he alleged that Congress leadership -from Ministers to MLAs - were indulging in widespread corruption in every Assembly constituency and scheme.



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## CM Chandrababu Naidu to launch 1S and 1Q Quantum test beds on April 14

Amravathi (TSIT) Andhra Pradesh is set to become a hub of India's quantum technology revolution, with Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu scheduled to inaugurate two quantum computer test beds on April 14 as part of the Amaravati Quantum Valley initiative.

The launch, timed to coincide with World Quantum Day, will take place physically at SRM University, Amaravati, and virtually at Medha Towers in Gannavaram. According to the announcement, these Quantum Reference Facilities will make Andhra Pradesh the first state in India to host a dedicated quantum test and certification ecosystem.

The facilities have been developed using indigenous technology and are intended to support the testing and certification of quantum computing hardware. The initiative is expected to strengthen research, innovation and industry collaboration in the quantum technology sector in Amaravati.

The 1Q test bed has been set up by Qubitech at Medha Towers, while the 1S test bed has been developed at SRM University Amaravati using superconducting technology. The announcement said both systems will operate at extremely low temperatures close to -273°C and are designed to test quantum components and devices.

The open-access facility at SRM University is expected to benefit researchers, students, startups and companies working in quantum



ANDHRA PRADESH IS SET TO BECOME A HUB OF INDIA'S QUANTUM TECHNOLOGY REVOLUTION, WITH CHIEF MINISTER N CHANDRABABU NAIDU SCHEDULED TO INAUGURATE TWO QUANTUM COMPUTER TEST BEDS ON APRIL 14 AS PART OF THE AMARAVATI QUANTUM VALLEY INITIATIVE.

technologies by providing a platform for experimentation and validation. According to the announcement, both facilities have been built entirely with domestically developed components, in line with India's push for self-reliance in deep-tech innovation. It added that the Tata Institute

of Fundamental Research, the Indian Institute of Science and the Defence Research and Development Organisation have provided technical support for the initiative.

Representatives of the National Quantum Mission, IIT professors, scientists, quantum startup founders, research scholars and domain experts are expected to take part in the inauguration event. Arrangements have also been made for more than 150,000 students from universities and colleges across Andhra Pradesh to attend the programme virtually. The initiative is expected to place Amaravati more prominently on the global map as an emerging centre for quantum innovation and advanced research.

## Last mile push key for entire alliance: Stalin

CHENNAI (TSIT): Chief Minister and DMK president MK Stalin on Sunday called upon the party cadre to step up campaign efforts in the final stretch ahead of polling on April 23, emphasising close engagement with voters not just for the party but also for allies.

In a letter to party workers, Stalin noted that only 10 days remain for polling and said people across constituencies are expressing expectations for the continuation of welfare schemes under the "Dravidian model 2.0". "The relationship with the people must continue. The cadre should work closely with voters and intensify ground-level campaign activities over the next 10 days," he



said. Highlighting the commitment within the alliance, Stalin pointed out that senior leaders, despite age and harsh summer conditions, are actively campaigning. He cited leaders such as DMK chief K Veeramani (92), P Chidambaram (80), Vaiko (81) and Duraimurugan (87) as examples to emulate.

Expressing confidence in victory, Stalin said the alliance's strength lies in support from women, confidence among youth, and backing from all sections, including minorities. "Our responsibility is to convert this goodwill into votes on polling day. Every vote matters," he said.

He also urged the cadre to work not just for DMK candidates but for the entire alliance, stressing coordination with partners to secure a comprehensive victory across all constituencies.

Calling for united efforts, Stalin said sustained ground-work over the next few days would help the alliance achieve a record mandate for a second consecutive term.

2026 TN ELECTIONS

## Puri in Odisha becomes campaign hotspot for Bengal elections

**PURI:** Campaign posters written in Bengali and appealing to voters of West Bengal have appeared across this seaside pilgrim town of Odisha, drawing criticism over the alleged politicisation of the sacred place. The posters, put up by the ruling BJP and bearing the party's "lotus" symbol, urge devotees of Lord Jagannath to support the saffron party in West Bengal, which goes to polls in two phases on April 23 and 29. The campaign materials have been strategically placed in high-footfall locations such as the sea beach,

bus stand, railway station and Grand Road beside the Jagannath temple frequented by pilgrims and tourists. The Swargadwar cremation ground area, often referred to as "mini-Bengal" due to the presence of Bengali shopkeepers and visitors, has also seen such posters. The campaign material targets Bengali tourists, urging them to vote for the BJP in the upcoming West Bengal elections. Some tourists expressed disapproval of the campaign. "We have come to Puri to keep away from the election campaign bustle and

for relaxation. The prime objective is to pay obeisance to Lord Jagannath," said Protima Basu, a visitor. The development has also not gone down well with the opposition BJD. "I was born and raised in this town, but have never seen Bengal election posters being pasted on the walls of Puri. The BJP is misusing the pilgrimage town. Puri is one of the sacred four 'dhams' of the Hindus and should be kept out of politics," BJD Raja Sabha MP Subhashish Khuntia said. He also urged the Odisha government to remove the posters and maintain the

town's sanctity. A section of the locals echoed similar concerns. Rathindra Mishra, a resident of the town, said it was for the first time that a political party from another state had used the town for election campaigning. The BJP, which came to power in Odisha in 2024 defeating the BJD, however, does not see anything wrong in it. "There is nothing wrong with fixing posters in Puri or some other places where Bengal voters are frequently visiting. It has nothing to do with religion," state BJP spokesperson Manoj Mohapatra told PTI.

## IIM Mumbai to roll out degree programme in Digital Science, Business Management this year

**MUMBAI:** The Indian Institute of Management Mumbai will roll out its first 4-year bachelor's degree programme in Digital Science and Business Management this year in collaboration with the IIT Bombay and industry partners. The announcement was made by IIM Mumbai Director Prof Manoj Tiwari on Saturday.



"This programme brings together the most transformative technologies of recent times - Artificial Intelligence, Machine Learning, Data Science, the Internet of Things, and Robotics, seamlessly integrated with the core pillars of management:

operations, marketing, finance, and manufacturing," he said at the institute's convocation ceremony for its first MBA batch. The programme, which has 70 seats, is designed to meet the evolving needs of digitally driven industries by creating

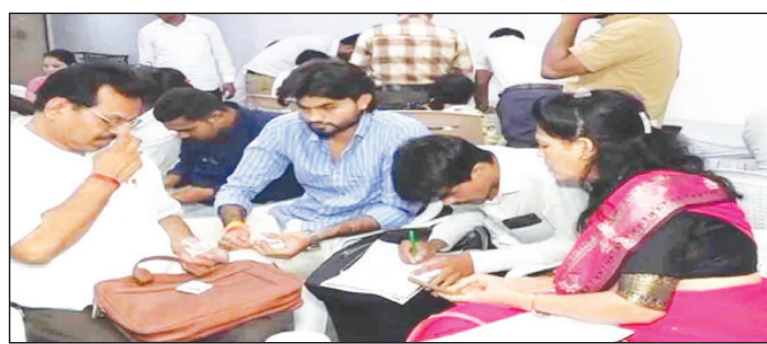
future-ready professionals who can operate at the intersection of technology and business leadership, he said. Tiwari said that the degree programme, which will cost Rs 6-7 lakh per year, will be in collaboration with the Indian Institute of Technology

Bombay (IIT Bombay) and several industry partners who will teach the students the technology aspect. "IIM Mumbai will teach the business management aspect with a guarantee of 100 per cent placement," he said. The selections are being done through the Joint Entrance Examinations - Main (JEE-Main), followed by an interview, said Tiwari.

"We will also give third-year students in the third year of the course the option to pursue a Master's in Business Administration (MBA), which they can complete in one year immediately after the four-year bachelor's programme," he added.

## Rush on final day of filing nominations papers for Gujarat local body elections

**AHMEDABAD:** Candidates scrambled to file their papers on the last day of filing nominations for the April 26 local body elections in Gujarat where the contest is mainly expected between the BJP, Congress and the AAP. As per the schedule announced by the State Election Commission, scrutiny of nominations will take place on April 13 and candidates can withdraw from the race till April 15. Counting of votes is scheduled for April 28. Several candidates who received party mandates at the last moment hurried to submit their papers on Saturday, while some of those who were denied tickets expressed dissatisfaction. Besides the BJP, Congress and AAP, the Nationalist Congress Party as well as the All India Majlis-e-Ittehadul Muslimeen



(AIMIM) too are in the fray, which would lead to multi-cornered contests in several places. Among notable candidates are former Gujarat-cadre IPS officer M L Ninama, former radio jockey Abha Desai and former AAP MLA Bhupendra Bhayani. Ninama, who recently took voluntary retirement and joined the BJP, has been field-

ed from Odh seat in Shamlaji taluka for the Arvalli district panchayat elections. Bhupendra Bhayani, who resigned as AAP MLA from Visavadar in 2024 and joined the BJP, has been nominated by the ruling party from Bhesan seat of the Junagadh district panchayat. Abha Desai, popularly known as 'RJ Abha', has been nominated by the Congress from

ward number 10 of the Rajkot Municipal Corporation. Elections will be held to 34 district panchayats, 260 taluka panchayats, 84 municipalities and 15 municipal corporations including Ahmedabad, Surat, Vadodara, Rajkot, making it one of the largest electoral exercises in the state. State Election Commissioner S Murali Krishna had said that there were over 4.18 crore eligible voters across 9,992 seats. The polls are being held under revised norms for Other Backward Class (OBC) reservations, which required extensive delimitation and restructuring of wards in several districts. Voting will be conducted between 7 am and 6 pm on April 26. If required, re-polling will be held on April 27, and the entire election process is expected to be completed by April 30, officials said.

## Mercury continues to rise in Delhi; temp likely to hit 40 deg Celsius by next week

**NEW DELHI:** The National Capital continued to see a rise in the temperature on Saturday, with forecasts by the India Meteorological Department (IMD) suggesting a further rise in the coming days. Safdarjung, representative of the city's weather, recorded a maximum temperature of 34.7 degrees Celsius, 1.4 degrees below the normal and 1.9 degrees more than a day before. The minimum temperature was logged at 18.6 degrees Celsius, 2.4 degrees below normal, but a 2.3 degree rise from the day before. Other weather stations also logged a significant rise in both maximum and minimum temperatures. Palam recorded a maximum

of 34.4 degrees Celsius, a 2.6 degree rise from Friday and a minimum of 19.5 degrees Celsius, 3.9 degrees more than the day before. Lodhi Road recorded a minimum of 17.8 degrees Celsius, 2.6 degrees rise from the day before. Meanwhile, THE IMD has forecast the minimum temperature to be around 18-22 degrees Celsius by Sunday and 20-22 degrees Celsius by Tuesday. The maximum temperature is likely to be around 35-37 degrees by Sunday and 38-40 degrees Celsius by next Wednesday. The MeT department has also forecast gusty winds of speed 15-25 kmph, even reaching 35 kmph, to continue through the daytime hours of Sunday.

Meanwhile, the city's air quality index (AQI) saw further improvement on Saturday morning. The 24-hour average AQI was recorded at 123 (moderate) at 4 pm, compared to an AQI of 151 (moderate) recorded at the same time on Friday. According to CPCB standards, an AQI of 0-50 is considered 'good', 51-100 'satisfactory', 101-200 'moderate', 201-300 'poor', 301-400 'very poor', and 401-500 'severe'. The Air Quality Early Warning System (AQEWS) for Delhi has forecast the AQI to remain in the moderate category for the next few days and then see a deterioration to the poor category in the subsequent days.

## Boy killed in leopard attack in Gondia

**GONDIA:** A 7-year-old boy was killed in a leopard attack in Arjuni Morgaon tehsil of Gondia district, a forest department official said on Saturday. The incident took place around 8pm on Friday when Prajwal Govardhan Meshram was playing in front of his house in Dhabetkedi village, Range Forest Officer Rajendra Bahure said. "The leopard pounced on the boy and dragged him into the thicket. Onlookers managed to free him from the clutches of the leopard but he had sustained severe injuries. He died some time later. An initial compensation amount of Rs 1 lakh has been given to his kin," the official said. On Saturday, three cages were installed in the area along with six camera traps and a drone camera to monitor the movement of the leopard to capture it.

## BJP-RSS attempting to change Constitution, replace democracy with dictatorship, alleges Tejashwi Yadav

**PATNA:** RJD leader Tejashwi Yadav on Saturday alleged that the BJP and RSS were attempting to change the Constitution, and replace democracy with dictatorship. Addressing a programme organised by the RJD minority cell in Patna, the leader of the opposition in the assembly called on party workers for a united fight against "adversaries of the Constitution". "RSS and BJP want to replace the Constitution of India with that of RSS. They seek to eliminate democracy and establish a dictatorship. For us, this is a time for struggle," he said. "If such changes occur, they will adversely affect backward classes, extremely backward classes, Dalits, and other margin-

alised communities," he asserted. The RJD leader urged party workers to fight against the alleged "divide and rule" policy of the "communal forces". "If any leader, Hindu or Muslim, including me, delivers an inflammatory speech or engages in communal politics, they should be strongly opposed," he said. Yadav alleged that the BJP and RSS were working to "derail peace and fraternity in the country by 'instigating conflict' for decades. "I am the son of Lala Prasad, who stopped LK Advani's 'rath' and got him arrested for trying to facilitate Babri Mosque demolition. Neither my father bowed down to communal forces, nor will I," he said.

He accused the Centre of filing false cases against him and his family members as "part of a conspiracy to defame and divide" them. "Cases are filed against my entire family and me. There are conspiracies to defame and divide us. Whenever Tejashwi raises questions about law and order, false cases are filed against him to divert public attention," he said. Yadav accused AJUP founder Humayun Kabir of allegedly taking Rs 1,000 crore from the BJP to defeat "secular forces" in poll-bound West Bengal, referring to a viral video shared by the TMC. "The BJP is trying to topple governments in opposition-ruled states to make sweeping changes in the Constitution," he claimed.

## Bypolls: K'taka Cong Minority chief Abdul Jabbar resigns amid allegations of 'internal conspiracy'

**BENGALURU:** Karnataka Congress Minority Department President K Abdul Jabbar announced his resignation from the post on Saturday, a day after a group of Muslim leaders accused members of their own party of "conspiring" to defeat the official candidate in Davanagere South. Jabbar, an MLC, was an aspirant for the Congress ticket from the Davanagere South Assembly segment. "It has been an honor for me to serve as Chairman of the KPCC Minority department and have worked to the best of my ability during assembly elections 2023 and followed by Parliament polls and many such occasions whenever the party needed the minority department and showed results. I have toured the entire state of Karnataka and worked to align the mi-

norities with Congress values and principles. Most of it is available in the public domain," Jabbar said in a letter to the party. "Minority voters and minority office bearers are the backbone of our great Congress party and certainly deserve better," he said. Deputy Chief Minister D K Shivakumar, who is also the Karnataka Pradesh Congress Committee President, confirmed Jabbar's resignation. "I won't speak about this now, I have got some reports. The Minority President has submitted his resignation. I will verify things, I will seek a report from local leaders after that I will speak," he told reporters in response to a question on internal conspiracy. A rift within the Karnataka Congress surfaced on Friday, a day after the bypolls to two

Assembly constituencies in the state, as a group of Muslim leaders alleged a "conspiracy" by some of their own senior party leaders to defeat the official candidate in Davanagere South. However, they asserted that despite efforts by some within to project that Congress "betrayed" Muslims, the party candidate Samarth Mallikarjun will win in Davanagere South, the constituency where the community has a significant presence. They said the party finally named Samarth Mallikarjun as the candidate after considering all factors and taking all Muslim leaders into confidence. Despite this, a massive campaign, including from some within the party, projected the Congress as having "betrayed" the minorities by denying them tickets.

Chief Whip in the Legislative Council Saleem Ahmed, MLAs Rizwan Arshad, Yasir Ahmed Khan Pathan, MLC Bilkis Bano, and other Congress leaders addressed a joint press conference on Friday, claiming an "internal conspiracy". According to party sources, these Muslim leaders have also complained to AICC and state party leadership, alleging "internal sabotage" in Davanagere South. Though the leaders did not name anyone, several party sources said their attack was directed at State Housing Minister B Z Zameer Ahmed Khan and Jabbar among others. Khan, who had openly demanded the Davanagere South ticket for a Muslim candidate, initially stayed away from campaigning in the constituency, citing his Kerala poll responsibilities.

## Man found sleeping in temple office after stealing Rupees 8,500, arrested

**THIRUVANANTHAPURAM:** A man who allegedly broke into a temple office and stole Rs 8,500 cash, somehow slept there in tiered, leading to his arrest on Saturday, police said. The incident happened in the Kuzhuvattam Sree Bhagathy temple in Kudappanmoodu in Amboori. When temple committee members arrived at the office at around 5.30 am, as usual, they were shocked to see the doors broken. They were also taken by surprise to see a man sleeping inside, police added.

He was found to have stolen Rs 8,500 from the office. The temple staff immediately alerted the police, who reached the spot and took him into custody. Vellarada police registered a case and recorded his arrest. The accused was identified as Senthil (40), from Tamil Nadu. He allegedly broke open the doors and entered the temple office on Friday night. After stealing money, he felt tired and slept there, police said, adding that he was allegedly involved in multiple theft cas-



es. He was later produced before a court and remanded to judicial custody.

## Shahdara Cyber Police nab 3 in Rs 10L investment fraud

**NEW DELHI:** The Cyber Police of Shahdara district has busted a high-return investment fraud racket and arrested three accused for allegedly cheating a Delhi resident of Rs 10 lakh through a fake stock market scheme. According to police, the victim was lured in December 2025 via a WhatsApp group where fraudsters promised guaranteed and high returns on stock market investments. Trusting the claims, the complainant transferred Rs 10 lakh, but received neither returns nor a refund. The accused later cut off all communication, confirming the fraud.

During the investigation, the cyber team used technical surveillance and digital analysis to trace the money trail, which led them to Rohini. Acting on inputs, police conducted a raid in Vijay Vihar Phase-2 area and apprehended three accused identified as Sumit (26), Sandeep (42), and Kamal Kumar (41). Police revealed that the accused were operating mule bank accounts to receive and transfer the cheated money, helping the main fraudsters conceal their identities. During the operation, officials recovered five mobile phones, six debit cards, and crucial digital ev-

idence including WhatsApp chats, bank credentials, and account details linked to the fraud. Deputy Commissioner of Police, Shahdara, Rajendra Prasad Meena (IPS) said, "Our cyber team used advanced technical analysis to track the financial trail and identify the accused. This action is part of our ongoing efforts to curb organized cyber fraud. Further investigation is underway to trace the larger network and recover the cheated amount." Police said efforts are continuing to identify other members of the syndicate and uncover the full extent of the fraud network.

## Punjab BJP forms teams to assess crop loss

**CHANDIGARH:** The Punjab BJP has assigned senior leaders to visit villages affected by rain and hailstorms to gather feedback from farmers regarding crop damage. Estimated crop damage has impacted over 1.25 lakh acres due to recent weather conditions in various parts of the state. "To assess the damage and gather first-hand feedback from farmers in rain-affected areas of Punjab, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) Punjab has deputed its senior leaders to visit the affected regions and take stock of the situation," said a statement.

According to a list released by state general secretary Anil Sarin, the party has constituted five teams to cover ten affected districts across the state. The team assigned for Fazilka and Sri Muktsar Sahib comprises Manpreet Singh Badal, Dyal Singh Sodhi, Sujet Jyani, Ashwani Sekhri, Vandana Sangwan, and Lakhbir Singh. For Ferozepur and Bathinda, the team includes Rana Gurmeet Singh Sodhi, Jagmeet Singh Brar, Sushil Rinku, Harminder Jassi, Jagdeep Singh Nakai, Sarabhjit Singh Makkar, and Darshan Singh Neneval.

The team for Barnala and Sangrur consists of Som Parkash, Kewal Singh Dhillon, Maharani Parnet Kaur, Harbans Lal, Mangat Rai Bansal, Ranjit Singh Gill, and Jagdeep Singh Cheema. Meanwhile, the team for Amritsar and Pathankot includes Vijay Sampla, Shwet Malik, Tikshan Sood, Dinesh Singh Babbu, Fateh Jang Singh Bajwa, Manjit Singh Manna, and Balwinder Singh Laddi. For Hoshiarpur and Kapurthala, the team comprises Manoranjan Kalia, Avinash Khanna, Jangi Lal Mahajan, Sheetal Angural, K D Bhandari, and Jagbir Singh Brar.

## Poppy husk worth Rs 1.25 cr seized in Palamu, 2 arrested

**MEDININAGAR:** Two persons were arrested after poppy husk worth Rs 1.25 crore was seized from their possession in Jharkhand's Palamu district, officials said on Saturday. The consignment was intercepted following a tip-off in the forest area near the Jawar village under Naudiha police station on Friday, they said. "We have recovered 815 kg of poppy husk packed in 60 plastic sacks from a pickup van. The vehicle was being escorted by two persons

riding on a motorcycle. The driver of the van somehow fled the scene, and raids are being conducted to nab him," said Chattarpur SDPO Awadh Kumar Yadav. The market value of the seized contraband is estimated at approximately Rs 1.25 crore, he added. The police also seized the motorcycle and two mobile phones from the arrested persons, and an FIR has been lodged against them under the NDPS Act at Naudiha police station.

## Man trapped under uprooted tree in Uttam Nagar rescued

**NEW DELHI:** A 26-year-old man, trapped under an uprooted tree in West Delhi's Uttam Nagar area, was rescued on Friday afternoon, officials from the Delhi Fire Services (DFS) said. "A call was received at 4.36 pm regarding the incident at A-Block cremation ground near a gurudwara in the area," a DFS official said, adding that two fire tenders were rushed to the spot. A tree got uprooted, possibly due to strong winds and a man, identified as Kallu, got trapped under it.

## Karnataka forests hit by illegal trekking surge amid fire season clampdown and weak enforcement



Hubballi, Apr 12: With the Karnataka Eco-Tourism Development Board (KEDB) portal — aranyavihaara.karnataka.gov.in suspending trekking slot bookings indefinitely due to the ongoing fire season, forest authorities are struggling to contain a surge in unauthorised trekking across sensitive forest zones in Karnataka. Despite the restrictions, hundreds of adventure seekers continue to trespass into forest areas, openly flouting rules and posing a growing threat to fragile ecosystems. While KEDB has officially identified 38 trekking routes in the state, regular trekkers and organisers claim there are over 175 trekking spots in and around forest regions, many of them unmanned and poorly regulated.

Recently, 10 youths from Dharwad district entered restricted forest areas in Khanapur to reach Vajrapoha waterfalls. Videos circulating on social media show them ignoring forest department warning boards. In one clip, a youth is heard claiming links to an elected representative, implying that action against them would not be possible. Based on the footage, forest officials detained all 10 youths. However, they were

later released on station bail after being issued warnings, as the offence is non-cognisable and carries a maximum penalty of a Rs 500 fine or up to six months' imprisonment. "We wanted to teach them a strict lesson as they had knowingly violated the rules. But most of the time, we are helpless as the law is weak," a senior forest department officer in Belagavi said.

The videos also show the youths swimming in deep waters at the waterfall, with some allegedly consuming alcohol and smoking. Officials warned that this is a particularly dangerous period, as dry leaves cover the forest floor and even a small spark could trigger large-scale fires in sensitive elephant corridors.

"This is not the first such incident in the Khanapur forests. Every year, four to five cases of trespassing are reported in the area. One major issue is the lack of forest watchers or guards," the officer added, noting that the Khanapur-Chorla Ghat stretch has several minor waterfalls that frequently attract unauthorised visitors. Similar violations are being reported in Kodagu, Chikkamagaluru, Uttara

Kannada, Dakshina Kannada and Udupi districts, where individuals increasingly enter forest areas to create social media content or "discover hidden gems".

Experts caution that such irresponsible behaviour not only endangers trekkers but also threatens forest biodiversity. The recent case of Kerala IT professional G S Sharanya going missing in Kodagu forests — later rescued after straying from a permitted trek to Tadiandamol — has further raised concerns over unregulated trekking groups.

Following these incidents, Forest Minister Eshwar Khandre has directed officials to formulate a standard operating procedure, develop a tracking app for trekkers, and introduce group insurance. However, experts remain doubtful whether these measures will effectively prevent future violations.

Bengaluru-based trekker Rakhi Gowda said authorities cannot fully prevent such trespassing. "The forest and tourism departments lack the manpower to monitor all areas. Instead, regulated access with local guides should be allowed. This can also generate employment for villagers," he said, adding that entry fees could be used to improve facilities.

Environment activist Girish D V from Chikkamagaluru criticised the state's approach, stating that trekking is being permitted without scientific assessment of carrying capacity. He also alleged that unauthorised trekking camps continue to operate unchecked, questioning what action is being taken against them.

## NETAJI'S GREAT-GRANDSON CHANDRA KUMAR BOSE JOINS TRINAMOL CONGRESS

Kolkata, April 12: Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose's great-grandson Chandra Kumar Bose on Sunday joined the Trinamool Congress after completely disassociating himself from the BJP.

Bose was officially inducted into the party at Trinamool Bhavan in the presence of state minister Bratya Basu and party MP Kirti Azad, who handed him the Trinamool flag.

Earlier, after being called for the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) hearing, Chandra Bose became disillusioned with the BJP, wondering why there was any doubt about

his citizenship, even after being the great-grandson of a freedom fighter like Netaji. Ahead of the Assembly polls, Chandra Bose has officially joined the Trinamool. "A few years ago, I made a historic mistake by joining the Bharatiya Janata Party. I have corrected that mistake today," he said at the press conference.

In 2016, Chandra Bose had joined the BJP in the presence of then party President Amit Shah during a rally in Howrah. However, he distanced himself from the party after the 2019 Lok Sabha polls. "When (Prime

Minister) Narendra Modi first came to power in the country in 2014, I liked him very much. He took the country forward on the path of progress. Then, in 2016, when I joined the party, I gradually saw that the Bharatiya Janata Party does not respect the constitution of the country. Moreover, they have no similarity with the culture of Bengal. The politics that is going on across the country now, the politics of communalism, the politics of division, is disastrous," he said at the press conference.

## Opportunities for Talent Empower Women to Contribute to Society: Basavaraj Bommai



Gadag: Former Chief Minister and MP Basavaraj Bommai said that girls possess greater talent and integrity, and when given opportunities, they can grow and make meaningful contributions to society.

He was speaking at Adavisomapura village in Gadag district, where he felicitated Manjula Hanumanthappa Hulakannavar, a second-year PUC student of Sri M.B. Patil Independent Pre-University College, Kalakeri, for securing first rank in Mundargi taluk and third rank in Gadag district. Bommai remarked that while the Rajyotsava Award is considered one of the highest honors in the state, the recognition given to Manjula was even more special. Many women in the country have similar untold stories and said that if previous generations of women had been given opportunities, society would have progressed further.

Referring to the ideals of Basavanna, the former CM stressed the importance of social equality without gender discrimination and praised Akka Mahadevi as one of the greatest Vachana composers whose works continue to inspire. Emotional Tribute to Mother

while recalling his mother, stating that a mother is greater than both father and men in general, as the bond begins even before birth. He said mothers nurture knowledge and values from the womb. Reflecting on his own mother, who excelled in mathematics and English but had to discontinue education after seventh standard, he said she later supported many children in pursuing education and held deep respect for teachers.

Need to Encourage Talent Highlighting changing times, Bommai said girls today are receiving more opportunities. Manjula's achievement—scoring 95% in SSLC and topping her taluk in PUC despite challenges after marriage—was commendable. She must pursue competitive exams like KAS and assured that his trust would bear her educational expenses.

Bommai recalled launching scholarships for farmers' children during his tenure as Chief Minister, benefiting nearly 11 lakh students. There is intent to revive the scheme if given another opportunity. Such achievements inspire other girls and shared that his own daughter secured second rank in architecture at a London university, bringing him equal pride.

## SMART QUICK CELEBRATES GRAND SUCCESS ANNIVERSARY; HONOURS ARTISTS ON DR. RAJKUMAR'S REMEMBRANCE DAY

Bengaluru: On the occasion of the remembrance day of Padma Bhushan Dr. Rajkumar, a grand event was organized at Babu Jagjivan Ram Auditorium, Sumanahalli, to honour artists and celebrate the grand success anniversary of Smart Quick Company. The organization has emerged as a beacon of hope for rural youth, providing employment opportunities and empowerment.

The event was inaugurated in the divine presence of Sri Sri Sri Nanjavadhuta Mahaswamiji, along with Smart Quick Managing Director Deepu Gowda, Bigg Boss fame Ashwini Gowda, and film personalities Dingri Nagaraj, Mysore Ramanand, and Shankar Bhat.

As part of the celebrations, 12 employees were awarded cars and 7 employees were presented with bikes in recognition of their



contribution to the company's success. Addressing the gathering, Sri Nanjavadhuta Mahaswamiji praised Managing Director Deepu Gowda for his dedication and hard work in building Smart Quick into a successful enterprise. He highlighted that the company is playing a significant role in providing employment to youth from rural areas, which is a commendable achievement.

Smart Quick has earned trust by ensuring employee safety and delivering fair ser-

vice to its customers. Currently, the company operates five supermarkets in Bengaluru and two in Rajasthan, serving the public efficiently. The Swamiji also appreciated the entrepreneurial spirit of a Kannadiga expanding the business across various states and called it a matter of pride. Speaking on the occasion, Managing Director Deepu Gowda said that Smart Quick is a proud Kannada enterprise committed to creating job opportunities for rural youth.

## Seminar on Social Justice and Media Sensitivity

Bengaluru: On the occasion of the birth anniversary of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, the Karnataka Media Academy, in collaboration with Dr. Manmohan Singh Bengaluru City University, organized a seminar on the topic "Is today's media sensitive to the concept of social justice?"

The seminar was held at the New Academic Block Seminar hall in the Central College campus. It was inaugurated by Prof. Purushottama Bilimale, Chairman of the Kannada Development Authority. He stated that the Constitution of India, drafted under the leadership of Ambedkar, serves as a guiding light for the concept of social justice. He expressed concern that discrimination based on caste, religion, gender, and language, along with the practice of untouchability and atrocities against minorities, continue to remain serious issues in the country. He also highlighted



that India has 19,658 languages, and many smaller languages—symbols of people's cultural identity—are being neglected and suppressed due to the dominance of major languages. He observed that the attacks on regional language newspapers that began during British rule continue even today,

and emphasized that the media must boldly uphold democratic values. Delivering the keynote address, senior journalist and thinker Kotiganehalli Ramaiah urged the younger generation to implement the ideals laid down by Ambedkar in order to build an enlightened India.

## Karnataka Stalls on Green Growth While Delhi BJP Accelerates EV Future

Bengaluru: The contrast in governance between the double-engine vision of the BJP and the regressive politics of the Congress has never been more glaring than in India's EV revolution. We are witnessing two completely different Indias, one that incentivizes the future, and one that taxes it to death.

In Delhi, the BJP-led administration is demonstrating what "pro-development" truly looks like. It has recently moved to clear a massive backlog of over Rs.140 crore in EV subsidies, ensuring that a promise made to the common man is a promise kept. The BJP's goal is simple: to make Delhi the EV capital of the world by installing 7,000 new charging stations and ensuring that clean mobility is



not a luxury, but a standard for every citizen.

Contrast this with the troubling state of affairs in Karnataka under the Congress regime. Once a global pioneer in tech and sustainability, Karnataka is now being dragged backward into stagnation. By

ending road tax exemptions for EVs, the Congress government has effectively declared war on both the middle class and the environment.

Why? Because its coffers are drained after funding unscientific, populist freebie schemes—leaving little room for real

development.

For Congress, the Silicon Valley of India has become a resource to be exploited. While the BJP in Delhi is removing barriers and building infrastructure, Congress in Karnataka is creating roadblocks and increasing costs. They are punishing the very innovators and eco-conscious citizens who built Bengaluru's reputation. The message is clear: the BJP stands for Incentive, Infrastructure, and Innovation. Congress stands for Taxation, Stagnation, and Regression. While Delhi charges ahead into the 21st century, Karnataka is being pushed into a slowdown by a government that has lost its developmental compass.

## PhysicsWallah Students Achieve Strong Karnataka 2nd PUC 2026 Results; 220+ Score Above 95%



Bengaluru: Students from PhysicsWallah (PW) have delivered strong performances in the Karnataka 2nd PUC Examination 2026, with multiple learners securing top scores across the state. Among the top performers, Dhruvi Ishani S and Ashay Jain have emerged as the highest scorers, each securing an outstanding 594 and 593 respectively out of 600 marks.

In the Karnataka 2nd PUC 2026 examinations, PW students achieved notable outcomes, with 20 students scoring 98% and above, 145 students 96% and above, and 220+ students 95% and above. These

students were enrolled in PW's structured programs designed and aimed at supporting Karnataka board aspirants through a focus on conceptual clarity, regular assessments, and consistent revision.

Speaking on the results, Alakh Pandey, Founder and CEO of PhysicsWallah (PW), said, "We congratulate all students on their performance in the Karnataka II PUC examinations. These results reflect the discipline and consistent effort put in by students. Board exams are an important milestone, and we remain focused on helping learners build strong fundamentals and stay on

track in their preparation." Sharing her preparation approach, Dhruvi Ishani S said, "I focused on completing the syllabus thoroughly and revising regularly. Solving previous years' papers helped me understand the exam pattern better. The structured lectures and practice materials from PW helped me stay consistent." Ashay Jain added, "I made sure to revise concepts multiple times and practice regularly. Mock tests and consistent study routines helped me improve my accuracy and confidence during the exams."

The Karnataka 2nd PUC examination is a significant academic milestone for students pursuing higher education. These results underscore the growing role of structured academic support and integrated learning platforms in enabling consistent performance outcomes. PhysicsWallah (PW) continues to expand access to education across India through its digital platforms and offline centers, aiming to support learners at scale.

## RUN TECH 2026 programme inaugurated by S.E.Sudheendra

Bengaluru: S. E. Sudheendra, Chairman of Karnataka State Bioenergy Development Board and Vice President of Karnataka Pradesh Congress Committee, participated in a three-kilometer walk organized in the memory of Bharat Ratna Sir M. Visvesvaraya this morning and inaugurated the RUN TECH 2026 programme.

Thousands of students, youth, engineers, technicians and the general public who participated in the walk, which started from the 100-foot road of Muthuraj Underpass in Hosakerehalli, Bengaluru, personally participated in this walk and became an inspiration to the participants. Speaking on the occasion, the Chairman of the Board said that the Chief Minister of the State and the Minister for Rural Development and Panchayat Raj have immense faith in the technicians involved in the service sector along with technological development in the administration and hoped that the growth of this sector will bring a great change in public life in the coming days.

The government has always responded to the grievances of the public in Padmanabhanagar



constituency, and the organizers of this programme Chaitra V Kumar and Girish Kumar said that the couple had organized this programme very successfully and that they had received good cooperation from the government for their performance.

This walk ended in front of the fire station via Ayodhya Hotel, Itmadu Junction, Devegowda Petrol Bunk Service Road. Prizes were distributed to the first, second and third place winners who participated in this walk. Certificates were given to all those who participated in this program. Former Rajya Sabha members Rajiv Gowda, Shivaramgowda, Sanjay Gowda, Dharmendra, President of Vokkaliga Sangha L Srinivasa and the head of the organization of this walk, Chaitra V Kumar, Girish Kumar Karnataka Pradesh Yuva BPAC Civic Leader, etc. participated in this programme.

## ARC Cancer Hospital launches affordable 'middle-path' cancer care model in Bengaluru

Bengaluru: Arion Radiotherapy & Oncology Centre (ARC Cancer Hospital) has been inaugurated with a vision to redefine cancer treatment by introducing a "middle-path" model that balances affordability with world-class clinical standards.

In a healthcare system often marked by a divide between expensive private hospitals and overburdened government institutions, ARC aims to bridge the gap by offering comprehensive oncology care at costs 20-30% lower than leading corporate hospitals, without compromising on quality or technology.

Founder and Managing Director Dr. Srihari R. Shapur said the initiative is designed to make quality cancer treatment accessible to the middle class while also extending services to beneficiaries under BPL and Ayushman Bharat schemes.



The hospital provides multi-disciplinary cancer care under one roof, including surgical oncology, chemotherapy, and advanced radiotherapy. Chairman Dr. Dinesh Mavinahalli highlighted that the facility offers screening, diagnosis, and treatment services supported by modern infrastructure and round-the-clock medical teams.

Medical Director Dr. Samskruthi P. Murthy noted that state-of-the-art equipment enables timely and efficient treatment, reducing delays often faced by patients.

A key feature of ARC's model is the integration of international tumour boards involving specialists from the United States, allowing access to globally benchmarked treatment protocols and emerging therapies such as immunotherapy. The hospital also focuses on inclusive care, initiating radiotherapy services under the Below Poverty Line (BPL) scheme. Support from government representatives, including T. B. Jayachandra, underscores efforts to expand access for underprivileged patients.

## EDITORIAL

### Asha Bhosle Is Gone, But Her 'Bad Girl' Anthems Live On

The year is 1971, Helen is dancing in a blingy red dress, with a faux Big Ben in the background, in Caravan, a thriller directed by Nasir Hussain. It's described as the last word in cabaret by several writers. But for Asha Bhosle fans, it was the first glimpse of modernity, with the chorus "Monica My Darling" continuing to be echoed in popular culture, most recently in last year's Dhurandhar in the Reble rap song, 'Run Down the City', set in a Karachi night club. The singer of the original song, Asha Bhosle, is no more, but her "bad girl" voice will live forever. Before the rise of the modernists in Hindi film industry music, composers like OP Nayyar and RD Burman, both of whom had long partnerships with Bhosle, the good girl voice was epitomised by Lata Mangeshkar, Bhosle's elder sister, with voices like that of Geeta Dutt being used for drink-sodden, late night songs. But Bhosle was the first to bring a rare sensuousness into modern Hindi music, represented in yet another blockbuster from 1971, 'Dum Maaro Dum', in the film Hare Rama Hare Krishna. The song was originally to be sung by Usha Uthup, whom the director Dev Anand and music composer RD Burman first heard at The Oberoi in New Delhi. The song soon became the anthem of rebellious youth, with its incendiary lyrics written by Anand Bakshi: "Duniya ne humko diya kya/Duniya se humne liya kya (What has the world ever given us/What have we ever taken from the world)." It was pictured on Zeenat Aman as Jasbir/Janice in Kathmandu, wearing a marigold necklace, dark glasses on her hair, and resting her head on Gautam Sarin's broad shoulders, supposedly lost in a drug haze. For those who grew up in the 1970s, Asha Bhosle was the voice of cosmopolitanism, which was showcased later in her global collaborations, from singing flirtatiously with Brett Lee ("You're the One for Me", 2007) to Boy George ("Bow Down Mister", with Bhosle chanting a 'Hare Krishna' mantra, 1991) to the British band Gorillaz on The Shadowy Light (along with Ajay Prasanna and Aman and Ayaan Ali Bangash) as late as early this year. She was the voice of Zeenat Aman shimmying in 'Chura Liye Hai Tumne' in Hindi cinema's first modern multistarrer Yaadon Ki Baarat, directed by Nazir Hussain; as much as she was the voice of Parveen Babi in the self-designed body hugging silver gown in Shaan (1980), singing 'Pyaar karne wale'. It wasn't a coincidence that both Aman and Babi were unique in breaking the good girl/bad girl binary that was the fate of women in Hindi cinema till then. But Bhosle had range as well, as she displayed to the surprise of many in Umrao Jaan (1981), where she sang Rekha's lovelorn ghazals penned by Shahryar and set to music by Khayyam. Anyone who can listen to 'Dil cheez kya hai/Aap meri jaan lijiye' (What is my heart/You can take my life as well) without a lump in her throat can only have a heart of stone. The iconic song contains multitudes - not merely Umrao Jaan's tragic life, but also the heartbreaks of Rekha and Bhosle. Despite her upbeat attitude to life, Bhosle's life was strewn with loss and longing, whether it was her abusive first husband Ganpatrao Bhosle, her long struggle to establish herself in an industry where her sister was already the reigning queen of music, her enduring love affair with RD Burman cut short by his untimely death at 54, the suicide of her daughter Varsha and the death by cancer of her eldest child Hemant. But whether it was in concerts or in rehearsals, rarely did she display her wounds. Bhosle's voice created stars. Remember 'Tanha tanha, composed by AR Rahman, and shot on Urmila Matondkar in a variety of flowing minidresses by the beach in Ram Gopal Varma's Rangaala (1995)? Or Gracy Singh in Lagaan (2001) singing the feisty 'Radha kaise na jale' in a duet with Udit Narayan? And it solidified stars such as Madhubala, oozing mischief and playfulness with songs such as 'Haal kaisa hai janaab ka' from Chalti ki Naam Gaadi (1958) and 'Aaiye Meherban' from Howrah Bridge (1958).

## WHEN TOM CRUISE SHOWED UP AT 'ASHA'S'

It was August 21, 2021. The world was still recovering from the Covid pandemic and restaurants had barely started doing regular business. So, you can imagine how surprised the staff of Asha's, a Michelin-starred restaurant in Birmingham (one of six owned by Asha Bhosle, the singing legend and passionate cook), must have been when Tom Cruise, dressed in a Henley-style round-necked, full-sleeved tee, jeans and bombardier jacket, casually walked in with his entourage, bodyguards and all, which included Mission: Impossible writer and director, Christopher McQuarrie. Cruise was in Birmingham shooting for Dead Reckoning: Part One, the seventh installment of the multi-billion-dollar Mission: Impossible franchise, and he left the Asha's staff gobsmacked when he asked for a second Chicken Tikka Masala (CTM) after finishing the first - and he wanted the spice quotient to be amped up for this one. "The greatest compliment," said the chuffed restaurant in an Instagram post. The CTM was not all that Cruise loved at Asha's. He also had - and relished - the Palak Paneer, but at the Birmingham restaurant he will always be remembered as "two tikka Tom". No one was happier at the superstar's surprise appearance than the restaurant's owner, the singer with the jaunty voice that still gets the nation grooving and the equally accomplished cook. She took to Instagram at once and said: "I was very happy to hear that Mr Tom Cruise enjoyed his fine dining experience at Asha's (Birmingham) and I look forward to him visiting us again soon!" Cruise, meanwhile, got himself photographed outside the restaurant, its senior staff at a distance behind him out of respect for Covid social distancing norms. And that picture went viral.



### A Childhood Relish

It also reminded the world about Asha Bhosle's love for cooking and eating good food, a talent she developed during her childhood spent travelling with her father Dinanath Mangeshkar's peripatetic theatre company. Her constant craving to know more about the food she ate at different places stayed with her throughout her life, getting a boost when she had to plan the meals of her son Anand, who went on to launch Asha's. It may be the reason why Asha's menu has such a pan-Indian footprint.

The restaurant, though, may not have happened, according to Farzana Contractor, founder and editor of Upper Crust, had the Emirati entrepreneur and royal, Sheikh Manna-bin-Halifa al Makhtoum, not read a Gulf News interview in which the singer who'll forever be remembered for 'Dum Maro Dum' and 'Mehbooba Oh Mehbooba' talked about her love

for food and her dream of opening an Indian eatery. That was in 1998-99 when Asha Bhosle was visiting Dubai for concerts. Sheikh Manna-bin-Halifa's management team contacted the singer and they got talking about the prospect of opening restaurant after her name in Dubai. Asha Bhosle could have just lent her name and go on to count her share of the earnings, but, as Contractor points out, she insisted on personally training the restaurant's opening chefs, Sachin Tilak and Salim Qureshi.

### Momos, Biryani, And Everything Else

The durability of the Dubai restaurant, which opened in 2002 with Anand helming it, and the fact that it has spread its wings to other locations internationally, only goes to show the drawing power of Asha Bhosle's eclectic table, where you could have been served everything - from momos, which Mala Sinha

(whose family had Nepali origins) taught the singer to make, to Raj Kapoor's favourite Peshawari biryani, to a delicious boneless chicken cooked with ginger, garlic and almonds in a coconut gravy, which she picked up from the lyricist Majrooh Sultanpuri's wife (who, incidentally, had a formidable repertoire of Awadhi delicacies). People talk about Asha Bhosle and RD Burman's partnership being one of the most enduring in Hindi cinema - and Burman, being an epicure whose favourite was the Goan prawn curry, made demands not only on his wife's exceptional singing talent, but also on her cooking skills.

Looking back at her days with him in her conversation with Contractor, Bhosle recalled how Burman, popularly known as Pancham Da, loved to entertain. "Burman saab would call and say he is bringing some people over for dinner.

## QUESTION ON PENSION OF PUBLIC REPRESENTATIVES



DR. SATYAWAN SAURABH

(The Supreme Court of India's strong remarks have sparked a debate—is the pension reserved by former MPs in accordance with the principle of equality or is it an example of privilege?)

India is a democratic country, where the people are considered supreme and public representatives act as public servants. However, from time to time, issues arise that question this fundamental principle. The recent debate over the pensions and benefits of former MPs falls into this category. When the Supreme Court of India questioned the Central Government about the justification for the pensions and benefits provided to former MPs, it sparked a new debate across the country. This question is not merely an administrative or legal issue, but one that concerns social justice, equality, and democratic values. Why should one class enjoy privileges while others are bound by strict rules and limitations? This question naturally arises in the minds of ordinary citizens. In a democracy, public representatives are elected by the people to protect their interests and work for the development of society. This is a responsibility, not a means to obtain permanent benefits. However, when public representatives are granted lifelong pensions, various privileges, and special rights, the question arises whether this system fosters a sense of service or turns it into a privilege. A typical government employee must serve for years to receive a pension, often only after 20 to 30 years of service. In contrast, a sin-

gle term—of five years—is sufficient to become a Member of Parliament. This inequality is worrying not only from an economic perspective but also from a moral perspective.

The Indian Constitution is based on the principle of equality. Every citizen should have equal opportunities and equal rights. However, when special privileges are granted to a particular class, this principle appears to be weakened. The issue of pensions for former MPs has become a symbol of this inequality. When a large section of the country is struggling economically, troubled by problems like unemployment and inflation, such privileges create public discontent. This discontent is not only economic, but also psychological and social. It's also important to note that the cost of these pensions and benefits is ultimately met by public taxes. This raises the question: is this a wise use of resources? Shouldn't this money be invested in education, health, employment, and infrastructure? While it could be argued that this expenditure is not significant in the overall budget, the issue is not just about the amount, but about the principle. If a system promotes inequality, it cannot be justified simply because its economic impact is limited. One perspective on this issue is that public representatives should receive certain benefits after their term. They argue that becoming an MP requires a person to distance themselves from their profession, business, or job. Consequently, they lack a stable source of income after their term ends. Furthermore, it is argued that if public representatives are not provided with financial security, they will be unable to make independent and impartial decisions. They may become more vulnerable to external influences, which could impact the quality of democracy. These arguments seem reasonable, but the question is whether the current system is balanced, or whether this benefit has gone beyond "necessity" and become a "privilege."

An important aspect of this entire issue is how transparent the

process for determining these benefits is. Is public opinion considered in these decisions? Is the advice of experts and economic analysts given importance? It is often observed that decisions related to the benefits of public representatives are made by them. This situation gives rise to conflicts of interest. Therefore, it becomes necessary to increase the role of independent and impartial institutions on these issues.

If we look at other democratic countries, they too provide certain benefits to public representatives, but in most places, these are subject to strict rules and conditions. Many countries have established minimum service periods, age limits, and other criteria. Such a system could be implemented in India, maintaining balance and strengthening the principle of equality. Measures such as determining pensions based on service period, providing them for a limited period, or balancing them with other government pension systems could be effective in this direction.

Public awareness and participation are crucial in any democracy. Positive change is possible only if citizens remain vigilant and raise their voices on these issues. Today, discussions on this topic have increased through social media and other platforms, which is a positive sign. This demonstrates that people no longer want to be mere spectators, but rather active participants. Ultimately, this debate over the pensions and benefits of former MPs is not merely a matter of policy, but rather one that touches the very heart of democracy. It forces us to consider whether we are truly adhering to the principles of equality and justice. The government and policymakers must take this issue seriously and develop a system that is not only rational but also just. Public representatives should be respected and protected, but this system must be designed to ensure that it does not become a privilege. A strong democracy is one where public trust is paramount, and to maintain this trust, transparency, equality, and accountability must be given top priority in policies.

## TREATMENT OR BUSINESS? THE TRUTH BEHIND THE WHITE COAT



DR. SATYAWAN SAURABH

(When the doctor broke his silence, the dark side of the system came to the fore)

Therecent story of a young doctor has shocked society. The courage with which she spoke on camera about her reasons for leaving her job raises serious questions about not just a personal decision but the entire healthcare system. She said she was pressured to admit as many patients as possible—whether their condition was critical or not. Furthermore, patients were often kept in the ICU for longer than necessary to increase hospital bills. This is more alarming than it sounds. Because healthcare is no ordinary service; it is a sensitive field based on trust, responsibility, and ethics. When profiteering and unethical practices take root in this field, it directly impacts human life. The state of healthcare in India is already beset by many challenges—overcrowding in government hospitals, a lack of resources, and expensive treatment in private hospitals. Consequently, ordinary citizens often turn to private hospitals, hoping for better and faster treatment. However, if they face unnecessary hospitalizations, unnecessary tests, and inflated bills, this not only creates a financial burden but also a psychological drain. The most important question in this entire matter is: Is medicine no longer a service, but a "business"? Are doctors also being subjected to pressures that dis-



tance them from the true spirit of their profession? It's important to understand that not every doctor or every hospital engages in such activities. Even today, thousands of doctors in the country treat patients with complete honesty and dedication despite limited resources. However, the corrupt policies and greed of some institutions tarnish the image of the entire profession. This step taken by a doctor—quitting his job—is not easy, especially when medical education costs lakhs of rupees and there is pressure to maintain a stable career. Standing up for one's ethics is a courageous decision. It also shows us that many people working within the system are uncomfortable with this situation, but not everyone is able to speak out openly. This problem isn't limited to hospital management, but rather, it's become part of a broader system. A complex relationship has developed between insurance companies, the pharmaceutical industry, and private hospitals, in which the patient is sometimes reduced to a mere "case" or "client." The purpose of treatment shifts from improving health to

maximizing revenue. Keeping patients unnecessarily in the ICU is not only financial exploitation but also a serious moral offense. In a sensitive setting like the ICU, patients and their families are already under psychological pressure. Taking advantage of this situation to inflate the bill is considered a betrayal. Additionally, unnecessary testing and treatment are a major problem. Patients are often subjected to tests that are not immediately necessary. This directly impacts their pockets, leaving many families in debt. Another dangerous aspect of this situation is that it erodes society's trust in doctors. When people begin to believe that doctors are more concerned with their bills than with their treatment, it poses a serious threat to the entire healthcare system. The relationship between doctor and patient is based on trust, and when this trust is broken, it is not easy to rebuild it. So what is the solution then? First, it is crucial to increase transparency in the health sector. Hospitals should clearly disclose their fees, treatment procedures, and admission standards. Patients and their families

have the right to know what treatment they are receiving and why. Second, the role of regulatory bodies must be strengthened. The government and relevant health authorities must ensure that ethical standards are followed in hospitals. Strict action should be taken against irregularities to prevent recurrence. Third, doctors must also have a safe and independent work environment. If they face unethical pressure from management, they must have a robust mechanism to complain and seek justice. Whistleblower protections can also be an important step in this direction. Fourth, patients and society need to be more aware. We should be aware of our rights and ask questions when necessary. Seeking a second opinion during treatment can also be a good option. Additionally, medical education should place greater emphasis on ethics. The process of becoming a doctor should not be limited to technical knowledge, but should also include a deep understanding of human values and responsibility. Finally, it's important to understand that healthcare isn't a typical industry.

# DONALD TRUMP ORDERS US NAVY BLOCKADE OF STRAIT OF HORMUZ

**THREATENS TO 'FINISH' IRAN OVER NUCLEAR DISPUTE**

US President Donald Trump said on Sunday that the Navy would "shortly" begin a blockade of ships entering and leaving the Strait of Hormuz.

"So, there you have it, the meeting went well, most points were agreed to, but the only point that really mattered, NUCLEAR, was not. Effective immediately, the United States Navy, the Finest in the World, will begin the process of BLOCKADING any and all Ships trying to enter, or leave, the Strait of Hormuz," he posted on Truth Social.

"At some point, we will reach an 'ALL BEING ALLOWED TO GO IN, ALL BEING ALLOWED TO GO OUT' basis, but Iran has not allowed that to happen by merely saying, 'There may be a mine out there somewhere,' that nobody knows about but them. THIS IS WORLD EXTORTION, and Leaders of Countries, especially the United States of America, will never be extorted. I have also instructed our Navy to seek and interdict every vessel in International Waters that has paid a toll to Iran. No one who pays an illegal toll will have safe passage on the



high seas," Trump said. The development follows collapsed talks with Iran in Pakistan. The US president has vowed to destroy Iranian mines, warning US forces are "locked and loaded". "We will also begin destroying the mines the Iranians laid in the Straits. Any Iranian who fires at us, or at peaceful vessels, will be BLOWN TO HELL! Iran knows, better than anyone, how to END this situation which has already devastated their Country. Their Navy is gone, their Air Force is gone, their Anti Aircraft and Radar are use-

less, Khomeini, and most of their "Leaders," are dead, all because of their Nuclear ambition," he added. Trump said other countries would also be involved with this blockade and Iran would not be allowed to profit off this "Illegal Act of EXTORTION". "The Blockade will begin shortly. They want money and, more importantly, they want Nuclear. Additionally and, at an appropriate moment, we are fully 'LOCKED AND LOADED,' and our Military will finish up the little that is left of Iran! President DONALD J. TRUMP," he added.

The Middle East teeters on the brink of an expanded conflict today, with Al Jazeera reporting that the Israeli army chief has explicitly ordered his forces to prepare for a possible resumption of war on Iran. This stark military escalation, broadcast by the Qatar-based news network, arrives at a critical and volatile moment for the region, directly following the abrupt collapse of international diplomatic efforts to halt the ongoing hostilities.

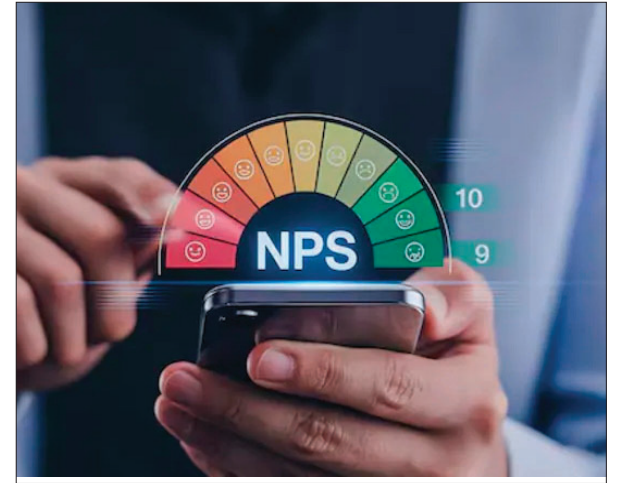
**Ceasefire Talks Hit Dead End**  
The alarming directive from Israel coincides with a complete standstill in US-Iran ceasefire negotiations. High-stakes diplomatic talks aimed at ending the six-week war have officially failed. Following 21 hours of gruelling, face-to-face marathon negotiations in Pakistan, the US delegation—led by Vice President J.D. Vance and featuring key figures like Jared Kushner and Steve Witkoff—could not reach a consensus with an Iranian delegation headed by Parliament Speaker M o h a m m a d - B a g h e r

Ghalibaf. The talks ultimately collapsed over profound strategic disagreements. A major roadblock was the inability to agree on the control and safe passage of vessels through the heavily contested Strait of Hormuz. Furthermore, Iranian officials maintained a hardline stance, asserting that any successful truce hinged entirely on the United States acknowledging Iran's "legitimate rights and interests." With neither side willing to concede, Vice President Vance confirmed the US delegation's return without a resolution.

**Global Economic Shockwaves**  
The dual blow of Israel's potential military mobilisation and the failure of international diplomacy is sending immediate shockwaves through global markets. Crude Oil and Gold Physical crude markets are bracing for severe shortages, driving up record premiums amid widespread geopolitical panic. Simultaneously, gold prices have surged as the breakdown of talks weakens the US dollar, triggering a massive wave of safe-haven investments.

## PFRDA's NPS Swasthya: Here's How You Can Dip Into Pension Funds For Health

The Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority (PFRDA) recently launched the second proof of concept for the groundbreaking initiative 'NPS Swasthya,' which has been designed to reshape the way Indians view their retirement savings. The initiative is intended to provide healthcare funding along with retirement planning.



Traditionally, the National Pension System (NPS) has served as a major vehicle for long-term financial security. It ensures that subscribers build a corpus to sustain themselves during their post-retirement years. Amid rising healthcare costs and medical emergencies often draining household finances, PFRDA has now come up with a mechanism that allows pension funds to serve a dual purpose — retirement planning and healthcare support. NPS Swasthya: Here's what you must know PFRDA, which serves as the regulatory authority, has described NPS Swasthya as a multi-partner initiative that has been structured to provide comprehensive financial support along with health security. As per the official

statement, the new initiative will see the Medi Assist Healthcare Services acting as the core technology partner to provide digital infrastructure, while CAMS KRA supports subscriber onboarding and KYC enablement. Meanwhile, Tata Pension Fund and Axis Pension Fund will serve as the designated pension fund managers. Further, it stated that the Aditya Birla Health Insurance provides the integrated top-up insurance cover, with Medi Assist TPA managing claims administration. "The initiative addresses a growing gap in India's retirement landscape, where healthcare costs are projected to rise by 11.5 per

cent to 14 per cent in 2026, significantly outpacing inflation and putting long-term financial security under pressure for millions," PFRDA said. The scheme has been introduced at a time when the pension ecosystem rapidly scales with NPS and Atal Pension Yojana (APY), having a cumulative subscriber base of 9.64 crore. Its combined assets under management are pegged at Rs 16.55 lakh crore, as of March 29, 2026. While the NPS funds have usually remained locked until the subscriber reaches retirement age, the NPS Swasthya initiative provided them access to a 'Net Eligible Balance' up to 25% of their contributions.

## IPOs This Week: One Mainboard Issue To Launch, Om Power Transmission Shares To List On Indian Stock Market

The third week of April will be a truncated week in the Indian stock market, expecting limited action in the primary market with limited openings of initial public offerings.

The coming week will witness the launch of two IPOs for subscription including one mainboard and one SME IPO and few listings.

Here's a look at all IPO actions in the primary market between April 13-17, 2026: Citius Transnet InvIT IPO Citius Transnet Investment Trust InvIT IPO will open for subscription on Friday, April 17, 2026 and end on Tuesday, April 21, 2026. The IPO is a book built issue of Rs 1,350 crore.

As per the draft documents, the proposed public issue, included a strategic investor portion capped at 25% of the total size. The shares are proposed to be listed on both BSE and NSE. Mehul Telecom IPO Mehul



Telecom IPO is scheduled to open for subscription on Friday, April 17, 2026 till Tuesday, April 21, 2026. The company will in BSE SME and expects to raise Rs 27.73 crore through the public issue.

The offer will be entirely fresh issue of around 28 lakh shares. New Listings Om Power Transmission IPO Shares of Om Power Transmission are scheduled to list on the BSE and NSE on April 17. The Om

Transmission IPO is a book-built issue of Rs 150.06 crore. It comprises a fresh issue of 76 lakh shares worth Rs 132.56 crore and an offer-for-sale (OFS) of 10 lakh shares amounting to Rs

17.50 crore. The price band for the IPO is set at Rs 166 to Rs 175 per share. Emiac Technologies IPO Emiac Technologies IPO will list on the BSE SME on Monday, April 13, 2026. The offer is entirely a fresh issue totalling up to Rs 31.75 crore. The IPO bidding started from Friday, March 27, 2026 and ended on Wednesday, April 8, 2026.

Safety Controls & Devices IPO Safety Controls & Devices SME IPO are scheduled to be listed on Monday, April 13. The shares will list on BSE SME. The Safety Controls & Devices IPO consists of 60 lakh shares. Safety Controls IPO bidding started from Monday, April 6, 2026 and ended on April 8, 2026.

## CORPORATE ACTIONS THIS WEEK:

### Aurobindo Pharma, Muthoot Finance, Others To Trade Ex-Dividend

Aurobindo Pharma Ltd., Muthoot Finance Ltd. Energy Infrastructure Trust Ltd., Blue Blends Ltd., Pashupati Cotspin Ltd., and Prime Plastics Ltd. are among the many companies that have corporate actions lined up this week. Prima Plastics will also engage in a spin-off. Blue Blends (India) Ltd. had had its resolution plan suspension on April 17, while Prima Plastics' will have its spin-off on the same date. The listed companies have announced dividend payouts, income distribution, buy backs and stock splits that investors can benefit from. Dividends Muthoot Finance will trade ex-dividend and mark the record date has approved an interim dividend of Rs 30 per share on Friday, April 17. Stock Split On Friday, April 17, R&B Denims Ltd. will trade ex-stock split in the ratio of 10:1. That means 10 equity share with a face value of



#### Highlights

■ Aurobindo Pharma Ltd., Muthoot Finance Ltd. Energy Infrastructure Trust Ltd., Blue Blends Ltd., Pashupati Cotspin Ltd., and Prime Plastics Ltd. are among the many companies that have corporate actions lined up this week.

Rs 10 will be subdivided into two shares of Rs 1. Stock splits typically enhances liquidity and encourages broader investor participation.

Investors should be watching these dates closely, as such actions often influence near-term stock sentiment and trading activity. Income Distribution

(InvIT) Energy Infrastructure Trust Ltd. will launch its InvIT (income distribution) with the record date of April 16. The ex-date is also April 16. Buy Back Of Shares Aurobindo Pharma Ltd. approved a share buyback plan worth up to Rs 800 crore. The company will repurchase 54,23,728 fully paid-up equity shares, representing up to 0.93% stake, at a price of Rs 1,475 per share. The offer price is a premium of 11.6% over April 2's close of Rs 1,333.7. The board has set April 17 as the record date for the purpose of determining the entitlement and the names of equity shareholders who would be eligible to participate in the buyback. The buyback is proposed to be made from all of the equity shareholders, including the promoters and members of the promoter group, on a proportionate basis through the "tender offer" route.

## TCS Suspends Employees, Launches Enquiry Following Sexual Harassment Allegations In Nashik

Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) has suspended several employees pending an internal enquiry following serious allegations of sexual harassment at its Nashik office. The IT firm initiated immediate disciplinary action upon learning of the matter, reaffirming its strict stance against workplace misconduct. The corporate response follows formal complaints made by tech employees in Nashik. In connection with the allegations, local law enforcement has arrested six individuals, including a team lead, from the multinational company's office. Emphasising its commitment to a secure working environment, TCS highlighted the priority it places on staff welfare and safety. "TCS has a long-standing zero-tolerance policy towards harassment and coercion of any form," a company



spokesperson stated. "We have always ensured the highest standards of safety and wellbeing of our employees at the workplace." Addressing the prompt intervention, the spokesperson detailed the immediate steps taken by the firm's management regarding the accused personnel. "As soon as we were made aware of the matter in Nashik, we took swift action. The employees being investigated have been suspended

pending enquiry." The technology giant confirmed it is fully supporting the ongoing police probe into the arrested individuals. Moving forward, the company's final disciplinary decisions will be guided by the official findings. "We are cooperating with the local law enforcement authorities, and any further action will be based on the conclusion of this investigation," the spokesperson concluded.

## Music giant Universal gets \$64bn takeover offer

Universal Music Group, the entertainment giant behind acts such as Taylor Swift, Sabrina Carpenter and Kendrick Lamar, has received a takeover offer estimated to be worth \$64.3bn (£48bn). US investment company Pershing Square is offering to buy Universal in a merger that would see the new company listed in America, its billionaire chief executive Bill Ackman said. As well as representing a huge list of artists, the world's largest music company also runs Abbey Road studios and owns labels such as EMI and Island Records. Pershing Square, which already owns a stake in Universal, also has holdings in Google, Meta and Amazon, as well as Restaurant Brands International, which includes Burger King. Universal said it had received Pershing's proposal and would assess its implications for shareholders, employees, artists, songwriters and other stakeholders. The company's board also expressed full confidence in chief executive Sir Lucian Grainge, his management team and strategy. Ackman



said its management had "done an excellent job nurturing and continuing to build a world-class artist roster and generating strong business performance". He said Universal had reshaped the industry to put artists at its centre, and had shown it could seize growth opportunities from artificial intelligence while protecting intellectual property. But he said the company's stock price had "languished" due to issues unrelated to the performance of its music business, which could all be "addressed with this transaction". Dan Coatsworth, head of markets at AJ Bell, said: "On paper, you might think is a money-

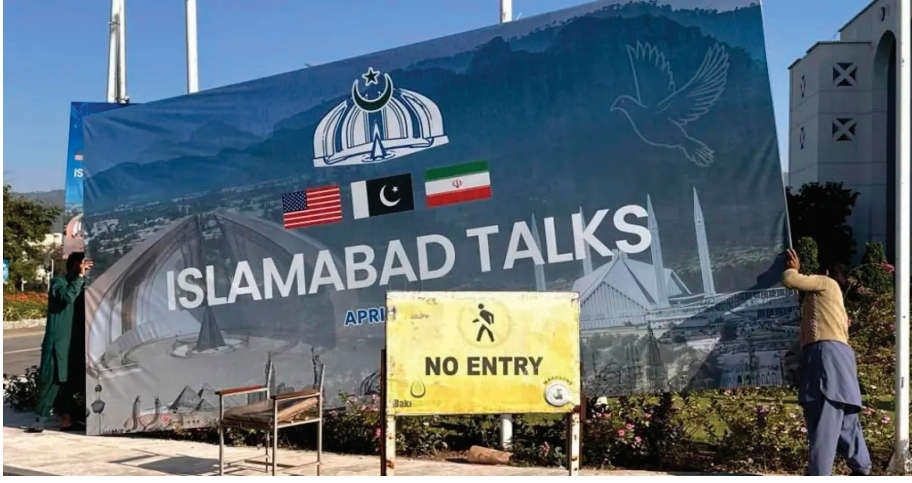
making machine. In reality, it's not that simple." Universal "is home to nine of the top 10 global recording artists of 2025", said Coatsworth but growth in the music streaming market had been slower than expected which matters "because Universal relies heavily on the likes of Spotify and Apple Music for royalty payments". Global music revenues have been growing year-on-year as streaming subscriptions rescued the industry from a period of piracy and financial decline. But a heated debate has been ongoing about how much these platforms pay out in royalties. The industry is also battling a rise in deepfakes - songs by

fraudsters impersonating its artists - which are created by AI and are flooding platforms. He blamed a variety of factors, including uncertainty around an 18% stake in Universal owned by Bolloré Group, the family conglomerate of billionaire Vincent Bolloré, as well as a recent decision to delay listing the company's shares on the New York Stock Exchange. Universal is currently listed in Amsterdam but Ackman has long-campaigned for the company to float in the US. Ackman became a high-profile supporter of Donald Trump in July 2024 during his bid for a second term in the Oval Office. His intervention was seen as an important electoral endorsement of the now president from the business world. Adrian Cheesley, a former senior vice president at Universal, said the company would be the only music major to be listed on the S&P 500 stock market index in the US if the move went ahead. Commenting on Ackman's motives, Cheesley told BBC Radio 4's Today Programme he believed the billionaire investor was happy with the

current management. "I think this is about financial engineering, I don't think it's gonna affect the day-to-day running of the business," he said. Universal's share price initially soared by nearly 30% after the offer emerged on Tuesday. By the afternoon, it was 10% ahead. How music businesses earn revenue has changed as listeners switched to the likes of TikTok and Instagram. In 2024 Universal threatened to pull its songs from TikTok, claiming the platform wasn't paying fair value for music, and it was also concerned about "protecting human artists from the harmful effects of AI, and online safety for TikTok's users". Coatsworth said this dispute, while now settled, points to broader concerns around getting paid by social media networks. Added to that, he said: "Cut-throat competition in the music business also doesn't help. Record labels must plough significant amounts into marketing to make their artists stand above the crowd, and that means Universal must constantly spend money to make money."

# Trump says US to 'blockade' Strait of Hormuz after talks failed over Iran's 'nuclear ambitions'

US President Donald Trump's threat to blockade the Strait of Hormuz will only affect a small handful of vessels that are still navigating the waterway, shipping expert Lars Jensen says. "If this is actually done by the Americans, it will halt a very tiny trickle of vessels. In the greater scheme of things, it doesn't really change anything," he says. Jensen, chief executive of Vespucci Maritime, says Trump's threat of preventing safe passage for any ships paying tolls to Iran would also have little impact, as any company doing so would already face sanctions for paying the regime. "First of all, there's very few ships that pass. There's even fewer of those that pay, and those that pay will already be subject to American sanctions," he says. Most shipping companies will continue to wait and see if there is a tentative peace agreement and whether that might hold,



Jensen says, and if that occurs, a slow ramping up of shipping may resume. As for what it would take shipping lines to decide whether it was safe to transit the strait again, he says the honest answer from those firms would be that they don't know. "Because at the end of it, it boils down to trust: trust that any agreement between the US and Iranians will hold for a significant portion of time,

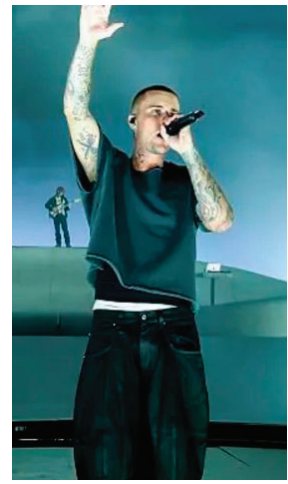
and that's a subjective feeling, there is nothing hard and tangible you can point to," he says. As we watch to see whether the next few days bring more talks or a resumption of the war, the US president has made various threats in a lengthy Truth Social post. We knew Iran's nuclear point was a huge point of contention and one that Trump has confirmed negotiators couldn't get past.

The future of the Strait of Hormuz is clearly an immediate concern, and the US is now threatening a blockade. Not only that, Trump is threatening any country who pays Iran "an illegal toll" to get through the vital shipping lane. There have been reports that some ships have passed through after paying a very expensive fee to Iran. Before these talks, he claimed there has been regime change in

Iran, with new and more "reasonable" leaders, but they are now "volatile, difficult, unpredictable people". But, he did acknowledge there had been points of agreement during these talks, and that's a sense we had here in Islamabad, as we heard technical experts became involved and talks continued into the early hours of the morning. Trump has also said the US delegation became "very friendly" and "respectful" of Iran's delegation, which would suggest some sort of working relationship difficult to imagine before this weekend. We had wondered how he might react to the failure to agree to come to an agreement in Islamabad... we can now see his first response. Across two lengthy social media posts, he says he will block the few ships that are currently making it through the Strait of Hormuz. "I have instructed our Navy to seek and interdict every vessel in International Waters that has

paid a toll to Iran. No one who pays an illegal toll will have safe passage on the high seas." The posts do not make it clear how "safe passage" will be denied, but it is worth remembering that the US has, in just the last few months, boarded vessels en route to or from Venezuela. Crucially, he also says "Other Countries will be involved with this Blockade", without specifying who. Iran's selective - but effective - blockade of ships either aligned to Iran, to nations Tehran considers friendly, or by vessels that are thought to have paid a toll, believed to be around \$2m (£1.5m). He also suggests that Iran has promised to open the Straits. Going by their public statements, they have repeatedly said the reverse, seeking formal recognition of what has become maybe their key strategic point of leverage.

## Justin Bieber headlines Coachella with nostalgia-fuelled set



Justin Bieber made a nostalgia-fuelled return to the major stage as Coachella's much-anticipated headline act. The 32-year-old spent much of Saturday night's gig sitting in front of a laptop and singing to YouTube music videos of his older hits, such as Baby and Never say Never - delighting the crowd in an apparent tribute to the platform on which he was discovered. He also played some of the home videos that had brought him to the industry's attention aged 12, pulling them up on the big screen, and appeared to

interact with the live comments on the YouTube stream of his set. It marked the star's biggest live show in four years, having cancelled his Justice world tour following health issues. He opened the gig alone on an otherwise empty stage, performing tracks from his 2025 albums Swag and Swag II - before telling the crowd he wanted to take them "on a journey" and reaching back into his archive. He repeatedly asked the audience: "How far back do you go?" Bieber also played the clip for which he most recently went viral - and which prompted speculation about his mental state - in which he confronted a photographer and said: "It's not clocking to you, I'm standing on business." Dressed in a hoodie and shorts on a stripped-back stage, Bieber was joined by musical guests including The Kid Laroi, Wizkid, Tems and Dijon. The star's wife Hailey Bieber was spotted in the crowd, alongside celebrity couple Timothée Chalamet and Kylie Jenner.

## Voters in Hungary set to decide whether Viktor Orbán remains in power after 16 years



Tensions between Budapest and Kyiv were heightened earlier this year when oil stopped passing through a major pipeline to Hungary and Slovakia. Deliveries via the Druzhba pipeline came to a halt after the major oil hub at Brody in western Ukraine was damaged in a Russian attack on 27 January. The channel supplies oil from Russia to Hungary and Slovakia and runs across Ukraine. Kyiv says the damage is severe and that it does not have the resources to repair it quickly, but Orbán's government has accused it of stalling. The situation highlights Hungary and Slovakia's continued dependence on Russian oil. Ukraine has accepted "technical support" and funding from the EU to speed up the mends. The stand-off resulted in

Orbán vetoing a 90bn (£78bn) EU loan to Ukraine, holding up a crucial support package for the country. Even before the first reports suggesting possible Russian efforts to bolster Orbán's position, Ukraine had already become a central issue in Hungary's parliamentary election campaign, dominating government messaging. It argues the EU and Kyiv risk dragging Hungary into the war, and that only Orbán's Fidesz party can prevent it. The party has amplified the message using AI-generated campaign videos. Fidesz has previously mobilised perceptions of external threat during election periods - most notably migration in 2018 and the war in Ukraine in 2022 - and analysts say the current campaign shows similar patterns.

## GERMANY'S FAR-RIGHT AFD ADOPTS 'RADICAL'

The far-right Alternative für Deutschland (AfD) party is riding high in the opinion polls in the eastern German state of Saxony-Anhalt and could win an outright majority in regional elections there in September. It would be the first time a far-right party has held power in a German state since World War Two. This weekend the AfD officially adopted what has been described as a "radical" and pro-ethnic German government programme for Saxony-Anhalt at a party conference in the central city of Magdeburg. The AfD's leading candidate in the state, Ulrich Siegmund, a TikTok star who was given a standing ovation by the delegates, said it was an historic moment, not just for Saxony-Anhalt. "The whole of Germany is watching this



historic election," he told the conference. "Parts of Europe are watching this historic election, because from here, finally, the political turnaround can also happen here in Germany." He said his party had the courage to speak out about what was going wrong in Germany, "that we don't feel safe anymore, that we scarcely feel at home anymore, that we don't recognise our homeland anymore".

## After Iran talks falter, the big question is 'what happens next?'

Twenty-one hours was not enough to end 47 years of hostility between Iran and the US. The historic high-level talks in Islamabad, during a pause in weeks of grievous war, were always unlikely to end any other way. Calling this marathon negotiating session a failure belies the scale of the challenge in narrowing wide gaps on complex issues ranging from age-old suspicion about Iran's nuclear programme to new challenges this war has thrown up - most of all Iran's control of the strategic Strait of Hormuz, whose closure is causing economic shocks worldwide. To do a deal, they also needed to overcome a deep chasm of distrust. A day ago, it wasn't even certain the two sides would meet, and even more, sit down in the same room. A long-



standing political taboo was broken. The urgent question now is: what happens next? What happens to the contested two-week ceasefire which pulled the world back from US President Donald Trump's alarming threat to destroy a "whole civilisation" in Iran? Would the US president be

ready to send his negotiators back to the bargaining table? We're hearing reports from sources here in Islamabad that some conversations have continued after US Vice-President JD Vance boarded his plane at sunrise, declaring the US delegation had made their "final and best offer".

Will the US now escalate or negotiate? We still don't know enough about what happened behind tightly closed doors in a five-star hotel in leafy locked-down Islamabad during talks that went on long into the night. There are still few details on the disputes and discussion between the two sides, assisted by Pakistani mediators, the calls to and from experts, advisers, and, according to Vance, "dozens" of calls to Trump himself. The vice-president spoke of the "core goal" of the US during his brief dawn news conference. "We need to see an affirmative commitment that [Iran] will not seek a nuclear weapon and they will not seek the tools that would enable them to quickly achieve a nuclear weapon," he said.

## Why this disillusioned Trump voter spends hours searching Epstein files

After Cayden McBride finishes class in Rome, Georgia, the 19-year-old goes home, opens his laptop, and starts searching. For the past few months, he has been spending hours at a time combing through the Jeffrey Epstein files on the US Department of Justice (DOJ) website and following others online who are doing the same. Flight logs. Transcripts. Images. Videos. The material released by the DOJ has given new insight into the crimes of the late convicted sex offender and into his high-profile connections. McBride believes the Epstein files still matter, even if the headlines have



moved on to the Iran war recently. "As a Christian, I don't believe anybody should endure what these women have been through," he says. "There is so much bad stuff in these files." McBride was a self-described "Trump guy" and "very anti-establishment".

He said he would always defend the US president in the belief that Donald Trump's Make America Great Again (Maga) movement stood for exposing corruption. But the DOJ's delay in releasing all the files, and the perceived lack of accountability afterwards,

has left him and many others disheartened with the movement, and especially with Pam Bondi, Trump's former attorney general. Bondi was removed from her post just last week, to be replaced, in the interim, by her deputy Todd Blanche. Trump has lauded Bondi for doing a "tremendous job" and Blanche denied reports that his predecessor's handling of the Epstein files had been a factor in her departure. But McBride hailed the changing of the guard, expressing hope that there could now be renewed focus on the Epstein issue. His wish was granted this week, from an unlikely quarter.

## AT LEAST 30 FEARED DEAD IN CRUSH AT HAITIAN TOURIST SITE



At least 30 people are feared to have been killed in a stampede at a popular tourist site in Haiti on Saturday. The incident took place on Saturday during an annual Easter gathering at the Laferrrière Citadelle, a Unesco World Heritage site, Jean Henri Petit, head of civil protection for Haiti's Nord department, said, warning the death toll could yet rise. Prime Minister Alix Didier Fils-Aimé said the incident occurred "during a tourist event attended by many young people" at the site, in the northern town of Milot. He said an investigation had been launched and "all relevant authorities" mobilised to support those affected. "The government sends its sincere condolences to the affected families," Fils-Aimé said in a statement. The site had been packed with students and visitors after the event - commemorating the 19th Century fortress's found-

ing - was advertised on social media, local media report, citing officials. The stampede was said to have started near the entrance to the site and was exacerbated by the onset of heavy rain. Haiti's Le Nouvelliste newspaper first reported the death toll, citing Petit. The government statement did not say how many had died. Citadelle Laferrrière, also known as Citadelle Henry, was built by revolutionary Henri Christophe shortly after Haiti gained independence from France. The stronghold took more than a decade to construct and was a crucial part of a network of fortifications to protect the new Caribbean island nation against attacks. The site has since become a symbol of Haitian independence. The deadly stampede comes as Haiti grapples with widespread gang violence that has led to thousands being killed.



Ukraine and Russia accuse each other of hundreds of ceasefire violations

## Manhattan prosecutor investigates abuse claims against congressman Eric Swalwell

The Manhattan District Attorney's Office says it has launched an investigation into sexual misconduct allegations against US Congressman Eric Swalwell. Four women have accused him of misconduct ranging from sexual harassment to rape, including an alleged incident in New York. Swalwell, a leading contender in California's governor race, denies the claims, vowing to defend himself with "facts". "We urge survivors and anyone with knowledge of these allegations to contact our Special Victims Division," said the New York City prosecutor's office. Representatives for

Swalwell - who was elected in 2012 to a district near San Francisco - did not immediately respond to the BBC's request for comment. In urging accusers to come forward, the district attorney's office said on Saturday: "Our specially trained prosecutors, investigators and counsellors are well-equipped to help you in a trauma-informed, survivor-centered manner." The investigation comes a day after Swalwell said the allegations were "false". "For nearly 20 years, I have served the public - as a prosecutor and a congressman, and have always protected women," the married father-of-three added.



## IPL 2026: Salt, Patidar power-hitting help RCB post 240/4 against Mumbai Indians

Mumbai, April 12 : Phil Salt, Virat Kohli, and skipper Rajat Patidar scored contrasting half-centuries as defending champions Royal Challengers Bengaluru smashed 240/4 against Mumbai Indians in Match 20 of the Indian Premier League (IPL) 2026 at the Wankhede Stadium in Mumbai on Sunday. It was fireworks all around as Salt (78 off 36 balls) and Patidar (53 off 20) put on a brilliant display of power-hitting while Kohli struggled to a pedestrian 50 off 38 balls. After the Mumbai Indians had pulled things back, Tim David provided a late boost with a 16-ball 34 as RCB made the most of the batting-friendly conditions to post a challenging total, and set a record chase for five-time winners Mumbai Indians. Asked to bat first, Phil Salt came out with guns blazing as he and Virat Kohli raised 100 runs for the opening wicket stand. They scored 13 runs off Trent Boult's opening over, with Kohli blasting him for a six and Salt for a four. After steady scores off Hardik Pandya, Jasprit Bumrah, and Boult, Phil Salt welcomed Mitchell Santner by hammering a hat-trick of sixes (first a heave over deep square leg, the



next clubbed over wide long-on, and third smashed over deep square leg), followed by a four off his first four deliveries of the match, blasting 22 runs from the over. While Kohli scored at a sedate pace, Salt continued to operate in the third gear, hitting Mayank Markande for a hat-trick of boundaries as he raced to his fifty in 25 balls. A six to celebrate his fifty off Markande in the eighth over meant Salt motored to 61 off just 27 balls. He eventually fell to Shardul Thakur in the 11th over, hitting an easy catch straight to Pandya at extra cover. Salt scored 78 off 36

balls, blasting half a dozen fours and sixes on the way. But there was no respite for the Mumbai Indians as Rajat Patidar took over the role of power-hitter. Starting with a four off Thakur, Patidar smashed a hat-trick of sixes off Markande in the 12th over. He smashed a six and a couple of fours off Thakur as they scored 23 runs off the 13th over and struck a four and six off Boult in the 1th over as he threatened to smash the record for the fastest fifty in IPL history, reaching 44 off 11 balls. Meanwhile, Kohli struggled to a sluggish fifty off 37 balls before Patidar blazed to

his half-century from 16 balls, with a streaky four off Santner. Both Kohli and Patidar fell soon after completing their fifties, as the Mumbai Indians applied the brakes as the RCB fell from 185/1 to 194/3 within eight balls. Kohli ended his misery by holing out to Suryakumar Yadav at long-on off Pandya for 50 (38 balls, 5x4, 1x6) while Patidar fell to Santner, attempting to shank him over long-on but miscuing it to Tilak Varma. Patidar hammered four boundaries and five maximums in his 20-ball 53.

Things went a bit quiet after that, though Tim David blasted Pandya for a six off a free hit and helped them score fifty runs in the last five overs. David remained unbeaten on 34 off 16 balls, reached with a six off the last ball bowled by Boult, as RCB, who were threatening to go beyond 250 after reaching 115/0 at the halfway mark and 201/3 in 17.

Brief scores: Royal Challengers Bengaluru 240/4 in 20 overs (Phil Salt 78, Rajat Patidar 53, Virat Kohli 50, Tim David 34 not out; Shardul Thakur 1-32, Hardik Pandya 1-39) against Mumbai Indians.

## Sanju Samson Breaks MS Dhoni's Record With 1st Ton For CSK, Joins KL Rahul In Super Elite IPL Club

Sanju Samson announced his arrival at Chennai Super Kings in style in his fourth match for the franchise in IPL 2026. Samson stayed unbeaten on 115\* (56b, 15x4s, 4x6s) as the star became the first wicket-keeper to hit a century for Chennai Super Kings (CSK). He reached the triple-figure mark in 52 balls. He also broke MS Dhoni's record for the most runs in an innings by a designated CSK wicket-keeper in the IPL - 84 against Royal Challengers Bengaluru in 2019. Samson is also the second batter to score a century for three IPL franchises. He has scored centuries for Delhi Daredevils (now Delhi Capitals), Rajasthan Royals (RR) and CSK. KL Rahul (Punjab Kings, Lucknow Super Giants, DC) was the first to achieve the feat. Sanju Samson shed his indifferent start to IPL 2026 season with a blazing hundred and Ayush Mhatre offered another glimpse into



the future with a fluent half-century as Chennai Super Kings posted a competitive 212 for two against Delhi Capitals in Chennai on Saturday. His unbeaten 115 off 56 balls (15x4, 4x6) was the cornerstone of Chennai's one of better outings with the bat in this IPL. After being asked to bat first, the CSK man brought up his first substantial knock in a Yellow jersey, and was involved in an excellent stand with Mhatre for the second wicket - 113 runs in a little over 11 overs.

It was Samson's fourth IPL hundred, the first for CSK and the first in IPL 2026. A big score from Samson was essential for himself and CSK to restore the belief of 'Anbu-den' faithfuls in their team, and he did that on the night with a brilliant innings in front of home fans. It was the typical Samson innings. The Kerala batter had looked unsure of his feet and field placings in earlier matches this season, but on this instance a familiar Samson returned.

## Ayush Mhatre Becomes First 'Retired Out' Batter Of IPL 2026 After Scoring 59 Off 36 Balls

Chennai Super Kings finally came into their own in IPL 2026 on Saturday, with Sanju Samson leading the charge. Samson made history by becoming the first batter in the history of the Indian Premier League (IPL) to score centuries for three different franchises after he brought up his maiden hundred in Chennai Super Kings (CSK) colours against Delhi Capitals (DC) at the Chepauk Stadium. During the clash at Chepauk, a wounded Samson, following three poor outings, roared back into form with an unbeaten 115\* off 56 balls, which included 11 fours and four sixes, at a strike rate of 205.36. Out of his four IPL hundreds, Sanju has scored two for Rajasthan Royals (in the 2019 and 2021 seasons) and



one for Delhi Capitals (in the 2017 season). He later added a 113-run stand with Ayush Mhatre (59 off 36 balls, with three fours and four sixes), while a fiery cameo from Shivam Dube (20\* off 10 balls, with two fours and a six) powered CSK to 212/2 in 20 overs.

DC skipper Axar Patel (1/39) was among the wickets. Interestingly, Mhatre was retired out after the third ball of the 18th over, becoming the first batter to be retired out in this IPL. The internet reacted strongly to the decision. Ayush Mhatre is a better hit-

ter than Shivam Dube and retiring Ayush out was a bad move. Samson also completed 400 sixes in T20 cricket, becoming the fourth Indian to reach the milestone after Rohit Sharma (554), Virat Kohli (441), and Suryakumar Yadav (442). He now has 401 sixes in the shortest format of the game. The 113-run partnership between Samson and half-centurion Ayush Mhatre is the second-highest for CSK against DC for any wicket in IPL history, behind the 141 runs added by Devon Conway and Ruturaj Gaikwad for the first wicket in Delhi in 2023. Sanju was sensational against both pace and spin, but he showed a particular liking for the pacers, scoring 84 runs off 39 balls at a strike rate of 215.4, with 11 fours and three sixes.

## SARA TENDULKAR IN THE STANDS DURING LSG VS GT IPL 2026 MATCH

There was no shortage of support for Lucknow Super Giants in their IPL 2026 match against Gujarat Titans at the Ekana Cricket Stadium on Sunday. Though LSG lost the match, the team can vouch for the fact that they will never be short of backing at the venue. Sachin Tendulkar's daughter Sara, an entrepreneur, was present at the stadium. Sachin's son Arjun is part of the LSG squad. A sensational four-wicket haul by Prasad Krishna and fifties from skipper Shubman Gill and Jos Buttler helped Gujarat Titans (GT) to a seven-wicket win over Lucknow Super Giants (LSG) in their Indian Premier League (IPL) clash on Sunday. GT are placed fifth with two wins and two losses,



collecting four points. LSG have slipped to sixth spot with an identical win-loss record. Put in to bat first, LSG scored 164/8, with only Aiden Markram (30 off 21 balls, with five fours and a six) crossing the 20-run mark, while Krishna picked up 4/28 in his spell. During the chase, fifties from Gill (56 off 40 balls, with

six fours and a six) and Buttler (60 off 37 balls, with 11 fours) helped GT reach the target comfortably, with seven wickets in hand and eight balls to spare. Sai Sudharsan got GT off to a solid start, hitting two fours off Mohammed Shami in the first over. He and skipper Shubman Gill played cau-

tiously until the fifth over, when Gill smashed Shami for 4, 6, 4 and 4 to pick up 20 runs. Digvesh Rathi, however, pulled things back for LSG by dismissing Sai Sudharsan for a 14-ball 15 (three fours) off his first delivery. GT were 45/1 in 5.1 overs. Courtesy of a back-foot punch from Jos Buttler, GT brought up the 50-run mark in 5.5 overs. Buttler and Gill then collected plenty of runs against left-arm spinner George Linde, taking 21 runs off his first two overs, with both batters sharing the spoils. At the halfway stage, GT were well placed at 86/1, with Buttler (22\*) and Gill (48\*) unbeaten. Gill, who had also completed 4,000 IPL runs, brought up his second successive fifty in 34 balls, hitting six fours and a six.

## AUSTRALIAN TEENAGER GOUT FASTER THAN BOLT AT 18

Eighteen-year-old Australian Gout Gout ran 200m faster than sprinting great Usain Bolt managed by the same age as he raced to a national title on Sunday. The teenager clocked a superb time of 19.67 seconds to set a world under-20 record. It was the first time that Gout had gone under the 20-second mark legally, after a wind-assisted 19.84 last season, and is the leading time in the world this year. Gout previously had the quickest-ever time by a 16-year-old, setting a national record of 20.06 when he burst on to the scene in 2024. Sunday's mark in Sydney put him ahead of Jamaican eight-time Olympic champion Bolt's time of 19.93 back in 2004. Bolt was aged 17 when setting what was then a world junior record and never bettered that time as a teenager, before setting a string of senior world records later in his career. United States sprinter Erriyon Knighton's 19.49 run in 2022 remains the fastest time by an U20 athlete, though it was not ratified as a world U20 record. Knighton was nevertheless the holder of the U20 record with an official time of 19.69, set in June 2022, until Gout went quicker. Aidan Murphy, who was second to Gout on



Sunday, also beat the 20-second mark with a time of 19.88. "This is what I've been waiting for," said Gout, who was born in Queensland to parents from South Sudan.

## It's Carlos Alcaraz vs Jannik Sinner Again In Monte Carlo Masters Final

Carlos Alcaraz and Jannik Sinner will renew their "Sincaraz" rivalry when they meet in the Monte Carlo Masters final on Sunday with the No. 1 ranking at stake. Four-time Grand Slam champion Sinner will reclaim the top spot if he beats seven-time major winner Alcaraz, the Monte Carlo defending champion. Sinner reached his first Monte Carlo final by beating Alexander Zverev 6-1, 6-4 an eighth straight time on Saturday. In his semifinal, Alcaraz eliminated home hope Valentin Vacherot 6-4, 6-4, concluding with a sublime drop shot. Alcaraz leads their head-to-head 10-6 going into their ninth final.



Both players are bidding for a 27th career title. Sinner swept Indian Wells and Miami and became only the fourth man to reach the final at the first three Masters tournaments of the season, matching Roger

Federer (2006), Rafael Nadal (2011) and Novak Djokovic (2015). Alcaraz's two titles this year include the Australian Open, where he downed Djokovic and became the youngest man ever to win all four tennis majors.

## PROGRAIS ANNOUNCES RETIREMENT FOLLOWING BENN LOSS



=Former world champion Prograis has announced his retirement at the age of 37. The two-time super-lightweight world champion was beaten convincingly by Conor Benn at Tottenham Hotspur Stadium on Saturday night and then revealed the fight would be his last. "Going in, I knew I was going to retire," the American told Ring Magazine. "This is my last fight. I knew this months ago - I just didn't tell anybody but I was terrified going into this. "It's a great fight to be my last against someone like Conor Benn, someone that was strong - an arena like this with 70,000 in a stadium. I couldn't ask for

a better going away party, perfect end to my story." There were reports circulating prior to the fight that Prograis was hurt, which he confirmed following the defeat, saying he thought about pulling out as little as 24 hours prior to the bout. He added: "The rumours about me being hurt were true. I wanted to pull out of this fight so bad a month ago but kept pushing. I was terrified and thinking about pulling out even yesterday." Prograis retires with a 30-4 record, with 24 victories by knockout. He held the WBA super-lightweight title in 2019, and WBC super-lightweight crown from 2022 to 2023.

## Landmark Moment In Bundesliga: Union Berlin Appoint Female Head Coach Marie-Louise Eta For Men's Team

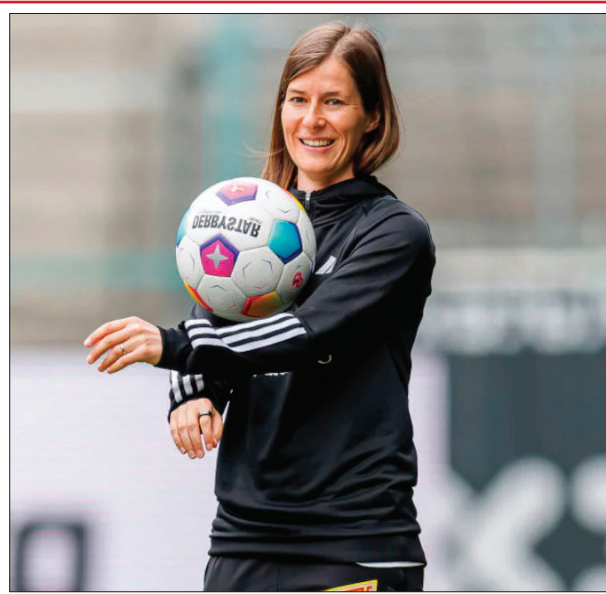
A tectonic shift has taken place in European football, as Bundesliga club Union Berlin has decided to appoint Marie-Louise Eta as manager for the remainder of the season. Eta's appointment was confirmed by the German club following the departure of Steffen Baumgart. Though there is no confirmation of Eta being given a long-term role yet, the management's decision to bank on a female coach to help them stay in the German top division speaks volumes about the belief they have in her. While it is the first time that

a female coach will take over a men's team in Europe's top five leagues, Eta is not an unknown figure in European football. The 34-year-old is a Champions League winner as a player with Turbine Potsdam in 2010, and she also won three consecutive Bundesliga titles from 2009 to 2011. A veteran of German football, Eta has spent years refining her tactical philosophy away from the limelight. She did not arrive at this position by chance, but has earned it through meticulous work within the German youth national

setups and as a trusted assistant at Union. It was in 2019 that she first took up a coaching role with the Germany U19 women's team, and she also worked with the U17 and U15 teams before landing the top job at Union Berlin.

**Challenges Ahead** Placed 11th in the Bundesliga standings, Union Berlin find themselves in a tricky position. The identity that defined their rise to the Champions League has been tested to the core this season. Eta's task is not just to help the club maintain its position in

the table, but also to strengthen its push for a top-half finish. With no transfer window to rely on, Eta must find a way to galvanise a squad that has lost its clinical edge and restore the defensive solidity that once made them the league's most feared underdogs. Whether Eta remains in the post beyond June is almost secondary to what has already been achieved. By stepping into the technical area as the person in charge, she has provided hope to aspiring coaches everywhere, regardless of gender.



## SENSATIONAL DIRECTOR HARISH SHANKAR RELEASES 'GODS AND SOLDIERS' TRAIISER

**G**ods and Soldiers' is a prestigious Tamil-Telugu bilingual film produced by Rough Note Production. The film has completed shooting and is currently progressing rapidly with post-production work. Directed by noted filmmaker and cinematographer Vijay Milton, the movie is shaping up as a commercial mass entertainer and has already created pre-release buzz. The team has released a video titled "TRAISER," which was unveiled by sensational director Harish Shankar through his social media platform. The teaser is attracting attention with its mix of mass elements, emotions, and action sequences. On this occasion, director Vijay Milton said, "We thank director Harish Shankar for releasing our TRAIISER and encouraging us. This film, made on a grand scale with an emotional backdrop, will offer a cinematic experience blending realistic storytelling with commercial elements. Talented actors will be seen in new avatars. Aari Arujunan will appear as a police officer for the first time. Raj Tarun is making his Tamil debut with this film, while Bharath plays a key emotional role. Amu Abhirami and Kishore will be seen in



important roles." He added that the entire team worked hard physically and emotionally for the film. As a special attraction, independent music artist Vedan will also be seen in an important role. Known for his unique voice and socially relevant songs, Vedan's presence adds cultural and musical depth to the film. The movie has been shot extensively in various locations and is currently in post-production. Produced by Rough Note Production, the film is being made as a blend of action, emotion, and social elements to appeal to both Tamil and Telugu audiences.

## GHANANGA "CHINTHAMANI SONTAKATHA" MOVIE LAUNCH

**S**riram and Mahima Gupta are the hero and heroines of the movie "Chintamani Sontakatha". This film is being produced by director Prem Raj. Mitra Movie Makers B. Rajeev Kumar, Rakesh Karre, Dr. NV Rao and Srinivas are producing Kumalleti. Today, the opening ceremony of this movie was held at Hyderabad Ramanaidu Studio with pooja programs. MLC, Government Chief Whip Dr. Addanki Dayakar, Telangana Council for Higher Education Vice Chairman Professor Purushottam were the chief guests in the event. Dr. Dayakar gave a clap to the mirror, GHMC retired Assistant Commissioner Vandana Kumar switched the camera. Social activist Dr. Srinivas directed the first shot. Actor Kashi Vishwanath and writer Nivas together handed over the script to the director. On this occasion Producer B. Rajeev Kumar said - We are producing the film "Chintamani Sontakatha" as the second film under our Mitra Movie Makers banner. Director Prem Raj tells us a good story. Believing in the strong content of the story, we decided to make the film. Hero heroines Sriram and Mahima Gupta are perfect for our movie. We have decided to do a film every year under our banner. Said. Producer Dr. NV Rao said - My friends and I have established Mitra Movie Makers with the intention of making films that give a good message to the audience. I am happy to produce the film "Chintamani Sontakatha" with an experienced director like Prem Raj. We will complete this film as soon as possible and release it. Said. Producer Rakesh Karre said - "Chintamani own story" means CS



K. Like IPL CSK, our movie will be successful. Director Prem Raj is making this film with a good crime thriller story. Good songs are impressive. Lyricist Mittapalli Surender said - I am happy to get an opportunity to write songs with Suddala Ashok Teja and Chandra Bose in this film. It is a film with good emphasis on songs. I am writing a song in this movie. We want you all to support our movie. Said.

Director Prem Raj said - This is my fourth film as a director. The three films I have done in the past are message oriented. Now as the fourth film, I am doing this film with a crime thriller story in a commercial style. Though a crime thriller, it has good drama between husband and wife. There are emotional scenes. The film is being made targeting the youth. We are designing according to the current

trend. The audience will feel the movie in a new way. This is a straight movie in Telugu and Hindi languages. We will dub in Tamil, Malayalam and Kannada. Our four producers are standing like four pillars and producing this movie. Heroine Mahima Gupta is well known for this movie. Hero Sriram is like the cover of our movie. As soon as he heard the story, he offered to do this film. We hope that we will have the cooperation of all of you. Heroine Mahima Gupta said - This is my first film in Telugu. Thanks to the director and producers for giving me the opportunity to act in this movie. Happy to get an opportunity to act opposite Sriram. I hope Telugu audience will support me with this movie. Actor Kashi Vishwanath said - Prem Raj is my friend. I know this story. Very good story. I am playing a character in this film. Along with crime thriller, suspense and family drama elements are impressive. Hero Sriram said - Like our director Prem Raj, I think every film is my first film. The movie "Chintamani Sontakatha" will be a hit movie for Mitra Movie Makers. They should make more movies. Everyone should be given work. All the team are passionate and want to make a good movie. The film is a 'meaningful crime thriller' with twists, emotions and action. We are going to give you a movie that you all will like. Our heroine Mahima got the title role in the first film. Telugu audience appreciates anyone who has talent and strives. We want all your support for our film. Said. In this program, Founder President of Telugu Television Federation Nagabala Suresh Kumar, President of Telugu Television Federation Nani, Others participated

## ARVIND KRISHNA'S INTENSE KARMASTALAM POSTER UNVEILED

**T**he makers of Karmastalam have unveiled a striking new poster featuring Arvind Krishna, and it instantly draws viewers into a mystical, jungle-bound world where myth, power, and raw human grit converge. In the poster, Arvind Krishna appears in a fierce warrior avatar, his muscular frame marked with blood and dust, while his expression reflects steely determination. Holding a glowing divine staff in one hand and gripping a thick vine in the other, he looks like a force summoned from an ancient legend. Behind him looms a giant stone creature with luminous emerald eyes, adding a layer of supernatural intrigue to the visual. The swirling leaves, flowing river, and dense forest back-

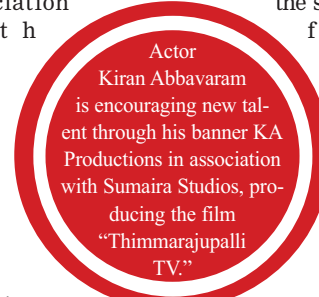


drop hint at an epic narrative shaped by destiny and the forces of nature. It is easily one of Arvind Krishna's most powerful looks on screen so far.

Directed by Rocky Sherman and presented by Roy Films, Karmastalam appears set to build an intense myth-adventure world. The newly released poster strengthens that impression further, offering the look of Arvind Krishna's intense physical preparation, that add scale and visual excitement to the film. Produced by Roy Films, with music by Sai Karthik, the film is gearing up for a grand multilingual release in Telugu, Hindi, Tamil, Kannada, and Malayalam. With each new reveal raising anticipation, Karmastalam is shaping up to be a visually rich and high-intensity cinematic spectacle. The film is currently in the final stages of production, and the team is preparing to bring this epic tale to theatres soon.

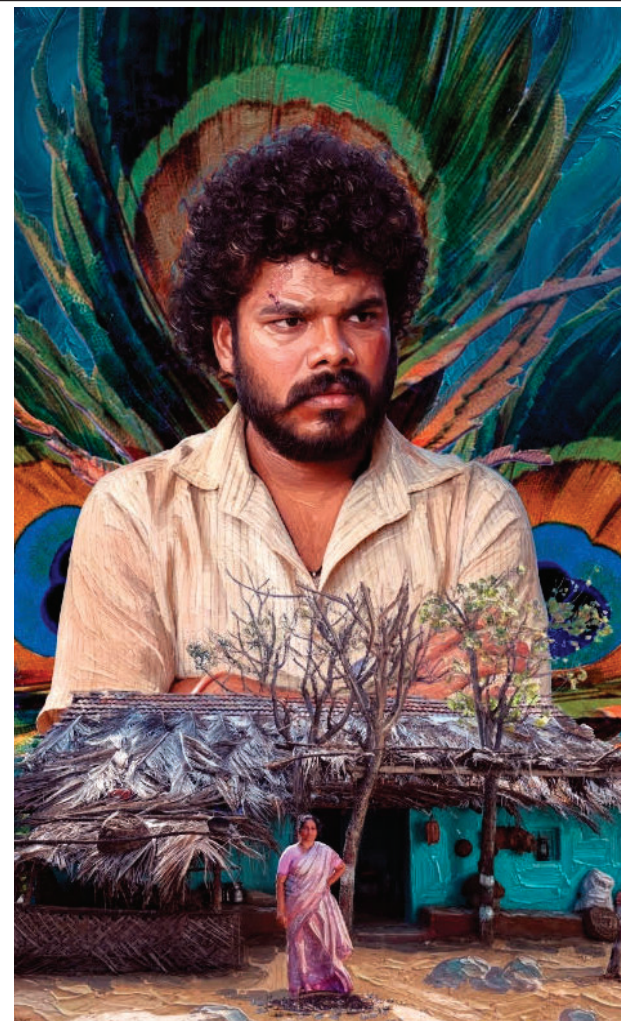
*Gopala Gopala song has been released from Thimmarajupalli TV, produced by hero Kiran Abbavaram under the banners of KA Productions in association with Sumaira Studios*

**A**ctor Kiran Abbavaram is encouraging new talent through his banner KA Productions in association with Sumaira Studios



Sumaira Studios, producing the film "Thimmarajupalli TV." Teja Velpucharla is serving as co-producer. With this film, Sai Tej and Veda Jalandhar are being introduced as the lead actors, while V. Muniraju is making his debut as a direc-

tor. Set against a village backdrop, the movie is a period drama and is gearing up for a grand theatrical release on April 17th. Today, the song "Gopala Gopala" for "Thimmarajupalli TV" was released. The lyrics are written by Sanare, music is composed by Vamsikant Rekha, and the song is sung by Meghana Naidu. The song beautifully reflects on the strange happenings of the modern age (Kaliyuga), appealing to Lord Govinda in a soulful manner. The beautiful line gives it a devotional yet thought-provoking tone, blending emotion and philosophy.



## Samyuktha Menon's Cutout Dress Reveals What Words Never Could

**S**amyuktha Menon has been one of Tollywood's most talked-about actresses, and her latest mirror selfies are breaking the internet all over again. Known for her girl-next-door charm and powerful screen presence, she has built a massive fan base across Telugu, Tamil, and Malayalam cinema. And now, off-screen, she is proving she is just as captivating. In these jaw-dropping photos, Samyuktha stuns in a form-fitting ribbed black cutout dress that hugs every curve perfectly. The deep plunge neckline and the bold waist cutout add just the right amount of edge and drama.



## Saanve Goes Dark And Dramatic In Black

**H**derabad-based actress Saanve Megghana shared a striking set of photos dressed in a sleek black halter-neck gown with a side bow detail. The floor-length silhouette is clean and fitted, styled with chunky silver bangles and statement earrings. One shot captures her from behind in black and white, adding a moody, editorial feel to the whole set.

Saanve has been around Telugu cinema since 2019, mostly in smaller and supporting roles. She has been noticed through Kathalu on Netflix and had a role in Pushpaka

Vimanam. Most recently she made her Tamil debut with Kudumbasthan in 2025 and was also seen in Tuk Tuk. She has another Tamil project in the pipeline too. She is not a leading lady yet, but these pictures show she is clearly putting effort into building her public image off screen. The dark gown, bold accessories and confident poses make for a decent photoshoot. For someone still finding her footing in the industry, it is a smart move to stay visible and keep the social media engagement going between projects.

