



**Pawan Khera approaches
Telangana HC seeking
anticipatory bail**

NATION | NEWS

**India urges nationals to leave Iran 'Expediently',
issues fresh advisory amid conflict**

New Delhi, Apr 8: The Government of India has issued a fresh advisory urging its citizens in Iran to "expeditiously exit" the conflict-hit nation in view of the evolving security situation. In a statement, the Indian Embassy in Tehran strongly advised Indian nationals to leave the country using routes suggested by the embassy and in close coordination with officials.



WORLD | NEWS

**Ranveer is the reason
why I exist in this industry:
Mrunal Thakur**

CINEMA | PAGE



SCAN FOR
E-PAPER



OM NAMO
VENKATESAYA



WEATHER

36 °C | °F

Precipitation: 5%
Humidity: 26%
Wind: 11 km/h

GOLD RATE



INBRIFS

**OIL FALLS AFTER TRUMP
SIGNALS IRAN PAUSE**

Washington (TSIT): Oil prices dropped sharply after US President Donald Trump said he would pause planned military strikes on Iran for two weeks, easing fears of a wider conflict in the energy-rich Gulf region. US crude futures fell below \$100 a barrel, reversing recent gains driven by weeks of tensions around the Strait of Hormuz, a key global oil transit route. The Wall Street Journal said on Tuesday (Local time). The decline followed Trump's announcement that he would suspend attacks on Iran, subject to Tehran reopening the strait, according to the Journal. Stock markets also reacted positively. Futures tied to major US indexes rose more than 2 per cent, signalling investor relief after days of volatility linked to the crisis, it reported.

**RAGHAV CHADHA FUELS
SPECULATION WITH
SOCIAL MEDIA POST**

New Delhi, (TSIT): Speculations are building around a social media post shared by Rajya Sabha MP Raghav Chadha on Instagram on Wednesday, where a purported supporter is found suggesting that he should start a new youth-led political party of his own, rather than join existing organisations. It comes at a time when Chadha appears locked in an apparent rift within the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP), which he represents in Parliament, after being removed as the party's deputy leader in the Upper House.

TN will not accept any decision taken without state's consent, says Stalin

CHENNAI (TSIT): Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M K Stalin on Wednesday said the South demanded a fair delimitation and that the state will not accept any decision taken by the Centre on the subject without its consent.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi should not turn a "calm south into a storm", he cautioned, and posed a set of questions to the PM. "The Prime Minister must answer these fair and pressing questions raised by the

**2026 Kerala Assembly polls
will be remembered as the
most communally-charged
in history**



Kerala (TSIT) In hindsight, the 2021 Assembly elections in Kerala was uncomplicated. On one side, the strength and solidarity that the LDF promised. On the other, the UDF's bouquet of scandals - gold smuggling, e-mobility hub, Sprinkl and deep sea fishing. After the deluge and the pandemic, voters had no appetite for the sensational. They wanted solidity, personified by Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan.

Both the Congress and the BJP had then misread the mind of an electorate shaken by a series of mythical disasters. The BJP tried to sell the entry of women into Sabarimala as the most consequential issue. The party lost the only seat it had. Hoping for the 2019 Lok Sabha magic, the Congress also had espoused the Sabarimala cause. It

lost minority votes in central and south Kerala. By default, the LDF had then emerged as the only secular formation.

This time, freed from apocalyptic terror, voters will perhaps assess the Chief Minister more rigorously. But the 2026 battle is not as simple as performance versus change. Communal thinking has both complicated and vitiated the 2026 elections like never before. It is as if parties are banking on alleged communal hatred to boost their chances.

**DOES KERALA HAVE
MUSLIM HATERS?**

Even while celebrating its development and welfare initiatives, the LDF seems willing to weaken its secular positioning for electoral gains. Will voters impressed by the performance of the Pinarayi-led

LDF government be troubled by this erosion of secular ethics? In 2018, while trying to take on the national leadership role in the fight against the Citizenship Amendment Act, the CPM had tried to nullify the appeasement charge by sharply attacking Jamaat-e-Islami and Social Democratic Party of India (SDPI). The CPM reserved for the Jamaat-e-Islami and the SDPI the same volume of revulsion it ostensibly had for the RSS. This way, it kept its secular wardrobe fresh and fragrant. Voters found this appealing and voted the LDF back to power in 2021. However, after the 2024 Lok Sabha drubbing, when it was felt that the secular balance had caused the loss of both Hindu and Muslim votes, the CPM ditched impartiality.

**Mamata vows legal fight over
voter deletions, slams BJP**



Kolkata, Apr 8 (TSIT): West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Wednesday strongly criticised the BJP and the Election Commission over large-scale deletions of names from voter rolls during the Special Intensive Revision (SIR), asserting that the Trinamool Congress will move court to challenge the exercise.

Addressing rallies in Hooghly district, Banerjee said the removal of nearly 91 lakh voters from the electoral rolls was an attack on democracy. She alleged that the state was being deliberately targeted and warned that deleting names would not weaken the TMC. "We will fight legally to ensure

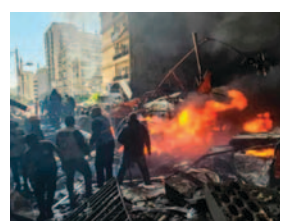
every eligible voter's name is restored," she said. Banerjee also questioned the finalisation of voter lists for the first phase of elections while the matter remains pending before tribunals. Expressing dissatisfaction over the process, she reiterated her respect for the Supreme Court of India but said clarity was needed.

The Chief Minister accused the BJP of attempting to manipulate electoral rolls and influencing institutions. She further alleged that the party was planning divisive politics under the guise of delimitation and warned against any move resembling the NRC in the state.

**ISRAEL'S LARGEST
LEBANON ATTACK
KILLS 89, IRAN WARNS
CEASEFIRE COLLAPSE**

**IRAN DOWNS DRONE, WARNS
OF RESPONSE AS CASUALTIES
MOUNT AND CEASEFIRE STRAINS.**

Lebanon (TSIT) At least 89 people have been killed and more than 800 wounded in Israel's attacks across Lebanon on Wednesday, April 8, Lebanon's Health Ministry told Al Jazeera, as Israel launched what it described as its largest coordinated assault on the country. The strikes came despite



a fragile US-Iran ceasefire, triggering sharp warnings from Tehran and raising fears of a wider regional escalation. Iran has warned it could withdraw from the ceasefire if Israeli strikes continue, signalling that the truce is at risk of collapse.

US-Iran ceasefire: The 10 points of Tehran's peace deal

Tehran (TSIT) US President Donald Trump termed it a "big day for world peace" after announcing a two-week ceasefire between the United States and Iran, just an hour before his escalation deadline expired. This comes after 39 days of war when the US and Israel launched coordinated attacks on Iran, and hours after Trump threatened "a whole civilisation will die tonight" if Iran did not reopen the Strait of Hormuz. Pakistan Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, who has been mediating negotiations, said early on Wednesday that the ceasefire was effective immediately.

The temporary truce hinges



on Iran reopening the strategically vital Strait of Hormuz, paving the way for negotiations based on a broader peace framework proposed by Tehran.

The proposal also reportedly includes provisions for financial compensation mechanisms and a commitment by Iran not to develop nuclear weapons, in exchange for recognition of its civilian nuclear programme.

While Washington has

**IRANIAN STATE MEDIA HAS OUTLINED A
10-POINT PROPOSAL THAT FORMS THE
BASIS FOR ONGOING NEGOTIATIONS:**

- No further military aggression against Iran;
- Continued Iranian control over the Strait of Hormuz;
- Acceptance of Iran's right to uranium enrichment;
- Removal of all primary US sanctions;
- Lifting of secondary sanctions;
- Termination of all UN Security Council resolutions against Iran;
- Revocation of IAEA (International Atomic Energy Agency) Board of Governors resolutions;
- Payment of compensation for war damages;
- Withdrawal of US combat forces from the region;
- End to attacks on Iran-aligned groups across the region.

several of its demands, particularly on sanctions relief, military withdrawal and nuclear enrichment, are expected to be major sticking points in talks. The ceasefire though appears to be fragile, it is a significant opening for diplomacy. Pakistan, which has been facilitating the talks, has invited the delegations to Islamabad on Friday "to further negotiate a conclusive agreement aimed at resolving all disputes."

White House press secretary Karoline Leavitt confirmed that discussions about in-person meetings are ongoing, but emphasized that "nothing is final until announced by the President or the White House."

described the plan as a "workable basis" for negotiations,

Naidu reviews road projects, pushes better connectivity

Amaravati (TSIT): Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu emphasized the need for strong road connectivity to boost the state's economy during a high-level review meeting.

He noted that out of 45,433 km of roads, over 10,000 km require regular maintenance and directed officials to ensure pothole-free roads through scientific



upkeep. With Godavari Pushkarams approach-

ing, he ordered quick repairs in key districts.

Naidu stressed improving connectivity to major ports and called national highways the backbone of development. He said several key highway projects are underway, with major works set for completion soon. He also promoted electric buses to reduce transport costs and instructed officials to expand charging infrastructure and modernize public transport systems.

**13,000 strikes, 13 US troops
killed in war with Iran**

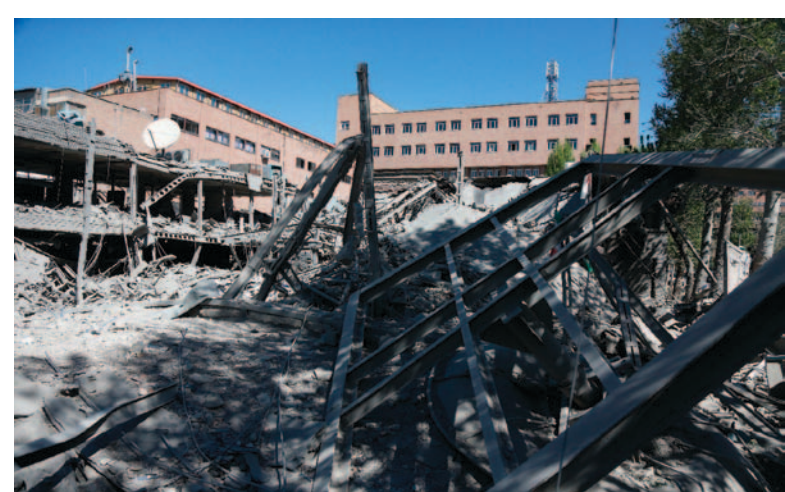
Washington, April 8 : The United States struck more than 13,000 targets during Operation Epic Fury, in a massive military campaign that also left 13 American service members dead, the Pentagon said on Wednesday.

Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Air Force General Dan Caine said the scale of operations reflected the intensity and reach of the campaign.

"Since the beginning of major combat operations, the United States joint forces struck more than 13,000 targets," he said.

Of these, more than 4,000 were dynamic battlefield targets that emerged in real time and were "immediately addressed" through rapid command-and-control systems.

The operation involved more than 10,000 missions, including 62 bomber sorties, some lasting over 30 hours round-trip from the United States to strike Iranian targets. "No other military in the world can do that," Caine said, calling it a testament to US



logistical capability. The campaign targeted a wide range of Iranian military infrastructure. US forces destroyed more than 450 ballistic missile storage facilities, 801 drone storage sites, and over 1,500 air defence targets, eliminating around 80 per cent of Iran's air defence systems.

Caine said the operation also dismantled Iran's command and control networks, striking more than 2,000 nodes and severely degrading its ability to coordinate military responses. "We've devastated Iran's command and control and logistical networks," he said.

Naval operations were equally extensive. The US said it had sunk more than 90 per cent of Iran's fleet, including major surface combatants, and destroyed over 95 per cent of its naval mines through more than 700 strikes.

The scale of destruction extended to Iran's defence industry. Around 90 per cent of its weapons factories were struck, including facilities producing drones and missile components. "Nearly 80 per cent of Iran's nuclear industrial base was hit," Caine said. The operation required the deployment of more than 50,000 US personnel across

the Central Command theatre and supporting bases. Troops consumed millions of meals and operated continuously for over five weeks. Caine said the statistics only partly captured the realities of combat.

"This is gritty and unforgiving business... chaotic, hot, dark, unpredictable," he said.

Amidst the operational success, the Pentagon acknowledged the loss of 13 US service members during the campaign.

"We never forget our fallen and their families... especially those 13 fallen from Operation Epic Fury," Caine said.

He said their sacrifice underscored the risks faced by troops even in a campaign described as highly effective. The Pentagon said the operation has significantly weakened Iran's ability to project power in the region and threaten US interests.

**Govt cuts landing, parking charges for airlines by
25 per cent to keep airfares affordable**

New Delhi, April 8 : Civil Aviation Minister Ram Mohan Naidu on Wednesday announced a 25 per cent cut in landing and parking charges for domestic airlines at the country's airports so that airfares for passengers remain at affordable levels amid the rise in jet fuel prices in the wake of the Middle East conflict. The



minister said that the measure is expected to reduce landing and parking charges payable by air-

lines at major airports during the three-month period by approximately Rs 400 crore. The Civil Aviation Ministry has issued directions to the Airports Economic Regulatory Authority (AERA) to reduce landing and parking charges by 25 per cent from the prevailing tariff at all major airports under its purview. This reduc-

tion has been brought into immediate effect for all domestic flights and will remain applicable for a period of three months. The AERA has issued an order to this effect, stating that any under-recovery by individual airports shall be adjusted during tariff determination in the next control period of five years. Similarly,

Mohammad Azharuddin visits Karnataka State Bioenergy Development Board, explores interstate collaboration

Bengaluru TSIT: Mohammad Azharuddin, former captain of the Indian cricket team and currently serving as Minister for Minority Welfare and Public Enterprises in Telangana, visited the Karnataka State Bioenergy Development Board (KSBD) on Wednesday and held detailed discussions on strengthening interstate collaboration in the bioenergy sector.

At the outset, the participants paid tribute to senior Congress leader and former Union Minister Mohsin Kidwai, who passed away earlier in the day. A one-minute silence was observed in his memory. During the meeting, KSBD Chairman S.E. Sudheendra highlighted Karnataka's pioneering role as the first State in India to introduce a Bioenergy Policy in 2009. He outlined key initiatives undertaken by the Board, including establishment of bioenergy research, information and demonstration centres, biofuel parks, collaborations with non-governmental organizations, bioenergy research and quality assurance laboratories, and partnerships with the Karnataka State Council for Science and Technology.

He further stated that under the leadership of Chief Minister Siddaramaiah, bioenergy development has been prioritised as a



major initiative. With guidance from Rural Development and Panchayat Raj as well as IT/BT Minister Priyank Kharge, efforts are underway to formulate a new bioenergy policy supported by data-driven planning.

The discussions also focused on emerging investments in Andhra Pradesh and Telangana in compressed biogas production using agricultural residue and Napier grass. Karnataka currently has an

estimated biomass availability of over 1.52 lakh tonnes, with investment potential exceeding Rs.1 lakh crore and the capacity to generate more than 35,000 direct and indirect employment opportunities.

Chairman informed that orders have been issued to establish retail outlets to make biodiesel available across the State, similar to the distribution model of kerosene through the Department of Food, Civil Supplies and Consumer

Affairs. He also noted that the Board functions under the Department of Rural Development and Panchayat Raj.

Responding to the presentation, Azharuddin emphasised that Telangana also holds significant potential for bioenergy development. He suggested initiating discussions with Danasari Anasuya Seethakka, Minister for Rural Development and Panchayat Raj, to accelerate sectoral growth.

Naidu Orders Land Reforms, 1.12 Crore Passbooks by March 2027



AMARAVATI: Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu has announced major decisions following a high-level review of the Revenue Department, focusing on land reforms, dispute resolution, and property rights.

The CM directed officials to complete the Resurvey 2.0 initiative by March 2027 and distribute 1.12 crore new Pattadar Passbooks. Surveys have already been completed in

6,976 villages, with 22.79 lakh passbooks being distributed in 5,717 villages. The remaining villages are expected to receive passbooks by July this year.

In a significant move, the government decided to remove restrictions under Section 22-A for 1.37 lakh acres of Village Service Inam lands. Another 1 lakh acres of other service inam lands will also be freed. Naidu instructed officials to bring new legislation to facilitate this pro-

cess, benefiting lakhs of families. The government will also allow registration of houses allotted under government housing schemes before 2016, benefiting nearly 75 lakh poor families. This will enable them to legally register, sell, or transfer their properties through gift deeds.

The CM emphasized complete digitization of land records, with soft copies sent to landowners' mobile phones. He also suggested securing records using blockchain technology after KYC verification, ensuring no land transaction can occur without the owner's consent.

These decisions aim to resolve long-pending land disputes, enhance transparency, and strengthen property ownership rights, especially for economically weaker sections. Senior officials and ministers attended the review.

Vani Bhavani Where Administrative Excellence Meets Classical Grace and Social Commitment

Hyderabad, TSIT: In an era where balancing professional responsibilities with personal passions is increasingly challenging, Vani Bhavani stands out as a rare and inspiring example of excellence, discipline, and cultural commitment. Serving as Assistant Commissioner in the Civil Supplies Department, Government of Telangana, she has seamlessly blended administrative efficiency with artistic brilliance, emerging as a role model for young professionals and aspiring artists alike.

A highly accomplished Kuchipudi dancer, Vani Bhavani trained under



renowned Guru Dr. Maddali Usha Gayatri. Her dedication to the classical art form has earned her the prestigious 'B High' grade from

Doordarshan an acknowledgment reserved for artists of exceptional calibre. Over the years, she has performed on several distinguished platforms, including the prestigious Rashtrapati Nilayam during the 'Udyanotsav' festival, as well as popular cultural programmes such as Naadaneerajanam, Natya Ravali, and Muvvala Ravali. Her performances are widely appreciated for their grace, expression, and adherence to classical traditions.

Beyond the stage, her contributions extend to nurturing young talent. She has served as a judge for district-level competi-

tions under Kala Utsav, conducted by SCERT, Telangana, guiding and encouraging budding artists across the State.

Her achievements have not gone unnoticed. In recognition of her outstanding contributions to both public service and the arts, she was conferred the prestigious 'Stri Murti' award by the Telangana Chamber of Events Industry (TCEI) in 2025. Earlier, she gained statewide popularity by winning 16.40 lakh in the well-known television quiz show Meelo Evaru Koteeswarudu, showcasing her intellect alongside her artistic pursuits.

Himachal: Man arrested with 4 grams of Chitta in Bilaspur

Bilaspur: Under the ongoing campaign against drugs in the district, the Sadar police have seized 4.05 grams of Chitta and arrested a young man in this connection. During a regular blockade on Patta in Kiratpur-Nerchowk four-lane last night, the team of police station Sadar stopped the suspect for investigation on the basis of suspicion. Upon search, 4.05 grams of Chitta was recovered from his possession. The accused has been identified as Prateek Chauhan (29), resident of Morsinghi tehsil Ghumarwin district Bilaspur.

Mission Shakti, Mission Vatsalya Reviewed at Tirupati Meet

Tirupati, April 8: A district-level Child Welfare and Protection Committee meeting reviewed the implementation of key welfare initiatives, including Mission Shakti and Mission Vatsalya, aimed at ensuring the safety and development of women and children.

District Collector Dr. S. Venkateswar directed officials to strengthen coordination among departments and ensure that benefits reach the grassroots level. He emphasized that the safety of women and children is fundamental to



societal progress and called for strict action against child marriages, child labour, and violence.

The Collector stressed effective monitoring of Anganwadi centres, shel-

ter homes, and child care institutions to ensure proper nutrition, healthcare, education, and emotional support. He warned of strict action in case of negligence.

Hi Life Summer Edition Exhibition Brings Luxury Fashion Showcase to Hyderabad

Hyderabad (TSIT): Fashion enthusiasts in the city can look forward to an exclusive style experience as the Hi Life Exhibition - Summer Edition arrives with a curated showcase of premium designer collections.

The exhibition brings together some of India's finest designers under one roof, featuring an exquisite range of bridal couture, festive wear, contemporary fashion, and handcrafted jewellery. The event promises a blend of tradition and modern elegance, offering visitors a chance to explore unique creations and statement pieces.

From intricate bridal ensembles to stylish summer edits, the collections



highlight a fusion of craftsmanship and contemporary trends. The exhibition caters to diverse fashion needs, whether for weddings, festive occasions, or upgrading personal wardrobes. Hi Life Exhibition is known for presenting high-end fashion and lifestyle products, attracting designers and shoppers seeking exclusive and sophisticated styles.

The Summer Edition aims to provide a premium shopping experience in Hyderabad, making it a must-visit destination for fashion lovers and trendsetters.

Special IAS Officers Needed to Ensure Quality of Goods: Dr. Pallepadu Damodar

Hyderabad, TSIT: Under the auspices of the Consumer Coordination Council South, in collaboration with the Consumer Confederation of India, on Tuesday at the Hyderabad Press Club on Food Adulteration - Consumer Protection Dr Pallepadu Damodar said on the occasion of World Health Day that food adulteration is a serious problem today. Many restaurants have been raided and are using rotten meat, harmful dyes and adulterated oils and are continuing their business with the priority of making money and putting people's health at risk.



Where does the milk supplied across the country come from, where is there sufficient livestock, as all milk products are contaminated, we welcome the establishment of a hydra-like special department by the government

and this food contamination. Regarding the quality of goods, special government departments should have special IASs for them, representatives of consumer associations should be included in food advisory committees, vigilance

committees, District Consumer Rights Protection Committees have been formed and consumer associations should be involved.

Sambaraju Chakrapani, Ande Sridhar Reddy, Secretary of Indian Consumer Federation, Telangana State said that the root cause of contamination of air, water and food items is pollution of man's mind, pollution of man's speech and pollution of sight. Consumer associations act as a bridge between the people and the government. He informed that the repre-

sentatives of the consumer associations will create awareness among the people with their programmes. In this meeting, Sambaraju Chakrapani, National General Secretary of Consumer Council said who should be contacted in case of food adulteration, he answered the questions asked by the press on how the representatives of the consumer associations would provide cooperation. In this meeting, Dr Pallepadu Damodar, Chairman Southern States Consumer Coordinating Committee Mamidi Bheemireddy.

Lack of awareness may lead to limb loss, warns specialist.

Mancherial, April 8, TSIT: Lack of awareness about Peripheral Arterial Disease (PAD), a condition that reduces blood flow to the limbs, could result in severe complications including limb loss among diabetic patients, said Dr. S. Srikanth Raju, Senior Consultant Vascular and Endovascular Surgeon at Yashoda Hospitals. Addressing a press conference held locally on Wednesday, Dr. Raju noted that PAD cases are rising among individuals with Diabetes Mellitus. He warned that even minor injuries in such patients may fail to heal and could develop into chronic ulcers. In some cases, nerve damage may prevent patients from feeling pain, delaying diagnosis and treatment. He advised individuals to watch for warning signs such as pain in the legs while walking, early fatigue, cold feet, non-healing wounds, and blackening of toes. "Immediate medical consultation is crucial if any of these symptoms are observed," he said. Dr. Raju emphasized the importance of early detection through diagnostic tests such as Doppler scans and regular vascular assessments. Maintaining blood sugar levels under control and quitting smoking are essential preventive measures, he added. He further stated that advanced treatment options, including medication and angioplasty, are available for managing the condition. Daily foot examination and prompt medical attention for even minor injuries can significantly reduce risks. "With proper awareness and timely treatment, the risk of limb loss can be completely prevented," he asserted.

Glorious Journey of Sri Venkateswara Veda Vijnana Peetham at Dharmagiri

Tirumala (TSIT) Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams has been playing a pioneering role in the preservation, propagation, and promotion of Vedic traditions, which form the foundation of Hindu Sanatana Dharma in the Indian culture. In this direction, Sri Venkateswara Veda Vijnana Peetham at Dharmagiri in Tirumala has emerged as one of the most prestigious Vedic educational institutions in the country. History of the Veda Vijnana Peetham Established in February 1884 under the leadership of Mahant Prayag Das Ji, the institution began as a Veda Patashala with three sections. Over the time, it has evolved into a distinguished center imparting comprehensive education in Vedas, Agamas, priesthood, and Shastras. In 1992, it was permanently established at Dharmagiri,



are provided daily through Ashwini Hospital. In case of necessity, free treatment is also extended at SVIMS and BIRRD hospitals in Tirupati. Securing the Future of Students To ensure a secure future for students, TTD implements special incentive schemes: - Rs.3 lakh deposit for Vedic students. - Rs.1 lakh deposit for students of other courses Upon course completion, the amount with interest is handed over along with a merit certificate and a 10-gram silver dollar of Sri Venkateswara. Holistic Education Based on Vedic Practices The daily routine of students is structured according to Vedic traditions. It includes S a n d h y a v a n d a n a m , Agnikaryam, study sessions, recitation, teaching, physical activities, and night study ensur-

ing a well rounded education system. National Level Scholarly Conferences The Sri Venkateswara Veda Shastra Agama Vidvat Sadas attracts scholars from across the country. Traditional examinations are conducted, and meritorious scholars are honored. The latest session was successfully held from March 8 to 13. Apart from Dharmagiri, TTD successfully operates similar Veda institutions in places like Keesaragutta, Nalgonda, Bhimavaram, Kotapakkonda, and Vizianagaram. Upholding the spirit of "Tirumala - the birthplace of the Vedas," the Sri Venkateswara Veda Vijnana Peetham stands as a divine center of learning, preserving and passing on India's spiritual heritage to future generations.

Landmark Seminar on Innovative Plumbing Technologies by Smile Foundation and Ashirvad by aliaxis



Bengaluru : Smile Foundation, in collaboration with Ashirvad by aliaxis, India's leading provider of plumbing and water management solutions organised a seminar on "Innovative Technologies in Plumbing" in Bengaluru. The seminar spotlighted a significant opportunity to transform the sector, generate higher employment opportunities by training 44% of the workforce with modern plumbing technologies. Bringing together industry leaders, Sector Skill Councils, and training organisations, the seminar focused on accelerating technology adoption, expanding on-ground training, and building a future-ready plumbing ecosystem to support India's rapid urban and infrastructure growth.

Management and Plumbing Sector Skill Council, industry leaders from Prestige Group, KOHLER, and Cemindia Projects Limited, along with key representatives from Smile Foundation. A key highlight of the seminar was Plumber Saathi, an initiative by Ashirvad by aliaxis implemented by Smile Foundation, which delivers free of cost, on-site and community-based training to plumbers. The programme focuses on enabling plumbers to upgrade their skills at their place of work or residence, ensuring accessibility and practical, hands-on learning. Mr. Santanu Mishra, Co-founder & Executive Trustee, Smile Foundation said, "Bringing training closer to where plumbers live and work is key to unlocking the sector's full potential. Through initiatives like Plumber Saathi, we are equipping plumbers with advanced skills, enabling their earning opportunities, thereby transforming the future of their children and families. We are also strengthening the foundation for a more advanced and future-ready plumbing ecosystem, wherein skilled plumbers are central."

Mr. Sudeep Agrawal, CFO & Head - CSR, Ashirvad by aliaxis said, "At Ashirvad by aliaxis, we believe that investing in the skilling of plumbers is not just a social responsibility-it is a strategic imperative for India's infrastructure future. Initiatives like Plumber Saathi reflect our commitment to making advanced plumbing knowledge accessible at the grassroots level. By equipping plumbers with the tools and technologies of tomorrow, we are not only enhancing livelihoods but also ensuring that India's rapidly growing urban landscape is built on a foundation of quality, efficiency, and sustainability." Discussions focused on the integration of advanced technologies within the plumbing ecosystem. Experts highlighted the importance of retrofitting and adopting smart plumbing systems to modernize ageing infrastructure, while also addressing challenges in high-rise buildings such as pressure management and waste systems. The role of smart water metering and automation in improving efficiency, reducing water loss, and enabling sustainable usage was also emphasized.

Commissioner Visits Census-2027 Training Centre: Emphasis on Accurate Data Collection

Bengaluru: Commissioner Pommala Sunil Kumar visited and inspected the Census-2027 training centre being conducted at Atria University, Yelahanka, under the jurisdiction of Bengaluru North City Corporation. During the visit, the Commissioner addressed enumerators and supervisors, emphasizing that accuracy of data is of utmost importance, and instructed them to ensure that only correct and reliable information is collected without any errors. He stated that the data collected through the census serves as a crucial foundation for the country's development, and highlighted that even today, data from the 2011 Census continues to be widely used, underscoring its significance. The Commissioner further instructed that enumerators, supervisors, and charge officers must perform their duties diligently without giving any excuses and complete the assigned work within the stipulated time. He also warned that negligence in census duties would attract legal action and urged all personnel to take pride and responsibility in contributing to this important nation-building exercise.



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Groundwater Use Declines, Annual Recharge Rises to 19.28 BCM in Karnataka: Minister

BENGALURU: Karnataka has recorded a significant decline in groundwater usage alongside a notable rise in annual recharge capacity, reflecting the impact of sustained water conservation efforts and good rainfall, said Minor Irrigation, Science and Technology Minister N.S. Boseraju. Releasing the 2025 Groundwater Assessment Report at Vikas Soudha on Wednesday, the Minister said the gains are a result of good rainfall, focused policy interventions, and large-scale water conservation initiatives implemented over the past two years under Chief Minister Siddaramaiah and Deputy Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar. According to the report, overall groundwater extraction has reduced from 68.44% in 2024 to 66.49% in 2025, indicating more responsible usage patterns. Annual groundwater recharge capacity increased from 18.74 billion cubic metres (BCM) in 2024 to 19.28 BCM in 2025, while annual extractable groundwater resources rose from 16.88 BCM to 17.41 BCM. This simultaneous reduction in usage and increase in recharge reflects our government's commitment to long-term water sustainability," Minister Boseraju said. The improvement has been driven largely by the expansion of water conservation structures (WCS) across the state. Recharge



through such structures increased by 29.11%, from 0.81 BCM to 1.04 BCM in a year. The number of water conservation works has risen sharply from 3.15 lakh in 2024 to 3.94 lakh in 2025. The report indicates improvement in groundwater status across 11 taluks. Chamarajanagar taluk has improved from 'over-exploited' to 'critical'. Taluks including Athani, Channarayana, Molakalmuru, Ranebennur, Savanur, and Shiggaon have transitioned from 'semi-critical' to 'safe'.

Comprehensive Development of Bannerghatta Main Road from Hosur Road to Kalena Agrahara via BSMILE: Commissioner K.N. Ramesh

Bengaluru: Commissioner of Bengaluru South City Corporation, K.N. Ramesh, conducted an inspection of Bannerghatta Main Road and surrounding areas today along with the Technical Director of BSMILE, the Corporation's Chief Engineers, and other senior officials. Immediate Asphaltting of Bannerghatta Main Road The BSMILE team informed the Commissioner that a plan

BMRLC to immediately carry out overlay (resurfacing) work on damaged sections of the road. He also urged BSMILE to expedite the DPR process. Furthermore, work on the 3.65 km stretch from Kalena Agrahara to Koli Farm is already underway at a cost of Rs.11.50 crore under the CMIDP (Chief Minister's Institutional Development Programme). The Commissioner directed officials to complete this work immedi-



has been devised for the comprehensive development of Bannerghatta Road from Hosur Road to Koli Farm Junction, and a Detailed Project Report (DPR) is currently being prepared. However, since BMRLC (Bangalore Metro Rail Corporation Limited) has already handed over the stretch from Dairy Circle to Kalena Agrahara to the City Corporation and deposited Rs.12.50 crore for maintenance, the Commissioner issued a specific directive. Recognizing that the tendering process for the comprehensive project will take time, he instructed officials to use the funds deposited by

ately under the existing tender while ensuring high quality. Proposal for Signal-Free Junction at Vega City Mall To alleviate traffic congestion, the Commissioner suggested making the Vega City Mall Junction signal-free by constructing an underpass and a flyover. He instructed the concerned department to prepare a DPR and cost estimates for this project. Inspecting vulnerable drainage spots in front of IIMB (Indian Institute of Management Bangalore) on Bannerghatta Main Road, the Commissioner ordered immediate measures to ensure the smooth flow of rainwater into the drains to prevent flooding.

Alkem launches A to Z Daily, an everyday multivitamin supplement for body and mind

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VALUE 360
Managing Brand Equity
Value 360 Communications Limited
New Delhi | Mumbai | Bangalore | Hyderabad

A TO Z DAILY IS FORMULATED WITH 26 ESSENTIAL VITAMINS, MINERALS AND SELECT BOTANICALS, PROVIDING SUPPORT FOR MANAGING STRESS, IMPROVING ENERGY LEVELS AND STRENGTHENING IMMUNITY.

Mumbai, April 8, 2026: Alkem Laboratories Ltd. (BSE: 539523,

NSE: ALKEM, "Alkem" and its subsidiaries) today announced the launch of A to Z Daily, an everyday multivitamin supplement for adults, for providing holistic nutritional support to the body and mind.

A to Z Daily tablets are formulated with a total of 26 essential vitamins, minerals and botanicals to provide balanced nutritional support. The key vitamins and minerals include Vitamin B complex,

Vitamin D3, Vitamin C, Zinc, and Iron that help in boosting energy levels, reducing fatigue and improving immunity. The product also contains clinically-researched botanicals such as Ashwagandha, Bacopa monnieri (Brahmi), Panax ginseng, and an amino acid L-theanine, which help in managing stress and anxiety, improving sleep quality and supporting the cognitive function.

Unlike conventional multivitamins that address only nutritional deficiencies, A to Z Daily is designed as an everyday support supplement for people to maintain physical energy while staying mentally composed through daily pressures and routines. It is intended for consistent, long-term use as part of a preventive wellness approach.

Commenting on the launch, Dr. Vikas Gupta, Chief Executive Officer, Alkem, said, "Our current lifestyles are placing sustained

demands not just on physical health but also on mental well-being. People are increasingly experiencing stress, fatigue, and reduced ability to stay focused. Nutritional supplementation can play a supportive role in addressing these challenges when designed thoughtfully.

A to Z Daily brings together essential ingredients to provide a balanced, everyday support for both body and mind. It is positioned not as a quick fix, but as a consistent, long-term approach for people seeking to manage everyday stress while improving overall vitality." A to Z Daily provides 100% of the recommended daily allowance (RDA) of 19 vitamins and minerals, helping bridge common dietary gaps and support overall nutritional adequacy in adults. The product is approved by the Food Safety Standards Authority of India (FSSAI). It is a 100% vegetarian product.

Gas Problem: Central Government Directly Responsible; Special Package for Auto Drivers Needed - Dr. Anand Kumar

Bengaluru : Dr. Anand Kumar, National Coordinator of the AICC Maharashtra in-charge demanded that, The ongoing auto gas crisis in the country is entirely the responsibility of the central government

led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi. Auto drivers, who are suffering for no fault of theirs, should be given a special relief package by the central government. Supply of LPG and CNG is completely under the purview of the central government.



Altum Credo HOME FINANCE PVT. LTD.
Regd. Office: Floor No. 7, Kalpataru Infinia, Wakdevadi, Shivajinagar, Pune - 411005, MAHARASHTRA (INDIA).

APPENDIX IV - POSSESSION NOTICE (For Immovable Property)

The undersigned being the authorized officer of Altum Credo Home Finance Pvt. Ltd. (ACHFL), Under the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 ("SARFAESI Act, 2002") and in exercise of powers conferred under Section 13(12) read with Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 ("Enforcement Rules"). Demand Notice(s) issued by the Authorized Officer of the company to the Borrower(s) / Co-Borrower(s) and Guarantor(s) (collectively referred to as the "Borrowers") mention herein below to repay the amount mentioned in the notice within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notice. The borrowers having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to Borrowers and the public in general that the under signed has taken symbolic / physical possession of the property described herein below in supersize of powers conferred upon him under Sub-section(4) of Section 13 of the said act read with Rule 8 of the Security Interest Enforcement rules, 2002. The borrower's attention is invited to provision of sub-section (8) of section 13 of the Act, in receipt of time available, to redeem the secured assets. The borrowers in particular and the public in general are hereby cautioned not to deal with the property and any dealings with the property will be subject to the charge of ACHFL for an amount mention herein under with the interest thereon.

Sr. No.	Name of Borrower(s) / Co-Borrower(s) and Guarantor(s) AND Loan Account Number	Date of Demand Notice & Amount (in Rs.)	Date of Possession
1)	GADDIGALA SHILPA (Applicant)	31/12/2025 Rs. 6,70,415/- (Rupees Six Lakh Seventy Thousand Four Hundred Fifteen Only) as on date 30/12/2025 NPA: 29/12/2025	04/04/2026 Symbolic Possession
2)	GANGAPPA KABBALI (Co-Aplicant)		
Description of Secured Asset: Property No. 1666, E Swathu No. 15120401 100102334, measuring 4 x 19.80 Mts. i.e 79.20 Sq.Mts., situated at Halwagalu Village, Halwagalu Gram Panchayath, Harapanahalli and bounded as: East-Office of Gram panchayath; West- House of Kabbali Krishnappa; North- Honda; South- Malhar Road.			
2)	1) NAGARAJA KODTHI (Applicant) 2) GONEMMA KODTHI (Co-Aplicant) 3) Samademma K (Co-Aplicant)	31/12/2025 Rs. 5,58,072/- (Rupees Five Lakh Fifty Eight Thousand Seventy Two Only) as on date 30/12/2025 NPA: 29/12/2025	04/04/2026 Symbolic Possession
Description of Secured Asset: The property admeasuring an extent of 111.48 sq. mtrs, comprised in Old Katta Property No. 232, New Khatra Property No. 266, bearing PID No. 15120400500400268, situated in Muthigi Village, bennehalli gram panchayat, Harapanahalli Taluk, Vijayanagar District, within the Sub-Registration office of Harapanahalli and bounded as: East- House of Manappara Hanumanthappa; West- House of Madhali Gangamma; North- House of Katu Kenchappara Kenchappa; South- C C Road.			

STATUTORY NOTICE TO BORROWERS / CO-BORROWERS AND GUARANTORS
Borrower(s) / Co-Borrower(s) and Guarantor(s) are hereby put to caution that the property may be sold at any time hereinafter by way of public auction / tenders and as such this may also be treated as a notice under Rule 6, 8 & 9 of Security (interest) Enforcement Rules, 2002.

SD/-
Date: 09.04.2026
Place: Harapanahalli
Authorized Officer
Altum Credo Home Finance Pvt. Ltd. (ACHFL)

WE Hub Hosts India Pilot of Global DEI Training in Collaboration with HERALBONY and JICA



Hyderabad, April 08, 2026 : WE Hub, India's first state-led organisation for women entrepreneurs, recently hosted the India pilot of a global Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) training programme in collaboration with HERALBONY Co., Ltd. and the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA). The three-day programme brought together CEOs, HR leaders, artists, and entrepreneurs for a meaningful dialogue on building more inclusive organisations. Founded by twin brothers Takaya Matsuda and Fumito Matsuda, HERALBONY is a Japan-based creative agency that works with artists with disabilities, connecting their art with companies and institutions worldwide. With a collection of over 2,000 artworks by neurodiverse artists, the organisation has developed a sustainable model that ensures fair royalties for artists while reshaping perceptions of disability through art and design. Delivered in India for the first time by

Japanese facilitators, the programme served as a pilot initiative aimed at refining the training model for future global expansion. Through interactive simulations, reflective exercises, and group discussions, participants explored how social norms are often shaped—often unconsciously—by the privileges of the majority. The workshop also highlighted how leading organisations globally are embedding inclusion into leadership practices, organisational culture, and innovation strategies. Leaders engaged openly with the exercises, noting that the experience challenged familiar assumptions and offered new perspectives on how inclusion can be meaningfully practiced within organisations. Participants came away with a renewed understanding of how inclusive thinking can shape leadership, workplace culture, and innovation. The programme concluded with a dinner hosted by WE Hub, bringing together distinguished guests and partners who supported the initiative. The evening was attended by Sri. B. Ajith Reddy, IDES, Special Secretary to Hon'ble Chief Minister, Govt. of Telangana; Mr. TAKEUCHI Takuro, Chief Representative, Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), India; Smt. Divya Devarajan, IAS, CEO, SERP and Commissioner for PR&RD, Government of Telangana; Mr. Nikhil Chakravarthi, IA&AS, Director, Commissionerate of Industries, Government of Telangana; Mr. Gareth Owen, British Deputy High Commissioner; Ms. Laura Williams, Consul

General, United States Consulate General, Hyderabad; Dr. Sujiv Nair, Board of Director, WE Hub; Ms. Sita Pallacholla, CEO, WE Hub; and, among others.

Protium PROTIUM FINANCE LIMITED
(Erstwhile Growth Source Financial Technologies Limited)

Registered & Corporate Office Address: 7th Floor, Block B2, Phase - 1 Nirjon Knowledge Park, Pahadi Village, Off. Western Express Highway, Cama Industrial Estate, Goregaon(E), Mumbai- 400063, Maharashtra.

POSSESSION NOTICE- (U/S 13(4) & As per Appendix IV read with rule 8(1) of the Security Interest Enforcement Rules, 2002)

WHEREAS, the undersigned, being the Authorized Officer of Protium Finance Limited (erstwhile Growth Source Financial Technologies Ltd.) (hereinafter referred to as "Protium Finance Limited"), under the provisions of the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 (Act No. 54 of 2002) (the "SARFAESI Act"), and in exercise of the powers conferred under Section 13(2) read with Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002, issued a Demand Notice dated 22nd Jan 2026, calling upon the Borrowers S K Traders Through Its Proprietor Dhanya Krishna W/o Shivaram, And The Co-Borrowers: 1. Dhanya Krishna W/o S Shivaram, 2. S Shivaram S/o Shankar T R, in respect of the Loan Account Bearing No. GS132EEL2462343, to repay the amount mentioned in the said notice, being INR 1,07,36,269.10/- (One Crore Seven Lakh Thirty Six Thousand Two Hundred Sixty Nine Rupees and Ten Paise Only) as on 22.01.2026, within 60 (sixty) days from the date of receipt of the said notice.

The borrowers having failed to repay the said amount, notice is hereby given to the borrowers and the public in general that the undersigned has taken Symbolic Possession of the property described hereinbelow, in exercise of the powers conferred under Section 13(4) of the said Act read with Rule 8 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002, on this 7th April 2026. The borrowers in particular and the public in general are hereby cautioned not to deal with the said property, and any dealings with the property shall be subject to the charge of Protium Finance Limited for an amount of INR 1,07,36,269.10/- (One Crore Seven Lakh Thirty Six Thousand Two Hundred Sixty Nine Rupees and Ten Paise Only) as on 22.01.2026 together with further interest thereon, and all costs, charges, and expenses incurred by the borrowers. The borrowers' attention is invited to the provisions of sub-section (8) of Section 13 of the Act, in respect of the time available to redeem the secured assets.

DESCRIPTION OF THE MORTGAGED PROPERTY -
Item No 1 All That Piece And Parcel Of The Property including RC Residential House Property Bearing Agasavalli Gram Panchayathi Property No.359/2, Pid No. 15240502700120283, Measuring East To West: 15.8496 Meters, And North To South: 12.192 Meters, In All Total Measuring 193.31 Sq. Meters, Built Up Area 148.70 Square Meters, Situated At Agasavalli Hosuru Village, Shivamogga Taluk & District, Within The Limits Of Agasavalli Gram Panchayath, And Bounded By: East By: Property Belongs To Agasavalli Gram Panchayathi Property No.167, North By: Survey No.167, Survey No.167, South By: Survey No.167, Item No.2 All That Piece And Parcel Of The Property including RC Residential House Property Bearing Agasavalli Gram Panchayathi Property No.25/2, Pid No. 15240502700120282, Measuring East To West: 28.95 Meters And North To South: (43.59+51.52)/2 Meters, In All Total Measuring 1377.19 Sq. Meters, Built Up Area is 228.81 Square Meters, Situated At Agasavalli Hosuru Village, Shivamogga Taluk & District, Within The Limits Of Agasavalli Gram Panchayath, And Bounded By: East By: Property Belongs To Palaniyamma, West By: Property Belongs To Palaniyamma And Habubulla, North By: Remaining Property Of Palaniyamma, South By: Hajj Hole Main Road.

Date of Possession: 7th April 2026
Place of Possession: Shimoga, Karnataka
SD/-, For Protium Finance Limited
Authorized Officer

BAJAJ FINANCE
Registered Office: C/o Bajaj Auto Limited Complex, Mumbai - Pune Road, Akurdi, Pune-411035, Maharashtra, India. Branch Office : Bajaj Finance Ltd, Bajaj Finserv, Prestige Towers, 5th floor, Residency Road, Bangalore 560025

Demand Notice Under Section 13(2) of Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002

Undersigned being the Authorized Officer of M/s Bajaj Finance Limited, hereby gives the following notice to the Borrower(s) Co-Borrower(s) who have failed to discharge their liability i.e., defaulted in the repayment of principal as well as the interest and other charges accrued there on for Home Loan(s)/Loan(s) Against Property advanced to them by Bajaj Finance Limited and as consequence the loan(s) have become Non Performing Assets (N.P.A.s). Accordingly, notices were issued to them under section 13(2) of Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 and rules there to in their last known addresses, however the same have been returned un-served/undelivered, as such the Borrower(s)/Co-Borrower(s) are hereby intimated/informed by way of this publication notice to clear their outstanding dues under the loan facilities available by them from time to time.

Loan Account No./Name of the Borrower(s), Mortgagor(s), Guarantor(s)	Description of Secured Immovable Property	Demand Notice Date and Amount
4045HL34231855 & 4045HL34229176 A D RAJASEKHAR (BORROWER) AT- F2 A BLOCK SHIVAGANGA OPAL, 4TH MAIN 2 ND CROSS BANK OF BARODA COLONY PETTENAHALLI JP NAGAR 7TH PHASE BESIDE SRI CHAITANYA PU COLLAGE, BANGALORE - 560078	ALL THAT PIECE AND PARCEL THE OF RESIDENTIAL PROPERTY BEARING FLAT NO. F2, A BLOCK, (2 BHK) SITUATED IN FIRST FLOOR OF THE APARTMENT KNOWN AS SHIVAGANGA OPAL, MEASURING 1100 SQ FEET OF SUPER BUILT UP AREA CONSISTING OF ONE COVERED CAR PARKING SLOT IN THE STILT/BASEMENT CONSTRUCTED ON THE PROPERTY BEARING SY NO. 36/2, HAVING BBMP KHATHA NO. 1252, MEASURING TO AN EXTENT OF 0-16.04 GUNTSAS SITUATED AT PUTTENAHALLI VILLAGE UTTARAHALLI HOBLI, BANGALORE SOUTH TALUK.	18/03/2026 Rs. 43,33,404/- (Rupees Forty Three Lakh Thirty Three Thousand Four Hundred and Four Only) as on 17/03/2026
404LAP47243116 DHARMANNA DESAI (BORROWER) AT- NO.256, 4TH MAIN EWS KHB COLONY 1ST STAGE, BASAVESHWARA, BANGALORE, KARNATAKA-560079	ALL THAT PIECE AND PARCEL OF THE PROPERTY BEING MUNICIPAL EWS NO.38/30, PID NO. 21-99-30, BBMP WARD NO.21, KHB COLONY, 2ND STAGE, 2ND CROSS, AGRAHARA, DASARAHALLI, BANGALORE, MEASURING EAST TO WEST 18 FEET AND NORTH TO SOUTH 26 FEET TOGETHER WITH RCC ROOFED HOUSE WITH ALL CIVIC AMENITIES BOUNDED ON EAST BY: - HOUSE NO.37, WEST BY: - KHB VACANT LAND, NORTH BY: - HOUSE NO.11, SOUTH BY: - ROAD.	28/03/2026 Rs.60,84,479/- (Rupees Sixty Lakh Eighty Four Thousand Four Hundred and Seventy Nine Only) as on 27/03/2026

This step is being taken for substituted service of notice. The above Borrowers / Co-Borrowers, Guarantors are advised to make the payments of outstanding along with future interest within 60 days from the date of publication of this notice, failing which (without prejudice to any other right remedy available with Bajaj Finance Limited) further steps for taking possession of the Secured Assets / Mortgage Property will be initiated as per provisions of Sec.13(4) of the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002. The parties named above are also advised not to alienate, create third party interest in the above-mentioned properties. On which Bajaj Finance Limited has the charge.

Date - 09/04/26, Place - BANGALORE
Authorized Officer, For M/s BAJAJ FINANCE LIMITED

EDITORIAL

War Ally To Mere Bystander: Is This The Loneliest Day For Netanyahu?

In the early hours of April 9, a few moments after US President Donald Trump took to social media and proclaimed that "a whole civilisation will die tonight, never to be brought back again", Iran and the US agreed to a two-week ceasefire arrangement via mediation of Pakistan. This arrangement seems to be the off-ramp the American leader was looking for, an escape from a potential 'forever war', something he has spent a vast amount of time deriding former US presidents for during his campaigns. It is difficult to deny that Trump was in a quagmire. The war was not only escalating but also entrenching into a protracted conflict. Long-standing regional fault-lines, which were actively being managed over the past years, were renewed and pulled back into a situation heading towards a global economic abyss. Trump, once again, took to social media to announce the ceasefire, and Iran's Foreign Minister, Syed Abbas Araghchi, also released a statement, in broad acceptance of the two-week timeline, but with more leverage than the White House in play.

A New Middle East

As the global economy, markets, and oil and gas supply chains took a sigh of relief, staring at the brink of an international energy crisis, the Middle East geopolitically is looking at a reorientation that it did not order, but now must deal with. The ceasefire agreement, as per available information, is designed for a US off-ramp and not regional stability. Talks to take forward the ceasefire understanding are slated to take place in Pakistan on Friday (April 10) without direct intervention or participation of either Israel or any of the Gulf states, while demands for an end to the warfare in countries like Lebanon have been put forward by Tehran. The non-participation of Israel and the Gulf states opens a Pandora's box on how the region moves forward in the coming months. Iran, maintaining tight control over the critical Strait of Hormuz and doubling down on its assertion about its armed forces having the right to decide the waterways' operationality, seems to have come out with the upper hand despite suffering immense damage over the 40-day-long bombing operation. However, the regime has survived, despite the assassination of Ayatollah Ali Khamenei in a US-Israeli strike in February, and questions over the ability of his son and successor, Ayatollah Mojtaba Khamenei.

Bibi Out In The Cold?

Israel, the US's closest partner in the region and which lured Trump to take on Iran, was a spectator to the ceasefire agreement and was forced to halt strikes against Iran (but has said it will continue its campaign against Hezbollah in Lebanon). From saying Iran was close to making a few nuclear warheads back in the summer of 2025 to highlighting that an uprising from within the Iranian population was inevitable following an aerial campaign against the regime, Netanyahu has seen Trump as a one-in-a-lifetime opportunity to fundamentally degrade Iran, whatever the cost. However, while the military campaign has certainly dealt a mighty blow to Iranian capacities, it has also solidified the idea that any future security construct of the region, specifically with relation to the Strait of Hormuz, cannot be put together without Iranian say. For Israel, the ceasefire may be a bitter pill to swallow, with its strategic aims remaining in suspension. Its strategy of 'mowing the grass', or short bursts of military campaigns to keep a threat degraded, may work in Gaza and Lebanon, but conducting these operations against Iran consistently will not be possible without the US. Israel's opposition leader, Yair Lapid, who supported these actions against Iran, called the ceasefire deal a "political disaster" due to Israel not being at the table during the ceasefire talks.

The 'Munir Doctrine' That Drove Pak's US-Iran Brokering Project

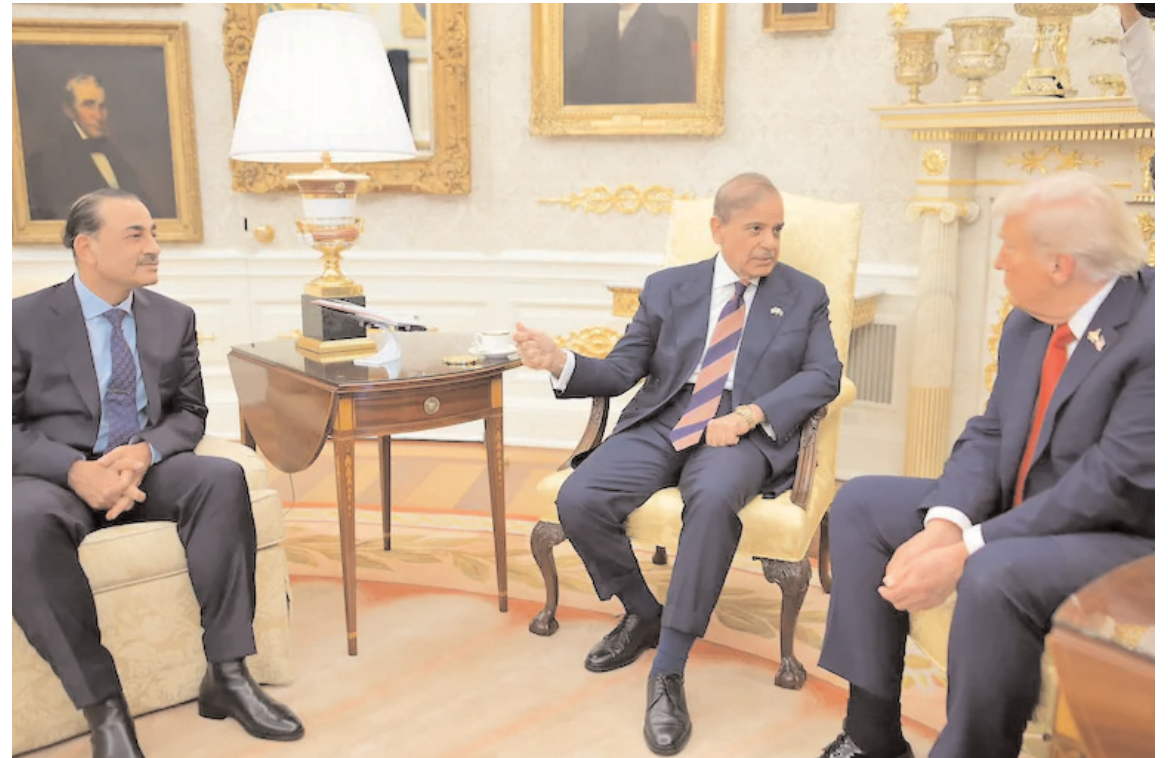
Pakistan's re-emergence as a diplomatic conduit in the ongoing West Asian conflict nudges us to revisit an age-old question: Who really conducts Pakistan's foreign policy? The spate of calls, social media messaging, and diplomatic signals coming from Pakistan in recent weeks, especially involving Pakistan Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and Army Chief Field Marshal Asim Munir, offers a window into the country's prevailing civil-military dynamics.

When Yahya Khan Mediated Between US And China

In 1971, former US President Richard Nixon persuaded General Yahya Khan to secretly mediate between China and the US - the channel through which Henry Kissinger met with Mao Zedong. Its architecture was similar to the present circumstances, where a civilian government held the official line, with the military managing the geometry of negotiations. Pakistan's dual-track foreign policy can also be traced to the erstwhile Soviet Union and Afghan war, where the government under Zia-ul-Haq coordinated with the US and Saudi Arabia, and Pakistan's security establishment, the Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI), was covertly arming the Afghan mujahideen. In the current scenario, Pakistan relayed proposals between Iran and the US, including a 15-point plan from Washington and a 10-point plan from Iran. Tehran has now agreed to a two-week ceasefire with the US, with its National Security Council stating the commencement of talks in Islamabad on April 10.

Two-Track Diplomacy

US President Donald Trump and Iran both acknowledged the role of Munir and Sharif in pausing strikes against Iran. Meanwhile, Sharif urged the US to extend its negotiation timeline while pressing Tehran to reopen the Strait of Hormuz. However, the mechanics of this mediation bring to light something more structurally significant. Pakistan's diplomacy continues to



unfold through a dual-track civil-military arrangement, with the civilian government conducting public diplomacy while the military manages strategic ties and back-channel communication. Understanding this blueprint requires situating it within its long history of civil-military dynamics. Pakistan's civil-military dynamics have always been a spectrum of overt military rule or hybrid co-governance. While former army chief Qamar Javed Bajwa only spoke of geoeconomics, Munir's position informs an intent where Pakistan refuses to project itself as a soft state. Since the early decades of the state, the military held influence over strategic decisions, especially in matters of security and strategic policy with major powers. Munir's direct engagements with Gulf monarchies and Washington suggest that the strategic brokering is in the hands of the army. The civilian government essentially inherits, rather than controls, these foreign ties that are estab-

lished by the military. Even now, Munir's engagement with the White House has reportedly been crucial to transmitting messages and negotiating deadlines in the conflict. To put it simply, Munir manages the backchannel, while Sharif is the face of the front desk.

The Munir Framework

The Munir doctrine can be perceived through three aspects: projecting a softer image of Pakistan, positioning itself as a middle power in the region, while also prioritising geoeconomics. The soft power portrayal of Munir is for foreign projection, while his hard approach is employed for consolidating domestic power. After decades of being associated with links to extremist elements and grey-list sanctions, the military has managed to reposition Pakistan's place in the world as a responsible state capable of effective diplomacy. Pakistan's emergence as a regional middle power is essentially

rooted in the country's geography - strategically located between the Indian subcontinent, Central Asia, and West Asia. Pakistan's future is also positioned in the context of geoeconomics, instead of geopolitics. This includes using diplomatic ties to gain economic opportunities - more recently involving a mineral deal with the US, and a security agreement with Saudi Arabia. The closure of the Strait of Hormuz and associated disruptions to energy flow from the Gulf are also a domestic issue for an economically fragile Pakistan. Rising oil prices could worsen its trade deficit and debt burden, exacerbating domestic pressures for Munir. Another crucial element is diplomatic acceptability. Unlike other regional actors, Pakistan maintains a relationship with all stakeholders in the conflict: brotherly ties with the Gulf, which is also enshrined in its Constitution, its ethnic and border ties with Iran, and an economic relationship with the US.

Schemes for Weaker Sections: A Matter of Controversy or a Basis of Development?



PRIYANKA SAURABH

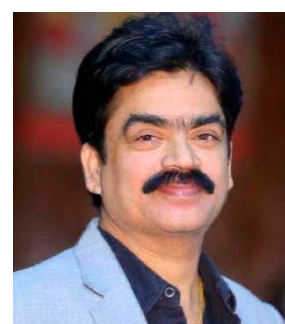
Development and welfare schemes for vulnerable groups are often criticized as discriminatory. At first glance, the argument may seem appealing: when the government targets certain groups for benefits, it's unfair to others. But when examined more deeply, it becomes clear that this approach challenges the very spirit of social justice. In a country like India, where caste, economic, and social inequalities have long been entrenched, such schemes are not just an option but a necessity, and a constitutionally mandated responsibility. The historical structure of Indian society privileged some classes, while others faced persistent deprivation and discrimination. This centuries-old inequality excluded Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, and other vulnerable groups from education, health, employment, and social respect. If the state merely adopted a policy of "equal treatment," this inequality would have deepened. Therefore, the framers of the Constitution understood that equality truly meant equal treatment for all, not simply the application of uniform rules. In this context, Article 46 of the Constitution holds special significance, directing the state to promote the educational and economic interests of the weaker sections and to protect them from social injustice and exploitation. This provision makes it clear that targeted schemes are not a form of discrimination, but a necessary step towards justice. This is the concept of 'positive discrimination' or 'affirmative action,' which attempts to compensate for historical inequalities. The impact of these schemes is evident not only in theory but also in practice. The progress made in education over the past few decades is a testament to this. While literacy rates among marginalized groups were once very low, they have now increased significantly. Scholarship schemes, residential schools, and special educational programs have provided millions of



children with the opportunity to access school and higher education. Similarly, rural employment schemes, self-help groups, and skill development programs have promoted economic self-reliance. These schemes have also played a significant role in women's empowerment. Through self-help groups, rural women have not only gained income but also established social standing. This has brought positive change to both families and society. This demonstrates that targeted schemes are not limited to economic benefits but also serve as a vehicle for social change. However, these schemes are not without controversy. Critics argue that when a particular class is given priority, it is unfair to others. For example, sometimes an economically disadvantaged person from the general category is unable to avail the benefits of a scheme simply because they do not fall into the prescribed category. This creates a feeling of reverse discrimination, which can lead to social unrest. This argument isn't entirely unfounded, but it's certainly incomplete. It ignores the fact that not all individuals are born into equal circumstances. Some grow up in social and economic environments that provide them with better education, resources, and opportunities, while others begin life in extremely disadvantaged circumstances. Therefore, even if both are given equal opportunities, the outcomes will not be the same. Therefore, to truly achieve equality, it becomes necessary to treat those who are unequal differently. Nevertheless, it must be acknowledged that there are many shortcomings in the implementation of these schemes.

Problems such as corruption, unequal distribution of benefits, and lack of transparency affect their effectiveness. It has often been observed that those who need these schemes the most are left out, while the more capable ones reap the benefits. The concept of the "creamy layer" was introduced to address this problem, but it has not been effectively implemented across all sections. Furthermore, society's problems are also evolving with changing times. Today, the nature of poverty in urban areas is different, with people of different castes facing similar economic hardships. Therefore, formulating plans based solely on caste is insufficient. Policies must be more inclusive and multifaceted, taking into account economic status, education, and regional disparities. The most important requirement for reform is transparency and accuracy. Digital technologies can be used to make beneficiary identification more effective. Schemes can be made more transparent and accountable through Aadhaar-based verification, Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT), and data analytics. Regular monitoring and independent audits of scheme implementation are also essential to prevent any irregularities in time. Private sector and civil society participation can also play an important role in this direction. Corporate social responsibility (CSR) can enhance support in the areas of education, health, and skill development. Furthermore, involving local communities in the implementation of programs can further enhance their effectiveness, as they gain a deeper understanding of the problems at the local level.

ENVIRONMENT AT THE CROSSROADS: A Global Wake-Up Call on Climate Crisis



BY DR. JITHENDER RAO THANUGULA
WORLD ENVIRONMENT MEDIA CELL CHAIRMAN

In recent decades, the Earth has witnessed unprecedented environmental transformations, largely driven by human activity. Climate change marked by rising global temperatures and shifting

use, and deforestation. These changes are disrupting the delicate balance of nature on a global scale. **EXTREME WEATHER: A GROWING DANGER** Climate change has intensified extreme weather conditions worldwide. Heatwaves, floods, cyclones, droughts, and wildfires are occurring more frequently and with greater severity. These disasters not only damage the environment but also threaten human lives, agriculture, and economic stability. **MELTING GLACIERS AND RISING SEAS** The rapid melting of glaciers and polar ice caps is contributing to rising sea levels. Coastal regions and island nations are increasingly at risk of flooding and displacement. This poses a serious challenge to urban planning, livelihoods, and long-term sustainability.

systems, particularly coral reefs and shellfish. The disruption of ocean life directly impacts global food security and coastal economies. **HUMAN DISPLACEMENT AND CLIMATE MIGRATION** Climate change is forcing millions to migrate due to uninhabitable conditions caused by floods, droughts, and resource scarcity. This emerging crisis demands urgent global attention, as it affects not only the environment but also social and political stability. **THE PATH FORWARD: ACTION AND RESPONSIBILITY** Addressing climate change requires immediate and collective action. Transitioning to renewable energy, promoting sustainable practices, protecting forests, and reducing emissions are essential steps.



weather patterns—has become one of the most critical challenges facing humanity today. Its consequences are widespread, affecting ecosystems, economies, and societies across the globe. **GLOBAL WARMING: THE CORE THREAT** At the heart of the crisis lies the steady rise in Earth's average temperature. This alarming trend is primarily caused by excessive emissions of greenhouse gases such as carbon dioxide and methane, resulting from industrialization, fossil fuel

BIODIVERSITY IN CRISIS The changing climate is severely impacting biodiversity. Many species are struggling to adapt to rapidly changing conditions, leading to habitat loss and extinction. The decline in biodiversity weakens ecosystems and reduces their ability to support life on Earth. **Oceans Under Stress** Oceans, which absorb a significant portion of carbon dioxide, are becoming more acidic. This phenomenon is damaging marine eco-

Equally important is building resilience through adaptive strategies to safeguard vulnerable communities. **CONCLUSION** The environmental crisis we face today is not a distant threat—it is a present reality. The time for action is now. Governments, institutions, and individuals must come together to combat climate change and protect our planet. Only through united efforts can we ensure a sustainable future for generations to come.

Oil prices plunge and shares jump on US-Iran ceasefire plan

Global oil prices have fallen sharply and stock markets have jumped after the US and Iran agreed to a conditional two-week ceasefire deal that includes the reopening of the key Strait of Hormuz waterway. The price of benchmark Brent crude fell by about 13% to \$94.80 (£70.73) a barrel, while US-traded oil was more than 15% lower at \$85.75. But oil prices remain higher than before the conflict started on 28 February. At the time, it was trading at around \$70 a barrel. The cost of energy has jumped as oil and gas supplies from the Middle East have been severely disrupted after Iran threatened to attack ships trying to use the strait in retaliation to US and Israeli airstrikes. Stock markets in Europe opened higher following sharp rises in Asia. London's FTSE 100 share index jumped by 2.53% in opening trade. In France, the Cac gained 4% while Germany's Dax rose by nearly 5%. Japan's Nikkei 225 gained 5% while South Korea's Kospi jumped nearly 6%. Hong Kong's Hang Seng was up 2.8%, while the ASX 200 in Australia gained 2.7%. US stock market futures also pointed to a higher open for



Wall Street. Futures contracts are an agreement to buy an asset for a set price at a later point in time. In the case of US stock futures, they can indicate the direction of the market before it opens. In a social media post on Tuesday evening, Trump said: "I agree to suspend the bombing and attack of Iran for a period of two weeks... subject to the Islamic Republic of Iran agreeing to the COMPLETE, IMMEDIATE, and SAFE OPENING of the Strait of Hormuz". He had set a deadline for 20:00 EDT on Tuesday (00:00 GMT on Wednesday), threatening

that "a whole civilisation will die tonight" if no deal was reached. Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi said on social media that Tehran will agree to a ceasefire "if attacks against Iran are halted", adding that safe passage through the Strait of Hormuz "will be possible". Despite his threats, Trump was likely to be wary about letting energy prices "skyrocket" by escalating the conflict, said Xavier Smith from market research firm AlphaSense. That could have led to a "self-inflicted economic wound" that few would risk, especially given

the looming pressure of approval ratings on Trump's leadership, said Smith, a research director. More oil tankers stranded near the strait may be able to pass through the waterway during the ceasefire, providing some relief for markets in the coming weeks, said analyst Saul Kavonic from financial services firm MST Marquee. Despite the conflict, some ships have passed through the Strait of

Hormuz, although far fewer than usual. Asian countries - including India, Malaysia and the Philippines - have negotiated safe passage for their vessels in recent weeks. China has also acknowledged that several of its ships have crossed the strait since the war began. Meanwhile, a Malta-flagged container vessel owned by French company CMA CGM crossed the shipping route, media organisation BFM TV - which is owned by the shipping firm - confirmed on Friday. And a Japanese ship carrying natural gas also made it out of the strait, shipping giant MOL confirmed. Kavonic said that while a ceasefire is in place, it is still unlikely that energy production in the Middle East will fully resume until there is confidence of a lasting peace deal. It could also take months for production to restart due to damage done to energy infrastructure in the region.

Global oil prices have fallen sharply and stock markets have jumped after the US and Iran agreed to a conditional two-week ceasefire deal that includes the reopening of the key Strait of Hormuz waterway.

Madagascar declares state of emergency over severe fuel shortages linked to Iran war

Madagascar has declared a two-week nationwide state of energy emergency amid severe fuel shortages caused by the US and Israel's war in Iran. The presidency said the decision was taken following Tuesday's cabinet meeting over fears the situation could lead to public disorder. The Indian Ocean island, which relies on oil to produce much of its electricity, is dependent on fuel imports from the Middle East - and supplies are likely to be disrupted for sometime despite the two-week ceasefire announced overnight. Last year, persistent power and water shortages in Madagascar led to youth-led protests, which escalated to broader political unrest, resulting in a military takeover. It is not clear exactly what measures the government intends to take - but it says it now has the powers to stabilise the country's power sector, mitigate further disruptions, manage consumption and ensure continuity of public services. So far fuel prices have not increased since the crisis began though there have been shortages with reports of drivers queuing



for hours. News of the state of emergency led to panic buying at some petrol stations on Wednesday - with some reportedly rationing how much each customer can buy, according to local media. Most of Madagascar's oil comes from Oman, south of the Strait of Hormuz - the key global energy shipping route that has been affected by war that started on 28 February. Nonetheless, the price of oil remains considerably higher than before the conflict and analysts say it could take months or even years to repair the damage done to

supply capacity in the region. Madagascar is among several African countries taking urgent action to stem the affects of these disruptions. Some have resorted to raising or subsidising fuel prices and rationing electricity. The Gambia has just ordered the immediate suspension of all non-essential official travel by government officials, days after Senegal implemented a similar move. Zambia recently suspended taxes on petrol and diesel imports, while Botswana scrapped fuel levies for six months to cushion consumers from price rises.

Across the Country, People Unite to Celebrate the First-Ever World Diamond Day

India, 8th April, 2026 - Jewellery has always held a deeply personal place in people's hearts, and natural diamonds remain its most powerful expression. Every natural diamond carries within it a story of love, milestones, heritage and personal triumphs. On the first-ever World Diamond Day, these stories took centre stage, as people across the country came together to celebrate the meaning and emotion behind every diamond. Launched by the Natural Diamond Council (NDC), World Diamond Day on April 8, 2026, was introduced as a global movement to recognise and celebrate the joy, passion, and community that natural diamonds inspire. Beyond their brilliance, diamonds represent memories, legacy, and the craftsmanship of a passionate industry that brings these stories to life. As a champion of the natural diamond industry, NDC led this collective celebration, encouraging people from across the industry, from artisans and manufacturers to retailers and consumers to share their authentic stories. The movement came alive on social media,



with participants sharing personal moments using #WorldDiamondDay and #NaturalDiamonds, turning the day into a vibrant, global narrative. In India, the celebration reflected a compelling blend of heritage and modern aspiration, as leading diamondaires and manufacturers spotlighted the journey of a diamond from its natural origin to a finished masterpiece. The reach of World Diamond Day was supported by the active participation of the Gem and Jewellery Export Promotion Council (GJEPC India), Gemological Institute of America (GIA),

All India Gem and Jewellery Domestic Council (GJC) and the Bharat Diamond Bourse, who joined the movement to celebrate natural diamonds. This collective spirit was also embraced by leading industry partners, including Venus Jewel, SRK Exports, HK Exports, KP Sanghvi, Dharmanandan Diamonds, Finestar Jewellery and Diamonds, Shivam Jewels and A.S. Motiwala. Additionally, the movement was championed by prominent thought leaders such as Richa Goyal Sikri, Archana Thani, Nitya Arora and Arundhati De Sheth, all of

whom played a significant role in bringing authentic stories and personal perspectives from across the industry to the global stage. Richa Singh, Managing Director, Natural Diamond Council, said, "World Diamond Day is a platform for people to share what their diamonds truly mean to them. At a time when consumers, especially younger audiences, are looking for more meaningful ways to celebrate, this initiative offers a reason to pause and honour those moments. Natural diamonds are the perfect custodians of our memories."

NATIVE SOUTH – KITCHEN & BREW HOUSE OPENS IN HYDERABAD

Hyderabad: 08th April, 2026: Native South Kitchen & Brewhouse, a vibrant new dining destination dedicated to traditional South Indian cuisine, opened its doors to the people of Hyderabad. Located in Narsingi, the restaurant is set to become a go-to hub for food lovers and enthusiasts in the city and the neighbouring IT hub. Native South Kitchen & Brewhouse brings together time-honoured recipes from Telangana, Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, and Kerala, prepared using fresh, locally sourced ingredients. The menu features regional staples with regional variations alongside innovative plant-based and wellness-oriented dishes tailored for modern palates. Native South Kitchen & Brewhouse aims to be more than just a restaurant—it aspires to be a community space where families, friends, and professionals gather to celebrate South Indian culture and convivial dining. Speaking on the occasion, Mr Praveen



Rao Gandra, owner of Native South - Kitchen & Brew House, said, "With Native South, we want to create a place where Hyderabad families and young professionals can come together to relish authentic flavours and enjoy time with family and friends. South Indian cuisine has a rich heritage, but we wanted to present it in a way that feels fresh, modern, and inclusive. By combining traditional recipes, we are creating a space where every guest can explore bold flavours and create new memories."

According to Shiva Shanmugam, Executive Chef, Native South Kitchen & Brewhouse, "Hyderabad has always had a deep love for South Indian food. With Native South Kitchen & Brewhouse, we are proud to offer a premium-quality dining experience that celebrates our roots while embracing innovation. The menu is refreshing and reinforces the brand's commitment to clean, wholesome, and flavour-forward South Indian food." Designed as a neighbourhood hub for families, friends and office groups,

Native South combines traditional South Indian warmth with sleek, modern interiors. The restaurant features home delivery, wheelchair access, live sports screening and a kid-friendly environment, allowing guests to enjoy South Indian food in a space that balances comfort and style. What sets Native South Kitchen & Brewhouse apart is its integrated brewhouse concept, where curated craft beers are designed to complement the spicy, tangy, and aromatic notes of South Indian cuisine.

Committee formed to study local bodies levying entertainment tax

Highlights
To boost the revenues of local bodies, the Telangana government is examining the feasibility of levying an entertainment tax on certain commercial establishments, such as theaters and amusement parks



To boost the revenues of local bodies, the Telangana government is examining the feasibility of levying an entertainment tax on certain commercial establishments, such as theaters and amusement parks, among others. According to a report published by The New Indian Express, a committee headed by Chief Secretary K Ramakrishna Rao, comprising an inter-departmental team of special chief secretaries, principal secretaries and secretaries as its members, has been

constituted to study how different states have been levying such tax on entertainment and amusement. The report also states that a preliminary report would be prepared by the committee in 30 days and a final report in 60 days. As per the 101st Constitutional Amendment, which introduced the Goods and Services Tax (GST) regime, the power of the states to levy taxes was controlled, while allowing the local bodies the lever-

age to levy certain taxes. The 62nd entry to the state list in the amended tax regime allows taxes on entertainments and amusements levied and collected by a panchayat, a municipality, a regional council or a district council. The state government is seeing this an opportunity for the local bodies to gain additional revenues by levying such taxes. A preliminary report will be prepared by the committee in 30 days, and a final report in 60 days.

Tanishq marks a new chapter in natural gemstone category by roping in rukmini vasanth as the face of its new campaign for south

08 April 2026: As we approach the auspicious festival of Akshaya Tritiya, Tanishq, India's leading jewellery brand from the House of Tata, unveils its latest launch in the natural gemstones category featuring Rukmini Vasanth. In South India, gemstones have always been more than adornment, they are tradition, identity, and everyday elegance. From temple jewellery influences to vibrant celebrations, colored gemstones are deeply woven into the region's aesthetic language. The South has embraced the richness of rubies, emeralds, and other vivid stones as a staple, and Rukmini Vasanth embodies the modern South Indian jewellery as Tanishq's new face in the south. Effortlessly elegant and refreshingly modern, she embodies the spirit of Hues, the latest collection where individuality meets timeless grace. Hues collection reimagines the way gold is experienced this Akshaya Tritiya, moving beyond traditional,



investment-led purchases to jewellery that is expressive and meant to be worn. The new Hues collection takes centre stage with a focused design language that celebrates contemporary colour stories in gold, crafted for those seeking distinctive yet affordable fine jewellery, starting at an accessible price of ₹35,000. Bringing together sculptural forms, radiant gemstones, and precision cuts that reveal the depth in every hue. Each piece places colour at its core, crafted for the woman

who embraces jewellery as a reflection of her mood, style, and spirit. With a renewed focus on natural-colored gemstones, the collection deepens Tanishq's presence in a category the region already values, pairing contemporary design with timeless preference. The use of smooth, cabochon-cut stones introduces a sculpted, luminous quality, while layered colour compositions and techniques such as bunching and slicing add depth, texture, and a sense of movement, resulting in jew-

ellery that feels dynamic and distinctly modern. Bringing together a curated selection of natural coloured gemstones such as emeralds, amethysts, citrines, tourmalines, and tanzanites, among others, each stone is sourced with expertise and selected through rigorous quality benchmarks for its exceptional colour, clarity, and intrinsic character. This lends the collection a sense of rarity and authenticity, while ensuring both beauty and durability for everyday wear. The range spans state-

ment neck pieces & bangles for special occasions, alongside lighter earrings, rings, and pendant sets designed for everyday elegance, offering a versatile wardrobe that balances the enduring value of gold with the vibrance of contemporary design. At the heart of this narrative is Rukmini Vasanth, introduced as the face of the campaign and a symbol of the contemporary South Indian woman. Marking the beginning of a long-term collaboration with Tanishq, her association signals a shared vision that extends beyond a single season. Effortlessly elegant and refreshingly modern, she embodies the spirit of Hues, where individuality meets timeless grace. Brought to life through a series of striking images, the campaign captures Rukmini in moments that celebrate both strength and softness. Styled to highlight the vibrancy and sculptural beauty of each piece, the visuals create a seamless interplay of colour, form, and emotion.

Hegseth says Iran ceasefire offers 'chance at real peace' as both sides claim victory

Arabic news agency Lebanon 24 says on X that hospitals in Lebanon are now overcrowded with victims and that the health ministry is calling on citizens to stay off roads to leave room for ambulances. The pro-Hezbollah Al Manar TV channel is reporting multiple deaths and injuries as a result of heavy strikes on Beirut's southern suburbs, southern Lebanon, Bekaa and the mountains, in posts on Telegram. In a post on X, LBCI Lebanon News quotes the country's health minister as saying that hundreds have been killed and wounded. The state-run National News Agency is reporting that three girls have been killed in an airstrike on a house in the town of Adlun, southern Lebanon. As we reported earlier, there is a conflict over the extent of the Iran ceasefire, and Israel's Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has said it "does not include Lebanon". There



are reports of a high number of casualties across Lebanon, with hospitals overwhelmed and people believed to be under the rubble of collapsed buildings, after a large wave of Israeli air strikes. Israel described it as the largest wave of attacks in this conflict, hitting more than 100 of what it called Hezbollah command centres and military sites in 10 minutes. Attacks hit the southern suburbs of

Beirut, southern Lebanon and the eastern Bekaa Valley. This happened hours after the office of the Israeli prime minister, Benjamin Netanyahu, denied the assertion by Pakistan, which helped mediate a ceasefire between the US and Iran, that the deal also covered the devastating conflict here. Shortly before Hegseth started speaking, the Israel Defence Forces (IDF)

announced its "biggest strikes" since the start of its ground operation in Lebanon, and Lebanese media are now reporting extensive bombardment in towns and cities across the country. IDF spokesperson Avichay Adraee says in a statement on X that "within 10 minutes and in several areas simultaneously" the army carried out strikes "targeting about 100 headquar-

ters and military infrastructure belonging to Hezbollah". He quotes Chief of Staff General Eyal Zamir as saying the IDF will "exploit every opportunity" and continue to strike Hezbollah, adding: "We will continue the raids without stopping." Defence Secretary Pete Hegseth and Joint Chiefs Chairman General Dan Caine clearly see the deal as a resounding, and complete, military victory - but significant questions remain about the broader deal. For one, it's unclear what exact circumstances would trigger a resumption of US strikes in Iran, although Hegseth said that American forces would "remain vigilant". US officials have also insisted - as Hegseth did in the briefing - that Iran's government is one that has already gone through "regime change", and is now more willing to negotiate. While Iran has clearly signalled a willingness to come to the

table, it is by no means clear that the regime is transformed and no longer a threat to US interests in the region. Many observers have speculated that those in power may ultimately be more hardline. There are also few details on how, exactly, the US will secure the highly enriched uranium still in Iran, despite Hegseth saying that. Lastly, the statement last night from Pakistan suggested that the deal also includes Israeli operations in Lebanon, but strikes continue. We don't know how this will impact the larger negotiations. We can expect something of a victory lap from the White House today, and at her 13:00 Eastern (18:00 BST) briefing Karoline Leavitt is likely to be peppered with these and other questions. Yesterday, President Donald Trump threatened a "whole civilization". Hegseth is now asked if Iran did not come to the table and agree to a ceasefire deal.

Newlywed wife of US soldier freed by ICE after detention at military base



A US soldier's wife who was detained by immigration agents at the military base where he is stationed - just days after their wedding - has been released. Annie Ramos, 22, an undocumented immigrant who came to the US as a toddler, was arrested on 2 April and spent five days at a detention centre alongside hundreds facing deportation under the Trump administration's immigration crackdown. Immigration officials described Ramos as "an illegal alien from Honduras" who was arrested after attempting to enter a military base. "I feel awesome. Relieved. Relieved," Staff Sergeant Matthew Blank told the New York Times after his wife's release. "These have been the worst days of my life." "I can't wait to carry my wife into our home and start our lives together," Blank told the newspaper, which first reported the story. "I'm complete and ready to serve our country. And it's her country, too." Blank, who enlisted more than five years ago and has served in the Middle East and Europe, is scheduled to begin training later this month ahead of another deployment. Ramos, a biochemistry student, said she was focused now on securing her status.

TRUMP-BACKED REPUBLICAN CLAY FULLER WINS ELECTION TO REPLACE MARJORIE TAYLOR GREENE



Republican Clay Fuller is projected to have won Georgia's runoff election to replace former Congresswoman Marjorie Taylor Greene, a once-staunch ally of Donald Trump who resigned earlier this year after breaking with the president. Fuller won the election to replace her on Tuesday, according to CBS News, the BBC's US partner. He is a Trump-endorsed candidate who won against Democrat Shawn Harris, and whose victory keeps the strongly conservative district in Republican hands. The win shores up the party's razor-thin 217-214 majority in the House of Representatives. Fuller, a lieutenant colonel in the Georgia Air National Guard, will serve out the rest of Greene's term, which ends next January. He said in an interview with Fox News on Tuesday night that Trump's endorsement was "the key factor in us winning". "He was the difference-maker," Fuller said.

"He made all the difference in the world. It was the honour of my lifetime to be able to get his endorsement." A special election was held on 10 March where Harris performed marginally better than Fuller, in part because a crowded Republican field split the vote. No single candidate won a majority that night, requiring Tuesday's run off election. In order to hold the seat in Congress beyond next January, Fuller will have to immediately start campaigning again, this time for the midterm elections this November. It's possible he will face off with Harris again. Harris indicated on social media that he plans to run. "This wasn't the result we wanted, but the message is clear - people here are ready for leadership that puts them first," he said. "The fight continues. On to November!" Fuller, who was a White House fellow during Trump's first term, is closely aligned with the president's agenda.

MAN FINED AFTER BREAKING INTO VIRAL HIPPO MOO DENG'S ENCLOSURE

A man has been fined \$300 (£223) by a Thai court after breaking into the enclosure of Moo Deng, an endangered baby pygmy hippo and internet sensation, the zoo's director said. Narongwit Chodchay, who runs Khao Kheow Open Zoo, told AFP that the man, who entered Moo Deng's pen last month, had been found guilty by a local court. Footage released by local media showed a man inside the enclosure, recording Moo Deng with a tablet. The zoo, which is about two hours drive from Bangkok, said that the pygmy hippo - who went viral in 2024 after the zoo shared videos of her antics on social media - was unharmed but "slightly startled". The zoo's director said the court decision



"shows that no one can violate animals' rights, no matter whether they are in an enclosure or in the wild". He told AFP: "We train staff on what to do if any animals escape, but from now on, we will have to train them on what to do if there are any intruders. "We learned from this lesson and will not allow it to happen again - not to Moo Deng and not to other animals in the zoo."

IRAN CEASEFIRE DEAL GIVES TRUMP A WAY OUT OF WAR - BUT AT A HIGH COST

In the end, cooler heads prevailed - at least for now. At 18:32 Washington time, President Donald Trump posted on his social media website that the US and Iran were "very far along" with a "definitive" peace agreement and that he had agreed to a two-week ceasefire to allow negotiations to proceed. It wasn't exactly the last minute, but with Trump's looming 20:00 EDT (00:00 GMT on Wednesday) deadline to reach a deal or the US would launch massive strikes against Iranian energy and transportation infrastructure, it came pretty close. All of this is contingent on Iran also suspending hostilities and fully opening the Strait of Hormuz to commercial shipping traffic, which the regime says it will do, while insisting it still



exerts "dominion" over the waterway. The deal allowed Trump to extricate himself from what was shaping up to be a treacherous choice - either escalating with his promise that a "whole civilization will die tonight" or backing down and undermining his credibility. The US president may have only bought himself a temporary reprieve, however. The US and Iranians now will

engage in negotiations over the next two weeks, buying some time to try to reach a permanent settlement. It is likely to be a bumpy ride, but in after-hours trading, the price of a barrel of oil dropped below the \$100 mark for the first time in days and US stock futures soared. There appears to be a sense of optimism that the worst is over. Even this kind of progress was far from cer-

tain as recently as Tuesday morning, when Trump threatened the death of Iranian civilisation, "never to be brought back again". Whether such a jaw-dropping threat from an American president pressured Iran to agree to the kind of ceasefire they had previously rejected is uncertain. What is clear is that Trump's astounding, inflammatory declaration - just two days after a similar obscenity-laced Truth Social demand - is unlike anything a modern US president has ever levelled or hinted at. And even if the two-week ceasefire does result in a permanent peace, the Iran war - and Trump's recent words - may have fundamentally altered the way the rest of the world views the US.

GREECE TO BAN SOCIAL MEDIA FOR UNDER-15S FROM NEXT YEAR

Greece has announced plans to ban access to social media for under-15s, becoming the latest European country to restrict children's exposure to online platforms. Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis said the move was aimed at tackling rising anxiety and sleep problems among young people, as well as what he described as the "addictive design" of social media. The restriction will come into force from January of next year. In December Australia became the first country in the world to require TikTok, YouTube, Snapchat and other top sites to remove accounts held by under-16s, or face heavy fines. France, Austria and



Spain are among a growing number of nations pursuing similar curbs. The UK government has launched a consultation on whether to implement a ban for under-16s, while Ireland and Denmark are considering similar measures. Social media companies argue that

blanket bans will be ineffective, difficult to enforce and could isolate vulnerable teenagers. Reddit is challenging Australia's law in court. In a video message posted on TikTok on Wednesday, Mitsotakis said: "Many young people tell me they feel exhausted from compar-

isons, from comments, from the pressure to always be online." He said he had spoken with parents who said their children do not sleep well, are anxious and are always on their phones. Calling the planned restriction "difficult but necessary", he said the government's goal was not to distance young people from technology which "can be a source of inspiration, knowledge and creativity". "But the addictive design of certain applications, and a business model based on capturing your attention - on how long you stay in front of a screen - takes away your innocence and your freedom. That has to stop somewhere."

Co-founder of Jalisco New Generation drug cartel pleads guilty



The co-founder of the Mexico-based Jalisco New Generation Cartel (CJNG), Erick Valencia Salazar, has pleaded guilty to drug trafficking charges, the US Department of Justice (DOJ) has announced. Valencia Salazar, known as "El 85", was captured by the Mexican army in 2022 in the state of Jalisco and was among a group of 29 alleged drug lords extradited to the United States in February 2025 to stand trial. The Drug Enforcement Administration said Valencia Salazar "helped build CJNG into a ruthless organisation that uses violence as a business model - murdering for control in Mexico while flooding the United States with poison". His sentencing is scheduled on 31 July. In a statement, the DOJ said that Valencia Salazar had changed his earlier not guilty plea to plead guilty to one count of conspiracy to distribute 5kg or more of cocaine to the United States. The mandatory minimum sentence is 10 years in prison. The Jalisco New Generation

Cartel is one of the most powerful criminal organisations founded in Mexico. In February, its members unleashed a wave of violence across 20 Mexican states after news spread that its leader, Nemesio Oseguera Cervantes, better known as "El Mencho", had died as a result of injuries sustained during his capture by Mexican security forces. Last year, the US President Donald Trump designated the CJNG as a Foreign Terrorist Organisation (FTO). The Trump administration has stepped up its battle against the cartels, which it says threaten "the safety of the American people, the security of the United States, and the stability of the international order in the Western Hemisphere". Trump has also pressured his Mexican counterpart, Claudia Sheinbaum, to do more to combat Mexico-based criminal groups such as the CJNG. The capture and subsequent death of "El Mencho" was hailed by Sheinbaum as proof of the armed forces' commitment to track down Mexico's most notorious drug lords.



Israel carries out large wave of air strikes across Lebanon

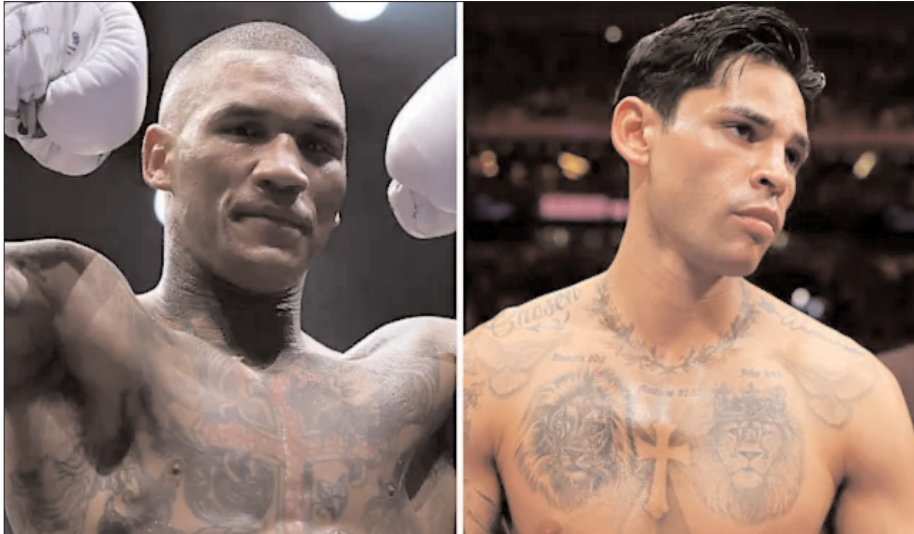
Cross-border travel hit by second day of fuel protests

Cross-border travel has been affected for the second day in a row by fuel protests in the Republic of Ireland. Slow-moving convoys protesting against high fuel prices caused by the US and Israeli war against Iran are in Dublin and various locations on main roads leading to the city, as well as near other large urban areas. Gardai (Irish police) said O'Connell Street and O'Connell Bridge in Dublin were at a standstill. Dublin Airport advised passengers to allow extra time for their journey while Translink said cross-border services were subject to delays and disruption. All of the public transport provider's X1/X2/X3/X4 services will

terminate at Dublin Airport until further notice. There are also a number of delays and diversions to Dublin Express coach services between Dublin and Belfast. The company advised customers to allow "significant extra time" for their journeys. The conflict in the Middle East has caused rapid price rises for both petrol and diesel. Some 20% of the world's oil trade, the raw ingredient for producing both petrol and diesel, has been halted by the closure of the Strait of Hormuz. Prices in the Republic of Ireland have surged to about 2.14 (£1.86) a litre for diesel and roughly 1.91 (£1.66) a litre for petrol, with higher prices in some places.

GARCIA IS GOOD FOR BOXING BUT A LIABILITY - BENN

Conor Benn says WBC welterweight champion Ryan Garcia is "good for boxing" but believes the American is a "liability". Garcia won his first major title in February after two previous failed attempts and following his return from a one-year suspension for doping. The 27-year-old has long been on Benn's radar but the Briton, who has served his own doping ban from the sport, spent 2025 tied up in his rivalry with Chris Eubank Jr. Benn, 29, stepped up two weight classes to face Eubank, winning the second encounter, but is ready to start campaigning back at his traditional division of welterweight. He told BBC Sport that Garcia was supposed to be his next opponent but did not want another period of inactivity, so agreed to face Regis Prograis on 11 April instead. "I think Garcia's good for the sport of boxing,



I think he's a character and he's entertaining, but he's also a liability," Benn told BBC Sport. "Garcia was next, that was scheduled in - I am mandatory number one position for Garcia. "Now if you're me, do you wait out until September or do you take a potential banana skin in the middle? I like rolling the dice and

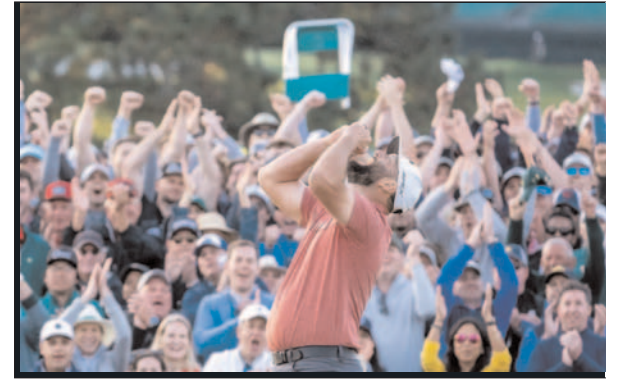
having a little bit of fun and keeping active." Benn's fight on Saturday is his first since leaving lifelong promoter Matchroom, having agreed a one-fight deal with Zuffa Boxing in February. Zuffa Boxing is backed by UFC chief Dana White and Saudi Arabian capital. White's ultimate aim is to sideline the four

traditional sanctioning bodies - the WBO, WBC, IBF and WBA - and make Zuffa's belt the premier world title alongside the Ring Magazine title, an organisation owned by Saudi boxing powerbroker Turki Alalshikh. What Benn's future looks like beyond his deal with Zuffa Boxing remains unclear,

but his desire to win a world title - just as his father Nigel did in the 1990s - remains firm. Benn has several avenues to explore if he beats Prograis, with Rolando Romero holding the WBA title, Lewis Crocker in possession of the IBF belt and Devin Haney the reigning WBO champion. But Garcia, whose unpredictability Benn admires, remains the Briton's number one target. "You don't know who's turning up - you don't know if Garcia's turning up," Benn said. "You don't know if he's going to make the fight or not, have some sort of episode. You just don't know. "People don't want to be themselves in the sport of boxing, so I love it when I see a young man under fire for being who he is. "At least you're true to yourself and who you are. Whether I like you or not - I don't him - but some people do, just be who you are."

Rolex Proud To Support 90th Edition Of The Masters Tournament

Steeped in history and tradition, the Masters Tournament is the first of the year's four men's major golf championships. The world's best players will arrive in Georgia, USA, and venture down Magnolia Lane - the prestigious entrance drive to Augusta National Golf Club - to begin their quest for the winner's Green Jacket. From Thursday 9 to Sunday 12 April, the 90th edition of this revered sporting event will be contested on the azalea-lined fairways and immaculate greens, once again supported by Rolex as Tournament Partner, a role it has fulfilled since 1999. World No. 1 Scottie Scheffler is one of several Rolex Testimonees bidding to reclaim the Masters crown. The 29-year-old American produced an outstanding season in 2025, securing two majors, the PGA Championship and The Open, and will be seeking to win the Masters for a third time following victories in 2022 and 2024.



Commenting on the emotions he feels at Augusta National Golf Club, Scheffler says: "I think the feeling that you get and the gratefulness of being able to achieve a lifelong dream is so special. It is just really fun to put on the Green Jacket, and when you go back the next year, you get to host the Champions Dinner and do all the things that you have dreamed about. Going from being a little kid learning to play the game to winning the Masters is a truly humbling experience." If victorious, Scheffler will add his name to an illustrious list of fel-

low Rolex Testimonees who have won the Masters on more than two occasions. Jack Nicklaus leads the title count with six, followed by Tiger Woods on five, Arnold Palmer on four and Phil Mickelson and Gary Player on three. Jon Rahm also has the opportunity to become a multiple Masters winner. The Spaniard triumphed at Augusta in 2023 and will attempt to repeat the feat this year after joining a group of golfing greats at the Champions Dinner on Tuesday 7 April. "Playing at Augusta National Golf Club is the most special feeling in golf," says Rahm.

Little Andaman Pro 2026 Signals Rise Of Andaman And Nicobar Islands As India's Next Surfing Hub

The Andaman and Nicobar group of Islands are fast emerging as India's next major surfing destination, with Andaman & Nicobar Tourism taking a decisive step in promoting the sport by hosting the first-ever national surfing and stand-up paddling championship in the region, the Little Andaman Pro 2026. Organised by the Surfing Federation of India (SFI) and fully supported by Andaman Tourism, the championship, scheduled from April 9-12 at Butler Bay, marks a significant milestone in the expansion of India's surfing map beyond traditional coastline locations. Known for its pristine coastline, coral reefs and consistent swell patterns, Little Andaman offers ideal conditions for high-per-



formance surfing. The reef break at Butler Bay, in particular, is increasingly being recognised as one of the most promising surf locations in the country, capable of hosting top-level competitions and attracting surfers from across India and beyond. The initiative is expected to not only elevate the standard of competitive

surfing in India but also provide a major boost to tourism in the islands by positioning Andaman as a premier destination for ocean sports and adventure travel. Speaking on the initiative, Shri Vinayak Chamadia, IAS, Director (IP&T), A&N Administration, said, "The Andaman Islands have

always been known for their natural beauty, and surfing is a natural extension of that identity. By hosting the Little Andaman Pro 2026, we aim to showcase the region's immense potential as a surfing destination while promoting sustainable and experience-driven tourism. This is a long-term vision to put Andaman on the global surfing map." The move reflects a growing emphasis on leveraging sports as a driver for tourism, with destinations increasingly investing in niche sporting events to attract new audiences and create unique travel experiences. Mr. Arun Vasu, President, Surfing Federation of India, highlighted the importance of expanding the sport into new geographies, saying,

CSK Head Coach's Success Only Dependent On MS Dhoni? Ex-India Star's Big Claim

Former Indian opener Sadagopan Ramesh stated that Chennai Super Kings head coach Stephen Fleming's success has depended entirely on his partnership with MS Dhoni. Fleming was appointed head coach of the franchise in 2009 and has since led them to five IPL titles-all of which came under Dhoni's captaincy. However, the franchise has struggled since Rituraj Gaikwad took over the captaincy in 2024. In a post on his Instagram account, Ramesh argued that Fleming's accolades are tied to Dhoni; with CSK losing their first three matches of IPL 2026, he claimed the coach appears to be "five steps behind" the



modern game. "Fleming has never had any success anywhere without Dhoni captaining the side. It's clear that Fleming's success hinges completely on Dhoni. With the way the game is evolving, just like how a player's fitness and

been overwhelming, with the opener scoring just 41 runs in three matches so far. Ramesh insisted that playing crucial knocks could boost Gaikwad's confidence and aid his development as a leader. "You don't need experience to smash fours and sixes, but you need experience to stop boundaries-which CSK's bowling lacks. To help himself as captain, Rituraj must start scoring runs. By doing that and single-handedly winning matches for CSK, things can start to turn around for him as a leader," said Ramesh. Chennai Super Kings will take on Delhi Capitals in their next IPL 2026 encounter this Saturday.

"3 Glasses Of Wine": Major Details Emerge In David Warner's Drink-Driving Case

Former Australian cricket team opener David Warner told the police that he had consumed alcohol shortly before he was stopped in Sydney's eastern suburbs, according to a report by NewsCorp. Fresh details have emerged in the drink-driving case, as the report claimed that Warner told officers he was drinking with a friend and had consumed three glasses of wine before trying to drive back to his residence in Maroubra. He was intercepted by authorities during a random breath-testing operation, which returned a positive reading for alcohol. Warner was taken to Maroubra police station from the scene, and his blood alcohol level was recorded at allegedly 0.104 more than twice the legal limit. The former Australian



cricketer was then charged with a mid-range drink-driving offence, and he will appear before the Downing Centre Local Court on May 7. The latest development adds to an already high-profile case involving the former Australian international, who continues to feature prominently in franchise cricket despite stepping away from international duties in 2024. Warner is cur-

rently leading Karachi Kings in the ongoing Pakistan Super League (PSL) 2026 and had briefly returned to Australia during a break in the tournament. He had recently scored a half-century in a match in Lahore on April 2. The incident comes on the heels of a prolific domestic T20 season, where Warner enjoyed a standout run in the Big Bash League, averaging 86.6 for Sydney Thunder and earning captaincy honours in the tournament's team of the season. The franchise has declined to comment on the matter. Warner, one of Australia's most accomplished modern-day batters, amassed 8786 runs in 112 Tests at an average exceeding 44, including a career-best unbeaten 335 against Pakistan. Since retiring from Test cricket,

Sunil Gavaskar Launches Brutal Rant On Overseas Stars' 'Commitment' To IPL: "Cash Cow"

Legendary Indian cricketer Sunil Gavaskar launched a scathing attack regarding the availability of overseas players in the Indian Premier League (IPL), questioning both their commitment and their fitness claims. While players like Mitchell Starc and Matheesha Pathirana have faced delayed starts due to injury concerns, Kolkata Knight Riders' record signing Mitchell Starc and RCB's Cameron Green have faced scrutiny over workload management. Gavaskar urged the BCCI to intervene, suggesting that stricter rules should be in place for players who do not commit fully to their designated roles. In his column for Sportstar, the legendary cricketer remarked that bowling four overs a match



can hardly be called "demanding." "To suggest that the franchise was 'informed before' is not a great excuse. And 'informed before' is how much before the opening day of the tournament? Playing for the country is paramount and comes before franchise cricket, but don't the franchises who open not just their wallets but also their hearts to players and often

their families-deserve full commitment?" "It is also worth remembering that a bowler can bowl only four overs in a match. If they have bowled a similar number of deliveries in practice without issue, what is stopping them from doing so in the game? As a bowler, you are expected to bowl 56 overs across 14 league games over two months and, if your team reaches the final, perhaps another two or three games and 12 more overs. C'mon, for a generation that keeps talking about how fit they are, that's no load at all. Four overs in a match-and not even in one stretch-is too much for the body? Man, if the body is that fragile, then it's best to give it two more months' rest, isn't it?" he wrote.

I AM MAXIMUS HEADS GRAND NATIONAL FIELD



I Am Maximus and Nick Rockett - the past two winners of the Grand National - head the field for Saturday's race at Aintree. The pair, both trained by Willie Mullins, won the race in 2024 and 2025 respectively and top the weights for the 2026 renewal. I Am Maximus, owned by JP McManus, triumphed by seven-and-a-half lengths in 2024, before finishing two-and-a-half lengths behind Nick Rockett, who was victorious under Mullins' son Patrick last year. Jockey Paul Townend has stuck with I Am Maximus, while Patrick Mullins has jumped off Nick Rockett for Grangeclare West. Tom Bellamy, who picked up his first Cheltenham Festival winner last month, has picked up the ride on Nick Rockett. A maximum of 34 runners have been declared for Saturday's showpiece, with six horses waiting in reserve. The reserves are Pied Piper, Imperial Saint, Amirite, Ain't That A Shame, Deep Cave and Buddy One - they will get runs if there are any non-runners before 13:00 BST on Friday. McManus is

seeking a record fourth victory in the race and has leading hopefuls Iroko and Jagwar - both trained by Oliver Greenall and Josh Guerriero. Johnnywho is another runner for McManus, alongside Spillane's Tower, who also holds an entry for the Aintree Bowl on Thursday so may yet drop out of the National. Oscars Brother and Perceval Gallegois, who will be ridden by Harry Cobden after falling last year, are also representing McManus. I Am Maximus is bidding to become the first horse to carry top weight to victory since triple winner Red Rum in the 1970s. Nick Rockett will attempt to match Tiger Roll's feat of back-to-back wins in 2018 and 2019. The previous horse to do that was Red Rum. The field is again dominated by Irish trainer Mullins, with the three-time winner having nine horses in the field. Joining I Am Maximus and Nick Rockett are last year's third-placed Grangeclare West, Spanish Harlem, Lecky Watson, Champ Kiely, High Class Hero, Captain Cody and Quai De Bourbon.

Savita, Deepika Return As Hockey India Announce Women's Squad For Argentina Tour

Hockey India has revealed a 24-member Indian Women's Hockey Team for the upcoming tour of Argentina, set to take place in Buenos Aires from April 13 to 17. The four-match exposure series against the top Argentine team arrives at a crucial point in India's international schedule, with the FIH Hockey World Cup in Belgium & the Netherlands 2026 and the Asian Games approaching. The squad combines experienced players with promising new talent, showcasing both the growth of Indian women's hockey in recent years and the high

expectations set by head coach Sjoerd Marijne. For the players, this tour is not just about preparation; it signifies their serious commitment. Experienced midfielder Salima Tete remains the team's captain, adding composure, intelligence, and energy to India's midfield. The most eagerly awaited return to the team is forward Deepika, who is coming back after rehab. Her return will be particularly appreciated by the Chief Coach, as Deepika resumes her role as India's main drag-flicker in what will be a pivotal year. In her absence, players such as Navneet Kaur, Manisha

Chauhan, Udita, and Annu stepped up commendably. Notably, Annu showcased her exceptional drag-flicking skills during the qualifiers. With Deepika back, bringing more depth and experience, the team now appears more balanced and formidable moving ahead. Over the past year, Navneet Kaur has established herself as a key player in Indian women's hockey and will be central to India's preparations for an important season ahead. Savita Punia, India's veteran goalkeeper and one of the most decorated custodians in Indian hockey, rejoins the squad after missing the

recent qualifiers. Her return is timely-Argentina will thoroughly test the defense, and there is no better player to meet that challenge. When Savita was unavailable for the qualifiers, Bichu Devi seized the opportunity and proved she belongs at this level. The young goalkeeper displayed maturity, sharp reflexes, and calmness beyond her age, confirming that India now has strong depth in goalkeeping. Her ongoing presence alongside Savita promotes healthy competition for the goalkeeper position and reassures the coaching staff about the team's future.



AA22XA6 IS RAAKA:

Icon Star Allu Arjun Roars in Birthday special poster; Atlee, and Sun Pictures brings Biggest Visual Spectacle of Indian Cinema

In a blockbuster announcement that has set the Indian film industry abuzz, Icon Star Allu Arjun, acclaimed director Atlee, and entertainment giant Kalanithi Maran's Sun Pictures have announced the much anticipated title of this mammoth project. AA22XA6 is now RAAKA. A uniquely titled film is generating excitement in the epic that Atlee is set to bring. In the first look poster, Icon Star Allu Arjun is seen in a striking and unique avatar. The poster introduces him as bald, kohl-eyed, staring directly into the camera, while sporting the animal claws teased yesterday. His forehead also features markings reminiscent of Viking tattoos. Beyond this look, little is known about the film, including the cast or even the genre. Fans have reacted positively to the stunning new look, with many calling it "jaw-dropping." As a superstar celebrated worldwide, he never shies away from experimenting with his looks to match the grand vision of his director. This transformation has truly shocked everyone. The first look sent shock-



waves across the country, with fans celebrating Icon Star's birthday with full Josh and excitement. After keeping fans waiting for almost a year, Atlee and Allu Arjun have stunned audiences, and everyone is eagerly anticipating what they are about to bring.

Following the global success of Pushpa: The Rule, National award winning actor Allu Arjun is expected to bring his signature style to this highly

anticipated project. Reports suggest that Raaka will be a major technical venture, with Atlee aiming to create visual effects and world-building to rival those seen in Hollywood biggies. The creator Atlee, known for massive blockbusters like Jawan,

Theri, Bigil, and Mersal; and Sun TV Network, one of India's most influential powerhouses. Deepika Padukone is playing as the female lead opposite Allu Arjun.

Manam Enterprises LLP and Sithara Entertainments' Lenin on June 26th: Akhil Akkineni's Birthday Special Poster unveiled

Young and dynamic actor Akhil Akkineni's next Lenin has raised a good buzz with the first single. The film stars Bhagyashri Borse as the female lead. Directed by Murali Kishor Abburu, Lenin is shaping up to be a complete cinematic package filled with powerful emotions and engaging storytelling. On the occasion of Akhil Akkineni's birthday, the makers dropped a special poster wishing the actor a very happy birthday. In the poster, Akhil is seen in a new look, and his charming smile adds warmth. This much-anticipated project is set to release in theatres on June 26, 2026. The



Young and dynamic actor Akhil Akkineni's next Lenin has raised a good buzz with the first single. The film stars Bhagyashri Borse as the female lead.

release date is also confirmed once again on the poster. Directed by Murali Kishor Abburu, Lenin is being crafted as a complete cinematic experience, promising a blend of strong emotions and engaging storytelling. The team assures audiences

that the film will be presented in its finest form, delivering a memorable big-screen experience. The film also features music by Thaman S, adding to the overall scale and appeal. Produced by Akkineni Nagarjuna and

Suryadevara Naga Vamsi under Manam Enterprises LLP and Sithara Entertainments, and presented by Annapurna Studios, the film promises a memorable big-screen spectacle.

SAMYUKTHA MENON'S NEW LOOK HAS NO OFF SWITCH



Samyuktha Menon is one actress who clearly believes that less is never more when it comes to glamour, and her latest pictures prove exactly that. Draped in a stunning traditional outfit with a heavy glamour dose, she looks every bit the star she is becoming. The rich fabric, the bold jewellery choices, the confident pose, and that intense gaze all come together to create pictures that are impossible to scroll past. Samyuktha has always had a magnetic screen presence, and these off-screen pictures show she carries that same energy everywhere she goes, no camera crew required.



Trisha Responds on Retirement but Skips the Big Question

while now, speculations intensified when Vijay's wife reportedly filed for divorce. Adding fuel to the fire, Vijay and Trisha attended a friend's wedding together following the divorce reports. Despite the rumours getting stronger in the media, Trisha and Vijay remain tight-lipped about their relationship. Meanwhile, noted Tamil actor Chitra Lakshmanan stated on his YouTube channel that Trisha has quit films. Responding to the same, Trisha shared a sarcastic story on Instagram, condemning it as false news. However, she didn't address the main rumour that has been doing the rounds in the media for a long time. Chitra

Lakshmanan said that Trisha has retired from films and added that a few reliable producers confirmed the news to him. Soon, his statements went viral on social media, with people speculating that Trisha quitting films had something to do with her relationship with Vijay, who also quit films after entering active politics. Trisha quashed Chitra Lakshmanan's statements by writing, "Apparently, I've quit films, married a rich businessman, and I'm raising quadruplets who turned two yesterday! Anything else I should add, or did we cover today's fiction quota?" Though she confirmed that she will not be leaving films, Trisha didn't answer whether she is in a relationship with Vijay or not. It remains to be seen when they will respond to

Of late, actress Trisha Krishnan has been in the news for her alleged relationship with actor-politician Vijay. Though their dating rumours have been circulating in the media for a

Dacoit will definitely be a blockbuster. No doubt about it: Victory Venkatesh at the pre-release event

Adivi Sesh, who is entertaining with back-to-back pan India blockbusters, is going to come before the audience with the pan-India action-romantic thriller 'Decoy'. Shaniel Deo is making his directorial debut with this film. Mrunal Thakur plays the heroine opposite Sesh. Anurag Kashyap plays a key role. Presented by Annapurna Studios, the film is produced by Supriya Yarlagadda and co-produced by Sunil Narang. The teaser, trailer and songs of this film have raised huge expectations on the film. Decoy is set to hit the theatres on April 10. On this occasion, the makers organized a pre-release event. The ceremony, attended by Victory Venkatesh as the chief guest, was very grand. Victory Venkatesh said at the pre-release event..



Greetings to everyone. Everyone thinks I came to the Decoy event for Supriya. But I came for a good film, coming in front of the audience, and giving a big hit. I saw Sesh in Panja. That's when I felt that he would be a very wonderful actor. All the films he did later became

very good film. Because they did it with a very passionate team. Everyone did it with the intention of making a good film, coming in front of the audience, and giving a big hit. I saw Sesh in Panja. That's when I felt that he would be a very wonderful actor. All the films he did later became

hits. I wish more blockbusters to come. Decoy will definitely be a blockbuster. There is no doubt about that. I believe this will be Mrunal's best film.



Ranveer is the reason why I exist in this industry: Mrunal Thakur

Mrunal Thakur, one of the most popular actresses in recent times, is currently busy promoting her upcoming film Dacoit. Amid the promotions, the actress made a heartfelt revelation that has caught everyone's attention. Do you know she recently called a Bollywood actor her "lucky charm"? Yes, Mrunal shared that Ranveer Singh played a key role in shaping her early career. Speaking during a podcast with Ranveer Allahbadia, Mrunal opened up about how her journey in Bollywood began after working with Ranveer in a

commercial. She said, "My heart is happy. He is my lucky charm. He is the reason why I exist in this industry in the first place. I did a commercial with him for a hair brand as a model, and when that commercial hit the screens, it was then that filmmakers started noticing me. That is how I give my credit to him. This man has really helped me. Such a positive person, he deserves all the success." The actress credited that one opportunity for changing her life and helping her enter the film industry.

Singh, I saw Hamza
Mrunal also spoke highly of Ranveer's performance in Dhurandhar: The Revenge, where he plays the character Hamza. Praising his acting, she said, "The acting was not surface level. It had depth and layers. I did not watch it as Ranveer Singh. I only saw it as Hamza, it was more of a character than a hero. I just feel incredibly proud of Ranveer because he is so hardworking. I pray and wish that whatever he does should be a blockbuster. He can do everything."

On the work front, Mrunal is gearing up for the release of Dacoit, where she stars alongside Adivi Sesh and Anurag Kashyap. The film is set to hit theatres on April 10.

■ WHAT'S NEXT FOR MRUNAL

■ "I didn't see Ranveer

NANI'S AAYA SHER SENSATIONAL 100 M MARK

Natural Star Nani is in unstoppable form, constantly reinventing himself and pushing the boundaries of mass cinema. He steps into one of his fiercest and most intense avatars yet in The Paradise and the film's musical journey began with a bang. The first single Aaya Sher has erupted into a global sensation, dominating across platforms and music charts. Impressively, the song has crossed 100M+ views, becoming the fastest from Nani to reach the landmark.

