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SCAN FOR E-PAPER



OM NAMO VENKATESAYA



26-04-2026

Total pilgrims: 79,878

Tonsures: 33,037

Hundi kankaluz: 3.94 CR

Waiting Compartments: 30

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

WEATHER

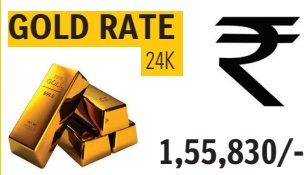


38 °C | °F

Precipitation: 15%

Humidity: 40%

Wind: 13 km/h



GOLD RATE 24K ₹ 1,55,830/-

WOMAN DELIVERS BABY ON TRAIN, CO-PASSENGERS HELP IN DOCTORS ABSENCE

Mangaluru (TSIT) A train journey from Mangaluru to Mysuru turned unexpectedly into a makeshift delivery room on Monday when a woman, somewhere between stations and destinations, brought a new life into the world inside a halted train in Dakshina Kannada district. The train was stopped at BC Road Railway Station in Bantwal taluk after the woman went into labour mid-journey. The idea was simple and urgent: get her medical help. But time, as it often does in moments of crisis, refused to cooperate. For more than half an hour, no doctor arrived. What followed was a scene both stark and extraordinary. With no medical personnel in sight, two women co-passengers stepped forward. Inside the cramped confines of a train toilet, they helped deliver the baby — away from hospital beds, monitors, or sterile rooms, but not away from courage.

Serving people of Bengal is in my destiny this time, says PM Modi

Kolkata (TSIT):

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday expressed confidence in the Bharatiya Janata Party's (BJP) success in the West Bengal Assembly election, stating that it is his destiny to serve the people of the state this time.

"To serve the people of West Bengal and ensure their safety and security is written in my destiny this time. Hence, this is my responsibility also. I will not walk away from this responsibility. The Assembly election in West Bengal this time is also critical in changing the destiny of the entire eastern India," the Prime Minister said while addressing an election campaign rally at Jagatdal in North 24 Parganas district.

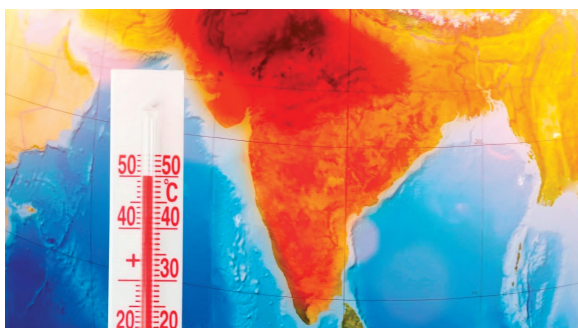
He also explained why the Assembly polls in the state this time were crucial for changing the destiny of eastern India. According to him,



Anga (Bihar), Banga (Bengal) and Kalinga (Odisha) are the three pillars for a prosperous India, and if any one of the three pillars becomes weak, then the entire India gets affected.

"This is my last campaign rally in West Bengal this time. The kind of public enthusiasm that I have witnessed this time in my campaign rallies, I am sure that I will have to come to West Bengal again after May 4, to be a witness to the oath ceremony of the new cabinet," the Prime Minister said. Speaking on the occasion, he also said that if the BJP comes to power in West Bengal, a major "Make in India" will be established around the state capital of Kolkata.

TN sizzles under scorching heat, temperatures to spike in coming days as peak summer intensifies



Chennai (TSIT):

As Tamil Nadu has been sizzling under scorching heat, with more than 14 districts recording temperatures in excess of 100 Deg F and touching 107 Deg F mark during the last few days, the Met office on Monday said the mercury level would increase in the coming days, setting the stage for the peak summer season to intensify. With the hot and humid weather would be causing great inconvenience, the Met

office has advised the people to take all precautionary measures, avoid travelling during 1200 noon at 3.00 PM and take enough fluids at frequent intervals to avoid dehydration.

As the health experts have warned of heat strokes, the Public Health departments as part of preventive steps has directed all the government hospitals, primary health centres and district headquarters hospitals to open heat stroke wards to provide treatment to the needy. According to weather

blogger, with the mercury level already rising steadily for the last two weeks and crossing the 100 Deg F mark in Chennai city, the similar weather pattern will continue in the coming, making the peak summer season called as "Kathiri", beginning on May 3 or 4, and last will the month-end, even more hotter. As the prevailing oppressive heat-wave setting the stage for heralding the Kathiri season, there would be significant rise in temperatures from May one, with the people in coastal, north coastal and interior districts, including Chennai, its suburbs and neighbouring districts of Kancheepuram, Tiruvallur and Chengalpattu districts, expected to bore the brunt of the scorching heat. Like how the Northeast monsoon, which was supposed to withdraw on December 30/31, 2025, got extended, spilling over to the month of January.

Russia will do everything that serves interests of Iran: Putin

Saint Petersburg (TSIT):

Iranian Foreign Minister Seyed Abbas Araghchi on Monday called on Russian President Vladimir Putin in Saint Petersburg as the Kremlin reiterated its support for bringing peace in the Middle East, local media reported.



"For our part, we will do everything that serves your interests, the interests of all the peoples of the region, to ensure that this peace is achieved as

quickly as possible. You know our position well," Russia's Tass news agency quoted Putin as saying during the meeting with the visiting Iranian minister.

Putin stated that people of Iran are fighting "courageously and heroically" for their sovereignty. He

expressed hope that the people of Iran will overcome this "difficult period of trials and peace will come." He also expressed Moscow's

2020 Delhi riots: Court acquits 12 accused of murdering Muslim man, rioting

New Delhi: A Delhi court has acquitted 12 men accused of abducting and murdering a man during the 2020 northeast Delhi riots, saying that the prosecution failed to prove the case beyond a reasonable doubt due to major contradictions in eyewitness testimonies and weak corroborative evidence.

Additional Sessions Judge Parveen Singh was hearing the case against Lokesh Solanki, Pankaj Sharma, Sumit Chaudhary alias Badshah, Ankit Chaudhary alias Fauzi, Prince alias DJ Wala, Rishabh Chaudhary alias Tapas, Jatin Sharma alias Rohit, Vivek Panchal alias Nandu, Himanshu Thakur, Sahil alias Babu, Sandeep alias Mogli and Tinku Arora, who were accused of murdering Musharraf.

In an order dated April 21, the court said, "Prosecution has failed to prove its case against the accused beyond a reasonable doubt and the accused are entitled to benefit of doubt. All the accused are accordingly acquitted of the charges framed against them."

All accused were arrested



in connection with the case related to the death of Musharraf, whose body was recovered from a drain in Bhagirathi Vihar on February 27, 2020, amid widespread communal violence in the area.

The prosecution alleged that on the night of February 25, a mob of 150-200 people forcibly entered Musharraf's residence, dragged him out, assaulted him and later threw his body into a drain. Charges were framed under various provisions, including murder, rioting, unlawful assembly, kidnapping, destruction of evidence and promoting enmity against the accused persons.

The court said the prosecution's case substantially rested on the testimony

of the deceased's wife and daughter, who claimed to have witnessed the killing.

"There are serious departures regarding the subsequent events leading to the death of the deceased. Individually, these discrepancies might be treated as minor variations; however, their cumulative effect is that the testimonies are mutually destructive and unreliable on the most material aspect of the case," the court said. The court also found the deceased's wife "wholly unnatural" and noted that despite claiming to have seen her husband being killed, she neither called a PCR nor informed relatives for nearly two days.

"It is evident that for

two days neither did she call the PCR nor inform anyone that her husband had been killed. This is highly improbable that in such a scenario she would not disclose, even to her daughter, that Musharraf had been murdered," the judge said. On the call detail records relied upon by the prosecution, the judge said they only placed the accused broadly in their residential areas and could not establish involvement in the crime.

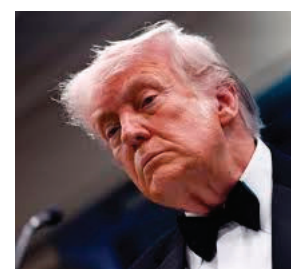
"Presence of an accused in or around his residential area, without more, does not establish his involvement in the crime. Consequently, no substantial weight can be attached to the CDR evidence for establishing guilt," the court said.

Regarding WhatsApp chats recovered from accused Lokesh Solanki, the court said that though they showed intent to spread hatred, he had already been convicted for the same chats in another FIR and could not be punished again. It then acquitted all the accused of all charges framed against them.

'I'm not a rapist, I'm not a paedophile': says Trump. Tells interviewer she's a 'disgrace'

Washington (TSIT) US President Donald Trump said on Monday that he is neither a 'rapist' nor a 'paedophile,' while referring to remarks made by the gunman who attacked the White House Correspondents' Association (WHCA) dinner on April 25. "I am not a rapist...I am not a paedophile," Trump said in an interview with 60Minutes programme (CBS News).

He also rebuked the interviewer by calling her a 'disgrace' and said she (the



interviewer) should be 'ashamed' of herself for asking question about something that a 'sick' person (the attacker) had written. The interviewer read out a

line from the attacker's 'manifesto' which said it was his duty to target Trump administration officials.

"And I am no longer willing to permit a paedophile, rapist, and traitor to coat my hands with his crimes. (Well, to be completely honest, I was no longer willing a long time ago, but this is the first real opportunity I've had to do something about it)" according to the attacker's 'manifesto.'

The 'manifesto' said 'I would still go through most

everyone here to get to the targets if it were absolutely necessary (on the basis that most people "chose" to attend a speech by a paedophile, rapist, and traitor, and are thus complicit) but I really hope it doesn't come to that." The interviewer while reading out the lines from the 'manifesto', asked Trump for his reaction. A calm looking Trump said 'I was waiting for this. I knew you would ask this because you are horrible people, horrible people.' 'I am not a rapist.

Justice must be seen to be done: Kejriwal on refusal to appear in excise case before HC judge

NEW DELHI: Aam Aadmi Party chief Arvind Kejriwal has written to Delhi High Court Justice Swarana Kanta Sharma, saying he will not appear in the excise case personally or through a lawyer before her, the party said on Monday. BJP urges Bengaluru Police Commissioner to cancel event supporting Umar Khalid. Pointing to a "grave miscarriage of justice", Kejriwal, in a four-page letter, said he has "serious and unconcealed" concerns regarding the matter. Kejriwal later posted a video message on X, in which he said that his fight is "not about winning or losing, but about right and wrong". He also said he is preparing to go to the apex court against the earlier order given by Justice Sharma in the matter.

"People can ask me that if I am unsatisfied with the rescusal order, then why do I not approach the Supreme Court? I am preparing for that, this is a very sensitive case.

"Keeping in mind the law, respect and public trust in judiciary, I am taking one step at a time. I am not taking this step in ego, rebellion or as an insult to judiciary," Kejriwal said in his video. The Delhi chief minister wrote in the letter, "I have decided that I shall not participate in the further proceedings in this matter, either in person or through counsel. I do not take this step light-



ly. He further said that "justice must not only be done, but must also be seen to be done." "The principle that justice must not only be done, but must also be seen to be done, is among the most sacred assurances that a court gives to a citizen in a democracy," he said.

The assurance cannot be dishonoured by asking the citizen to ignore what "anyone can plainly see" in a case like this, he added in the letter.

The letter also invoked the principles of Satyagraha and the teachings of Mahatma Gandhi, with Kejriwal saying that his intent is "strengthening of judiciary and prevent its weakening".

He added that he has given the authority an

opportunity to consider and correct what he perceived to be a grave miscarriage of justice.

His earlier plea seeking the recusal of Justice Sharma, which was rejected on April 20, was interpreted as a personal attack, the AAP chief claimed. "After the said judgment, I am left with the painful and inescapable impression that what I had urged as a lawful plea of apprehension was received and answered as a personal attack upon Your Ladyship and as an assault on the institution itself. "Those are not, with respect, answers to the case I had brought. They show me that my plea of apprehension has been judicially understood as a personal and institutional affront,"

he said in the letter. The letter further noted the leader's belief that it was now "impossible to receive an impartial hearing" in Justice Sharma's court in the excise case.

Kejriwal also reiterated two grounds cited earlier in his recusal plea.

"First, the issue of Your Ladyship's repeated public association with the RSS's legal front, the Akhil Bharatiya Adhivakta Parishad (ABAP) - an organisation belonging to the ideological ecosystem of the ruling dispensation," he wrote, further pointing out that Justice Sharma's children "are professionally engaged on multiple advocates' panels of the Union government which happens to be the opposite party in this

case". Reflecting on his personal experience during the proceedings, the former Delhi chief minister expressed concern over the broader implications of his case on public trust in the judiciary, while he said he maintains respect for the institution.

"When I appeared before Your Ladyship to argue my case, the question in my heart was simple: Will I get justice? Today, with the deepest respect, I must say that the same question has become graver and deeper in my conscience," he said. This case has now become a matter of widespread public discussion. It is being discussed not merely in legal and political circles, but in homes across the country, the letter read. Addressing potential criticism, Kejriwal clarified that his remarks should not be interpreted as opposition to the judiciary.

"As I write this, I am also cognisant of the fact that some might portray me as someone 'against' the judiciary. But how can that ever be the case when I have personally received relief from the judiciary, including orders of bail and the present discharge?"

"Today, I walk free because of the judiciary. Let there exist no figment of imagination that my present stand is against the institution," he asserted. Kejriwal further said his respect for the judiciary "remains intact" and he

AAP WORKERS PROTEST OUTSIDE RAGHAV CHADHA'S MUMBAI RESIDENCE; CASE FILED AGAINST 8



Mumbai, April 27 : A protest by leaders and workers of the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) outside the residence of Rajya Sabha member Raghav Chadha in Mumbai led to police action, with several demonstrators being detained and a case registered against more than eight individuals.

During the protest, demonstrators raised slogans, including "Traitor Raghav Chadha", expressing their anger over his reported exit from the party. The protest was described as intense, prompting intervention by the Khar Police Station, which later issued notices to the detainees and released them. Police registered a First Information Report (FIR) against eight AAP leaders, including Mumbai Working President

Reuben Mascarenhas. The case has been filed under Sections 189(2), 189(3), and 223 of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), along with relevant provisions of the Maharashtra Police Act.

According to police officials, the FIR pertains to alleged unlawful assembly and protest activities against Chadha and six other Rajya Sabha members who merged with the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) in the Upper House.

The development follows a major political shift last week, when Chadha and six other AAP MPs announced that they were leaving the party and joining the BJP. The move was presented as a group merger rather than individual defections, a distinction that holds significance under India's anti-defec-

tion law.

AAP had 10 members in the Rajya Sabha. With seven MPs moving together, they crossed the required two-thirds threshold, enabling them to seek protection under the provisions of the anti-defection law.

The issue has triggered a wider political and legal debate, not only about the defections but also about earlier reform proposals related to such laws, some of which Chadha himself had supported.

Meanwhile, Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Singh Mann has sought an appointment with President Droupadi Murmu, where he appears to present his case regarding the AAP's call to disqualify its rebel members. Chadha had been elected to the Rajya Sabha from Punjab.

Gujarat AAP's general secretary quits ahead of local poll results

Ahmedabad, April 27 : The Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) suffered a setback in Gujarat just 24 hours before vote counting, as its state General Secretary Sagar Rabari resigned from all party posts, adding to a series of recent exits from the organisation. Rabari, a prominent leader with influence among grassroots workers and sections of the farming community, announced his resignation through a Facebook post.

His departure comes at a sensitive juncture for the party, which is awaiting the results of the local body elections held on Sunday.

In his statement issued on Monday, Rabari said, "I finish my journey with the Aam Aadmi Party here today. Freeing myself from party membership, position and responsibilities. Heartfelt thanks to all colleagues for their cooperation. Personal relationships and friendships will remain intact." His resignation follows recent political developments within the party in Gujarat, where multiple leaders have exited in the run-up to the polls. Days earlier, he had publicly criticised the Bharatiya Janata



Party (BJP), alleging attempts to intimidate voters and curb the party's outreach, including through social media restrictions.

A party source told IANS that the reasons for his decision remain unclear. "We do not know why he has given his resignation. He was doing press conferences till two days ago for the party and targeting the BJP. He is not picking up our calls. He has not said anything wrong about the party. Likely due to personal reasons, he resigned," the source said. Rabari's exit comes amid earlier high-profile defections in the state unit. Farmer leader Raju Karpada had resigned from the AAP in February this year and subsequently joined the BJP in April, stating that working with the government would better serve farmers' interests.

'Why listen to Mamata': Amit Shah refutes Bengal CM's charge of 'paid' supporters

Behala, April 27 : Responding to West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee's allegation that the BJP was bringing "paid supporters" from outside states to swell crowds at public rallies, Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Monday firmly rejected the claims.

Refuting the accusation, HM Shah questioned the logic behind the allegation and said, "Show this crowd. Can so many people come from outside?" He added, "Kya yaar, aap bhi Mamata Banerjee ki baat sun rahe ho," implying that such claims should not be taken seriously.

The remarks come after CM Banerjee, on April 5, alleged that the BJP was mobilising supporters from other states and paying them to attend rallies in a bid to influence the ongoing Assembly elections. Speaking to IANS, HM Shah reiterated his confidence in the party's prospects, stating that the BJP would secure a deci-



sive mandate in the state. "We are going to win the election with a huge majority," he asserted.

Reacting to reports of clashes between BJP and Trinamool Congress workers, HM Shah dismissed concerns of widespread violence.

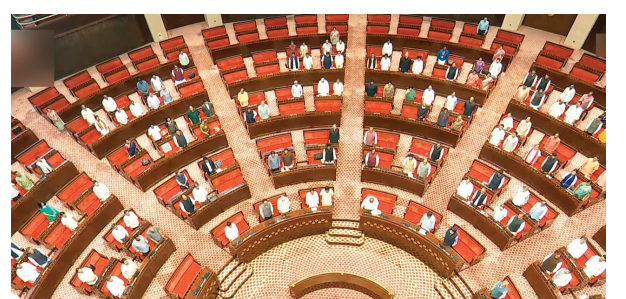
"There is no clash at all; the election is being conducted peacefully. Those who have covered Bengal know how many people used to die in every elec-

tion," he said. Meanwhile, tensions flared in Jagatdal in North 24 Parganas, where a violent clash broke out between workers of the two parties on Sunday night. The incident involved stone-pelting, firing, and the use of crude bombs, leaving several people injured. At least three individuals sustained injuries, while a jawan of the Central Armed Police Forces (CAPF) suffered a bullet injury to his leg. Officials

stated that the clash occurred near a police station after BJP workers alleged that posters and flags put up for Prime Minister Narendra Modi's rally at Jalebi Math Maidan had been removed.

Campaigning for the second phase of the West Bengal Assembly Election 2026 has intensified, with major political parties organising rallies, roadshows, and public meetings to attract voters.

RS releases fresh list of party positions: BJP's number rises to 113



New Delhi, April 27 : The Rajya Sabha released a fresh list of party positions on Monday after seven members defected from the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) and announced their merger with the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP). This change increased the BJP's representation in the House from 107 to 113 members, while that of AAP has decreased to three. The defectors - Raghav Chadha, Swati Maliwal, Harbhajan Singh, Sandeep Pathak, Ashok Mittal, Rajinder Gupta, and Vikram Sahni - revealed their decision to leave AAP last week and join the BJP. This move further strengthened the BJP's presence in the Upper House of Parliament. Now, only three

members of AAP - Sanjay Singh, Narain Dass Gupta and Sant Balbir Singh - represent the party in the Rajya Sabha.

The group that defected represented a two-thirds majority of AAP's Rajya Sabha members. According to the Tenth Schedule of the Constitution, added by the 52nd Amendment in 1985, members cannot defect; however, there is an exception for "mergers." If two-thirds of a party's elected members agree to merge with another party, they are not disqualified, nor are the members who choose to remain in the original party. Chadha and the six others cited this rule to validate their merger. Earlier in the day.

Where is Vijayan? CM's absence after polls fuels speculation in Kerala

Thiruvananthapuram, April 27 : With the dust settling after Kerala's April 9 Assembly polls, an unusual political silence has taken centre stage, the conspicuous absence of Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan from the public domain. The last official word from the government indicated that the veteran Communist leader had undergone a cataract surgery at a private hospital in Chennai and was recuperating.

However, the lack of subsequent public appearances or detailed updates has triggered a wave of speculation across political circles and social media.

Critics have been quick to seize upon the development. During the



election campaign, Vijayan had repeatedly underscored Kerala's

advancements in the public healthcare system, projecting it as a

model for the country. His decision to seek treatment outside the

state has now become a talking point, with opponents questioning the contradiction between rhetoric and personal choice. Despite the chatter, there has been no official indication of any serious health concern.

Government sources point out that the Chief Minister chaired an online Cabinet meeting last week, suggesting that administrative functions continue uninterrupted, albeit remotely.

Vijayan, who turns 81 next month, remains a central figure in Kerala's political landscape. Within the Left Democratic Front (LDF), there is quiet confidence that he could script history by leading the coalition to a rare third consecutive term, an

achievement unprecedented in the state's electoral history. Meanwhile, the Opposition Indian National Congress finds itself grappling with internal questions.

Even as it awaits the results, discussions within the party have intensified over projecting a clear chief ministerial face, exposing familiar fault lines. In this politically charged backdrop, the Chief Minister's low profile has only added to the intrigue.

Whether it is a brief medical recovery or a more deliberate retreat from the spotlight, Vijayan's absence is being closely watched, both for what it signals and what it leaves unsaid. Seen or unseen, one thing is certain, by

this time on next Monday when counting of votes will be over, it will be clear on which way

Vijayan is heading and more importantly the CPI(M), as it's their last bastion in the country.

kotak
Kotak Mahindra Bank
कोटक महिंद्रा बँक

NOTICE

Locker Hired by **Vinaya G Naik & M P Ajithkumar**
having address at -
Avittom House, House no 12-443, Sujatha Road, Koovappadam, Mattancherry, Ernakulam-682002 with Palarivattom, Kochi Branch of Kotak Mahindra Bank Ltd. situated at **32/1172 A1, Ground Floor, Veerath Complex, Palarivattom, Kochi- 682025** remains Un-operated past **7 years.**

All the **2** letters sent to **Vinaya G Naik & M P Ajithkumar** calling upon them to operate the locker has return unreserved and they are not contactable.

It is hereby informed that despite this notice if the said locker is not operated by **Vinaya G Naik & M P Ajithkumar** within **90 days** from the date of this notice, break open of the said locker will be done on **27-07-2026** at around **12 PM.**

Congress Faces 'Political Talaq' Warning from Muslim Leaders in Karnataka



Bengaluru (TSIT) In a significant political development, the Indian National Congress in Karnataka is facing strong backlash from sections of Muslim leadership, with warnings of a symbolic "talaq" — indicating a complete break in political support.

The unrest follows disciplinary actions against party leaders, including the suspension of a Congress MLC and the removal of Nasir Ahmed from his role as Political Secretary to Chief Minister Siddaramaiah. These moves have triggered concerns among minority leaders, who allege select

ive targeting of Muslim representatives. Leaders from across districts such as Bengaluru, Davangere, and Mysuru have voiced strong objections, stating that the issue goes beyond internal party discipline and touches upon dignity, representation, and trust. Several leaders warned that continued action against minority representatives could force the community to reconsider its long-standing political alignment with the Congress.

"The message is clear — respect minority voices or risk losing their support," a senior leader remarked,

emphasizing that the use of the term "talaq" reflects a serious erosion of confidence rather than temporary dissatisfaction. Adding to the discontent are unmet electoral expectations, including demands related to hijab permissions, reservations, and adequate political representation. Leaders argue that failure to address these concerns has deepened frustration within the community. As tensions rise, the Congress leadership now faces a crucial challenge — rebuilding trust with a key support base or confronting potential electoral repercussions in Karnataka.

Shivakumar defers leadership call to Congress high command

Bengaluru (TSIT) Karnataka's simmering leadership narrative in the ruling Congress once again found echo on Monday, with Deputy Chief Minister and state Congress president DK Shivakumar reiterating that both Chief Minister Siddaramaiah and he would abide by any decision taken by the party high command on the issue.

Speaking to reporters after returning from Delhi, Shivakumar said he places "full faith" in the Congress leadership, which, according to him, would take an appropriate call at the right time.

His remarks come amid continued political buzz over a possible reshuffle in the State leadership structure and changes in the Cabinet, particularly in the period following May 4, when electoral outcomes from four States, one Union Territory, and bypolls in two Karnataka Assembly constituencies are expected.

Without divulging details of his Delhi discussions, Shivakumar maintained a guarded tone on internal deliberations. "I will not speak about political issues before the media. I have already said that when the time comes, you will get to know. So I will not tell you," he



said when asked about his meetings with the party leadership.

He also sought to play down speculation of internal discord, insisting that the party remains united and that all decisions already taken would move forward as planned.

Responding to remarks attributed to senior Minister Satish Jarkiholi on alleged internal differences, the Deputy Chief Minister dismissed such concerns, saying the high command would address matters at the appropriate time. "There are no issues, we have faith in our party, they will

do what they have to," he said.

On growing speculation around leadership change as the government approaches the three-year mark, Shivakumar said neither he nor the Chief Minister had publicly discussed the subject, adding that both would fully abide by the party's decision.

"We will accept whatever and whenever the high command decides, and we will abide by it," he said. He also brushed aside queries on whether any "political development" could coincide with his birthday on May 15. The leadership discourse within the ruling

Congress has intensified in recent months, fuelled in part by talk of an informal understanding between Siddaramaiah and Shivakumar at the time of government formation in 2023, and the approaching midpoint of the government's five-year term.

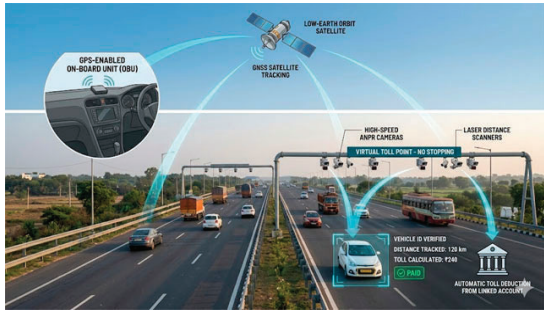
On the issue of internal reservation for Scheduled Castes, Shivakumar responded to BJP criticism by asserting that the government had acted in line with its commitment to ensure equitable distribution of benefits.

"We have found a solution and tried to do justice to all sections among SCs. We have fulfilled the promise made, and everyone should go together," he said.

In a separate note, the Deputy Chief Minister issued a firm advisory to party workers, asking them not to put up flex banners or advertisements for his birthday on May 15.

"No one should put up flex banners or advertisements for my birthday. If flexes are installed, cases will be registered by authorities against those responsible," he warned, adding that civic authorities have been instructed to enforce penalties for violations.

National highways to replace toll plazas with satellite-based tracking by year-end



New Delhi, Apr 26: In a significant move to ease highway travel, the central government is preparing to eliminate physical toll plazas on National Highways across the country by the end of this year. Union minister Nitin Gadkari has announced the implementation of an advanced, barrier-free toll collection system to replace the existing FastTag method.

Under the new system, which is expected to roll out by December, toll charges will be calculated based on the actual distance traveled. Using Global Positioning System (GPS) and satellite-based tracking, the system will monitor a vehicle's movement on the highway and automatically deduct the fee proportionally to the kilometers covered.

To facilitate this transition, high-speed cameras will be installed along National Highways. These cameras

are designed to scan vehicle number plates in real-time. The technology will identify the vehicle and link it to the owner's bank account associated with their FastTag or registration, ensuring a seamless and direct deduction of the toll amount.

The primary objective of this shift is to put an end to the long wait times and occasional disputes between commuters and staff at toll booths. By removing physical barriers, the government aims to ensure uninterrupted high-speed travel, reducing fuel consumption and traffic congestion at entry and exit points of major highways. While the physical structures of toll plazas will vanish, commuters will only pay for the exact stretch of the road they utilize, making the process more transparent and efficient for long-distance travelers.

Special Cleanliness Drive in 34 Slum Areas under Swachh Survekshan: Daljit Kumar

AWARENESS CREATED AMONG SLUM RESIDENTS TO MAINTAIN CLEANLINESS



Bengaluru : With the objective of maintaining cleanliness across the city and transforming it into a waste-free urban body, as well as securing a better ranking in Swachh Survekshan 2025-26, the Bengaluru Central City Corporation has undertaken a special cleanliness drive. As part of the already prepared action plan, and considering the importance of maintaining hygiene in slum areas, a total of 34 slums and adjoining backlane areas within the corporation limits were selected and cleaned under the 10th phase of the drive.

Awareness was also created among the public to avoid littering in and around these areas, informed Daljit Kumar, Additional Commissioner (Development), Bengaluru Central City Corporation. A total of 275 pourakarmikas and 88 other sanitation staff actively participated in the drive. Approximately 12.8 quintals of waste were collected and safely disposed of during this operation. DGM Bhimesh Nayak, concerned division AGMs, officials, pourakarmikas, and other staff members also took part in the cleanliness drive.

GMR Sports and Rugby India Announce Introduction of Women's Franchises in Season 2 of the HSBC Rugby Premier League



New Delhi : GMR Sports, in partnership with Rugby India, today announced a landmark step in the evolution of the HSBC Rugby Premier League (RPL) with the introduction of women's franchises in its second season.

Building on the success of the inaugural 2025 edition, four of the existing six men's teams—Chennai Bulls (owned by Avid Sys Sports), Delhi Redz (owned by RMZ Corp), Mumbai Dreamers (owned by Dream Sports), and Kolkata Banga Tigers (owned by Hunch Ventures), formerly Kalinga Black Tigers and now relocated from Bhubaneswar to Kolkata—will also field women's teams. This marks a significant stride towards inclusivity and the growth of rugby in India.

The addition of women's teams underscores the league's commitment to fostering a robust and sustainable rugby ecosystem while

providing a premier platform for female athletes to showcase their talent at the highest level.

The HSBC Rugby Premier League, scheduled to be held from June 16-28 at Gachibowli Stadium in Hyderabad, builds on the strong foundation of its debut season held in Mumbai last year, which featured six men's franchises. The league has rapidly emerged as a key driver in popularising rugby across the country. The introduction of women's teams is expected to further elevate the league's profile and inspire the next generation of players on the development, Mr Rahul Bose, President, Rugby India, said: "It has always been our dream at Rugby India to have an RPL Women edition. This year that dream comes to fruition. We have our partners, GMR Sports and our wonderful franchisees to thank. Women's 7s rugby across the world is as exciting as Men's 7s rugby."

Bengaluru's Most Anticipated Nature-Centric Plotted Development Goes Live: EARA Group Unveils 'Amidst Nature' Phase 1 to 100 Channel Partners

Bengaluru: EARA successfully hosted an engaging Channel Partner Meet at its flagship 'Amidst Nature' project site on April 23, 2026. The event witnessed participation from approximately 100 channel partners, reflecting strong industry interest and confidence in the project.

The gathering also served as an exclusive, invite-only preview of the development for select partners ahead of its wider market rollout. The meet served as a strategic platform to strengthen relationships with channel partners while providing them with deep insights into the project's vision, planning, and differentiated value proposition. The EARA team presented comprehensive details about the development, including its design philosophy, lifestyle offerings and long-term investment potential.

The session also focused on equipping channel partners with the necessary knowledge and tools to effectively communicate the project's key differentiators to prospective buyers. Interactive discussions, site walkthroughs and presentations enabled attendees to gain a first-hand understanding of the project's scale, strategic location advantages and thoughtfully designed infrastructure.

E. Lakshminarayana Reddy said, "We believe channel partners are integral to our growth journey, and this meet was

aimed at strengthening that collaboration. 'Amidst Nature' reflects our vision of creating thoughtfully planned spaces that balance modern living with natural surroundings. What sets the project apart is its readiness that is offering well-planned, ready-to-build villa plots supported by strong infrastructure, legal clarity and a low-density layout. We have consciously focused on creating a development where buyers can move from investment to actual construction without delays, which is a key gap in today's plotted development market. We are confident that with the support of our partners, the project will resonate strongly with today's discerning buyers and deliver long-term value."

The 'Amidst Nature' project has been conceptualized to offer a harmonious blend of modern living and natural surroundings, catering to the evolving preferences of today's homebuyers who seek wellness-driven and sustainable lifestyles. With increasing demand for serene yet well-connected living spaces, the project stands out as a compelling investment opportunity.

The event further reinforced EARA's commitment to building a strong partner ecosystem and maintaining transparent communication with stakeholders. Channel partners appreciated the detailed briefing and expressed strong confidence in the project's potential to attract both end-users and investors alike. Rakesh from Homes and Spaces shared, "Amidst Nature" is a beautifully planned development, and its location near Kanakapura makes it highly attractive for both end-users and investors. The infrastructure is well-developed, with ready-to-build plots that offer immediate usability.

NOTICE

Locker Hired by **Prajeen C Varghese** having address at – **Pioneer Treads, MC Road, Pullimood Junction, Kottayam, Kerala, Pin: 686001** with **Kottayam Branch of Kotak Mahindra Bank Ltd.** situated at **Ground floor, Teresa Plaza, Railway Station Road, Kottayam, Kerala, Pin-686001** remains Un-operated past **7 years.**

All the **2** letters sent to **Prajeen C Varghese** calling upon them to operate the locker has return unreserved and they are not contactable.

It is hereby informed that despite this notice if the said locker is not operated by **Prajeen C Varghese** within **90 days** from the date of this notice, break open of the said locker will be done on **27-07-2026** at **around 12 PM.**

Credila FINANCIAL SERVICES LIMITED
(Formerly known as HDFC CREDILA FINANCIAL SERVICES LIMITED)
Registered Office: 2nd Floor, All Cargo House, Kalina, CST Road, Santacruz (East), Mumbai - 400098, Maharashtra, India, T: +91-22-28266636, E: loan@credila.com

POSSESSION NOTICE

Under Section 13(4) of the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 ("Securitisation Act, 2002") read with proviso to Rule 8(1) of Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 ("SARFAESI Rules") (APPENDIX IV)

The undersigned being the Authorised Officer of Credila Financial Services Limited (Formerly known as HDFC Credila Financial Services Limited) under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 ("Act") and exercise of the powers conferred under Sub-Section (12) of the Section 13 read with Rule 8 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002, issued a Demand Notice as mentioned below calling upon the following Borrower(s) and Guarantor(s) and Legal Heir(s) and Legal Representative(s) to pay amount as mentioned against the respective names together with interest thereon at the applicable rates within 60 days from the date of the said notice incidental expenses, costs, charges, etc. till date of payment and/or realization.

Name of Borrower(s) and Guarantor(s) / Legal Heir(s) and Legal Representative(s) Loan Account Nos.	Description of immovable Property (ies) / Secured Asset (s)	Date of Demand Notice	Outstanding Dues	Date of Possession / Type of Possession
Sreerag Suresh Kumar, Suresh Kumar S & Sindhu Kumari V	ALL THAT PIECE AND PARCEL OF LAND HAVING AN EXTENT OF 06.92 AREAS MADE UP OF 03 AREAS IN RE. S. NO. 144/17 AND 03.92 AREAS IN 145/15-2 IN S. NO. 448/1-3, 448/1-4 AND 104/4 ALONG WITH RIGHT OF WAY SITUATED AT ULIVAZHATHURA VILLAGE, TRIVANDRUM TALUK, LYING IN SUB REGISTRATION DISTRICT OF POTHENCODEAND IN THE REGISTRATION DISTRICT OF RAMANATHAN, WEST BY-PROPERTY OF GOPALKRISHNAN, & SOUTH BY-PROPERTY OF VENU. BOUNDARIES FOR AN EXTENT 03.92 AREAS IN 145/15-2; NORTH BY-PROPERTY OF RAMACHANDRAN, EAST BY-PROPERTY OF SUKUMARAN AND SREEJITH, WEST BY-PROPERTY OF ADARSH AND PRIVATE ROAD, & SOUTH BY-PROPERTY OF BILUKUMAR.	16th February, 2026	Rs. 34,15,419/- (Rupees Thirty Four Lakhs Fifteen Thousand Four Hundred and Ninety)	23rd April, 2026 PHYSICAL POSSESSION
Education Loan Account No. A2108040049				

*with further interest as applicable, incidental expenses, costs, charges, etc. incurred till the date of payment and/or realization.

However, since the borrower and guarantors having failed to repay the amount, Notice is hereby given to the borrower and the guarantors and the public in general that the undersigned has taken symbolic possession of the property described herein below, in exercise of powers conferred on him under section 13(4) of the said Act read with Rule 8 of the said rules, on dates as mentioned above.

The borrower and the guarantors 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 Credila Financial Services Limited (Formerly known as HDFC Credila Financial Services Limited) for an amount as mentioned and interest, less the subsequent recoveries, if any.

(Authorised Officer)
Credila Financial Services Limited
(Formerly known as HDFC Credila Financial Services Limited)

Date : 24.04.2026
Place : Trivandrum

EDITORIAL

Trump's 'Hellhole' Comment Might Just Be A Favour To India

When a head of state starts using unparliamentary language about another state and its people, it can be assumed to be a sign of deterioration: either of the ties between the states or the mental faculties of the speaker. It is not difficult to understand what applies to the utterings of Donald Trump, the President of the United States. Apart from Israel, there has been no country, ally or enemy, spared his verbal lashings during his second term in office. It appears, sometimes, that he channels all the criticism and curses landing on his doorstep from his countrymen towards anyone beyond the US territory. This doesn't mean that he spares his countrymen either. The latest 60 Minutes interview, hours after the shooting at the White House Correspondents' Dinner, saw Trump lashing out at CBS correspondent Norah O'Donnell for reading out the suspect's manifesto. He called O'Donnell a "disgrace" and labelled the media in general as "horrible people". It's now public knowledge that Trump is touchy. He feels. The only problem with this is his temperament and words have the power to upset the markets, kill and kidnap heads of state, and bring economies to the brink of ruin.

From 'I Love Hindu' To Verbal Lashings

When he calls India a "hellhole", therefore, it's not the words per se that matter but the impression they create for a country that's making a bid to be counted as a global superpower. And we Indians are no less touchy. We are perhaps also upset at Trump's volte-face. How does an "I-love-Hindu" proclaiming man go to this current litany of curses and complaints within a matter of a few years? Not just that, we are also baffled by his consistent hyping up of the Pakistan establishment. While Indians get verbal lashings, Pakistanis are being lavished with trust and praise.

How much attention should we actually pay to Trump's harangues?

Words are not important; what they betray is. Trump is putting in words, rather blatantly, the itch of an imperialist. Through his words, Trump becomes the representative of the Empire that strikes back at the erstwhile colonies for daring to demand equity. Neocolonialism has been given too big a benefit of the doubt in the era of globalisation. The stated claims of globalisation - equity, mobility, and dismantling of the racial supremacy of the Global North - have all fallen flat. Yet, we are uncomfortable accepting them. Perhaps because the post-colonial nations are still clutching at straws. We are still dependent on the scraps of the empire. Any change in immigration policies in the Global North gives us nightmares. Any change in the geoeconomics reaches our kitchens. We are still vulnerable.

Vivek Ramaswamy Knows

The emergence of China and India as big economies is not good news for the populations whose ancestral pride involves carrying out massacres in these very countries. Sure, the Indian and Chinese people are welcome to spend their money on holidays and luxuries that strengthen the neocolonial states; they are not welcome to demand equality. They are also not supposed to be in denial of their roots. Vivek Ramaswamy, for example, learned it the hard way. It's the same old script, and now even the vocabulary is getting back to its offensive roots.

And yet, there is a danger in over-reading Trump. He is a symptom, not a system. The neocolonial order he so crudely ventriloquises was perfectly well-oiled even when American presidents spoke in the measured cadences of diplomacy. The polite version of the same hierarchy and condescension. The "aid", the World Bank conditionalities, the IMF prescriptions, and the visa queues outside Western embassies were no less humiliating for being dressed in the language of partnership and development. Trump's contribution, if it can be called that, is merely to have removed the euphemism. The empire has always struck back. It is just now doing so without a speechwriter.

Thank Trump For Clarity

This, perhaps, is the only service Trump inadvertently renders the post-colonial world: clarity. For decades, the Global South has been asked to perform gratitude for an arrangement that was never designed in its favour. The question for India and for every nation still negotiating its place in an order it did not build is what to do with this clarity. The day India stops caring what Trump calls it will be a more significant milestone than any trade agreement. We are not there yet. But the map, at least, is getting harder to misread. So, it's not the "hellhole" comment that's worrisome; it's the probability that he can make hell break loose, and there's very little that can stop him from being gratuitously destructive. Let's focus on that. On April 21, President Trump unilaterally extended the ceasefire with Iran just a few hours before the deadline was supposed to end. This is the second time that Trump announced a ceasefire this month, the first one being on April 7, when he, like this time, unilaterally announced a 15-day ceasefire mere 90 minutes before the deadline for Iran to open the Strait of Hormuz was to expire. Irrespective of the rationale presented by the US behind the announcement of a ceasefire each time, it is quite clear that the US wants an early end to the war and possibly on terms that it can dictate. Is it because the US has realised that Iran cannot be defeated militarily? Or, is it because the US does not have the wherewithal to fight Iran in an attritional battle for a prolonged period? To find possible answers to these, there is a need to examine two critical issues in this: the combat stamina and options for further military operations in this war by the US and Israel. Combat Stamina All inputs indicate that the US is looking at an early off-ramp in the war. In the current circumstances, if Iran were to unconditionally agree to open the Strait of Hormuz, the US is likely to take it as a win immediately and wind up its war commitment. Among other reasons, the primary reason is that the US is finding it difficult to replenish the essential stock of weaponry required to fight a prolonged war. For the kind of war that the US is fighting in Iran, it essentially requires two types of munitions to fight. One is the stand-off ground attack munitions, which require aircraft, ships, artillery and missile systems to engage the targets. These munitions allow platforms to launch at a long, standoff distance from adversary air defences. The US has already engaged about 13,000 targets over the first 39 days before the ceasefire took effect on April 7.

Sabarimala Effect: Judges To Decide Course For Women's Rights

At a critical juncture in India's constitutional journey, the proceedings before the Supreme Court of India signal far more than a continuation of the controversy surrounding the Sabarimala Temple. What is presently in progress before nine judges is a deeper judicial interrogation of the constitutional boundaries itself. It seeks to delineate the contours of religious freedom while testing its limits against the guarantees of equality, dignity, and individual autonomy. While engaging with these questions, the Supreme Court is not merely revisiting a prior judgment, but is poised to clarify enduring tensions that have historically remained unresolved in the evolution of India's rights-based jurisprudence. The proceedings before the nine-judge bench, though triggered by the review of the Sabarimala Temple verdict, are in substance a far-reaching constitutional inquiry into the relationship between religious freedom and fundamental rights. As the seven framed questions are examined, the court is not merely revisiting temple entry but is effectively setting the doctrinal boundaries that will govern a range of pending and future disputes involving gender justice across communities. This includes challenges to practices affecting women of the Dawoodi Bohra community (such as excommunication and female genital mutilation), the rights of Parsi community women who marry outside the faith, and broader questions concerning equality within Muslim personal law impacting women. The constitutional framework will determine whether claims of denominational autonomy can continue to shield discriminatory practices, or whether constitutional morality and equality will prevail, thereby giving this hearing consequences that extend well beyond



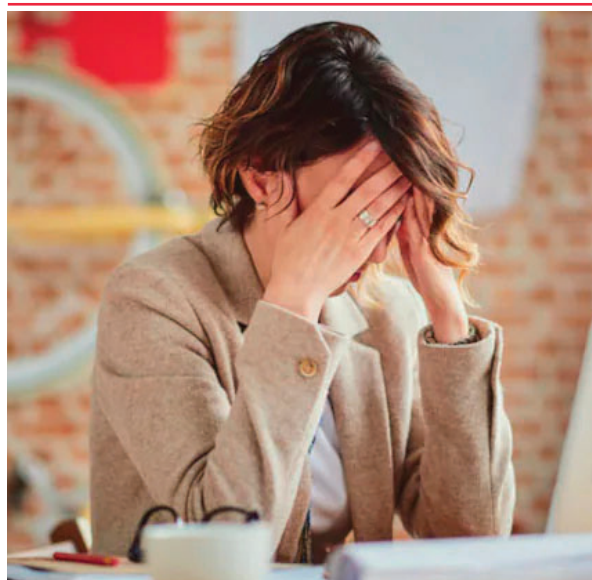
Sabarimala and into the core of gender rights jurisprudence in India. This article marks the opening of a special five-part series that seeks to closely examine the constitutional significance of the ongoing nine-judge bench proceedings before the Supreme Court of India. The series will systematically unpack how the Supreme Court's determination on the seven questions is poised to recalibrate the delicate balance between religious freedom and fundamental rights across diverse communities. Each subsequent part will analyse specific fault lines, ranging from denominational autonomy to the extent of judicial review over personal laws and trace their implications for questions of gender justice, equality, and reform. In doing so, the series aims to situate the present hearing within the larger constitutional trajectory, demonstrating that what is at stake is not merely the resolution of a single dispute,

but the shaping of a jurisprudential framework that will govern the interface between faith and rights in the years to come. The seven substantive questions of law that the Supreme Court nine judge bench is hearing presently seek to clarify the scope of religious freedom and conscience under the Constitution of India, rights of denominations, and how religious freedom interacts with the other rights under Part III of the Constitution. The questions emanated from the Sabarimala review petitions that challenged the judgment of the Supreme Court allowing the entry of women at the Sabarimala shrine. A cursory look at the questions would give us an impression that these questions do not affect the rights of women. To put it accurately, none of these questions directly refer to the rights of women. After all, women enjoy right to equality as enshrined in Article 14 of the Constitution.

One would assume that the debate that women should have equal rights is settled and over. But dig a little deeper and one would realise that the present debate will have huge implications for women as they negotiate their rights within society and religion. It is one thing to say that the Constitution protects the right to equality of women in civil and administrative affairs. But a deeply religious society like India held on to customary beliefs and practises believe that women can never occupy places of leadership within religious institutions. A woman cannot be a Shankaracharya of a math, she can never be a Shahi Imam, can never be a Pope and so on. While clothed differently, the reason for inequality of women is because they menstruate. Menstruation aside, even some customary laws like Muslim personal laws or the Shariat laws that are protected under the Constitution are highly discrimina-

tory. All communities and religions protect these laws and customs under Article 25 of the Constitution which imparts them freedom to practise their faith, and under Article 26 that allows denominations to manage their own religious affairs. Post-independence, the Union and state government brought in a series of legislations that sought to regulate the affairs of the religious institutions like Hindu mutts, dargahs, among others. All these legislative interventions were challenged before the Supreme Court by the temple administration. In almost all instances, the Supreme Court upheld the intervention of the government and upheld the reform brought in by the government. The reform was sweeping in many cases. Take the example of the famous case of Devaru (Sri Venkatarama Devaru and Others V State of Mysore and Others, 1958). In this case the legislation allowed the entry of all "Hindus" to the temple (earlier the right was restricted). If the religious denomination's right would have been protected in toto, then the Constitutional mandate that allowed the entry of all Hindus to the temples would have been defeated. The Supreme Court upheld that Madras Temple Entry Authorisation Act that allowed the entry of all Hindus to the temple. In about a dozen such cases before the Supreme Court, the top court upheld the legislation of the state to give way to the reformist agenda. Post-independence, the clash was between the state's intent to reform versus the religious institutions which asserted their rights to manage their own affairs. In this clash, it was reform that won, echoing the spirit of the constitution. The Woman Question The case of Shah Bano (1985), Shayara Bano or the triple talaq case (2017), Sabarimala Judgment (2018) are some rare instances where the Constitutional courts were directly confronted with the 'woman question'.

IT'S TIME TO ADDRESS PSYCHOSOCIAL HAZARDS IN A CHANGING WORLD OF WORK



A delivery rider works 14 hours a day to meet algorithm-driven targets. A factory worker quietly endures relentless pressure and harassment. A middle-aged manager pushes away thoughts of suicide resulting from stress. These are not isolated stories. They are signals of a deeper crisis, one that is too often invisible, unspoken and underestimated: the impact of psychosocial hazards on workers. This April 28, the World Day for Safety and Health at Work, calls global attention to psychosocial factors that influence health at work. The impact of physical work-related hazards such as manual handling of heavy loads or working at heights is well-recognised and understood. Psychosocial hazards are invisible but just as dangerous. Long working hours, workplace stress, violence and harassment, low pay and lack of job security - to name but a few - can all take a toll on both the physical and mental health of workers. A new International Labour Organization (ILO) report, The Psychosocial Working Environment: Global Developments and Pathways for Action, high-

lights the scale of the impact. It reveals that work-related psychosocial factors are responsible for more than 840,000 deaths annually due to associated cardiovascular diseases and mental disorders and lead to the loss of nearly 45 million disability-adjusted life years (DALYs) each year. Long working hours are highlighted as a critical psychosocial risk factor associated with increased risk of cardiovascular disease and stroke. In Asia and the Pacific, the burden is especially significant, with nearly half of workers in the region working more than 48 hours per week, substantially higher than in other parts of the world. The report also recognises the implications of the changing world of work on the psychosocial work environment. Digitalisation and the use of artificial intelligence are transforming how tasks are coordinated, monitored and assessed. New forms of employment, including platform work, varied contractual arrangements and the expansion of remote and hybrid work, are redefining supervision, expectations and working time.

Cheers! India-New Zealand FTA Promises Wine Drinkers A New High

The 'once-in-a-generation' India-New Zealand Free Trade Agreement (FTA) has made Shubham Upadhyaya, sommelier at the Manish Mehrotra-helmed Nisaba restaurant in Delhi, a very happy man. With the FTA green-lighting the reduction of the peak tariff of 150 per cent to 83 per cent on New Zealand wine imports over the next 10 years, Upadhyaya believes the seven New Zealand labels he has on his impressive list of 98 wines from around the world will get cheaper over the next two or three years - and these are more likely to be picked up by customers. Will one have to wait for 10 years, though, to benefit from the trickle-down effect of the proposed duty reductions? Citing the impact of the India Australia Economic Cooperation and Trade Agreement (ECTA), sommelier and corporate Trainer Gagan Sharma says that though the accord was signed in 2022 and the wine duty reduction was spread across a similar time range, price drops are already evident on restaurant menus. "New Zealand wine prices, too, will be impacted within a couple of years," Sharma says. Manish Mehrotra, Nisaba's multi-award-winning chef, who has had New Zealand Sauvignon Blancs on his menus for as long as he can remember, explains why. A New Zealand Sauvignon Blanc - or 'sauv blanc' - is fresh (a benefit of the country's idyllic air quality), gently acidic (which helps to cut through the ghee, butter and masala), and mildly sweet - just the three qualities that help a wine to



sit well with Indian food. More importantly, it is best for the summer months, which comes as a relief at a time when the media is spilling over with stories of how we must brace for torrid months ahead because of the El Nino Effect. The chef's choice for an accompaniment with the 'sauv blanc' from New Zealand, preferably from its Marlborough wine region, is chaat! Yes, whether it is the standard bhalla papri chaat or the party must-have, palak patta chaat, you have your perfect match. Did anyone say wine pairings are for food snobs? For Abhiroop Dey, the young restaurant manager and sommelier of Captain's Cellar, Taj Mahal Hotel, New Delhi, a New Zealand 'sauv blanc' pairs seamlessly with the Triphal Spiced Pan-Seared Chilean Sea Bass that you get at Varq, the hotel's pan-Indian restaurant. Triphal is a variety of pepper popular along the Konkan Coast and Goa. "The beauty of the New Zealand Sauvignon Blanc is that it pairs well with both Indian and Chinese food," Ray says. Reacting

to the FTA, he adds that prices of New Zealand wines have been a barrier for the customer, so any movement downwards will not only increase the interest in New Zealand wines, but also make his guests more amenable to checking out different wine varietals and boutique labels. There's been a lot of interest, for instance, in the New Zealand Pinot Noir, a red wine varietal popularly associated with Burgundy in France. Again, the New Zealand one is lighter bodied and more fruit forward than its French cousin. The Delhi Wine Club's founding president, Subhash Arora, recalls a recent dinner he had at Bann, the Modern Thai restaurant promoted by the Michelin two-star chef Garima Arora in Gurugram, where he kept drinking a Pinot Noir from New Zealand's Otago wine region, deep down to the country's south closest to Antarctica. "I chose Pinot Noir over the other options available," Arora says. Talk about the Pinot Noir listed on the Olive Bar & Kitchen, Mehrauli, menu, and the restaur-

ant's Executive Chef Dhruv Oberoi insists that it is the perfect match for his Nilah Cheese Souffle, whose base ingredient is the English Stilton-inspired blue cheese from Eleftheria, the artisanal cheese maker recently in the news for winning a 'Super Gold' and two gold medals - an achievement noted by Prime Minister Narendra Modi - at a prestigious global competition held in Brazil. Blue cheese figures again in Mehrotra's choice for the best pairing with a New Zealand Pinot Noir. It's his popular Mutton Seekh Kabab with Butter and Blue Cheese. The Pinot Noir, the chef says, is the perfect foil for the butter and blue cheese. The FTA is most likely to renew popular interest in New Zealand wines. For Upadhyaya, Nisaba's Sommelier, it will definitely lead to the discerning oenophile discovering New Zealand's lesser-known wine regions - notably Otago, Hawkes Bay and Martinborough - and getting to taste the depth and diversity of the country's offerings. That seems like a great way to start the FTA party.

DUTY-FREE EXPORTS TO \$20 BILLION INVESTMENT:

How India-New Zealand FTA Emerged As A Win-Win Deal

India and New Zealand have signed a landmark Free Trade Agreement (FTA), positioning it as a major step forward in deepening economic ties, boosting exports, and unlocking investments, according to official statements. The pact, signed at Bharat Mandapam in New Delhi by Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal and New Zealand Trade Minister Todd McClay, is being described as a "once-in-a-generation" opportunity to strengthen bilateral engagement. According to a PIB report, McClay termed the agreement transformative, saying it would "boost exports, create jobs, and strengthen bilateral economic ties," while improving market access and reducing trade barriers. He also pointed to strong business participation and deep people-to-people linkages between the two nations. Goyal called the FTA a defining milestone in India's engagement with developed economies, aligned with Prime Minister Narendra Modi's push for expanded global partnerships. "This



forward-looking agreement will also facilitate \$20 billion of investment into India, deepening our cooperation in trade, services, investment, innovation, mobility, agriculture productivity and education, and creating pathways for skilled talent and students," he wrote on X. A key highlight of the deal is 100% duty-free access for Indian exports to New Zealand across all tariff lines, a move expected to significantly boost labour-intensive sectors such as

textiles, leather, engineering goods, and processed foods. Commerce Secretary Rajesh Agrawal said the FTA "marks a new era in our economic partnership," adding that Indian exporters will gain a level playing field and scale advantages in the Indo-Pacific. "The deal offers predictability in today's uncertain world," he said. PIB noted that the agreement, concluded in just nine months, opens 118 services sectors for India, introduces mobili-

ty said, adding that India's emergence as the world's third-largest economy offers Kiwi exporters "unprecedented access" to a 1.4 billion-strong market. Prime Minister Modi echoed the sentiment, calling it a landmark moment in bilateral ties. "This agreement will greatly benefit our farmers, youth, women, MSMEs, artisans, startups, students and innovators... The investment commitment of \$20 billion by New Zealand will further strengthen our cooperation... paving the way for a more prosperous and dynamic future for both countries," he said in a post on X. With bilateral trade currently modest, both sides expect the FTA to significantly expand trade and investment flows, reinforcing a broader strategic partnership anchored in economic cooperation and shared growth ambitions.



pathways for professionals and students, and lays out frameworks for agricultural cooperation, innovation, and supply chain integration. New Zealand Prime Minister Christopher Luxon described the pact as transformative. "It's a once in a generation agreement," he

Financial Results for the Quarter and Year Ended 31



Business Growth - Total Business of the Bank stood at Rs.5,90,314 Crore as on 31.03.2026 registering a growth of 14.95% on Y-o-Y basis, wherein Gross Advances grew by 19.44% on Y-o-Y basis to Rs.2,62,752 Crore & Total Deposits grew by 11.59% on Y-o-Y basis to Rs.3,27,563 Crore. CASA Growth - Total CASA stood at Rs. 1,17,752 Crore as on 31.03.2026 registering a growth of 12.46% on Y-o-Y basis, Savings Deposit stood at Rs. 1,01,025 Crore registering a growth of 11.78% on Y-o-Y basis and Current Deposit stood at Rs. 16,727 Crore registering a growth of 16.77% on Y-o-Y basis. CASA ratio improved by 74bps to 38.65%. Profitability- Net profit for the quarter ending 31.03.2026 stood at Rs.801 Crore as against Rs.653 Crore as on 31.03.2025 registering 22.66% growth on Y-o-Y basis. Operating Profit for the quarter ended 31.03.2026 stood at Rs.1,573 Crore. Net Interest Margin (NIM)- Global stood at 3.00% and Domestic NIM at 3.19% for the quarter ended 31.03.2026. Advances in Retail, Agriculture & MSME (RAM) Sectors - RAM segment of the Bank increased by 24.23% to Rs. 1,52,324 Crore Y-o-Y backed by 26.62% Y-o-Y growth in Retail advances 26.24% Y-o-Y growth in Agriculture advances and 19.36% Y-o-Y growth in MSME advances. Reduction in NPA - Gross NPA reduced by 52bps Y-o-Y to 2.17% as on 31.03.2026 whereas Net NPA reduced by 23 bps Y-o-Y to 0.27% as on 31.03.2026. Capital Adequacy Ratio - Capital Adequacy Ratio (CRAR) stood at 18.61% as on 31.03.2026 with Tier I Capital Ratio of 16.59%. Credit to Deposit Ratio - Stood at 80.21% as on 31.03.2026 as against 74.94% as on 31.03.2025. Dividend @ 4.40% (i.e @ 44paise per equity share) is proposed for the year 2025-26 subject to approval from shareholders in ensuing Annual General Meeting of the Bank. Financial Results for the Quarter and Year Ended 31st March 2026 Profitability (Quarter Ended March 31st, 2026): Net Profit for the quarter ended 31.03.2026 stood at Rs.801 Crore as against Rs.653 Crore for the same period in the preceding year, registering a growth of 22.66% Y-o-Y. Net Interest Margin (NIM)- Global stood at 3% and Domestic NIM at 3.19% for the quarter ended 31.03.2026. Cost of fund improved by 31 bps Y-o-Y to 4.47% for the quarter ended 31.03.2026. Yield on Advances (Domestic) stood at 8.18% for the quarter ended 31.03.2026. Cost to Income ratio improved by 581 bps Y-o-Y at 52.66% for the quarter ended 31.03.2026. Return on Asset (ROA) stood at 0.87% showing an improvement of 10 bps on Y-o-Y basis Fee Based Income grew by 32.65% Y-o-Y basis to Rs.516 Crore as on 31.03.2026 as against Rs.389 Crore as on 31.03.2025. Profitability (Year Ended March 31st, 2026): Operating Profit has shown a growth of 6.49% on Y-o-Y basis to Rs.6,429 Crore as against Rs.6,037 Crore for the year ended 31.03.2025.

Escorts Kubota expands Digitrac into a full series, launches three new tractor models

Escorts Kubota Limited, the agri-machinery and construction equipment major, has announced the launch of the Digitrac series under Powertrac. With this launch, the company expands the Digitrac range from its existing two models to a comprehensive series of five, spanning the 45-55 HP category range. The series is designed for advanced agricultural and heavy haulage applications and is being launched pan India. Escorts Kubota operates three tractor brands in India - Kubota, Farmtrac & Powertrac - catering to premium, entry-premium and value segments respectively. The Digitrac series sits within the Powertrac brand. This is the company's fourth major tractor introduction since February 2025, following the Farmtrac Promaxx series, the Kubota MU4201 and the Powertrac Shaurya paddy series. The two existing Digitrac models, the PP 461 and PP 431 are one of the key contributors to Powertrac tractor sales in India. Their design and pre-



mium aesthetics have resonated strongly with young and aspirational farmers. The three new additions to the series are the Digitrac PP 461 4WD, the Digitrac PP 431 Plus and the Digitrac PP 41i. All five models feature bigger CC engines, bigger tyres, side shift gear, a 12 forward and 3 reverse constant mesh gearbox, independent PTO (iPTO) and a heavy hydraulic lift of 2000 kg. The series fully supports advanced implements for each stage of farming, such as Super Seeder, Reaper, Reversible MB Plough, and Laser Leveller.

Commenting on the launch, Nikhil Nanda, Chairman and Managing Director said, "This is our fourth new tractor introduction since February 2025, across all three brands. This sustained pace of launches reflects the stage we are now in as an organisation. Each launch is a deliberate step towards strengthening our portfolio and moving closer to our stated ambition of a stronger market position in India." Akira Kato, Deputy Managing Director said, "Digitrac has established a strong identity with its dis-

tinctive design and proven appeal among young and progressive farmers. Expanding it into a full series of five models is a natural progression. We see meaningful opportunity to scale this product across India and make it an even larger contributor to the Powertrac business." Neeraj Mehra, Chief Officer, Tractor Business Division added, "Digitrac is now a full-fledged Tractor Series for New Age Farmers. With its positioning as Style to Kill, Performance to Thrill, this new expanded Digitrac series brings 5 models with bigger engine, a 12+3 gearbox, independent PTO and a top speed of upto 39.9 km/h. These are features that were earlier available only in higher horsepower categories. With Digitrac, we are making advanced tractor capability accessible in the 45 to 55 HP segment also, with the fuel efficiency and value that Powertrac is known for. We are confident that the expanded series will further strengthen this connect with farmers across India."

COAL INDIA Q4 RESULTS:

Profit Rises 11%, Revenue Beats Estimates; Dividend Declared

Coal India Ltd.'s net profit for the fourth quarter of financial year 2026 rose 11.2% year-on-year, according to an exchange filing on Monday. The company logged a consolidated bottom-line of Rs 10,839 crore, exceeding market expectations of Rs 9,125 crore. In the corresponding period of last fiscal, Coal India's net profit stood at Rs 9751 crore. Revenue from operations rose nearly 6% to Rs 46,490 crore from Rs 43,961 crore in the year-ago period. Bloomberg analysts' had estimated the topline to come in at Rs 37,800 crore. On the operational front, earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation and amortisation were up 6.2% to Rs 12,673 crore from Rs 11,932 crore year-on-year. Analysts consensus estimates stood at Rs 11,932 crore. While Ebitda margin stood at 27.3%, compared to 27.1% in the comparable quarter of the last



fiscal, analysts' had estimated margins to come in at 29.8%. Moreover, the company has also declared a final dividend of Rs 5.25 per share. "Payment of final dividend for fiscal 2025-26 shall be made subject to approval of shareholders in the ensuing AGM (annual general meeting)," the filing stated. Coal production fell 2% in fiscal

2026 to 768.19 MT and the offtake was down at 744.88 MT. In the fourth quarter coal production was down 1% and offtake fell 2%. Follow live updates here. Coal India Q4 Result Highlights (Cons, YoY) Revenue up 5.8% to Rs 46,490.03 crore versus Rs 43,961.56 crore. Net Profit up 11% to Rs 10,839.18 crore versus Rs 9,751.64 crore. Ebitda up 6% to Rs

12,673.16 crore versus Rs 11,932.14 crore. Margin at 27.3% versus 27.1%. Coal India Share Price Coal India's stock ended 0.77% lower at Rs 452.50 apiece on the NSE on Monday, before the results were declared. This compared to a 0.81% advance in the Nifty index. The share price has risen 13.41% year-to-date, and 15.10% in the last 12 months.

Bajaj Housing Finance Q4 Results: Net Profit Soars; NII Rises 15%

Highlights
Bajaj Housing Finance Ltd. on Monday posted a 14.1% year-on-year rise in its net profit to Rs 669 crore in the fourth quarter of fiscal year 2026.



Bajaj Housing Finance Ltd. on Monday posted a 14.1% year-on-year rise in its net profit to Rs 669 crore in the fourth quarter of fiscal year 2026. In the corresponding quarter of fiscal 2025, the company had logged a bottomline of Rs 587 crore. The non-banking financial company's net interest income rose 15% to Rs 945 crore, as compared to Rs 823 crore in the year-ago period. In terms of asset quality, the gross non-performing assets ratio stood at 0.27%, marginally lower as

against 0.29% at the end of March 2025 quarter. The net NPA ratio was flat at 0.11%. The NBFC's loan losses and provisions for March 2025 quarter was reported as Rs 55 crore as against Rs 26 crore in the year-ago quarter. For the entire fiscal year 2025, Bajaj Housing Finance's NII rose 25% to Rs 3,752 crore from Rs 3,007 crore in fiscal 2024. The net profit increased by 20% to Rs 3,320 crore from Rs 2,770 crore in the preceding fiscal. The housing finance company's capital

adequacy ratio, including Tier II capital, stood at 22.46% as of March 31, 2025. Bajaj Housing Finance Share Price Today Before the quarterly results were declared, shares of Bajaj Housing Finance closed 1.8% higher at Rs 91.07 per share after it rose as much as 2.47% to Rs 91.60 apiece. This compares to a 0.81% advance in the NSE Nifty 50 Index. It has fallen 3.46% in the last 12 months and 27.17% year-to-date.

Haier Launches F11, India's Only Ultra Fresh Air Technology Washing Machine with Full AI Color Touch Panel

India, 27th April, 2026: Haier Appliances India, the No. 1 global major appliances brand for 17 consecutive years, has taken laundry innovation to the next level with the launch of its new Haier F11 washing machine series. Designed to tackle everyday consumer pain points from fabric odour and detergent wastage to complex controls, the Haier F11, India's Only Ultra Fresh Air Technology with AI Touch Panel, brings unmatched freshness, hygiene and care for laundry in modern Indian homes. The Haier F11 Washing Machine keeps clothes super fresh for up to 12 hours with its India's Only Ultra Air Fresh Technology, helping prevent odour even when clothes are left inside after a wash. Its stylish design is paired with Full AI Color Touch Panel that features large icons and dedicated programs for fabrics such as sarees, jeans and cotton, making everyday use straightforward. The washing machine also comes with Essence Wash technology that auto-



matically adjusts detergent usage based on the load, reducing wastage. It further features Instant Dissolve Premix technology, which creates a premix microbubble solution for faster and more effective detergent dissolution, along with 3D Power Spraying, where the microbubble solution is sprayed directly onto fabrics to ensure deeper and more thorough cleaning. AI One Touch further simplifies operation allowing users to start a smart wash with a three-second press while automatically setting the wash parameters.

Commenting on the launch, Mr. NS Satish, CEO, Haier Appliances India said, "With the launch of the F11, our focus is to address the real, everyday challenges faced by modern Indian households. Today, laundry is no longer just a functional task; it's about hygiene, convenience, and the reassurance that technology can quietly take care of it. Every feature of the new Haier F11 is thoughtfully designed to simplify the experience while making advanced technology intuitive and accessible to everyone. This launch reflects

Haier's commitment to redefining standards in the washing machine category and our broader goal of delivering intelligent, high-performance appliances that genuinely enhance everyday living." Manufactured at Haier's advanced facility in India, the F11 washing machine series reaffirms the company's commitment to the 'Make in India, Made for India' initiative. This launch embodies Haier's innovation-first philosophy and underscores its ongoing dedication to designing smart, globally competitive appliances tailored for Indian

lifestyles. HAIER F11 WASHER-DRYER WASHING MACHINE SERIES: TOP FEATURES AND SPECIFICATIONS: Ultra Fresh Air Technology One of the most common complaints with washing machines is stale or musty odour in clothes, especially when laundry is left inside the drum after a wash. The F11 addresses this with India's Only Ultra Fresh Air Technology, which continuously circulates fresh air through the drum after the wash cycle. Full AI Color Touch Panel Traditional machines often confuse users with multiple buttons and complex settings. The Haier F11 washing machine's large, full AI color touch panel display offers an intuitive, user-friendly interface. Users can easily select programs, track wash progress, and customise cycles at a glance, making laundry simple for every family member.

White House says Trump 'stands by' Secret Service as shooting suspect due in court

The Washington Hilton hotel, the venue for the White House Correspondents' Dinner, says its security protocols had been directed by the US Secret Service. "The hotel was operating under stringent security protocols for the property as directed by the US Secret Service, which led security for the event," says the hotel in a statement, reported by Reuters news agency. The hotel adds that the Secret Service worked in coordination with a wide range of security teams, including local Washington DC police and hotel security. US Secretary of State Marco Rubio has been speaking to Fox News. In clips reposted on X by the official White House Rapid Response account, Rubio says: "I didn't hear shots I just saw a bunch of security people rushing in." "The first thing you wonder immediately is... is there an internal threat, is there a threat inside the ballroom



itself?" He says he watched the staff follow "all the security protocols". "It was sort of an unfortunate situation that happened there, where one individual can disrupt what is one of the bigger nights in Washington, especially when the president attends. "That's kind of the world we live in right now." FBI Director Kash Patel says

"we're going to be so ready" for Donald Trump to attend the correspondents' dinner in the next 30 days. He tells Fox News: "The security posture, I imagine, is going to be completely different. "I'll be working with the White House, with the Department of Homeland Security, the Secret Service, the Metropolitan Police

Department. The FBI will be fully resourced for that event." Speaking about the FBI's work after the shooting, Patel says that the bureau has conducted interviews "literally across the country" and transported evidence to be analysed quickly. He adds that the FBI's Behavioural Analysis Unit is working to create a

profile from "emails, social media postings, witness interviews" and interviews with friends, family and neighbours to create a "complete picture of this individual's mindset and intent". US officials identified Cole Tomas Allen, 31, as the suspect in Saturday night's shooting. Allen, from Torrance, California, describes himself as a mechanical engineer, game developer and teacher on his LinkedIn. He graduated from California State University in 2025 with a Master's in computer science. After he was detained, Allen told officials that he wanted to shoot officials in the Trump administration, two sources told CBS News, the BBC's US partner. US media are reporting a history of anti-Trump posts from the alleged shooter. A document, described as a manifesto, has also been linked to an X account with Allen's name as a username. A post

in November 2024 said the user had voted for Kamala Harris. An account with the same name on the social network Bluesky wrote in January: "The country will continue to crash and burn until people stop asking when other people will step up." I am at the federal courthouse here in Washington DC. Cole Tomas Allen, the 31-year-old suspect in the White House Correspondents' Dinner shooting, is expected to hear the formal charges against him read out shortly. Today's hearing is usually a fairly procedural part of the court process. But today we could hear from Allen himself or his attorney about his plea to the charges. While we've been learning about the suspect, we still haven't seen or heard from him since images of him were released on Saturday. We could also learn new details about what the prosecutors plan.

Sri Lankan monks arrested after 110kg of cannabis discovered in their luggage



Twenty-two monks have been arrested at an airport in Sri Lanka after officials discovered 110kg (242lbs) of cannabis concealed in their luggage. Customs officials said each monk was found with around 5kg of Kush - a particularly potent form of the drug - hidden within "false walls" in their luggage when they arrived in the capital Colombo on Saturday. The monks, who were mainly students, were returning from Thailand after being treated to an all-expenses-paid four-day holiday by an unnamed sponsor when they were detained.

A 23rd monk, believed to have organised the trip, has since been arrested in a suburb of Colombo, police told BBC Sinhala. According to the acting police spokesman, the monk - who did not join the trip - had told the other monks that "these parcels are a donation" and that a van would come to collect the packages. Sri Lanka's Police Narcotics Bureau discovered photos and videos on the mobile phones of some of the monks, who were from temples across Sri Lanka, showing them enjoying their break wearing casual clothing.

GUNMEN RAID NIGERIAN ORPHANAGE AND KIDNAP CHILDREN



Eight children are still missing after gunmen raided an unregistered orphanage in Nigeria's north-central Kogi State and kidnapped 23, authorities have said. Kogi's information commissioner Kingsley Fanwo said 15 children were rescued due to the "prompt and coordinated response" of security agencies. Sunday's attack also saw the owner of the facility taken, he added. No group has claimed responsibility for the attack, but security sources say the state has a functional Boko Haram cell, and that there have been several violent attacks in the area. Nigeria is also grappling with a kidnap crisis in many parts of the country, with criminal gangs abducting people for ransoms. The government has made paying ransoms illegal but this has not prevented the kidnappings. "The government remains fully committed to ensuring the rescue of all the victims," Fanwo said. His statement on Monday also

highlighted that the orphanage was "operating illegally" in a "bushy environment" without the knowledge of relevant authorities. Fanwo urged operators of orphanages, schools, and similar institutions to always engage appropriately with the appropriate government agencies "especially in the current security climate". Mass kidnappings in schools are not uncommon in Nigeria, especially in the country's northern region which is currently plagued by insecurity. This is the first time an orphanage has been targeted. In November 2025, more than 300 students and their teachers were abducted from one Catholic Secondary School in Niger State, also in the north central region of Nigeria. They were released in two batches with the last group regaining freedom more than one month after. The government denied reports that any ransom had been paid, or that two Boko Haram commanders had been freed as part of the deal.

Colombia offers record \$1.4m-reward for rebel it blames for deadly bomb attack



Colombia's Defence Minister Pedro Sánchez says he is offering a record reward for information leading to the capture of a rebel leader known as "Marlon". "Marlon", whose real name is Iván Jacob Idrobo Arredondo, is suspected of having ordered Saturday's bomb attack on the Pan-American Highway, in which 20 people were killed. The attack is one of the dead-

liest targeting civilians and comes just over a month before presidential elections scheduled for 31 May. Sánchez said the 5bn peso (\$1.4m; £1m) reward for "Marlon" was the highest offered by Colombia. The defence minister accused "Marlon" of being behind Saturday's attack as well as a series of others in the provinces of Cauca and Valle del Cauca.

Trump says King will be 'very safe' during US visit after security talks

Donald Trump has said King Charles III will "be very safe" during his state visit to the US, which is due to begin later on Monday. Further security talks took place between the White House and Buckingham Palace after a gunman gained access to an event attended by Trump in Washington DC on Saturday. Asked about the security implications for the royal visit, the US president told CBS' 60 Minutes on Sunday that the grounds of the White House, where King Charles will visit, are "really safe". The King and Queen's programme will go ahead largely as planned, Buckingham Palace said, with the UK government hoping it could ease diplomatic tensions. The UK's ambassador to the US, Sir Christian Turner, said



the visit would be about "renewing and revitalising a unique friendship" between the two countries. He said Prime Minister Sir Keir Starmer had spoken to Trump on Sunday, and the trip would proceed largely as expected. The King and Queen privately reached out to the Trumps to give their sympathies after the attack, during which a Secret

Service agent was lightly injured and the president and his wife were rushed to safety. The four-day state visit will begin in Washington DC, with the King and Queen being greeted at the White House by Trump and the First Lady Melania Trump. The president said on Sunday: "I think it's great, he'll be very safe... the White House grounds are really

safe. This area of not very many acres is really safe. "And he'll be staying here, I believe he's going to a couple of other locations because he's here for a few days. "He's a great guy. They called him and they are so looking forward to being here. We spoke this morning." There are British and US flags flying in the streets around the White House, ahead of what will be several days of political theatre. It will be a charm offensive by the UK, attending ceremonial events in Washington and making a symbolic show of solidarity at the 9/11 Memorial in New York. For Trump, it will also be a chance to be seen on the world stage next to royalty and might be a welcome diversion from his own political battles.

Kim Jong Un opens memorial for N Korean soldiers killed in Ukraine war

North Korean leader Kim Jong Un and Russian Defence Minister Andrey Belousov have unveiled a memorial in Pyongyang for North Koreans who have died fighting in the Ukraine war. Military jets flew overhead and white balloons were released into the air as Kim and Belousov unveiled a statue and opened a memorial museum. It is not known how many North Korean soldiers are fighting against Ukraine, but South Korean intelligence estimates that at least 15,000 have been sent to help Russia recapture parts of western Kursk. Seoul also estimates that about 2,000 North Koreans have died in the conflict - neither



Pyongyang nor Russia have provided any official numbers. In return for providing soldiers, it is believed North Korea has received food, money and technical help from Moscow. The opening of the Memorial Museum of Combat Feats at the Overseas Military Operations on

Sunday coincided with what Russia described as the first anniversary of its recovery of parts of Kursk. Ukraine launched a surprise incursion in Kursk in August 2024. Russia said it regained full control of the region a year later. Kim assured Belousov that North Korea "will as ever

fully support the policy of the Russian Federation to defend the national sovereignty, territorial integrity and security interests", according to state media. Russia will "surely win a victory in the just sacred war", Kim said. Belousov said he discussed long-term military co-operation with North Korean officials, according to Russian news agencies. Aside from Belousov, Kim also met with the speaker of Russia's parliament, Vyacheslav Volodin, a close ally of Russian President Vladimir Putin. During a meeting on the sidelines of China's military parade in Beijing last September, where both leaders came as guests.

Russian fighters confirm withdrawal from northern Mali city after separatist attacks



After a weekend of co-ordinated attacks across Mali by separatist fighters and Islamist militants, Russian forces who are in the country helping protect the military government have confirmed they have pulled out of the northern city of Kidal. In a series of social media posts, Russia's Africa Corps said they had "left the locality" along with Malian troops. The separatist Azawad Liberation Front (FLA) group said on Sunday the Russian troops had agreed to withdraw permanently, and claimed control of Kidal, declaring it "now free". Mali has faced insurgencies for years from the separatists in the north, and groups affiliated with al-Qaeda and the Islamic State group. On Saturday, explosions and sustained gunfire were reported in multiple parts of Mali, including the capital, Bamako. Attacks were also reported in the central cities of Ségou and Mopti, as well as Gao and Kidal in the north, on the southern fringes of the Sahara desert. In Kati - a town near the capital and home to a major military base - Malian Defence Minister Sadio Camara

was killed in an apparent suicide truck bombing on his residence. Reports suggest the assault by the FLA - who seek a breakaway state for northern areas dominated by ethnic Tuaregs - was primarily focused on cities in the region, while the jihadist group Jama'at Nusrat al-Islam wal-Muslimin (JNIM) had staged simultaneous attacks in multiple areas. The Alliance of Sahel States (AES) - comprising Mali and the neighbouring countries of Burkina Faso and Niger also led by the military - said the attacks were a "monstrous plot backed by the enemies of the liberation of the Sahel" but did not go into any further detail. Fighting resumed in Kidal on Sunday, but shortly afterwards, FLA spokesman Mohamed Elmaouloud Ramadane said an agreement had been reached between them and the Russian Africa Corps with a "a view to ensuring their secure withdrawal from the fighting". He previously told the FLA had remained in the city because "elements of the Malian army and Russian mercenaries" were still present.

Iran's foreign minister meets Putin in Russia as Israel continues strikes in Lebanon

Two separate clips, filmed yesterday, show a helicopter landing before a group of what appear to be Israel Defense Forces (IDF) soldiers carry a stretcher towards the aircraft. Seconds later an explosion can be seen in the background. We have geolocated the footage using satellite imagery and carried out reverse image searches to confirm the videos are new. Israeli media reported that one soldier was killed in the attack as wounded troops were being evacuated. The Iran-linked Hezbollah group said it carried out the attack. As a reminder, Israel has what it calls a "buffer zone" extending around 10 kilometres into Lebanese territory, needed, it says, to reduce the threat from Hezbollah. It

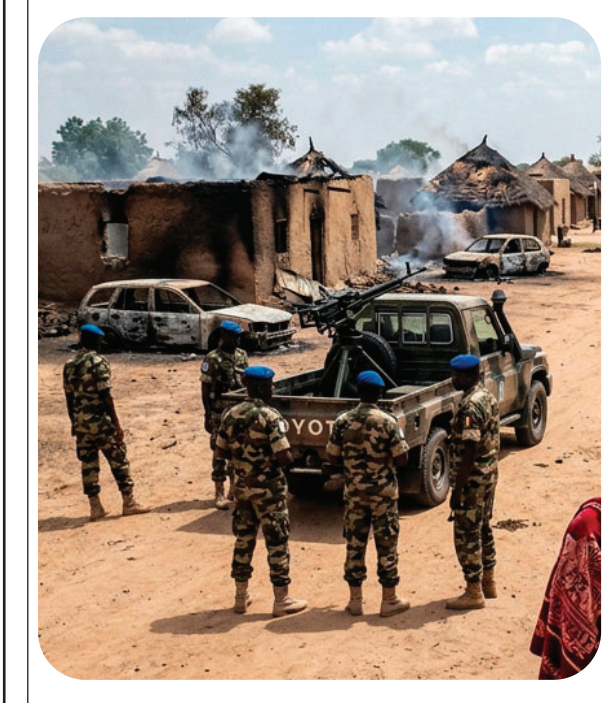


means around 5% of Lebanon is now under Israeli military occupation. Back in Russia Sergei Lavrov, the country's foreign minister, has given a positive assessment of the talks between Russian and Iranian delegations in St Petersburg. They were "useful", state TASS news agency quoted Lavrov as telling journalists after the

meeting. The negotiations lasted for "about 1.5 hours", Interfax added. Earlier, Putin offered Araghchi Russia's support in ending the Iran war, while Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said that Moscow was ready to mediate in reaching a peace deal. As discussions take place in Russia, we've been monitoring the latest in the Strait of Hormuz.

Satellite imagery seen by BBC Verify shows that two ships seized last week by Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) are currently anchored off Hormuz Island. Imagery captured today show the ships - MSC-Francesca and Epaminondas - lying at anchor around 8km (5 miles) from the island in the Strait of Hormuz. Both vessels reportedly came under fire from IRGC forces last Wednesday and were said to have been damaged. Videos showing IRGC personnel boarding the two ships was broadcast by Iranian state media last week - although BBC Verify analysis indicates some parts of the footage was filmed after the seizures.

AT LEAST 42 KILLED IN CHAD AFTER WATER WELL DISPUTE ESCALATES

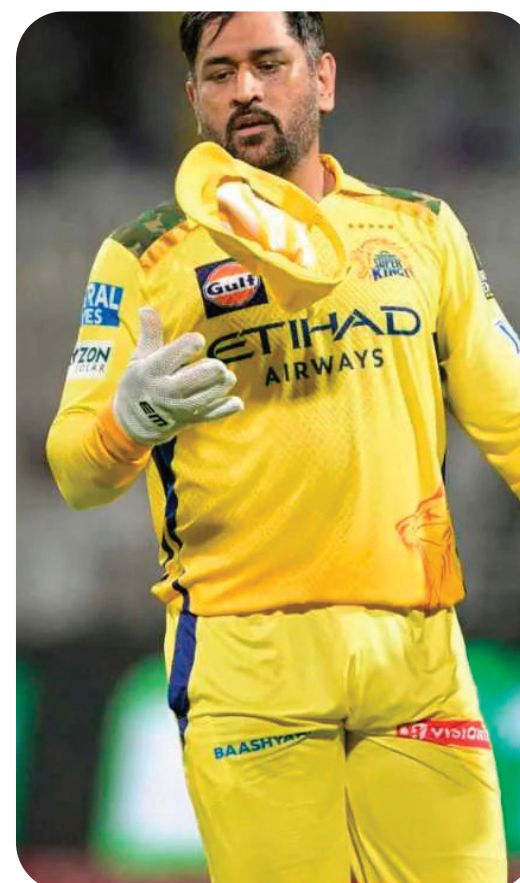


AT LEAST 42 KILLED IN CHAD AFTER WATER WELL DISPUTE ESCALATES



Royal Challengers Bengaluru defeats Delhi Capitals by 9 wickets (81 balls left)

MS Dhoni Suffers 2nd Injury, CSK Coach Stephen Fleming Drops IPL 2026 'Comeback' Bombshell



If one calf strain was not enough, MS Dhoni has faced another setback. Chennai Super Kings head coach Stephen Fleming has revealed that the former captain has "tweaked" his calf again. Fleming indicated that Dhoni's return to the playing XI for the Indian Premier League (IPL) 2026 has been further delayed after the veteran wicketkeeper-batter suffered another setback in his recovery. Dhoni, who was initially expected to miss only the opening two weeks of IPL 2026, has now been sidelined for nearly a month, with CSK already eight matches into their campaign without their talismanic former captain featuring even once.

Abhishek Sharma Fan Girl Responds To Backlash Over Grabbing SRH Star's Hand At Team Hotel

Recently, Sunrisers Hyderabad star Abhishek Sharma was involved in an off-field incident. Following the match against Rajasthan Royals in Jaipur on Saturday, a video went viral on social media showing a fan forcibly grabbing and pulling Abhishek's hand after spotting the star cricketer at the team hotel. While the fan was visibly excited upon seeing the player, the incident left Abhishek visibly agitated, despite being surrounded by security officials. The encounter has sparked a heated debate among fans, with many suggesting the incident was a clear security breach. Now, the fan-girl in question has responded. On her Instagram handle,



named *moreofhimshikha*, she posted a video with the caption: "Girls, tumhare jiju pyaar se nahi maan rahe the toh bas phir kuch aisa kiya maine (Girls, your brother-in-law was not agreeing politely, so I ended up doing something like this)." After facing backlash, she wrote on Instagram: "With all due respect to Abhishek Sharma and his fans, I would like to share what actually happened from my side. Things are not always exactly how they appear

online. "I was at a venue where Abhishek Sharma had arrived, and when I found out he was there, I went to see him because I've been a fan of his for a long time, even before he became this famous. I only wanted to shake his hand, but there was a huge crowd. In the rush, while I was trying to move and give space, I accidentally grabbed his hand instead of shaking it," she added. "Everything happened very quickly, and the moment got messed up. I got nervous, and my brother pulled me back right after. The video was recorded, and I posted it because that moment felt special to me. I genuinely didn't expect it to go viral or be misunderstood like this."

Mohammed Shami Given Award For 'Obstructing The Field' Dismissal Amid Ongoing IPL 2026 Row

Veteran Indian cricket team fast bowler Mohammed Shami received the 'ChatGPT IQ Award' in the Lucknow Super Giants dressing room following the loss against Kolkata Knight Riders on Sunday. Shami did not take any wickets, but he slammed a last-ball six to take the match to a Super Over, and it was his throw that led to Angkrish Raghuvanshi's controversial 'obstructing the field' dismissal. In a video released by LSG on their social media, assistant coach Lance Klusener listed Shami's performances in the match and mentioned the dismissal while handing him the award. Klusener said, Shami showed presence of mind to



affect the dismissal. Shami's throw hit Raghuvanshi while he tried to return to his crease and the third umpire decided that he intentionally came in between the ball and the wicket-keeper. Raghuvanshi was on Monday fined 20 per cent of his match fee for his emotional outburst after being

one Demerit Point for breaching Level 1 of the IPL's Code of Conduct for Players and Team Officials during Match No. 38 against Lucknow Super Giants," read an IPL statement. "Raghuvanshi was found to have breached Article 2.2 of the IPL's Code of Conduct, which relates to "abuse of cricket equipment or clothing, ground equipment or fixtures and fittings during a Match." The incident occurred in the fifth over, when, after being given out for "obstructing the field", Raghuvanshi struck the boundary cushion with his bat in an aggressive manner and subsequently threw his helmet into the dugout. Raghuvanshi admitted to the offence and accepted the Match Referee's sanction.

Delhi Capitals Gets Special Message From Parth Jindal Ahead Of RCB Clash

Two days after losing to Punjab Kings despite posting a 264-run total, Delhi Capitals face the humongous task of beating the formidable Royal Challengers Bengaluru. The six-wicket loss to Punjab Kings - a game in which their bowlers were dismantled in a record chase - has left DC shaken. Placed sixth on the points table, they now find themselves in a tightening playoff race where another defeat could seriously dent their chances. Ahead of the match, DC co-owner Parth Jindal remarked: "Time to turn the heat on @DelhiCapitals. We all know how good this squad is - time to be together, time to play together and time to bring our best cricket to the @IPL. This is where our season truly begins." Time to turn the heat on @DelhiCapitals

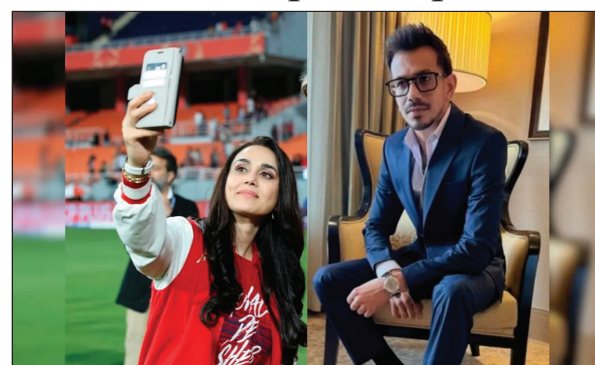


we all know how good this squad is - time to be together, time to play together and time to bring our best cricket to the @IPL - this is where our season truly begins. Delhi's campaign so far has been defined by splendid batting but inconsistent execution with the ball. Their top order, led by KL Rahul, has repeatedly provided blistering starts, while the likes of

Nitish Rana and David Miller have ensured momentum is maintained through the middle overs. However, the inability to defend even imposing totals remains a concern, despite moderate success while chasing targets. The death bowling, in particular, has looked vulnerable under pressure - something opposition teams have begun to target.

Yuzvendra Chahal Wants To Open For Punjab Kings, Preity Zinta Gives Epic Response

Punjab Kings are currently riding high in IPL 2026. At the halfway stage of the group phase, PBKS are the only undefeated team. In seven matches so far, they have won six, while one was washed out, taking their total points tally to 13. Generally, going by past trends, 16 points are enough for a team to qualify for the playoffs. If they win two more matches, it can be safely assumed that PBKS will be the first team to enter the IPL 2026 playoffs. No wonder the PBKS dressing room is a happy place at the moment. In the midst of this, PBKS spinner Yuzvendra Chahal had a funny request for the team's co-owner, Preity Zinta. "Mam, ek match mein open batting karne ka chance mil jaaye toh



#pzchat," Chahal asked the veteran actor on X. "For sure, Yuzi. Anything for you. IPL khatam hone do, uske baad whichever match you like I'm sure Prabh & Priyansh won't mind then #Ting," came the epic reply from Preity.

SPURS' SIMONS TO MISS REST OF SEASON AND WORLD CUP



Netherlands attacking midfielder Xavi Simons said he was "heartbroken" after being ruled out for the rest of the season for reoperation on a ruptured anterior cruciate ligament. Simons was carried off on a stretcher in the second half of Tottenham's 1-0 win at Wolves on Saturday. The 23-year-old fell to the ground following a collision with Wolves defender Hugo Bueno. After initially getting to his feet, he went down again. Spurs confirmed Simons will have surgery in the coming weeks. "They say life can be cruel and today it feels that way," Simons wrote in a social media post. "My season has come to an abrupt end and I'm just trying to process it. Honestly, I'm heartbroken. None of it makes sense." Partial tears or ruptures to the ACL typically lead to players being unavailable for between six and nine months as they recover. "We can confirm that Xavi Simons has ruptured the anterior cruciate ligament (ACL) in his right knee," said a Tottenham statement, "external Xavi will undergo surgery in the coming weeks and, following that, will then begin his rehabilitation with our medical team." The injury to Simons comes as Spurs fight for Premier League survival. Despite beating Wolves, they remain in the relegation zone and are two points from safety with four games left. The 2026 World Cup, which is taking place in the United States, Canada and Mexico, begins on 11 June, with the Netherlands starting their campaign in Group F against Japan on 14 June. "All I've wanted to do is fight for my team and now the ability to do that has been snatched away from me... along with the World Cup," added Simons. "Representing my country this summer just gone. I'll take time to find peace with this, but I'll continue to be the best team-mate I can be. I have no doubt that together we'll win this fight."

Kylian Mbappe A Doubt For El Clasico, Real Madrid Confirm Thigh Injury

Real Madrid striker Kylian Mbappe is a doubt for the Clasico on May 10 after his club confirmed Monday he has sustained a thigh injury. "He has been diagnosed with an injury to the semitendinosus muscle in his left leg," said Los Blancos in a statement, after the France captain went off hurt during Madrid's 1-1 draw against Real Betis in La Liga last Friday. Madrid, second in the Spanish top flight by 11 points from leaders Barcelona, face Espanyol on

Sunday before taking on the Catalan giants the following weekend. Real Madrid initially indicated Mbappe had suffered a muscular overload, but further tests showed the top goalscorer was injured. If Madrid drop points against Espanyol without him and Barcelona defeat Osasuna on Saturday, Hansi Flick's side will be crowned champions for a second successive season. Mbappe has been troubled by injury this season, generating concern in France with the World Cup in the

United States, Canada and Mexico starting on June 11. The 27-year-old, a world champion in 2018, was dogged by a knee issue which lasted for two months, the longest absence of his career, and admitted it caused him "frustration, anger and anxiety". Real Madrid striker Kylian Mbappe is a doubt for the El Clasico against Barcelona next month because of a hamstring injury. The France captain was replaced after 81 minutes of the 1-1 La Liga draw with Real Betis on Friday.

Real said Mbappe had been "diagnosed with an injury to the semitendinosus muscle in his left leg" and that they were "awaiting progress". Real, who are 11 points behind leaders Barcelona in the table with five games remaining, visit Espanyol on Sunday before travelling to the Nou Camp on 10 May.



Kara Telugu Release Promoted Ahead of April 30 Debut

This film, Kara, is a story of an ordinary man struck in extraordinary situations. The film is also an extraordinary film, one which is very close to our hearts" says Dhanush at 'Kara' Telugu Pre-Release Event Ahead of its theatrical release on April 30, Kara was formally introduced to the Telugu audience at a special promotional event in Hyderabad, with Dhanush presenting the film alongside director Vignesh Raja. Produced by Dr. Ishari K. Ganesh under Vels Film International, the film features music by G. V. Prakash Kumar and brings together a performance-driven ensemble including Mamitha Baiju and K. S. Ravi Kumar in key roles. Set against a tense, realism-rooted backdrop, Kara is positioned as a character-centric drama that follows an ordinary man drawn into extraordinary circumstances. The narrative unfolds through emotional conflict and situational pressure rather than conventional hero-driven spectacle. The film marks director Vignesh Raja's next after Por Thozhil, carrying forward a similar emphasis on grounded storytelling and psychological engagement. The Telugu release is being handled by Vigneshwara Entertainments, signalling a structured and simultaneous outreach into the Telugu market. The



evening was graced by Sai Durgha Tej, Venky Atluri, and Buchi Babu Sana, whose presence underscored the growing anticipation around the film's Telugu release. With music by G. V. Prakash Kumar and a strong ensemble cast supporting Dhanush, Kara is being presented not merely as a dubbed release, but as a film with the potential to resonate across languages through its narrative strength and performances. Distributor Satish who is releasing the film in the Telugu market, spoke about the significance of the opportunity and his confidence in the film's appeal. "Good evening, and a hearty welcome to everyone here. I am thankful to my parents and family, who are the core strength behind where I am today.

Very thankful to Ganesh Sir for this opportunity. Dhanush Sir, it has been a long-standing dream to be a distributor for your most successful film, and this will be that film. Director Sir, I have seen the film; it has great sequences, and the plot is such a hardcore family drama. I would also like to introduce my friend Rajesh, with whom all the promotions were handled. We hope to work with you again soon, and are thankful for the opportunity." Director Vignesh Raja reflected on the intent behind the film, emphasising its sincerity and connection with audiences. "Hello all, my first film, Por Thozhil - as soon as the film was released, I got so much appreciation from the Telugu audience. So, for all the people who liked that film, we made a film that is

similar in spirit, meaning it is very honest and sincere in its intention, and the intention is only one thing: to show you guys a good time at the theatre. It will respect your time, your intelligence, and the time you spent on the ticket. So please do come and watch; I am banking on you guys to take the film to the masses and take the word further. Thanks to Dhanush Sir, Mamitha Mam, Ravi Kumar Sir, and a lot of actors who gave genuine performances. Thanks, Durgha Tej Sir - I am a fan of your work - and thank you, Atluri Sir, for taking the time. And Vigneshwara Entertainments, thanks for distributing the film." K. S. Ravi Kumar shared his experience of working on the film and his long-standing association with Dhanush. "Hello everyone,

it's a good time for me here. Recently, I made a straight Telugu film, Ustaad, and now, in this film, I did my own dubbing. It has been a decade since Dhanush and I acted together; he hasn't changed. He has been the same guy, and it is the same with his father too, who is a friend of mine. They are such a great family. And the Telugu audience are great; all my films were remade or dubbed, and they became super hits. For this film—one thing I have to say is about the producer. He is a big educationalist. He has many colleges and schools; films are his passion. His father is a great artist, and his daughter also worked as a producer for this film. The director is also an intelligent guy; he knows things and is aware of everything. He gave me a fantastic role, and like how I did to Kamal, he did the same with me — he made me go through prosthetic make-up. I want to thank Mr. Sai Durgha Tej garu; he became a big hero. Venky Atluri Sir, big fan of your films. Dhanush is a guy who lives for cinema. Yesterday also, he mentioned that he is like a blinded horse when it comes to cinema, and nobody can disturb him. I acted as his father in the film, and thank you, Dhanush, for this role." Mamitha Baiju spoke about her journey with the film and the personal significance of the role.

Jagapathi Babu, Laya, Akella V Krishna, Kishore Naidu Chirumamilla, Tammareddy Bharadwaj, Charitha Chitra Production's Vadhala Thrilling Teaser Unveiled

Senior actor Jagapathi Babu steps into an intense new territory with Vadhala, a suspense-driven drama that blends emotional depth with a chilling premise. Sharing the screen with him are Laya and Hrithika Srinivas, both playing crucial roles in this tightly wound narrative. The film is directed by Akella V Krishna and backed by producers Kishore Naidu Chirumamilla and Tammareddy Bharadwaj under the Charitha Chitra Production banner. The makers who previously generated intrigue with a glimpse, have now come up with a thrilling teaser. Yogi is a deeply devoted husband who dotes on his wife, making her the center of his world. She, in turn, loves him wholeheartedly and guards their relationship with quiet intensity, unwilling to let anyone disrupt the bond they share. However, their seemingly perfect world is unsettled by the presence of a young girl close to the family, who develops an intense attachment to Yogi. To her, he is everything - her anchor, her obsession, and she is prepared to cross any line to claim his love. Jagapathi Babu slips comfortably into an age-appropriate role, portraying a gentle, caring hus-



band whose world carries a quiet charm. Laya matches him perfectly as the devoted wife, bringing warmth and affection to their bond. Together, they share an effortless, endearing chemistry that anchors the narrative. Hrithika Srinivas emerges as an intriguing surprise, stepping into a character laced with negative shades, hinting at deeper layers to the story. The teaser also hints at another pivotal presence, with Ravi Varma appearing in a key role that adds further weight to the ensemble. Akella V Krishna presented the story in a gripping manner, with the inclusion of

suspense and drama in remarkable way. Chota K Naidu frames the film with a gritty visual tone that enhances the suspense, while Karthik Kodakandla's background score injects a steady pulse of tension throughout. The editing by Kotagiri Venkateswara Rao keeps the narrative crisp. Lakshmi Bhupala is the writer, while production design is handled by Bajja Bramaiah. Overall, Vadhala positions itself as a gripping emotional thriller where every moment feels consequential, leaving behind a teaser that lingers with its intensity and intrigue.

Janhvi Kapoor's Micro Dress Shuts Down Night



Bollywood actress Janhvi Kapoor turned heads at the grand launch of Fenty Beauty in Mumbai, where global pop icon Rihanna was also present. The star-studded evening brought together some of India's most stylish celebrities, and Janhvi stood out with a look that perfectly balanced modern structure and understated elegance. She wore an off-shoulder white top paired with a sculpted corset-style waist and a draped black mini skirt. The silhouette played with volume and structure, giving the outfit a sharp, editori-

al edge. Her hair was pulled back in a sleek bun, and she kept her accessories minimal, letting the outfit do all the talking. Her makeup leaned toward a soft glam look, with a flawless base, contoured cheeks, and defined eyes that were striking yet not overdone, a style that felt perfectly in tune with Fenty Beauty's philosophy of celebrating natural beauty. On the career front, her film Homebound has been selected as India's official entry for the 2026 Oscars, and her upcoming Telugu project Peddi with Ram Charan is set for a June 2026 release.

THE BLACK GOLD SHOOT WRAPPED UP IN 60+ WORKING DAYS, SAMYUKTHA LOOKS POWERFUL IN NEW POSTER, MAKING VIDEO UNVEILED

Stepping into one of the boldest phases of her career, versatile actress Samyuktha, known for her strong performances, diverse roles, and a streak of successful films as a lucky heroine, takes the lead in the gritty, female-led action drama The Black Gold, being mounted on a pan-Indian scale. Directed by Yogesh KMC and produced by Razesh Danda under Hasya Movies in collaboration with Maganti Pictures, the film promises a hard-hitting narrative driven by intensity and scale. Set against the backdrop of coal mines along the Telangana-Maharashtra border, the story revolves around a police officer who values the law more than the gun in her hand, an intriguing and fresh narrative point. The film boldly explores one of India's most sensational

coal syndicates, reportedly involving even a Chief Minister. It is inspired by real-life incidents, adding further intensity to the story. Samyuktha looks tough, standing in front of a massive industrial machine, with her sunglasses on in the poster. She carries a gun casually by her side, as if danger is just part of her day. Dust swirls around her. The movie was shot across locations such as Mancherial, Bellampalli, Kagaznagar, and Adilabad, along with specially

erected sets in Hyderabad. The team wrapped the entire production in just 60+ working days, executing five power-packed schedules across 10+ fully built, realistic sets, with 300+ crew members on the ground every day, as revealed in a working video that showcases the grit and determination behind the making of the film. The action sequences have been designed on a scale rarely seen in heroine-oriented films. Completing such a high-intensity film with extensive action in just 60 days is no small

feat. The shoot was carried out using two cameras daily, and in some cases, up to five cameras simultaneously. With high production values and strong technical standards, The Black Gold is being shaped to appeal to both cinema lovers and Gen Z audiences alike. The film also brings together a strong supporting cast, including Murali Sharma, Rao Ramesh, Nassar, Manish Wadhwa, Ramki, Ravindra Vijay, Adukalam Naren, BVS Ravi, Krishna Chaitanya, and Chandrika Ravi in important roles. Coming to the technical crew, the music is composed by Sam CS, while A. Vasanth handles the cinematography. Chota K Prasad is the editor, and Sahi Suresh serves as the production designer. The Black Gold will have a pan-Indian release in Telugu, Hindi, Tamil, Malayalam, and Kannada.



Drugs case: Mumbai court orders defreezing of Rhea Chakraborty's bank account

A special court in Mumbai has ordered the defreezing of the bank accounts of actor Rhea Chakraborty and her brother, accused in a drugs case, citing the NCB's failure to follow procedural requirements under the NDPS Act. The Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB) had frozen the duo's accounts as part of its probe into a drug-related case linked to the death of actor Sushant Singh Rajput. Rhea Chakraborty and her brother, Showik, represented by lawyer Ayaz Khan, argued that the NCB failed to follow the mandatory procedural requirements under Section 68F (for seizure or freezing of properties) of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act, 1985. The prosecution opposed the applica-

tion, citing Chakraborty's alleged statements as evidence of her being an active member of a drug syndicate in contact with peddlers. It maintained that the freezing of the account was a necessary action by the investigation officer. However, finding merits in the defence's contention, Special NDPS Court Judge U C Deshmukh on Saturday noted that under section 68F(2) of the NDPS Act, any order to freeze or seize property must be confirmed by a "competent authority" within 30 days. If no such confirmation is made, the order becomes legally invalid. The respondent (NCB) does not deny that there is no compliance with the mandatory pro-

cedure, the court pointed out. Therefore, in view of a high court ruling and provisions of Section 68F of the NDPS Act, the application is liable to be allowed, it said.



Rishab Shetty's 'A Film By Giri' to Release in Theatres on May 8



Under the banners of Star Wood Entertainment and Rishab Shetty Films, presented by Achhibabu M, the film 'A Film By Giri' stars Rishab Shetty of Kantara fame as the hero, with Rachana Inder as the female lead. The film has completed all formalities and is set to arrive in theatres on May 8.