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Women Reservation Bill will help to change 'disha and dasha' of nation: PM Modi

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Blockade of Iranian ports will last 'as long as it takes', US defence secretary says

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Tralala Moving Pictures Drops First Single 'Thassadiya' from Samantha's Action Comedy Family Drama 'Maa Inti Bangaaram' — In Cinemas May 15

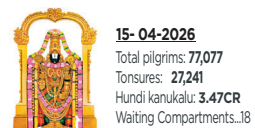
CINEMA | PAGE



SCAN FOR E-PAPER



OM NAMO VENKATESAYA



WEATHER
39 °C | °F
Precipitation: 10%
Humidity: 30%
Wind: 11 km/h

GOLD RATE
24K ₹
1,57,510

INBRIFS

Indian Navy's INS Sudarshini reaches Morocco on Lokayan 26 deployment

New Delhi, April 16 (TSIT) Indian Navy's Sail Training Ship, INS Sudarshini, made port call at Casablanca, Morocco on April 15, as part of its ongoing transoceanic deployment under Lokayan 26. The ship's arrival at this prominent port marks an important milestone in the expedition and reflects Indian Navy's sustained efforts to enhance maritime engagement in line with the vision of MAHASAGAR (Mutual and Holistic Advancement for Security and Growth Across the Region). In a statement issued here, the Naval spokesperson said that the visit further underscores the strengthening of bilateral relations and naval cooperation between India and Morocco.

Lack of power in over 100 Kolkata poll booths; EC orders immediate action

Kolkata (TSIT) In a surprising development, the Election Commission has discovered that more than 100 polling booths in central Kolkata lack electricity. The issue has raised serious concerns just a few days ahead of the election because this time the Commission has mandated advanced web-casting arrangements at every polling station to ensure transparency during voting.

"Webcasting cannot function without a reliable power supply. So we have directed district election officers (DEOs) to immediately ensure electricity connections at all such booths," a senior official at the CEO's office said. In cases where restoring power is not feasible in time, authorities have been instructed to arrange generators. The Commission has made it clear that the absence of electricity must not disrupt webcasting under any circumstances. While the absence of electricity in rural polling stations is not uncommon and had been addressed earlier through specific directives, officials admitted that such a situation in Kolkata was unexpected.

Ponnam seeks action against Tejasvi Surya over Telangana remarks



Hyderabad (TSIT) : Telangana's Minister for Transport and Backwards Classes Welfare, Ponnam Prabhakar, has urged Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla to expunge the offensive remarks made by BJP MP Tejasvi Surya on Telangana's formation from official records and to take strict action, including cancellation of his membership.

In a letter submitted to the Lok Sabha Speaker, the minister strongly objected to Surya's remarks made during the debate on the bills for women's reservation. The minister stated that the MP compared the bifurcation of Andhra Pradesh and creation of Telangana state with the partition

of India and formation of Pakistan. "This analogy is not only factually untenable but also deeply insensitive and inappropriate in the context of parliamentary discourse," Ponnam Prabhakar wrote. He mentioned that the formation of Telangana was the outcome of a democratic constitutional process that reflected the legitimate aspirations of its people.

He added that equating this with the violent and traumatic partition of the nation diminishes the sanctity of that process and disregards the sentiments of the people of Telangana.

He further stated that such comparisons are unnecessary and risk fostering regional discord, misrepresenting historical and constitutional realities, and undermining the spirit of unity and cooperative federalism that underpins democracy. Ponnam Prabhakar urged the Speaker to order the expunction of the remarks and to direct the MP to tender an unconditional apology to the Lok Sabha and the people of Telangana.

"This analogy is not only factually untenable but also deeply insensitive and inappropriate in the context of parliamentary discourse,"
Ponnam Prabhakar wrote in Letter.

CM Naidu Calls for 15% Growth, Stresses Strategic Planning & Execution

CM stresses micro-macro planning, boosts productivity focus; assures funds for key projects and welfare schemes without burdening public



Amaravati (TSIT): Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu on Thursday directed officials to make efforts to achieve 15 per cent growth rate. He asked them to implement both micro and macro-level planning strategies to achieve the state's Gross State Domestic Product (GSDP) targets. He emphasised the need for short-, medium-, and long-term planning to attain optimal productivity levels across sectors.

During a review meeting of Finance department, the Chief Minister stressed that field-level execution is critical to achieve the targeted 15 percent growth rate. He instructed officials

to ensure effective implementation of these plans down to the grassroots level, according to Chief Minister's Office (CMO). The CM noted that the state is already providing essential resources such as water and electricity to agriculture sector and industries, and called for focused efforts to further enhance productivity.

Despite financial constraints, the government has not increased electricity tariffs and is also bearing an additional burden of Rs 4,600 crore arising from decisions taken by the previous administration, he said. The Chief Minister directed revenue-generating departments to meet their targets

without imposing any burden on the public. He highlighted that completion of key projects like Amaravati and Polavaram would significantly boost wealth creation in the state.

He assured that there is no shortage of funds for priority projects and that, with the support of the Central Government, these projects will be completed to accelerate development. He asked the officials to utilise central government schemes including Purvodaya and Sasei schemes to take up development projects.

The Chief Minister reiterated that welfare schemes will be implemented in line with the welfare calendar. He further directed officials to focus on securing funds due to the state under the Andhra Pradesh Reorganisation Act.

Criticising the previous government for shutting down Anna Canteens, he said that despite challenges, the current government is providing meals to poor through 269 Anna Canteens across the state.

"We'd rather not have to do it, but we're ready to go at the command of our President and at the push of a button,".



tional. "We'd rather not have to do it, but we're ready to go at the command of our President and at the push of a button," he said.

Hegseth was joined by Air Force General Dan Caine, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and Admiral Bradley Cooper, who oversees US military operations in the Middle East as Commander of US Central Command.

The warning comes as the

US enforces a naval blockade targeting Iran's ports and coastline, part of a broader effort to pressure Tehran following what officials described as recent combat operations under Operation Epic Fury.

Hegseth said the blockade was already constraining Iran's economic lifelines, particularly energy exports. "Your energy is not moving and will not move and we can

If Constitution amendment bill is passed, democracy will be finished in India: Priyanka

NEW DELHI (TSIT): In a stinging attack, Congress leader Priyanka Gandhi Vadra on Thursday said the government began finishing off democracy by putting pressure on institutions, such as the Election Commission (EC) and the judiciary, but now, an "open attack" has been launched on democracy with the Constitution amendment bill. Participating in a debate in the Lok Sabha on three bills introduced for amendments in the women's-quota law and setting up a delimitation commission, Priyanka Gandhi asked why can't the government give 33 per cent reservation to women on the current 543 seats of the Lok Sabha.

She said the bill talks of increasing the number of Lok Sabha seats to up to 850 - to be done by a delimitation commission on the basis of the 2011 Census data. "This seems fine on the surface but the real meaning comes to the fore when one carefully reads it. It smells of politics," the Congress leader said.

She said on reading the fine print, it shows that the three members of the delimitation commission will decide the fate of the states and their representation in Parliament. "The gov-



This issue is close to the heart of every woman. There is a background to this issue. The prime minister said this issue was blocked for 30 years. This was started by a person called Nehru. Not the Nehru they avoid so much but Motilal Nehru, who as the president of a committee prepared a list of 19 rights which were then passed as a resolution at the Karachi session of the Congress and formed the basis of giving women equal rights in Indian politics."

ernment began finishing off democracy by putting pressure on institutions, such as the Election Commission, the judiciary, the media etc., but now, an open attack on democracy is being launched," Priyanka Gandhi said. If this Constitution amendment bill is passed in Parliament, democracy will be finished in India, she added.

The Congress MP also narrated a background to the issue of women's reservation in legislative bodies.

"This issue is close to the heart of every woman. There is a background to this issue. The prime minister said this issue was blocked for 30 years. This was started by a person called Nehru. Not the Nehru they avoid so much but Motilal

Nehru, who as the president of a committee prepared a list of 19 rights which were then passed as a resolution at the Karachi session of the Congress and formed the basis of giving women equal rights in Indian politics," she said. She said it was Rajiv Gandhi who, as the prime minister, brought a bill for women's reservation in panchayats and nagarpalikas and finally, the bill for it was passed during the P V Narasimha Rao government of the Congress.

"Under the UPA, this was passed in the Rajya Sabha but a consensus could not be reached in the Lok Sabha. In 2018, Rahul Gandhi wrote a letter to Prime Minister Narendra Modi, calling for women's reservation," Priyanka Gandhi said.

TN POLLS:

TVK chief Vijay announces Rs 2,500 monthly assistance, eight gram gold for marriage



CHENNAI (TSIT): TVK chief Vijay on Thursday unveiled a sweeping manifesto for the April 23 Assembly elections in Tamil Nadu that particularly highlighted the welfare of women, promising others - Rs 2,500 monthly assistance for those below 60 years and 8 gram gold for marriage.

The actor-turned-politician also assured a quality silk saree in addition to gold for indigent brides and interest-free loans up to Rs 5 lakh for women-run SHGs.

He assured corruption-free good governance if voted to power. The manifesto also laid importance on education. To prevent school dropouts, mothers or guardians of children studying in government and

state-aided schools will receive Rs 15,000 annually.

Vijay promised 100 special residential schools named after iconic leader K Kamaraj and higher education loans of up to Rs 20 lakh. He also assured AI Ministry, AI University and AI City. The manifesto places a strong emphasis on agrarian welfare, too. The TVK chief assured a full waiver of agricultural cooperative crop loans for farmers owning less than five acres of land, while those holding more than five acres will receive a 50 per cent loan waiver. Additionally, the party promised a Minimum Support Price of Rs 3,500 per quintal for paddy and Rs 4,500 per tonne for sugarcane.

Addressing youth unemployment, Vijay pledged to create five lakh new government jobs and offer five lakh stipendiary internships. Unemployed graduates will be provided a monthly aid of up to Rs 4,000. For government employees, the party assured consideration of the Old Pension Scheme and the regularisation of contract workers, including nurses.

US warns strikes on Iran energy infrastructure if deal is not reached

Washington (TSIT): The United States on Thursday warned Iran that its energy infrastructure could be targeted if it fails to reach a deal, with Defence Secretary Pete Hegseth saying American forces are prepared to escalate beyond the current blockade.

Speaking at a Pentagon briefing, Hegseth said US forces were ready to strike critical sectors, including power generation and energy facilities, if Tehran "chooses poorly". "We are locked and loaded on your critical dual use infrastructure... and on your energy industry," he said.

He added that while Washington preferred a diplomatic resolution, military options remained fully opera-

do this all day," he said.

He framed the blockade as an alternative to direct strikes but made clear that escalation remained an option.

"This blockade... is the polite way that this can go," he said, warning that failure to reach an agreement could lead to attacks on infrastructure. Military officials said US forces remain on high readiness despite a ceasefire that has temporarily paused major combat operations. Caine said the joint force was prepared "to resume major combat operations at literally a moment's notice."

The Pentagon said Iran's military capabilities, particularly command and control systems, had been significantly degraded during

recent operations. Hegseth noted that Tehran's ability to coordinate had reached "the worst it's ever been," though he said the regime retained an incentive to avoid renewed conflict.

Cooper said US forces in the region were using the ceasefire period to strengthen operational readiness. "We're rearming, we're retooling, and we're adjusting our tactics," he said, adding that troops remained "highly motivated" following recent engagements.

He also highlighted coordination with regional partners, including Gulf states and Israel, describing them as "exceptional teammates" supporting joint defence efforts across the Middle East.

AKASA AIR, SPICEJET PLANES DAMAGED IN GROUND INCIDENT AT DELHI AIRPORT; DGCA PROBES

NEW DELHI: An Akasa Air aircraft and a SpiceJet plane were damaged after coming in contact at Delhi's Indira Gandhi International Airport on Thursday afternoon, officials said. The incident occurred around 2:15 pm at Terminal 1. The Akasa Air plane was stationary on the taxiway preparing for takeoff, while the SpiceJet aircraft was taxiing toward the parking stand.



Women Reservation Bill will help to change ‘disha and dasha’ of nation: PM Modi

New Delhi, April 16 : Prime Minister Narendra Modi said on Thursday that the Women Reservation Bill will help change the “disha and dasha” (direction and condition) of the country’s politics by involving half of the population of the nation in decision-making.

Outlining the benefits of women’s reservation in achieving Viksit Bharat @2047, PM Modi said all those who have opposed this provision have been taught a lesson by women voters. “We are privileged that we have an opportunity to give a new direction to the nation’s politics and strengthen democracy,” he said, urging parties not to see it through the

prism of politics.

Earlier, the introduction was approved in the Lok Sabha on Thursday, following a division of votes in the House. The development came after the Opposition pressed for a recorded vote, leading to a formal division process.

Union Law Minister Arjun Meghwal rose in the House to table the Bill, marking a key step in the legislative process. The introduction follows an earlier round of voting in which Members of Parliament supported bringing the Bill forward for discussion. The Constitution (One Hundred and Thirty-First Amendment) Bill, 2026, and the



Delimitation Bill 2026 and Union Territories Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2026, were introduced.

The Lok Sabha had voted in favour of introducing the Constitution (One Hundred and Thirty-First Amendment) Bill, 2026, after the Opposition demanded a division. Following the use of vote slips, the distribution stood at 251 in support and 185 against, announced Speaker Om Birla, adding that it is subject to change. The Lok Sabha typically relies on voice voting to pass motions; however, when the outcome is contested, a “division” is conducted. In such cases, the Automatic Vote Recorder system is used to register

votes under “Ayes”, “Noes”, and “Abstain”. Subsequently, vote slips were also utilised during the proceedings after the division, with a total of 333 members casting their votes and no abstentions recorded in that round. “If any member wishes to change the vote, they may call for voting through slips,” the Lok Sabha Secretary General had earlier informed the House. The Opposition had insisted on a division as the House took up voting on the introduction of the Women’s Reservation Bill. The motion required a simple majority to be carried, and the voting process was conducted accordingly amid heightened political engagement.

CM Naidu Leads by Example, Registers for Self-Enumeration as AP Census Begins

VISAKHAPATNAM (TSIT) Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu has registered his details through the online portal as part of the Self-Enumeration initiative launched under the ongoing Census process in the state. The online registration process, which began today under the House Listing and Housing Census phase, allows citizens to submit their household details through the official website (se.census.gov.in). The self-enumeration process consists of 33 questions, which were explained to the Chief Minister by AP Census Director J. Nivas.

Officials informed that the public can utilize the self-enumeration facility until April 30. Subsequently, from May 1



to May 30, enumerators will conduct door-to-door visits to carry out the physical verification and data collection process. Speaking on the occasion, the Chief Minister emphasized that accurate data

collection is crucial for ensuring equitable distribution of welfare and development benefits to all citizens. He stated that the government aims to design development policies by considering the family as

the basic unit, and highlighted the importance of the Census in achieving this objective.

Naidu further noted that this is the first Census exercise being conducted in Andhra Pradesh after the state’s bifurcation, and described it as not just a data collection exercise but a strong foundation for future development.

The Census will be conducted in two phases: the first phase involving house listing has commenced now, while the second phase, focusing on population enumeration, will begin next year. The Chief Minister urged all citizens to actively participate in the process by submitting accurate information online and contributing to the successful completion of the Census exercise.

Kamal Haasan campaigns for DMK alliance ahead of TN polls

Chennai, April 16 : Actor-politician Kamal Haasan will campaign in support of Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK) alliance candidates on April 17 and 19, adding momentum to the ruling front’s high-intensity outreach ahead of the Tamil Nadu Assembly elections scheduled for April 23. With the campaign entering its final phase, political activity across the State has intensified, with parties stepping up voter engagement in what is shaping up to be a four-cornered contest.

The electoral battle features the DMK-led Secular Progressive Alliance, the All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (AIADMK)-led National Democratic Alliance (NDA), Naam Tamilar Katchi, and actor Vijay’s



Tamilaga VettriKazhagam (TVK). Candidates have been actively canvassing support at the grassroots level, interacting with voters in residential areas, marketplaces, and public spaces. Senior leaders and key party functionaries have also been crisscrossing constituencies, participating in rallies, roadshows, and public meetings as part of a whirlwind campaign effort.

According to a statement issued by the DMK General Secretariat, Haasan, who heads the Makkal Needhi Maiam (MNM), will campaign in select constituencies to bolster support for the alliance. His participation is expected to resonate particularly among urban voters and youth, segments in which he retains some political influence. The DMK alliance is relying on

its governance record and welfare initiatives to appeal to voters, while the AIADMK-led front is seeking to capitalise on anti-incumbency and coalition strength.

At the same time, Naam Tamilar Katchi and TVK are attempting to position themselves as alternatives, targeting undecided voters and first-time electors. As the countdown to polling day continues, parties are deploying star campaigners and intensifying outreach to maximise voter turnout in their favour. The coming days are expected to witness a surge in high-profile campaign events across the State. The vote count will take place on May 4, when the electoral fate of candidates in all 234 constituencies will be decided.

Mahesh Babu's High-Octane Mountain Dew Campaign Spotlights 400ml PET Pack at Rs.20



HYDERABAD, April 16, 2026 – Mountain Dew®, PepsiCo India’s bold and fearless beverage brand, has unveiled a high-octane campaign featuring celebrity brand ambassador Mahesh Babu, spotlighting its popular 400ml PET pack at just Rs.20. The campaign reinforces Mountain Dew’s commitment to delivering value and accessibility through its trusted price-pack architecture, while staying true to its iconic philosophy of “Darr Ke Aage Jeet Hai.” The brand continues to inspire fans to embrace courage and thrill with every sip.

As part of this campaign, Mountain Dew has launched a gripping new TVC directed by acclaimed filmmaker Ali Abbas Zafar. The adrenaline-fuelled film showcases Mahesh Babu in a high-stakes outdoor adventure as he confronts a daunting natural obstacle. With suspense building, he faces fear head-on and takes the leap, once again proving that “Darr Ke Aage Jeet Hai.” The film highlights Mahesh Babu’s fearless persona while bringing alive Mountain Dew’s philosophy of courage and triumph, spotlighting the

brand’s accessible 400ml at Rs.20 offering.

Commenting on the launch, Akanksha Dalal, Category Head, Mountain Dew, PepsiCo India, said: “At Mountain Dew, our partnership with Mahesh Babu perfectly embodies the fearless spirit that defines our brand. His powerful presence brings ‘Darr Ke Aage Jeet Hai’ to life like never before, inspiring consumers to embrace courage and thrill—made even more accessible through our value offerings. This campaign perfectly showcases how we connect with audiences through authentic, high-energy storytelling.”

The new Mountain Dew TVC will be amplified through a robust 360-degree campaign spanning television, digital, outdoor, and social media. Mountain Dew is available in single-serve and multi-serve packs across modern and traditional retail outlets, as well as e-commerce and quick-commerce platforms. The portfolio includes formats such as 400ml at Rs.20, 1.25L at Rs.50, and 2.25L/2L at Rs.90 – offering consumers multiple value-led choices without compromising on the trusted experience the brand is known for.

Valedictory of Student Activity Center(SAC) held at Auditorium, KITS Warangal Campus

WARANGAL District Correspondent TSIT, (April 16) : Valedictory of Activity Center (SAC) for the academic year 2025-2026 held at NLR shed - Auditorium, Kakatiya Institute of Technology & Science, Warangal (KITSW) campus announced by the Principal Prof. K. Ashoka Reddy. SAC is the nerve centre of all student activities to build character and attitude. The outcome is the student will become technologically superior and ethically strong and they are also emotionally balanced, he added.

On this occasion the Rajya Sabha MP, KITSW Chairman, Capt. V. LakshmiKantha Rao KITSW treasurer P. Narayana Reddy & Husnabad constituency Former MLA & KITSW Additional secretary, Vodithala Satish Kumar has appreciated and congratulated the faculty incharges for 9 clubs and the team of student representatives for successfully



organizing curricular and extra curricular activities under the umbrella of SAC for the all round development of students.

According to the Dean Student affairs Prof. K. Sridhar the students are doing well with Discipline, Dedication and Determination, i.e. D3 formula. Student thought process is highly innovative and most suitable when they are organising technical and cultural events. SAC includes 9 clubs such as Music, Dance & Fine arts (MDF), Photography

and Media Club (PMC), Humanity Club, NCC club, NSS club, Sports & Games club, Literary Club, Technical club & Disciplinary club and ISTE chapter. They have conducted successful technical workshops, seminars and cultural events a total of 74 under SAC. At the end students gave feedback and highlighted that we have acquired life skills, leadership qualities and various technical skills to achieve required competencies for the employability.

Implement Progress Planning Programmes with Full Force: Collector

Jagityala, April 16, TSIT : District Collector B Satya Prasad directed the officials to conduct the 99-day action plan mandal level meetings to be organized in the district in a manner that reflects public governance. In a meeting held at the PNR function hall in Madipelli mandal on Thursday, the collector said that the people should be made aware of the development and welfare programmes undertaken by the government. Farmer assurance, distribution of ration cards, construction of



Indiramma houses, loans to women, loans provided by corporations, Special explanation should be given to the eligible

people about Mahalakshmi scheme and Sannabiyam distribution. Korutla RDO Jivakar Reddy, Medipelli Mandal

Special Officer Surendra Kumar, Tehsildar Munindhar and MPDO Gangadhar participated in this meeting.

EARLY DETECTION KEY TO PREVENTING CANCER: DR. SANDEEP KUMAR TULA.

The district correspondent, Mancherial, April 16, TSIT : Early detection of cancer significantly increases the chances of complete recovery, said Dr. Sandeep Kumar Tula, a medical expert from Yashoda Hospital, Secunderabad. He was speaking at an awareness program held in Mancherial on Thursday.

Dr. Tula emphasized that people should not ignore minor symptoms and must consult doctors immediately if they notice any unusual changes in their bodies. He noted that modern lifestyle, unhealthy eating habits, and stress are major contributors to the rising incidence of cancer. He advised adopting a healthy diet, regular exercise, and avoiding habits such as tobacco and alcohol to reduce cancer risk. Highlighting women’s health, he stressed the importance of regular screening for breast and cervical cancers. He also mentioned that certain cancers can be prevented through vaccination for children aged 9 to 14 years. Dr. Tula added that advancements in medical technology have improved cancer treatment outcomes, and people should not fear the disease but seek timely medical care.



JAGGAREDDY, NIRMALA REVIEW DRINKING WATER ISSUES IN SADASIVPET

RS.135 CRORE PLAN PROPOSED TO ENSURE SAFE WATER SUPPLY



Sangareddy, April 16 (TSIT)T-GCC Chairman Nirmala Jaggareddy reviewed the drinking water issues in Sadasivpet town and directed officials to prepare plans to supply safe drinking water to every household for one and a half hours daily. A review meeting was held on Thursday with municipal officials, councillors, and representatives from Mission Bhagiratha and the Public Health Department. Officials proposed a comprehensive water supply project from Singur Dam, including construction of intake wells, filter beds, storage tanks, and new pipelines. The estimated cost of the project is Rs.135 crore. Engineers stated that while the town’s population of 60,000 requires 21 lakh gallons of water per day, the new scheme is designed to supply up to 52 lakh gallons, ensuring adequate drinking water for the next 50 years. An emergency Municipal Council meeting will be held on April 17 to discuss the project, followed by consultations with public representatives and residents before submitting a final report to Chief Minister Revanth Reddy.

EDITORIAL

Trump's Favourite Field Marshal: How Munir Became The President's Best Man

The photograph of Pakistan's Army chief being received by Iran's Foreign Minister in Tehran this week has its real backdrop not in the Iranian capital - the real context lies in the White House Oval Office in June 2025. A uniformed Pakistani general serving as America's most trusted diplomatic courier in one of the world's most dangerous standoffs is striking. But once you understand how Donald Trump runs American foreign policy, it is entirely predictable. Trump does not send career diplomats when things get serious. He sends people he has personally decided to trust. Right now, that man is Asim Munir. To understand why, you have to understand not just the President but the remarkable structural symmetry between the two states he and Munir respectively represent. The photograph of Pakistan's Army chief being received by Iran's Foreign Minister in Tehran this week has its real backdrop not in the Iranian capital - the real context lies in the White House Oval Office in June 2025. A uniformed Pakistani general serving as America's most trusted diplomatic courier in one of the world's most dangerous standoffs is striking. But once you understand how Donald Trump runs American foreign policy, it is entirely predictable. Trump does not send career diplomats when things get serious. He sends people he has personally decided to trust. Right now, that man is Asim Munir. To understand why, you have to understand not just the President but the remarkable structural symmetry between the two states he and Munir respectively represent.

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Two Systems, One Illogic

Pakistan and the United States are not obvious analogues. One is a nuclear-armed developing state with a GDP per capita below \$1,500, perpetually on IMF life support, where the military has historically governed from behind civilian facades. The other is the world's largest economy, a constitutional republic with 2.5 centuries of institutional continuity. And yet, under their current leaderships, both countries are governed by a strikingly similar operating logic: institutions are weak or weakened, personalities dominate, and outcomes depend less on process than on who knows whom and what they have to offer each other. In Pakistan, this is a structural condition. The military has always been the institution that actually decides. Civilian governments come and go; the army remains. Munir has simply made this arrangement more explicit than most predecessors. In Trump's Washington, institutional erosion is more recent but directionally similar. Pakistani officials quickly diagnosed it: access to this White House runs through Trump family businesses as much as through the State Department. Career diplomats and inter-agency processes still formally exist, but they are increasingly decorative. What matters is the personal relationship with the President, and what you can offer him and his circle.

The Art of the Offer

Islamabad understood that in a personalised system, the entry point is commerce and flattery, not diplomatic convention. The courtship was methodical. The first move was counterterrorism. Pakistani intelligence helped the US capture a key Islamic State-Khorasan operative responsible for the 2021 Abbey Gate bombing, the kind of concrete, nameable result Trump could announce and claim as his own. Then came the commercial offers. World Liberty Financial, a crypto venture in which the Trump family holds substantial interests, sent executives to Islamabad, where Pakistan signed an MoU on stablecoin adoption. Munir personally welcomed the delegation, signalling an alignment between Pakistan's military and Trump-linked business entities. Pakistan simultaneously pitched claims to trillions of dollars in rare-earth minerals.

Amid Trump's War On The World, How Effective Really Is India's Strategic Autonomy?

In a recent op-ed in February, India's External Affairs Minister assessed, "The world has entered a volatile and uncertain era, possibly the most turbulent in living memory". In a subsequent public comment on April 4, he went on to say that "everything today is being leveraged, if not actually weaponised", and that "arriving at an optimal mix of equities, exposure and risks is a far more complex calculus". The Challenge With Staying Neutral India's striving for and assertion of the strategic autonomy of its decision-making has thus become even more an imperative, and also challenging at the same time. Since 2000, India has built a deepening economic, technological, political and defence partnership with the US, with the latter declaring India as a Major Defence partner and describing the relationship as a defining feature for the 21st century. US leaders also repeatedly said that they saw the rise of India to be in the US's interest. Contrast this with President Trump's comment in July 2025 that he did not want US companies to hire in India, and that of US Deputy Secretary of State Landau at the Raisina dialogue in March this year, that the US would not make the same mistake with India that it did with China. The Quad also does not appear to be getting the same summit-level traction in Trump 2.0 as it did in the preceding Biden administration. Trump's 50% tariffs on Indian products levied last year were seen as a vindictive measure driven by his personal pique at India not crediting him with a role in the ceasefire following Operation Sindoor in May 2025. Before US-Israel, There Was Russia Yet, India avoided direct criticism of the US and Israel for initiating the conflict with Iran, while asserting in its February 28 statement that "sovereignty and territorial integrity of all states must be respected", and expressing only deep "concern at the recent developments". By contrast, in a conversation with the President of the UAE on March 1, the Indian Prime Minister "strongly condemned the attacks on the UAE" and



"expressed that he stands in solidarity with the UAE in these difficult times". The Indian Prime Minister's visit to Israel, just two days before the start of the US and Israeli actions, has also raised questions about the appropriateness of the timing and appearance of partisanship, when the outbreak of conflict was expected. Similarly, India had refrained from direct criticism of Russia when it violated the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine in February 2022, with the Indian Prime Minister diplomatically telling Russian President Vladimir Putin in September 2022 at the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) summit in Samarkand, that this was "not an era of war". Russia's deep and longstanding defence cooperation partnership with India, and political support over decades in international fora, no doubt influenced the nuance of India's position. What Strategic Autonomy Really Means - In The Real World All these legitimately raise questions about what strategic autonomy entails. Clearly, it cannot imply that India mechanistically base its positions and articulations on certain widely articulated, heretofore, positions of

preferred international norms, unmindful of its own direct economic, technological, defence and political interests. No major power does that. China had in 2016 rejected the ruling of an international arbitration tribunal on the South China Sea, calling it "not worth the paper it was written on", and proceeded to militarise several islands and features in violation of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS). The 2026 US National Defence Strategy asserts that the US would no longer support "cloud-castle abstractions like the rules-based international order". In the immediate aftermath of independence, India had adopted non-alignment as a strategy to avoid subservience to decisions made elsewhere in the two competing superpower-led military alliances. In the post-1990 unipolar phase in global affairs, the assertion of its strategic autonomy enabled India to ward off US-led attempts to universalise norms based on American preferences. These had included the indefinite extension of the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) in 1995 and attempts to bring into force the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban

Treaty (CTBT) in 1996. Hedging', Not Isolation In the current context of India striving for productive relations with different poles in the international system, along with the growing weaponisation of dependencies by all major players, strategic autonomy can be sustained only if India builds up further its own economic, technological and military strengths. Given the competitive advantages that can be derived from cooperation and partnerships, isolation is not a viable strategy. But hedging certainly is. Each of our partners needs to be aware that India has other options, too. In the current situation, the effective multiplicity of options is under strain. Russia has been preoccupied with the Ukraine conflict for more than four years, straining its ability to provide supplies in time or be impactful in other international contexts. Russia was not able to do much to deter a US-driven "regime change" action in Venezuela, or the enhanced embargoes in Cuba. Europe and Japan caved in to maximalist US trade demands in 2025 because they continue to be security-dependent on it, through NATO or through bilateral alliances in the Indo-Pacific.

CAUTION IS NECESSARY AGAINST THE BABAS CARRYING BAGS



DR. SATYAWAN SAURABH

The farmer's hard work will be protected only by avoiding the deception spread in the name of faith. In the villages of North India, wheat harvesting is not just a season, but a celebration of life. It's the time when a farmer's months of hard work, sun-burnt hands, cold nights of vigilance, and a battle with uncertain weather finally pay off. The golden ears of corn swaying in the fields are not just a scene of an ordinary harvest, but a symbol of hope, struggle, and self-respect. When this crop is harvested and piled up in the courtyard of the house, it's not just grain—it's security for the entire year, the foundation for children's education, support during illness, and strength to fight the uncertainties of the future. The women of the house collect, clean, dry, and carefully store the grain, knowing that these grains will strengthen the foundation of the home in the years to come. But alongside this golden and contented scene, a shadow descends upon the village streets, slowly diminishing this joy. This shadow is that of the so-called babas and swindlers who wander about with bags, waiting for this season. As soon as grain arrives in homes, these individuals suddenly appear in villages. Their clothing, their appearance, and their speech are all designed to make them appear worthy of reverence. A tilak on the forehead, a turban or cap on the head, colorful clothes, and a bag in hand—all this creates an image that easily captivates the average villager. They go from house to house, standing at the doorsteps, offering sweet blessings—"God bless," "May Mother Goddess bless"—and expect some grain or money in return. The tradition of charity and service has been prevalent in villages for centuries. This tradition is not only religious but also social, strengthening

the spirit of mutual cooperation and coexistence. Women, in particular, play a vital role in maintaining this tradition. They stand at the doorsteps of their homes, welcoming visitors and donating as much as they can. For them, this is not just a social duty, but a part of their faith. But this faith can sometimes become a weakness when some people take advantage of it. A handful of wheat donated by one household may seem like a small thing. The giver might think it won't make much difference. But when this process is repeated throughout the village, these small handfuls add up to a large pile. Grain collected from hundreds of households throughout the day adds up to a large amount by evening. This grain is then often sold in the market, and complaints arise that the proceeds are used for drugs, gambling, or other inappropriate activities rather than for essential needs. Thus, the grain that the farmer cultivated with his hard work and sweat gradually ends up in hands that are not respected. This isn't just about financial loss, it's also about a breakdown in trust. When someone exploits someone's hard work by invoking religion and faith, they not only steal resources but also undermine social values. Even more worrying is when some people resort to intimidation if donations are not made. "If you don't donate, there will be disaster," "There will be unrest in the home"—such words not only promote superstition but also create unnecessary fear in people's minds. This fear particularly affects women and the elderly, who are already deeply rooted in religious beliefs. However, there's another aspect to this whole picture that can't be ignored. There are people in society who are truly in need—the elderly, the disabled, or those without any means of subsistence. For them, begging isn't a choice, but a compulsion. Their faces reflect not pretense, but the reality of struggle and exhaustion. Therefore, it's unfair to treat every person carrying a bag with the same eyes. This is where both discretion and sensitivity are required. The solution to the problem lies not in mere protest, but in understanding. First, awareness is essential. It is important to explain to all family members that donations should be made thoughtfully, not based solely on emotion. Women, in particular, need

to be taught not to make decisions under any kind of fear or pressure. If someone tries to force or intimidate, they should be opposed, and if necessary, seek the help of neighbors or the Panchayat. The second important step is to channel donations correctly. If someone has a giving spirit, they should direct it to those truly in need. Villages contain many economically vulnerable families whose lives could be improved with help. Widows, the elderly, orphans, or those in need of education and health—these are where donations have a real impact. This not only ensures the proper use of resources but also strengthens mutual cooperation and trust in society. Third, it's important to understand the power of collective decision-making. If the entire village decides together to limit the practice of door-to-door distribution of grain, this problem can be solved naturally. It may be difficult for an individual to refuse, but when the entire community stands together, the situation changes. Collective awareness and solidarity are the most powerful weapons against such exploitation. Ultimately, the issue isn't just about grain, but about the respect a farmer earns through his hard work. The sweat shed in the fields is not just water, but a part of his life. Every grain grown from that sweat is precious, and it is the duty of every society to respect it. Letting it go to waste due to any kind of deceit, pressure, or superstition is not only a financial loss but also a loss of self-respect. Faith is an important part of our lives, but faith doesn't mean blind faith. True faith is one that is accompanied by reason, capable of distinguishing between right and wrong. When someone exploits our hard work in the name of faith, true wisdom lies in recognizing and avoiding it. Therefore, the times demand that we respect our traditions, but not blindly. We must remain vigilant and vigilant to protect our society, our resources, and our hard work. Because, ultimately, only those societies that remain connected to their roots but also evolve their thinking with changing times will thrive. And when this understanding develops within us, perhaps this golden harvest of wheat will flourish not only in the fields, but also in our thoughts—with respect, awareness, and wisdom.

A new milestone in Haryanvi short story: "Mhari Matti, Mhare Akhar"



Dr. Vijay Garg

(Book Review)

For the first time, "Mhari Matti, Mhare Akhar" brings together 33 Haryanvi short story writers from India and abroad. This unique collection of 99 short stories offers a vivid glimpse of Haryana's soil, folk culture, and human sensibilities. This work is dedicated to the memory of Mr. Manumukt 'Manav', IPS, a youth inspiration. Published in 2026 under the guidance of Dr. Ramniwas 'Manav', compiled by Dr. Priyanka Saurabh, edited by Dr. Satyawan Saurabh, and with a cover designed by Surendra Bansal, this 121-page work is priced at ₹275. It is a must-have for lovers of Haryanvi literature. The true strength of every language lies in its soil, and from that very soil its letters are born. "Mhari Matti, Mhare Akhar" is a collection of short stories that captures this sweet fragrance, not only bringing to the fore the vibrant Haryanvi dialect but also strengthening the influential literary genre that has become the most relevant in today's fast-paced life—the short story. This collection, edited by Dr. Satyawan 'Saurabh' and compiled by Dr. Priyanka 'Saurabh', includes a total of 99 short stories by 33 short story writers. This number is not just a statistic, but an indication of the emerging form of the Haryanvi short story. For a long time, Haryanvi literature was largely limited to folk songs, raginis, and storytelling, but this collection shows that this dialect



is now making its strong presence felt in modern literary genres as well. The defining characteristic of a short story is its brevity, but reading this collection, one feels that the words are few, yet the impact is profound. Each work is centered on a single event, emotion, or social situation, instantly engaging the reader. These stories are not only read, but also felt—and this is the greatest success of this collection. The book's greatest strength lies in its diverse subject matter. It explores life's many shades—the sweetness of relationships, the harsh realities of society, the simplicity of rural life, and the complexities of changing times. "Tadakai Ki Maa" reflects the sensitivity of motherhood, "Izzat Ki Paribhasa" questions social norms, "Bahu Bihar Ki" exposes social prejudices, while works like "Mati Ki Sondh" and "Ghunghat Aur Ghadi" offer a vivid portrait of Haryana's connection to its cultural roots. The sim-

plicity and straightforward nature of the Haryanvi language make these short stories even more impressive. There's no artificiality or pretense in the language, but rather a natural flow that reaches directly to the reader. This collection reinforces the belief that the depth of literature lies not in the complexity of language, but in its sensitivity. However, there is one aspect of this book that draws attention—the lack of linguistic uniformity. Since it includes works by many authors, different forms of Haryanvi emerge. In some places, the language is pure folk, while in others, the influence of Hindi is clearly visible. This diversity, on the one hand, makes the collection comprehensive, but on the other, it also lacks a uniform linguistic flow. Nevertheless, this should be seen as a natural condition of the evolving form of Haryanvi rather than a shortcoming. Many of the works in this collection

sharply attack social anomalies. Short stories like "Dogla," "Kagzi Samaj Seva," "Leader," and "Crowd and Leader" satirize the hypocrisy, pretense, and hollow leadership prevalent in society. Works like "Daughter's Honor," "Lioness Mother," and "Women's Rights" effectively present women's struggles, self-respect, and changing social roles. The hallmark of these stories is their straightforward portrayal of reality without unnecessary sentimentality. An important aspect of this book is that it features both new and experienced writers. This not only maintains literary balance but also provides new writers with an opportunity to express themselves. This effort is also important because the emergence of new talent is essential for the development of any language. Dr. Ramniwas 'Manav's' preface provides an ideological foundation for this collection.

Can Iran Legally Charge Ships To Cross Strait of Hormuz?

Iran has floated the idea of charging vessels for passage through the Strait of Hormuz, a narrow and strategically vital waterway linking the Gulf with the Gulf of Oman. Why The Strait Matters The strait is about 167 kilometres long and, at its narrowest point, consists of two 2-mile channels separated by a 2-mile buffer zone. It remains one of the world's most important energy chokepoints: in 2024 and the first quarter of 2025, flows through Hormuz accounted for more than one-quarter of total global seaborne oil trade and about one-fifth of global oil and petroleum-product consumption, while roughly one-fifth of global LNG trade also transited the passage. What Law Says The key legal framework is the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea, or UNCLOS, which entered into force in 1994. Under its Article 38, ships and aircraft enjoy the right of transit passage through international straits, and that passage "shall not be impeded". Article 44 goes further, saying states bordering straits "shall not hamper transit passage" and that there "shall be no



suspension" of it. Meanwhile, UNCLOS does allow coastal states to regulate certain matters in their territorial seas, including safety, pollution control, and customs or immigration rules. But Article 42 says those laws cannot have the practical effect of denying, hampering or impairing transit passage. That is why legal experts generally view a toll regime as highly vulnerable to challenge. Can Iran Do It Anyway? Roughly 170 countries and the European Union have

ratified UNCLOS, while Iran and the United States have not. That creates a legal argument over whether the strait rules are binding only on treaty parties or have become customary international law. Experts generally see UNCLOS's navigation rules as customary law, while Iran argues it has objected consistently enough to avoid being bound. The United States disputes Iran's authority to impose tolls. That is why the legality of any toll would likely be con-

tested immediately, even before the question of enforcement arose. What Happens Next Even if Iran goes ahead with the plan, the greater issue is enforceability. UNCLOS does not provide a direct enforcement mechanism, and any dispute would likely be handled through diplomacy, shipping rerouting, sanctions pressure, or multilateral maritime coordination. The Strait's significance is amplified by the limited alternatives available: Saudi Arabia and the UAE

do have some bypass capacity, but it is far from enough to replace Hormuz at full scale."Israel isolates Litani region in south from Lebanon's north - state media Lebanese state media is reporting that Israel's fatal strike on a key bridge in Lebanon has isolated the southern Litani area from the northern region, citing the nation's army. According to Lebanon's National News Agency, the Qasmiyeh bridge - which connects the Tyre area with Sidon - was destroyed, killing one person and injuring two. Israel's destruction had "the aim of separating the southern Litani region from its north and isolating it," the army says. Israel has previously said its forces target bridges in the country to stop Hezbollah using Lebanon's state infrastructure. A short while ago, chairman of the joint chiefs of staff, General Dan Caine, said 13 ships had turned around since the US implemented its blockade of Iranian ports on Monday. In an new update, US Central Command (Centcom) says 14 have turned round over 72 hours.

Wipro's Rs 15,000-Crore Buyback: How Retail Investors Will Be Impacted By Promoters' Participation

Wipro Ltd. on Thursday approved Rs 15,000 Crore buyback, with the promoter group intending to participate, the IT giant said in an exchange filing. The participation of the promoter group comes after they did not participate in the Rs 18,000-crore share buyback announced last year. According to one of India's largest software services exporter, buyback is expected to be completed in the first quarter of fiscal 2027, with the company looking to acquire the shares at Rs 250 per piece. The buyback price is at a premium of 19% to Thursday's close of Rs 210 per share. The proposed buyback announcement was expected to be between Rs 16,000 crore to Rs 18,500 crore, based on past trends, according to brokerages tracked by NDTV Profit. The buyback will be done via the tender route and all shareholders on the record date will be eligible to take part in the corporate action. This also includes all those who received the equity shares after cancelling their American Depository Receipts (ADR). What's In It For Retail Shareholders? From the announced buyback 15% or 9 crores is reserved for retail share-



holders. With the promoters and the promoter group intending to tender offers during the buyback, the entitlement ratio for retail investors may decrease. As on December 31, 2025, promoters and promoter group of the company held 72.63% stake in the company, showed BSE data. It's also important to note that gains for retail shareholder completely depends on acceptance ratio. For those not aware, acceptance ratio is how many shares company actually bought back. In past acceptance ratio has been in the range of 53%-100%. However, if all retail shareholders participate, then acceptance ratio could be as low as 25%. So if the

acceptance gains is 25% then retail shareholders could see a gain of 4.8%, however if it is at 50% then the acceptance gains will be at 9.5%. With an acceptance gain of 75% retail shareholders can expect gains of 14.3% and a 100% acceptance gain could lead to gains of 19%. Market History Morgan Stanley said Wipro shares have often responded after buyback announcements. "During the past five buybacks, Wipro has outperformed the Sensex post a formal buyback announcement in four out of five instances over one week, and in three out of five instances over one month," the brokerage said.

Hyderabad home registrations remain stable in Mar'26, recorded 4% YoY rise in revenue collection: Knight Frank India

Hyderabad, April 2026: According to Knight Frank India's latest assessment, residential property registrations in Hyderabad sustained momentum in March 2026 after a recovery seen in the previous month. A total of 6,386 residential properties were registered in March reflecting a 1% year-on-year (YoY) and 3% month-on-month (MoM) increase. In value terms, homes worth INR 4,637 crore were registered, marking a 4% YoY and 12% MoM growth, further strengthening sales trend in higher-value transactions. Homes priced above INR 1 crore (cr) accounted for 20% of total registrations, further underscoring the growing prominence of the premiumisation in the city's residential market. The Hyderabad residential market spans four districts namely Hyderabad, Medchal-Malkajgiri, Rangareddy, and Sangareddy and includes transactions from both the primary and secondary real



estate markets. Shishir Bajjal, International Partner, Chairman and Managing Director, Knight Frank India said Hyderabad's residential market continues to demonstrate stability, building on the recovery seen in the previous month reflecting the depth and resilience of the market, especially during in the wake of the current geopolitical challenges. The 1% year-on-year increase in registrations reflects steady underlying demand, even as monthly trends remain dynamic. What stands out is the growing share of higher-value transactions, with homes priced above INR 1 cr gaining traction. This indicates a more discerning buyer base and underscores the depth of demand in the

market, positioning Hyderabad as a consistently stable and evolving residential destination." In March 2026, Hyderabad's residential registration trends reflected a continued strengthening of demand for premium properties alongside relatively stable activity in the affordable segment. Registrations of homes priced above INR 1 cr increased by 8% YoY, marking a sustained uptick in high-value transactions and reinforcing the segment's recovery momentum observed in the previous month. The affordable segment (homes priced below INR 50 lakh) also recorded a marginal 2% YoY increase in volumes, indicating steady but subdued demand at the lower end of the market.

Despite this divergence in growth trends in March 2026, the premium segment further consolidated its dominance in value terms. Homes priced above INR 1 crore accounted for 53% of the total transaction value registered in the month, up from 50% a year ago, while their share in overall registrations inched up from 19% to 20%. Meanwhile, the mid-segment (INR 50 lakh-INR 1 cr) remained under pressure, with registrations declining by 5% YoY and its share in total volumes moderating by 1 basis point to 24%. The segment's contribution also fell in value terms from 25% to 23% over same time last year underscoring an ongoing squeeze as buyers increasingly gravitate toward either premium upgrades or relatively affordable options.

THE KEYS TO YOUR FUTURE: Handover Commences for A2A Homeland, Balanagar's Largest Luxury Gated Community

Hyderabad, April 16th Thursday, 2026: The wait for a lifestyle defined by balance and brilliance is nearly over. Raghuram Infrastructure is proud to announce that A2A Homeland, the landmark 12 acre premium residential project in Balanagar, is moving toward its final stages, with handovers for its luxury 3BHK residences fast approaching (Blocks I,C,B,J-Phase 1) are getting ready to hand over. Homebuyers who have sought a blend of urban connectivity and natural serenity are now one step away from stepping into their dream homes. As the skyline of Balanagar transforms, A2A Homeland stands as the crown jewel of the area. This isn't just a delivery of apartments; it is the handover of a meticulously crafted "Urban Oasis" designed to elevate the standard of living for many families.

- **A New Chapter in "City Center" Living**
Located strategically near the Kukatpally Y Junction and just minutes from the



Balanagar Metro Station, A2A Homeland offers the ultimate connectivity advantage. With the Kaithalapur Flyover providing a direct artery to HITEC City and Madhapur, residents are moving into a hub that balances professional proximity with residential peace.

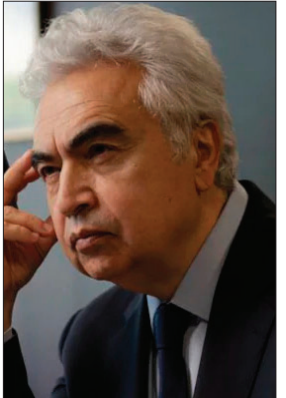
- **Why A2A Homeland is the Smart Move Today:**
Ready for Life: With handovers on the horizon, buyers can bypass the long wait times of typical under-construction

community, offering everything from preview theatres and temperature-controlled pools to business lounges and salons.

- **Built on a 40-Year Legacy of Trust**
Promoted by Global Homes and Heights LLP—a part of the renowned Raghuram Infrastructure —A2A Homeland carries the hallmark of Quality, Innovation, and On-Time Delivery**. As a prominent member of CREDAI, Raghuram Infrastructure has completed over 40 projects, and A2A Homeland represents their most ambitious residential marvel to date. "We understand that a home is the biggest investment a family makes," said a spokesperson for Raghuram Infrastructure. "As we approach the handover phase, our focus remains on ensuring that every detail—from the 7-chakra landscaping to the massive balconies of our 3BHK units—exceeds the expectations of our homeowners."

IEA Chief's Big Warning Amid US-Iran War: Europe Has Maybe Six Weeks Of Jet Fuel

Europe may have only six weeks of jet fuel supplies left before shortages begin to disrupt air travel, according to the head of the International Energy Agency (IEA), as the prolonged US-Iran conflict continues to strain global energy markets. Fatih Birol, executive director of the IEA, warned that flight cancellations could begin within weeks if oil supplies from the Middle East are not restored. Also Read | US-Israel-Iran War News Updates: US Says 13 Ships Turned Around Due To Blockade "I can tell you soon we will hear the news that some of the flights from city A to city B might be cancelled as a result of lack of jet fuel," Birol told the Associated Press. The US-Israel conflict with Iran, which began in late February, has caused major disruption across global oil and fuel markets. In response to the attacks, Iran has effectively shut the Strait of Hormuz, a critical route for oil exports from the Gulf region. Although the US and Iran agreed to a two-week



ceasefire last week, efforts to negotiate a broader end to the conflict stalled over the weekend. Indirect talks, reportedly being brokered by Pakistan, are still underway. Brent crude prices remain more than 30% higher than pre-war levels, adding pressure on fuel markets and driving up petrol prices globally. So far, Europe has avoided outright shortages because fuel shipments that departed before the conflict escalated continued to arrive. However, those final cargoes have now reached Europe, raising fears that the region could

soon face supply gaps. Birol said Europe had "maybe six weeks or so" of jet fuel left. His comments follow a warning from Airports Council International Europe, which wrote to European Union energy and transport commissioners last week saying the bloc was only three weeks away from shortages. Under normal circumstances, airports and airlines generally maintain around six weeks of fuel reserves. Also Read | US Says Won't Renew Sanctions Waiver On Iranian, Russian Oil However, industry officials say the prolonged conflict has forced companies to dip into emergency stockpiles, while alternative suppliers do not have the capacity to fully replace Gulf-origin fuel supplies. "In the past there was a group called Dire Straits," Birol said. "It's a dire strait now, and it is going to have major implications for the global economy. And the longer it goes, the worse it will be for the economic growth and inflation around the world."

Signature global and tonino lamborghini announce the new luxury branded residential project in gurugram

16th April 2026: Signature Global, one of India's leading real estate developers, has announced its strategic collaboration with the iconic Italian lifestyle brand Tonino Lamborghini to develop a landmark premium residential project in Sector 71, Gurugram. This exclusive development will introduce an iconic Italian residential experience under the prestigious Tonino Lamborghini brand, globally synonymous with craftsmanship, design excellence, and luxury living. The partnership marks Tonino Lamborghini's significant entry into India's residential real estate market, setting a new benchmark in branded residences. Spread across approximately 12.40 acres, the development will feature 812 premium residences in 3, 4 and 4.5 BHK configurations, strategically located on Sector 71, Southern Peripheral Road - one of Gurugram's fastest-growing real estate corridors. The branded residences segment continues to gain

strong global traction, with the total number of schemes projected to grow from 764 in December 2024 to 910 by the end of 2025, marking a robust 19% year-on-year increase, according to Savills India. India, ranked among the top 10 globally, is rapidly strengthening its position - currently standing sixth worldwide and contributing nearly 4% to global supply, as per Knight Frank's 'The Wealth Report'. Within this landscape, Gurugram has emerged as the clear frontrunner, leading the country's branded residences growth on the back of rising affluence, a maturing luxury ecosystem, and increasing demand for globally benchmarked, hospitality-led living experiences. The partnership brings Tonino Lamborghini's iconic Italian craftsmanship, design excellence, and brand prestige to the forefront of Indian urban living. Rooted in the Lamborghini heritage, the project is envisioned as a seamless blend of Italian ele-

gance and Indian ambition, where global design sensibilities meet the dynamic growth of Gurugram. The design intervention by Tonino Lamborghini will extend across key lifestyle and architectural elements through the Creative Direction of Mrs. Angela Krieger - Tonino Lamborghini Total Living Creative Director - including a grand reception lobby and a fully curated clubhouse featuring a café, restaurant, banquet spaces, yoga, swimming-pool and gym facilities, spa & sauna, salon and a gaming arcade - creating a holistic luxury ecosystem. Wellness will be interpreted as a refined lifestyle philosophy, where spaces, atmosphere, and the brand distinctive design converge to elevate the quality of everyday living. A sensorial approach to well-being will define the experience, fostering energy and inner balance through curated environments conceived for restoration and timeless comfort. The brand's signature design language

will also be reflected in the façade, lending the development a distinctive and iconic visual identity. The architectural vision emphasizes a curated approach to luxury, featuring a design philosophy that prioritizes volume and natural light. With generous floor-to-floor heights creating a sense of openness and towers positioned to maximize views of the surrounding greenery, the development incorporates biophilic-designed landscapes that effortlessly integrate nature into the everyday living experience. Commenting on the collaboration, Mr. Pradeep Aggarwal, Founder and Chairman, Signature Global (India) Ltd., said, "Our vision has always been to redefine the standards of urban living in India by bringing world-class innovation to our home soil. By partnering with a global icon like Tonino Lamborghini, we are not just building apartments; we are creating a lifestyle statement that resonates with the ambi-

tions of the modern Indian achiever. This project in Sector 71 is a testament to our commitment to excellence, combining Signature Global's expertise in integrated community building with the timeless Italian craftsmanship that only Tonino Lamborghini can provide." At the heart of the development is a signature clubhouse that offers world-class amenities envisioned through Tonino Lamborghini's distinct design philosophy. Residents will be immersed in a series of curated experiences, starting from a grand reception lobby and extending to a designer café, a fine-dining restaurant, a grand banquet, and a high-end gaming arcade. The wellness facilities are equally comprehensive, featuring state-of-the-art gym, swimming-pool and yoga spaces, a luxury spa and sauna, and a premium salon, all thoughtfully crafted to deliver an elevated lifestyle experience from the very moment of arrival.

Blockade of Iranian ports will last 'as long as it takes', US defence secretary says

Israel isolates Litani region in south from Lebanon's north - state media Lebanese state media is reporting that Israel's fatal strike on a key bridge in Lebanon has isolated the southern Litani area from the northern region, citing the nation's army. According to Lebanon's National News Agency, the Qasmiyeh bridge - which connects the Tyre area with Sidon - was destroyed, killing one person and injuring two. Israel's destruction had "the aim of separating the southern Litani region from its north and isolating it," the army says. Israel has previously said its forces target bridges in the country to stop Hezbollah using Lebanon's state infrastructure. A short while ago, chairman of the joint chiefs of staff, General Dan Caine, said 13 ships had turned around since the US implemented its blockade of Iranian ports on Monday. In an new update, US Central Command (Centcom) says 14

have turned round over 72 hours. "US forces are focused, vigilant, and highly motivated as they execute a blockade on vessels attempting to enter or exit Iranian ports," Centcom says. Israeli Defence Minister Israel Katz has warned that his country will launch "even more painful" strikes against Iran if it does not agree a deal in negotiations with the United States. "Iran is facing a historic crossroads. This is their moment of choice - between a bridge to the future and an abyss of isolation and destruction," he says. He says if Iran chooses the latter option, it will "very quickly discover" that targets Israel has not yet struck are "even more painful than the ones we have already attacked". "The choice is in their hands and the consequences are on them," he concludes. Earlier today, an official from Lebanon's presidential office told the BBC it wasn't aware of any upcoming contact with Israel. It



came after Donald Trump said Lebanon's President Joseph Aoun and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu were speaking today, which has since been echoed by an Israeli cabinet minister. Now, official Lebanese sources tell the BBC that there won't be any talks between the two leaders for the moment. Aoun has informed US Secretary of State Marco Rubio he won't take the call, they say.

The president's office has been careful not to put out the above in a statement, perhaps for fear of antagonising Trump. Speaking to Netanyahu as Israel's operations continue may have further strained Aoun's relations with both Hezbollah and a large part of Lebanese society. The Lebanese president is advocating for dialogue with Israel, but says a ceasefire is key. Israel has so far refused to stop its mili-

tary campaign here. US President Donald Trump will head to Las Vegas later today, where he will turn his attention towards domestic issues after weeks spent largely focusing on Iran. In the early afternoon, Trump will leave the White House and head to nearby Joint Base Andrews, from where he will fly to Nevada to deliver remarks on his "No Tax on Tips" policy at an event marking Tax Week in the US. That policy was one of his campaign promises, and administration officials - such as Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent - have been busy speaking about its impact on American workers. The policy is particularly important in Nevada, home to thousands of hospitality sector workers. Aside from that event, there is little on the president's public schedule. At 11:00 EST/ 16:00 BST, the president is scheduled to receive his intelligence briefing, which is likely to focus heavily on Iran.

That briefing takes place behind closed doors. Trump, however, may take to Truth Social to deliver comments on the ceasefire, the blockade, or a potential longer-term end to the conflict. Since Monday, the United States has said it's been enforcing a blockade on all vessels either entering and exiting Iranian ports. Chairman of the joint chiefs of staff, General Dan Caine, says a total of 13 ships have been ordered to return to Iran by the US Navy - up three on the total given yesterday. However, it's not clear if the navy has turned away any vessels suspected of heading toward Iranian ports, rather than departing them. Caine detailed the warning being given to commercial vessels in breach of the blockade, which reads: "Turn around or prepare to be boarded. If you do comply with this blockade, we will use force." So far, he says, the US Navy has not needed to board any vessels.

South African opposition figure Malema sentenced to five years in prison for firing a gun



Leading South African opposition politician Julius Malema, 45, has been sentenced to five years after being found guilty of the illegal possession of a gun and firing it in public. But Magistrate Twanet Olivier allowed the leader of the Economic Freedom Fighters and MP to appeal against the sentencing, meaning that he was not immediately be taken to prison. Earlier, standing in court in a dark suit and red tie, Malema showed little emotion as Olivier read out the sentence even though his political future was at stake. Last year, he was convicted of five offences, including the

unlawful possession of a firearm, discharging it in public and reckless endangerment. The charges related to an incident in 2018 when a video emerged showing Malema using a semi-automatic rifle to fire several shots in the air during his party's fifth anniversary celebrations held in the country's Eastern Cape province. During the trial in KuGompo City, which is the new name for East London, Malema told the court that the firearm was not his and that he had fired the shots to rouse the crowd, South African news site SowetanLIVE reported at the time. "

Satellite images reveal scale of Israeli demolitions as Lebanese villages destroyed



Towns and villages in southern Lebanon are being levelled by Israeli demolitions, satellite images and videos obtained by BBC Verify reveal. BBC Verify analysis found more than 1,400 buildings had been destroyed since 2 March based on verified visual evidence. This is just a snapshot of the overall damage caused by Israeli air strikes and demolitions, because of limited access on the ground and available satellite imagery. The true scale is likely to be much higher. Israel's levelling of these structures comes after Defence Minister Israel Katz's order on 22 March to "accelerate the destruction of Lebanese homes" near the Israeli border based on the "model in Gaza" as part of its campaign against Hezbollah. The systematic demolition of these towns

and villages may amount to a war crime, international law experts told BBC Verify. The Israel Defense Forces (IDF) said that it operates in accordance with the Law of Armed Conflict and does not allow the destruction of property unless there is an imperative military necessity. It added, without providing evidence, that Hezbollah has embedded military infrastructure within civilian areas in the region. On 2 March the Iranian-backed armed group Hezbollah launched rockets and drones into Israel in retaliation for the killing of Iran's supreme leader at the start of the war with Israel and the US. The IDF responded with a wave of strikes across Lebanon, targeting what it said was Hezbollah infrastructure, and launched a ground invasion of southern Lebanon.

Wanted activist arrested in South Africa over support for Benin coup plot

South African police say have they arrested "wanted fugitive" French-born Beninese activist Kemi Seba while he was allegedly attempting to flee to Europe through Zimbabwe. Seba, whose real name is Stello Gilles Robert Capo Chichi, is wanted in Benin on charges of "inciting rebellion" after supporting last year's foiled coup there. He was arrested on Monday alongside his 18-year-old son in a sting operation at a shopping centre in Pretoria. A "facilitator" who had allegedly been paid to help them illegally cross to Zimbabwe was also detained. Seba, 45, is known for opposing French influence in Africa, backing West Africa's military leaders and has been



accused of spreading Russian propaganda. "Preliminary investigations have revealed that the father [Seba] is allegedly a wanted fugitive in France and Benin for criminal activities relating to crimes against the state," South Africa's police said in a statement on Thursday.

Pope criticises 'tyrants' who spend billions on wars after Trump spat

Pope Leo has criticised leaders who spend billions on wars and said the world was "being ravaged by a handful of tyrants" in unusually forceful comments during a visit to Cameroon. The pontiff blasted those he said had manipulated "the very name of God" for their own gain, while touring a region ravaged by a deadly insurgency. The remarks come just days after a high-profile spat with US President Donald Trump, who posted a lengthy attack on the Pope, a vocal critic of the US-Israeli military operation in Iran. The Pope had voiced his concern about Trump's threat that "a whole civilisation will die" if Iran did not agree to US demands to end the war and open the Strait of Hormuz. Leo, who last year became the first US-



born Pope, has previously also questioned the Trump administration's approach to immigration. "Leo should get his act together as Pope," Trump wrote in a Truth Social post at the time. The Pope told reporters at the start of his Africa tour that he did not want to get into a

debate with Trump but would continue to promote peace. Speaking in Cameroon, the Pope criticised leaders who "turn a blind eye to the fact that billions of dollars are spent on killing and devastation, yet the resources needed for healing, education and

restoration are nowhere to 'be found'. "The masters of war pretend not to know that it takes only a moment to destroy, yet often a lifetime is not enough to rebuild," he said on Thursday. The Pope also condemned "an endless cycle of destabilisation and death" in a "bloodstained" region of Cameroon that has been gripped by insurgency for nearly a decade. "Those who rob your land of its resources generally invest much of the profit in weapons, thus perpetuating an endless cycle of destabilisation and death," he told those gathered at a cathedral in the north-western city of Bamenda - the centre of the violence that has left at least 6,000 people dead and displaced many more.

Turkish police detain 162 people over online praise for school shootings

Turkish police have arrested 162 people accused of posting controversial content online about two deadly school shootings that took place this week. They were "found to have engaged in posts and activities praising crime and criminals and negatively affecting public order", police said. At least 16 people were injured in a shooting at a high school in the country's south-east on Tuesday, before another nine were killed in a shooting at another school in the city of Kahramanmaraş on Wednesday. Hundreds have gathered near the city's main mosque for the funerals of the young victims, which are being held on Thursday. One victim has been identified as



10-year-old Zeynep. Her uncle, Mahmut, told the BBC that she was a clever girl who respected others. He said: "Now she is an angel, she flew away." He said he wanted more protection in schools following the attack. The aunt of another victim, Shura, told the BBC she had learned that

her 10-year-old niece had been killed when her name was read out on the news. Three Turkish government ministers are also expected to attend the funerals, the BBC understands. Eight students and one teacher were killed in the shooting in Kahramanmaraş, Turkish officials said, with 13

others wounded, including six in critical condition. A 14-year-old attacker was also killed during the incident, which took place at Ayser Calik Secondary School. The suspect had planned the attack in advance, the local prosecutor's office said in a statement. "During the examination of digital materials, a document dated April 11, 2026, was found on the suspect's computer indicating that he intended to carry out a major operation in the near future." The suspect had referenced US mass killer Elliot Rodger in a photo on his WhatsApp profile, according to police. Rodger murdered six people before taking his own life in California in 2014.

BRAZIL'S FORMER SPY CHIEF RELEASED FROM ICE DETENTION



Brazil's fugitive former spy chief Alexandre Ramagem has been released from custody by the US Immigration and Customs Enforcement agency (ICE). ICE confirmed it had detained Ramagem on Monday, but has not said why. The 53-year-old's name no longer appears on the agency's list of those in its custody, BBC News Brasil has confirmed. He is wanted in Brazil, where he was sentenced to 16 years in prison for his role in an attempted military coup aimed at keeping former President Jair Bolsonaro in power after he lost the 2022 election. Ramagem, who led Brazil's intelligence agency (Abin), fled to the US in September 2025 before he could be jailed by Brazilian authorities. Bolsonaro's son Eduardo, who lives in the US, said on Thursday that the former intelligence chief was "out and home". In a post on social media, he thanked US President Donald Trump and Secretary of State Marco Rubio for "the sensitivity with which they dealt with this true national hero, who does not give up even when he is being persecuted". Referencing Ramagem's

reported request for sanctuary in the US, Bolsonaro added that the ex-spy chief deserved being granted "asylum in the land of liberty". Brazilian media reported he had been let go on Wednesday. ICE has not commented on his release following his detention in Orlando, Florida. A close ally of former President Bolsonaro, the 53-year-old was one of seven co-conspirators convicted alongside him over the military coup plot. He is also under investigation for allegedly using his position at Abin to illegally spy on Bolsonaro's critics, which he has denied. Brazilian judicial authorities have declared him a fugitive, and in December the country's Supreme Court asked the US to extradite him. Brazil's President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva said before Ramagem's release that he must "return to Brazil to serve his sentence". Trump has in the past said Bolsonaro had been "a good president of Brazil" and called the trial over the attempted coup a "witch hunt". He also described Bolsonaro's 27-year jail sentence as "very surprising" at the time.

'UNPRECEDENTED' FIRE AT AUSTRALIAN OIL REFINERY TO AFFECT NATION'S PETROL SUPPLIES

A major fire at one of Australia's two oil refineries has been extinguished, but the damage has deepened fears over the nation's petrol supplies amid a global fuel crunch. Emergency crews rushed to Viva's Corio oil refinery in Geelong, south-west of Melbourne, just before midnight local time (14:00 GMT) on Wednesday, after reports of explosions and flames. The blaze was put out on Thursday after burning for 13 hours. No one was injured, with dozens of workers on site when it broke out evacuated safely. The refinery - which produces 50% of Victoria's fuel and 10% of the nation's - is still partially operational but the government has warned



of impacts to petrol production. Energy Minister Chris Bowen said the fire was "not great timing" with Australia's fuel supplies under pressure since war

broke out in Iran, creating a global oil crisis. The price of diesel in Australia has doubled in recent weeks, with fuel stations reporting shortages amid reports of panic

buying, while airlines are cutting back some services as jet fuel costs rise. "This is not a positive development, but obviously there's a long way to go in terms of work-

ing out just what the impact is," Bowen told Nine's Today show on Thursday, adding that he was working closely with the company. "This is very early days." The cause of the fire was due to "equipment failure", Fire Rescue Victoria said, adding that there will be an investigation. The refinery processes about 120,000 barrels of oil per day and employs over 1,100 people. Viva Energy chief executive Scott Wyatt said earlier on Thursday that the fire had affected two petrol production units, though others were undamaged. "But naturally petrol will be one of the products that are potentially impacted," he said. Jet fuel and diesel were also being made

at reduced levels as a safety precaution. "We'll only start increasing production again once we're confident we can do that safely," Wyatt said. Australia relies heavily on imported refined fuels - primarily from countries like Singapore, South Korea and Malaysia - which should mean any impact the fire has on domestic fuel availability is limited, experts say. "This diversified supply chain provides a degree of resilience against short-term domestic disruptions," Yuan Chen, a professor of chemical engineering at the University of Sydney, said. "[It] doesn't mean people will run out of fuel tomorrow, but it does narrow the buffer we have to absorb shocks.

IPL 2026: Mumbai Indians Set 146-Run Target for Punjab Kings

Quinton de Kock slammed his third IPL century as Mumbai Indians posted 195 for 6 in 20 overs against Punjab Kings in their IPL 2026 clash at the Wankhede Stadium, Mumbai, tonight. Arshdeep Singh struck in consecutive deliveries reducing MI to a poor start (12 for 2 in 2.2 overs). De Kock and Naman Dhir then stitched a 122-run stand, leading Mumbai's comeback in the game. While de Kock remained unbeaten on 112 off 60, Dhir also contributed with 50 off 31. Earlier, PBKS captain Shreyas Iyer won the toss and opted to bowl. Deepak Chahar has leaked 21 runs in his first over! This is not the start Mumbai Indians wanted from the bowler. Prabhsimran Singh smashed Deepak for two fours, and Priyansh Arya too joined the party with a six and a four. Priyansh Arya takes the strike,



Prabhsimran Singh is at the other end. Deepak Chahar will bowl the first over. Here we go... Chahar starts with a fuller ball and Arya drives it down the ground for a single. Nine runs and a wicket came off the final over from

Vijaykumar Vyshak. The pacer ran Tilak Varma out on the fifth ball of the over as the MI batter tried to steal a run. This wicket is not a beller, and Mumbai Indians would feel that they have some good runs on the

board. MI vs PBKS Live: BOWLED! OUT! That is a terrific yorker from Arshdeep Singh and Sherfane Rutherford fails to dig it out. The southpaw goes for his shot and ends up being bowled. Mumbai

Indians are five down. That is the third one for Arshdeep. He is having a superb night!

Sherfane Rutherford b Arshdeep Singh 1(5) SShreyas Iyer has done a sensational job here!!! Hardik Pandya mistimed the Marco Jansen delivery towards long-on. Shreyas Iyer jumped, took the catch and threw the ball towards his partner, Xavier Bartlett, before falling at the other end of the rope. Excellent effort from the PBKS captain, though Bartlett will have his name on the catch officially. Rohit Sharma is missing the Mumbai Indians vs Punjab Kings IPL 2026 match at the Wankhede Stadium on Thursday. The former MI captain had to retire hurt with a hamstring issue during Mumbai Indians' previous match against Royal Challengers Bengaluru.

"PAKISTAN CRICKET BOARD IS SO POLITICISED": LALIT MODI DROPS MAJOR BOMBSHELL

Former Indian Premier League (IPL) chairman Lalit Modi said that there is no chance of India and Pakistan playing any bilateral series in the near future considering the political tensions between the two nations. In a recent interview, he was asked whether India and Pakistan could play a series at a neutral venue but Lalit Modi made it clear that the 'politicisation' of the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) means that it will not be a possibility. He explained that the PCB has been under the control of 'powers' beyond the cricket field and even said that he was afraid for the players considering the high emotions surrounding the matches. "I was the one that brought Pakistani players into the IPL and then I had to move them after the 26/11 massacre in Bombay. The problem is if the Pakistan Cricket Board was independent and ran independently, if it wasn't politically influenced, we



would have some traction. But today the Pakistan Cricket Board is so politicised by the powers that be and they are pulling the levers and making it political. We have tension at that level, political level and that is not going away. It's only going to get worse. So I fear for the players," Lalit Modi said in a podcast with former England captain Michael Vaughan. "I fear that it may not be possible

in the near future primarily because of the politicisation by the Pakistan Cricket Board in Pakistan and unfortunately that's the way it is," he added. Lalit Modi also commented on Bangladesh missing out on participation in T20 World Cup 2026 after refusing to travel to India citing security concerns. He clearly said that the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) should not have taken such a decision.

Krunal Pandya Puts To Rest All Social Media Buzz About Brother Hardik Pandya With One Reply

Krunal Pandya and Hardik Pandya are the only star brother duo playing in the IPL 2026. While Krunal plays for defending champions Royal Challengers Bengaluru, Hardik is the skipper of five-time winners Mumbai Indians. Ahead of IPL 2026, there was social media speculation about an alleged rift between the two brothers. However, there was no official communication regarding the same. Interestingly, a reply by Krunal during a rapid-fire round may have put all speculation to rest. In an interview with Cricbuzz, Krunal was asked a series of questions, and his replies were as follows. He named Hardik Pandya and Kieron Pollard among the best finishers. Best batter: Chris Gayle



Best captain: Rohit Sharma, MS Dhoni Best fielder: Kieron Pollard Best away ground: Right now, Wankhede Stadium, because I played for Mumbai Indians Best cover drive: Virat Kohli Best fast bowler: Jasprit Bumrah

Best death-over bowler: Lasith Malinga Best spinner: Sunil Narine, Rashid Khan Best finisher: Kieron Pollard, Hardik Pandya Royal Challengers Bengaluru (RCB) player Krunal Pandya emphasised that playing for India

remains his ultimate goal. However, for now, he is focused on delivering strong performances and contributing to team victories, trusting that opportunities will follow. Pandya last represented India during the July 2021 tour of Sri Lanka, featuring in the third ODI on July 20 and the second T20I on July 25 at Colombo (RPS). He has not made an international appearance since then. "The ultimate goal is to represent the country, and I don't dwell too much on it. I want to keep doing what is in my control, which is to go out there and perform and win games. And in that process, if I get that opportunity, I'll be really glad because that's the ultimate goal - playing for the country," Pandya told reporters.

Lalit Modi Predicts 'New Face Of Indian Cricket'. Not Abhishek Sharma Or Shubman Gill

Former Indian Premier League (IPL) chairman Lalit Modi was all praise for Vaibhav Sooryavanshi and he claimed that the 15-year-old will become the "face of Indian cricket" in the future. The young sensation has been enjoying a brilliant run of form in the IPL 2026 and his performances have played a big role in handing Rajasthan Royals an impressive start to their season. Sooryavanshi has already scored 2 half-centuries and currently enjoys a strike rate of 263.16. In a podcast with ex-England skipper Michael Vaughan, Lalit Modi said that he was impressed by the confidence on display by a youngster like Sooryavanshi. "Look at the young kid. Look at (Vaibhav)



Sooryavanshi. I can tell you now that kid is going to go out there and be the new face of Indian cricket in the future. The confidence in the kid. Look at the confidence in the kid and his face. 14 years old! My son is 14 years

old." Lalit Modi also advised that it will be important to manage a young talent like Sooryavanshi as he has encountered fame at a very young age. He added that he has seen many cricketers turning into 'monsters' in

similar situations. "This is going to be the next journey for cricketers is how we manage them, how we groom them and how we make sure that it's not about the next watch and the next Ferrari and it's happened to a lot of the players. You could see it in the IPL. It's created lots of monsters but it has created some great players. The Sooryavanshi kid. I saw this kid hit, [I thought] 'Not possible, I am dreaming. It's not possible that this kid is 14. Seriously?' I am Googling it. I am calling out people, [asking], 'Is this real or is somebody making this up?' And I am getting these messages, and I tell them I am watching. Not once, not twice, this guy has outperformed everybody," he said.

WADA Flags India As Key Hub In Global Doping Crackdown, Pushes Stronger Laws and Enforcement

The global fight against doping zoomed its focus on India this week as World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) President Witold Banka visited the capital for a high-level conference and a series of meetings with Indian authorities. The visit had both concerns and cautious optimism over the country's anti-doping efforts. Banka was in New Delhi for the concluding conference of the expansion phase of WADA's Global Anti-Doping Intelligence and Investigations Network (GAIIN) across Asia and Oceania. The visit comes at a time when India continues to figure prominently in global doping statistics, with recent WADA reports placing the country among the highest for doping violations. A key takeaway from the visit is a strategic shift in anti-doping enforcement. Authorities are moving beyond traditional testing toward intelligence-led investigations, aimed at dismantling the ecosystems that enable doping. NADA has begun strengthening its intelligence and investigation units, investing in training, and expanding whistleblower mechanisms such as its Speak-Up portal. Officials stressed that future efforts will focus on disrupting supply chains, rather than solely penalizing athletes. WADA also under-



lined that coaches, doctors, and support staff often central to doping networks will face stricter sanctions under an updated anti-doping code. "More cases may mean better enforcement" In a notable remark, Banka suggested that a rise in positive doping cases could indicate a more effective system, as it reflects improved detection and targeted enforcement. Conversely, a sharp decline in cases may signal weak testing or oversight. WADA has encouraged India to consider stronger legal frameworks.

Philadelphia 76ers Top Orlando Magic To Book NBA Playoff Clash With Boston Celtics

The Philadelphia 76ers held off the Orlando Magic 109-97 on Wednesday to book an NBA playoffs first-round meeting with the Boston Celtics. Tyrese Maxey had 31 points to lead five Philadelphia players to score in double figures. Rookie VJ Edgecombe added 19 points and 11 rebounds and Andre Drummond came off the bench to score 14 points with 10 rebounds, three steals and three blocked shots. The 76ers' play-in victory - with star big man Joel Embiid sidelined as he recovers from an appendectomy - secured the seventh seed in the Eastern Conference and a first-round series against the second-seeded Celtics. The Magic, led by 34 points



from Desmond Bane, will have a last chance to grab the East eighth seed on Friday when they host the Charlotte Hornets, who knocked out the Miami Heat in a 127-126 overtime thriller on Tuesday. The reward for the winner of Friday's game will be a first-round series against East top seeds Detroit.

Philadelphia led most of the night but the Magic cut an 11-point deficit midway through the third quarter to one early in the fourth. Orlando trailed by four with four minutes remaining, but the Sixers pulled away with a late spurt capped by Drummond's three-pointer with 41 seconds left.

'It's not like my ovaries are fighting'



Ronda Rousey has hit back at critics who have questioned her age before her first MMA bout in 10 years against Gina Carano, saying: "It's not like my ovaries are fighting." The 39-year-old, the first woman to be signed by the UFC in 2012 and one of the biggest MMA stars of all time, will fight fellow American Carano at the Intuit Dome in California on 16 May. With Carano, 44, competing for the first time in 17 years, critics have questioned how competitive the bout will be. Rousey pointed to 38-year-old former UFC champion Jon Jones, who last fought 17 months ago, as an example where the same principles are not applied. "I never hear Jon Jones' age being brought up

as a disqualifying factor. Why are we even talking about this?" Rousey told CBS Mornings. Jones retired in 2025 but UFC president Dana White has shut down repeated questions from journalists in recent months about his potential return. Rousey defended the UFC bantamweight title six times during a historic reign, but retired in 2016 following defeats by Holly Holm and Amanda Nunes. Rousey has acknowledged that she was forced to retire because of repeated concussions, and she and Carano will have extra neurological tests before their bout, which will take place under Jake Paul's promotional outfit MVP and be broadcast live on Netflix.

Chaos Was Real Madrid's Weapon, Control Became The Answer For Bayern Munich

T railing 1-2 from the first leg of the UEFA Champions League quarter-finals at home, Real Madrid arrived at the Allianz Arena ready to prove why they are the kings of the competition. The 15 European championship titles they have in their cabinet haven't come from comfort, but rather the willingness to find answers even when their backs are against the wall. Against Bayern, that is how Real Madrid started, thanks to a loose pass by Manuel Neuer, widely recognised as the greatest goalkeeper of the modern era. Real Madrid thrived in

chaos for 45 minutes, scoring three first-half goals in a breathless encounter, but a tactical shift from Bayern manager Vincent Kompany after half-time transformed the match and ultimately swung momentum in Bayern's favour. In a high-tempo opening period at the Allianz Arena, Real Madrid capitalised on defensive transitions and minor leaks in structure, converting chances efficiently to take a 3-2 lead into the break. In matches like these, there are no real winners or losers, but rather players who are just willing to struggle, sacrifice, and ultimately survive a lit-

tle more. The first half unfolded at relentless speed, with both teams committing numbers forward and leaving space behind. Defensive organisation struggled to keep pace with the tempo, and transitions defined the rhythm of play. Real Madrid were particularly effective in those conditions. Rather than dominating possession, they focused on exploiting moments-attacking quickly after turnovers and finishing chances with precision. It was Real Madrid's Arda Guler who converted Manuel Neuer's misguided pass into a first-time shot, putting Real Madrid level in

the aggregate scoreline in the first minute. Aleksandar Pavlovic equalised from a crafty free-kick by Joshua Kimmich in the 6th minute to give Bayern the aggregate lead, levelling scores in the second leg. Guler struck again from a brilliant free-kick right outside the penalty box in the 29th minute before Harry Kane showed the world once again why he is widely considered the greatest No. 9 in the modern era. The 38th-minute strike from the former Tottenham Hotspur man was also his 50th goal of the season (including strikes for Bayern in all competitions).



Pochamma” would be a success the moment we heard its story: aha Content Head Kavitha



Pochamma will be available for streaming on aha in Telugu and Tamil on April 17th. The new web series “Pochamma” is set to stream in Telugu and Tamil from the 17th of this month. It is a mystical thriller featuring Ambati Arjun, Ramesh Indira, Priya Shatamarshan, Snehal Kamat, Shruti Naidu, and Sri Pooja in key roles. Gold subscribers will get access 24 hours early. The series is produced by Shruti Naidu under her banner, with Ramesh Indira as the director.

A special premiere and press meet were today. Actress Snehal Kamat said she played the character Jessie in the series, which was entirely shot in Chikmagalur. She thanked producer Shruti Naidu for selecting her and said working with director Ramesh Indira was a great experience, both as a filmmaker and co-actor. She added that working with the entire cast was memorable and encouraged audiences to watch the series. Actress Sri Pooja shared that from the very first day, she believed the series would be a success because everyone involved was extremely dedicated. She said that where such hardworking people come together, failure has no place. She added that the series will engage audiences and streams in both Tamil and Telugu from the 17th.

Kavitha from aha said they were confident about the success of “Pochamma” as soon as they heard the story. She also mentioned that during the shoot, it felt as though the goddess Pochamma herself guided the team, as they frequently came across temples and idols related to her.

The team collaborated closely on every scene, which turned out very well, and the music also came together nicely. She assured that the series would captivate viewers. She also noted that aha is bringing several interesting titles this year, including Chiranjeeva, Three Roses Season 2, Dhoolpet Police Station, Sarkar, and Chef Mantra. Actor Ambati Arjun said some content may appear quiet initially but creates a strong impact after release, and “Pochamma” falls into that category. He added that the poster and title have already attracted attention. He praised the cinematographer and music director as the real heroes of the series and said the aha team has brought it forward with great passion. He highlighted that all actors, including child artists, delivered excellent performances. He concluded by saying that such good content doesn’t need excessive promotion and will succeed once it starts streaming, urging audiences to watch “Pochamma” on aha from the 17th.

Trailer Launch of “Atu Friend Itu Lover” Produced by Prince Film Productions under Fashion Hunt Presentation



The film “Atu Friend Itu Lover”, directed by Nazim S under the banner of Prince Film Productions and presented by Fashion Hunt, is introducing Prince and Sanchi Kashyap as a fresh on-screen pair. The trailer of this different-concept movie was launched on Tuesday. At the event.

Director Nazim S said: “We all came together and made Atu Friend Itu Lover really well. Prince and Sanchi supported us a lot. Even though I am a new director, they stood by me like a backbone in every aspect. Thanks to everyone who worked on this film. I will share more during the success meet.”

Sanchi Kashyap said: “I thank everyone who gave me the opportunity in Atu Friend Itu Lover. I’m very happy to be part of this film. We all worked very hard for it. Thanks to everyone who attended our trailer launch event.”

Prince said: “We all worked very hard on Atu Friend Itu Lover. With everyone’s support, we were able to complete the film. The director has presented the movie wonderfully. This film will definitely impress everyone. I thank each and every person who supported us. Telugu audiences always encourage good films. I am happy to have acted alongside Sanchi. I hope everyone continues to support our movie.”

MRUNAL BURSTS OUT AT DATING AND MARRIAGE RUMORS



It is very common to see speculations and media reports surrounding actors and actresses across the country. A similar scenario is observed in the case of actress Mrunal Thakur, who is active in Telugu cinema. Just a few months back, there were extensive campaigns that Mrunal would be marrying South Indian actor Dhanush and the two of them had been in a relationship for a long time. This got diluted later with time as both of them laughed away at the rumors. And even after that, there have been rumours about Mrunal Thakur being in a relationship with her co-star in a recent Hindi film.

This also gained some traction before eventually fading away. And finally, when this question was asked in front of Mrunal herself, she had a pretty interesting reaction to the same.

The actress said she simply doesn’t have the time for relationship or marriage at this point in time as she is so busy with her acting career.

“I recently had a ligament tear, and I am not even in a position to treat my leg properly due to my busy schedule. If that is the situation, then where would I have the time for relationship? Moreover, I must be known for the kind of work that I am doing rather than who I am dating.”



Tralala Moving Pictures Drops First Single 'Thassadiya' from Samantha's Action Comedy Family Drama 'Maa Inti Bangaaram' — In Cinemas May 15

Tralala Moving Pictures has released the first single from its upcoming production Maa Inti Bangaaram, ahead of its worldwide theatrical release on May 15, 2026.

The track, “Thassadiya”, is a high-energy wedding celebration number composed by Santosh Narayanan, with lyrics by Rehman and vocals by Chinmayi Sripada and Punya Selva. Samantha brings the song to life with commanding screen presence and sharp choreography — setting the tone for what the film promises to deliver. The beats, lyrics, choreography and composition brings to life a vibrant energy and a distinctive festive vibe. Santhosh Narayanan kicks off the chartbuster album with a groovy dance number that celebrate love, life and family

Maa Inti Bangaaram is a family action comedy drama created by Raj Nidimoru & directed by Nandini

Reddy who reunites with Samantha after their smash hit Oh! Baby. The film stars Diganth and Gulshan Devaiah in key roles, with a supporting cast featuring Sree Mukhi, Gautami, Anand, Lakshmi, Srinivas Gavireddy, and Manjusha. Samantha leads with a performance built on commendable physical preparation — anchoring a film that balances emotional depth with high-stakes action across age groups. This song follows a well received teaser that has not set high expectations of the film and of Samantha and it looks like it’ll deliver on all counts.

The film is produced by Tralala Moving Pictures who producers are Samantha, Raj Nidumoru & Himank Duvvuru, featuring a technical crew of immense repute

With ira strategic May release, Maa Into Bangaaram is positioned to be the highlight of Summer 2026’s cinematic calendar.

Vanajeevi Ramaiah” Wins Top Award; Ravindranath Eyes Next Filma

Inspired by the philosophy “If we protect trees, trees will protect us,” the life of Daripalli Ramaiah, who dedicated his entire life to planting trees and became known as “Chettla Ramaiah” (Vanajeevi Ramaiah), has been brought to the screen as “Vanajeevi Ramaiah.” He was honored with the prestigious Padma Shri by the Government of India. This 40-minute short film, produced by Busam Ravindranath under the B.R. Movies banner and directed by Nandi Award-winning director Vemuganti, carries the tagline “Vruksho Rakshati Rakshitah.” The film won the First Best Short Film award in the Short Films category at the Gaddar Awards presented by the Telangana Government. It also received a cash prize of ₹5 lakh and drew attention from



audiences across both Telugu states. Encouraged by the success of his debut production, Ravindranath is now gearing up for his second film. He currently serves as an MPTC from Proddatur in Kadapa district, representing the YSR Congress Party, and is also a real estate businessman by profession. With a deep passion for cinema since childhood, he even appeared in a small role in “Vanajeevi Ramaiah.” At present, Ravindranath is actively engaged in story discussions for his next project and is planning to take it to the sets soon. He expressed heartfelt

gratitude to everyone who contributed to the making of the film, especially senior actor Brahmagi, who impressed audiences in the title role. Ravindranath also shared that receiving appreciation from Megastar Chiranjeevi after winning the Gaddar Award.

