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Rahul accuses AIADMK of 'surrendering' to BJP over corruption

Kanniyakumari, Apr 20: Senior Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on Monday alleged that the AIADMK leadership has "surrendered" to the BJP due to corruption. Addressing an election rally in Kanniyakumari, he claimed that the AIADMK has now become a vehicle for the BJP's entry into Tamil Nadu.

NATION | NEWS

Tehran will never cede control of Strait of Hormuz: Senior Iranian politician

WORLD | NEWS



Marking His Return to Telugu Screens, Dhanush Starrer 'Kara' Officially Fixes April 30, 2026 as Its Telugu Release Date

CINEMA | PAGE



SCAN FOR E-PAPER



OM NAMO VENKATESAYA

19-04-2026
Total pilgrims: 76,406
Tonsures: 28,463
Hundi kanakulu: 3.45 CR
Waiting Compartments: .08

Approx. Darshan Time for Sarvadarshanam (with out SSD Tokens): 6 H

WEATHER 38 °C | °F

Precipitation: 10%

Humidity: 35%

Wind: 10 km/h

GOLD RATE

24K ₹ 1,57,420

Four students bag AIR 1; 26 score 100 percentile

New Delhi, April 20: Four male students shared the All India Rank 1 and 26 candidates scored 100 percentile in the Joint Entrance Examination (JEE) Main 2026 national-level engineering entrance exam as the National Testing Agency (NTA) declared the result on Monday. Kabeer Chhillar, Pasala Mohith, Chandra Sekhar and Aditya Gupta were the four AIR 1 students who scored a perfect 300-on-300 to corner AIR 1, NTA sources said, adding that Mallavarapu Aasna from Telangana was the best performing girl student. There are no girls among the 26 students with 100 percentile. A total of 16,04,854 unique candidates registered for the exam across both sessions.

100 ENTITIES ONBOARD TO USE AADHAAR-BASED OFFLINE VERIFICATION: GOVERNMENT

New Delhi, April 20: In a significant push towards privacy-first digital services, the government on Monday said that at least 100 entities have been onboarded as Offline Verification Seeking Entities (OVSEs) within just three months of the rollout of Aadhaar-based offline verification. The milestone, achieved by the Unique Identification Authority of India, marks a major step in enabling secure, consent-driven and paperless identity verification using Aadhaar without requiring real-time access to central databases. "These entities span a wide range of sectors, including central and state government departments, fintech firms, hospitality and event management companies, educational and examination bodies, as well as background and workforce verification organisations," the Ministry of Electronics & IT said. "Their integration into the ecosystem is expected to streamline service delivery, cut down processing time, and reduce reliance on physical documents," the ministry added. The Aadhaar offline verification system allows users to share limited and necessary identity data through methods such as QR code-based verification and digitally signed documents. This ensures that individuals retain control over their personal information.



CM Revanth seeks CBI probe into Kaleshwaram, targets KCR and Harish Rao



Hyderabad TSIT BUREAU:

Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy launched a sharp attack on BRS leaders over alleged irregularities in the Kaleshwaram Lift Irrigation Project, asserting that those responsible would not be spared and that his government is committed to repairs and accountability.

Addressing a media conference, he traced Telangana's irrigation history, recalling that Jalagam Vengala Rao had signed an agreement with Maharashtra in 1975 to utilize Godavari waters. He also referred to the Pranahita Chevella Project, launched in 2009 under Y. S. Rajasekhara Reddy with an estimated cost of Rs.38,063 crore.

Revanth Reddy alleged that former CM K. Chandrashekar Rao scrapped the project and redesigned it as Kaleshwaram, escalating costs to near-



ly Rs.1.5 lakh crore. He said the Medigadda Barrage, built in 2016 and inaugurated in 2019, was projected as an engineering marvel for political gain. However, the 2023 collapse of the Medigadda structure exposed "hidden truths," he alleged, adding that a report by the National Dam Safety Authority submitted on November 1, 2023, was ignored during the previous regime. The Chief Minister said the P.C. Ghose Committee had submitted a detailed

report on irregularities, following which the state urged the Centre for a Central Bureau of Investigation probe. He criticized the Union government for inaction despite earlier demands, including those by Union Minister G. Kishan Reddy. Revanth Reddy alleged that despite massive spending, the project failed to irrigate even one lakh acres. He affirmed that his government would repair the system and ensure water supply, noting that a high-level technical review had already been conducted.

Targeting BRS leaders, he accused them of diverting attention and claimed that T. Harish

Rao made a "secret trip" to Delhi to avoid a probe, demanding transparency on his meetings. Reiterating his stance, the Chief Minister said strict action would be taken against those involved in irregularities while ensuring the project is restored. He also highlighted the Sripada Yellampalli Project as a "lifeline" for the region, noting its contribution to agricultural output.

'Bias needs proof, not perception': Justice Swarana Kanta Sharma rejects Kejriwal's recusal plea



New Delhi (TSIT)

The courtroom fell silent as Justice Swarana Kanta Sharma began dictating her order, a pause that underscored the weight of what lay before her. This was not merely about deciding a legal dispute, she said, but about confronting a direct challenge to judicial independence itself. Refusing to step aside from hearing the Delhi excise policy case, the judge dismissed all recusal applications moved by Arvind Kejriwal and other accused, holding that the pleas were driven by perception, not proof. At the centre of the controversy, she remarked, was an unusual situation: instead of the court judging a litigant, the litigant had sought to place the judge and the institution in the

dock. Recusal not a matter of convenience, but of law

Justice Sharma made it clear that stepping aside would have been the easier option. Her first instinct, she said, was to withdraw without hearing the applications after her impartiality and dignity were questioned. Yet, she chose to proceed with the hearing to ensure fairness and transparency.

The court underlined that judicial impartiality is presumed and must be rebutted with concrete material. "Apprehension alone cannot replace evidence," the judge indicated, pointing to contradictions in the applicants' submissions, on one hand asserting faith in her integrity, and on the other seeking her removal.

She cautioned that recusal cannot be reduced to a tool in the hands of litigants. If accepted on such grounds, it would open the floodgates for forum shopping and weaken the justice delivery system.

The judge firmly rejected reliance on statements attributed to Union Minister Amit Shah, observing that courts cannot be influenced by political commentary. Public statements by politicians, she noted, are beyond judicial control and cannot determine whether a judge hears a case.

CM Naidu Slams DMK, congress at Coimbatore rally; accuses them of betraying Women Over Reservation Bill

Coimbatore (TSIT)

Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu launched a scathing attack on the DMK, Congress, and their INDIA bloc allies during an election campaign press conference in Coimbatore on [date], accusing them of betraying women by opposing key legislative reforms.

Expressing strong displeasure, Naidu asserted that by opposing the Women's Reservation Bill and the Delimitation Bill, parties like the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam and Indian National Congress had effectively "defeated women."

He claimed that the bills, introduced by the central government under Prime Minister Narendra Modi with good intentions, were derailed for political reasons, and accused the opposition bloc of prioritizing politics over the welfare of women and the development of southern states.

Naidu questioned whether the DMK wants injustice toward southern states or believes women do not need reservations. He warned that according to 2027 Census projections, southern states could face significant disadvantages, and said women awaiting reservations have been disappointed due to the actions of parties like the



Addressing the media, Naidu made several key remarks:

- Blocking the Women's Reservation Bill amounts to a betrayal of women by the Congress-led DMK alliance.
- Tamil Nadu, once considered a progressive state, is now lagging economically and has witnessed multiple scams.
- The DMK must explain why it opposed the Women's Reservation Bill.
- The party allegedly obstructed due benefits meant for southern states.
- If parliamentary seats were set to increase by 50%, there should have been no objection.
- Leaders like himself have fought for decades to secure reservations for women.
- The Prime Minister intended to implement these reservations by the 2029 elections.
- The proposed Delimitation Bill would have increased seats for states like Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, Kerala, Telangana, and Karnataka.
- Due to the DMK's stance, both women and southern states have suffered losses.

DMK. He further alleged that the political strategies of

Congress and DMK have resulted in setbacks for women.

Highlighting development initiatives, Naidu recalled the Telugu Ganga project, undertaken to supply water to Tamil Nadu, and emphasized ongoing river interlinking efforts within Andhra Pradesh. He added that a Ganga-Cauvery river linkage could resolve water scarcity issues across the country. Calling for accountability, the Chief Minister stressed that every government must adopt transparent and responsible governance practices.

Ensure 200+ to stop BJP at bay: CM Stalin to BLAs

CHENNAI (TSIT): Chief Minister and DMK president MK Stalin on Monday exuded confidence that the DMK-led Secular Progressive Alliance (SPA) would return to power and form a "Dravidian Model 2.0" government after the Assembly election. Addressing around 75,000 booth-level agents through a virtual meeting, Stalin said



the alliance was best positioned to counter what he described as external political pressure on the State. "Only a strong government can safeguard Tamil Nadu's rights. Unless we secure adequate strength in the Assembly, forces from Delhi cannot be kept at bay," he said. Alleging that Opposition parties were apprehensive of defeat, Stalin instructed booth agents to remain vigilant and report any irregularities to the party's central war room.

No plans yet to attend next round of talks with US: Iran

Tehran (TSIT)

Citing "contradictory actions" from Washington, Iran on Monday made it clear that it has not made any decision yet on participating in the next round of negotiations with the US. "So far, we have not made any decisions regarding the next round of negotiations," said Esmail Baqaei, spokesperson for the Iranian Foreign Ministry, while speaking to reporters at a weekly press conference in Tehran. The spokesperson criticised the United States, accusing Washington of engaging in con-



tradictory actions while claiming to pursue diplomacy. He mentioned that since the very beginning of the ceasefire, "bad faith and constant complaints" were faced by Iran from Washington. He clarified that the US initially claimed that Lebanon was not part of the ceasefire, despite contrary assertions.

Can't rule out BJP getting two-thirds majority: Rajnath Singh ahead of Bengal polls

Nanoor (TSIT):

With the West Bengal Assembly elections just days away, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Monday expressed confidence that the BJP will secure a clear majority, adding that the possibility of a two-thirds majority cannot be ruled out. Speaking to reporters, Singh said that West Bengal has witnessed an atmosphere of fear, violence, and alleged atrocities over the past 15 years. He noted that the people of the state have given three



consecutive terms to the Trinamool Congress, adding that such a long tenure should

have resulted in substantial development.

"There are many states in the country that have shown remarkable progress within just five to eight years. Earlier, West Bengal contributed around 10 per cent, but under the Trinamool Congress, it has declined to nearly five per cent," he said. Appealing to voters, Singh urged the people of West Bengal to opt for change. He also sought to reassure women voters, stating that the Women's Reservation Bill

would be implemented to ensure 33 per cent representation for women. "I cannot predict the exact number of seats we will win, but I am confident that the BJP will secure a clear majority. I also cannot rule out the possibility of the party achieving a two-thirds majority," he added.

He further alleged that the Women's Reservation Bill has been opposed by the Trinamool Congress, Congress, and other opposition parties, and claimed that women would respond to this in the elections.

Collector Harichandana Dasari Reviews Welfare Week Celebrations Felicitates Inter Toppers

Hyderabad TSIT: District Collector Harichandana Dasari directed officials to ensure the effective conduct of Welfare Week celebrations across government hostels, residential schools, and junior colleges in the district. Participating in the programme held at Mahendra Hills Social Welfare School and Residential Junior College as part of the Praja Palana - Pragathi Pranalika (99-day programme), the Collector reviewed arrangements for the Welfare Week being conducted from April 20 to 26. During her visit, she inspected the kitchen, store room, dining hall, and surrounding premises,



stressing the need for cleanliness and proper maintenance. She instructed officials to provide special training to cooking staff and ensure that food is served to students strictly as per the prescribed menu and on time.

ANANTHAGIRI ECO URBAN PARK INAUGURATED

Hyderabad TSIT: Telangana State Legislative Assembly Speaker and Vikarabad MLA Gaddam Prasad Kumar on Monday inaugurated the newly developed Ananthagiri Eco Urban Park, built at a cost of 2.50 crore to boost eco-tourism in the region. Inauguration programme was attended by Vikarabad Municipal Chairperson Gaddam Ananya, PCCF Dr.Suvarna, Forest Development Corporation MD Sunita Bhagawat, Chief Conservator of Forests (Charminar Circle) Priyanka Varghese, Tourism Wing Director Ranjith Naik, District Forest Officer Gnaneshwar, along with forest officials, public representatives, local leaders, and tourists. Addressing the media, Gaddam Prasad Kumar said that the government is taking steps to develop Ananthagiri Hills



into a prominent eco-tourism destination. He described Ananthagiri as the "Kashmir of Telangana" and highlighted its scenic beauty. He stated that the park has been developed with a focus on protecting the environment while providing facilities such as watch towers and other amenities to enhance the visitor experience. Speaker added that the development of tourism in Ananthagiri will create employment opportunities for local people and contribute to the overall growth of the region.

DGP B. SHIVADHAR REDDY FELICITATES DSP NIKHAT ZAREEN



Hyderabad TSIT: Director General of Police B.Shivadhar Reddy on Monday felicitated DSP Nikhat Zareen at his office for her outstanding achievement at the prestigious international boxing championship held in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia, from April 2 to 12, where she secured a bronze medal. The DGP lauded Nikhat Zareen for her exceptional performance on the international stage, stating that she has brought pride and recognition to the Telangana Police Department. He expressed confidence that she would continue to scale greater heights in her sporting career. On the same occasion, the DGP also congratulated Telangana Police personnel for their commendable performance at the 25th All India Police Water Sports Cluster competitions held at Dehradun and Tehri Lake, Uttarakhand, from April 8 to 12. In the Rowing Coxless Pair - 500 meters category, Head Constable N. Ramakrishna of 1st Battalion TGSP and Police Constable J. Raju of CAR Siddipet showcased remarkable talent and secured a silver medal.

Nirmala Jaggareddy Inducts Peddapur Sarpanch, Leaders into Congress



Hyderabad TSIT: In a notable political development, TGICC Chairperson and DCC President Nirmala Jaggareddy inducted Peddapur village Sarpanch Manisha Balraj Goud along with several ward members and local leaders into the Congress party from the BRS. Ward members Patti Anasuya, Bandaraju, and Padakandi Srikanth, along with key village leaders including Anjaneyulu Goud, Narahari, Rangani Shivakumar, Rangani Kiran Goud, Chakrapani, Nalla Ramesh, Vadla Niranjan, Alivada Arun, MD Ashwak, Salman, Maqsood, M. Ravi, Akhlesh Goud, Rakesh Goud, Antham Santhosh, Shravan Kumar, Hari Prasad, Rangani Mallesh, and Sara Satish Kumar, formally joined the Congress in her presence. Addressing the gathering, the newly inducted leaders expressed confidence that the development of Peddapur village would be accelerated under the leadership of the ruling Congress party. The programme was attended by PCC General Secretary Topaji Anantha Kishan, CDC Chairman Gadila Ram Reddy, Sadashivpet Mandal Congress President Siddanna, Sarpanches Forum President Ogu Srinivas, former Block President Magdoom Patel, Kambalapalli Bharathamma Babu, Anjaneyulu, Peddapur Deputy Sarpanch Sandeep, village President Banda Arun, Bikshapathi, Komaraiah, and several party workers.

VENKATESH GOUD TAKES CHARGE AS SI OF PEBBER POLICE STATION

Wanaparthy, April 20: Venkatesh Goud assumed charge as the new Sub-Inspector (SI) of Pebber Police Station in Wanaparthy district on Sunday. Hereplaces SI Yugandhar Reddy, who has been transferred to the Nagarkurnool District SP Office on VR (voluntary retirement). Prior to this posting, Venkatesh Goud served as SI at Lingala Police Station in Nagarkurnool district. He has earlier worked as Town SI in Wanaparthy and at Khilla Ghanpur Police Station. Known for his clean record and dedicated service, Venkatesh Goud earned recognition for his effective policing and coordination with tribal communities in the Nallamala forest region. Locals expressed confidence that he would strengthen law and order in the Pebber mandal.On the occasion of assuming charge, Pebber Municipal chairman Akki Susheela Srinivas Goud, Jai Goud movement leader



Suguru Rajashekar Goud, along with leaders from various political parties and members of the Goud community, felicitated him with shawls. Speaking on the occasion, leaders emphasized that public cooperation with the police is essential to maintain peace and security. They expressed hope that Venkatesh Goud would continue his dedicated service and effectively address local issues. Wanaparthy district correspondent of Praja Pratibha, Ravi Shankar Goud, congratulated the newly appointed SI.

Collector Dr. Satya Sharada visited the Tribal Welfare Ashram School as part of the Welfare Week

WARANGAL, April 20, TSIT : District Collector Dr Satya Sharada visited the Tribal Welfare Ashram School of Nallabelli Mandal, Muduchekkalapally Village on the first day of the Welfare Week as part of the 99-day activity organized as part of the Public Governance - Progress Plan. On this occasion, the facilities, accommodation, quality of food and education provided to the students in the school were examined.It is suggested to



the headmaster to organize a health camp if there are any health problems of the children. On this occasion, it was suggested to visit the dormitory hall of the female students and ensure that it is kept clean,

similarly to ensure that the toilets and bathrooms are kept clean from time to time.The hostel warden was instructed to inspect the vegetables, food, kitchen and dining hall and ensure proper hygiene.The District Collector conducted a motivational class for the 8th and 9th class students and also explained to the students what kind of eating habits and health precautions should be taken. It is said that the Arrive Alive programme has been completed as part of the government's public administration progress plan.

ENSURE BETTER INFRASTRUCTURE FOR STUDENTS: COLLECTOR DIVAKARA TO OFFICIALS

Mulugu, April 20, TSIT: District Collector, ITDA In-charge Project Officer Divakara RS directed the concerned officials to provide better infrastructure to the students, to pay special attention to the schools and hostels and to give high priority to the applications received in the Girivani and Prajavani programme. The complainants who came to the Prajavani-Girivani tribal darbar programme at the ITDA Eturunagaram meeting hall on Monday presented the petitions to the collector themselves, voicing their problems.The district collector received the complaints from the people and sent them to the officials of the concerned department and ordered them to resolve them quickly. 96 complaints were received for Girivani Tribal Darbar



programme, total 122 complaints. On this occasion, the District Collector said that the officials should pay special attention to the schools and hostels and monitor them continuously and prepare a comprehensive report on the situation at the field level. It has been clarified that things like kitchen, store room, campus surroundings, toilets, drinking water accommodation should be thoroughly examined and reports should be submitted immediately.

SANITATION IN GURUKULS MUST BE IMPROVED: COLLECTOR HAIMAVATHI



The South India Times Hunsabad : Hunsabad: District Collector K. Haimavathi has issued directives to officials to enhance sanitation standards across all welfare educational institutions within the district, emphasizing that kitchens, restrooms, classrooms, and the entire school premises must be maintained in a state of continuous cleanliness. As part of the 'Welfare Week' activities—being conducted this week under the broader 'Praja Palana Pragathi Pranalika' (People's Administration and Progress Plan) 99-day program—she paid a surprise visit on Monday to the Tribal Welfare Boys' Gurukul School located at Jillelagadda in Hunsabad Mandal. During this visit, the Collector inspected the school kitchen and personally examined the food being served to the students. She expressed severe dissatisfaction upon observing that the 'Palakura Pappu' (spinach dal)—which was scheduled to be on the menu—was extremely watery in consistency. She lashed out at the kitchen staff, demanding to know why they had prepared 'Pachipulusu' (a raw tamarind soup) when it was not listed on the menu, and questioned the audacity of serving 'Pachipulusu' while claiming it was 'Rasam'. She ordered that 'Pachipulusu' must not be served to the students and directed that it be removed immediately.

COLLECTOR WHO DISTRIBUTED FREE SPECTACLES TO STUDENTS. ADARSH SURABHI

Wanaparthy (TSIT):Collector visited the Telangana Social Welfare Residential School

Table Charitable Trust distributed free new spectacles to the students of this school. Nitin, Abhishek



in Buddharam Village, Gopalapeta Mandal. Adarsh Surabhi distributed free glasses to the students.A total of 6950 students were examined through eye examination camps under the auspices of RBSK in government and residential schools across the district and 570 students were found to have vision problems, while 69 students out of 400 students in this school were found to have vision problems.OP Tibre wala Foundation and Hyderabad Titans Round

and Akhil participated in this program. The Collector specially congratulated the representatives of the voluntary organization who provided free spectacles. Students are advised to use the glasses properly and achieve good results in education. The Collector advised the officials to implement the welfare programs effectively in the schools and to achieve the objectives of the Public Governance Development Plan with commitment.

DIFFERENTLY-ABLED SEEK HOUSING, PENSIONS, MOTORIZED VEHICLES IN GADWAL

Jogulamba Gadwal: Members of the District Differently-Abled Women's Wing submitted a representation to Additional Collector Narasimha Rao during the Prajavani program, seeking urgent support for persons with disabilities in the district.

Led by district women's wing leader Manjula, the delegation highlighted the need for allocation of double-bedroom houses, sanction of new pensions, and provision of motorized vehicles for differently-abled individuals. They stated that many persons with disabilities continue to face severe hardships due to lack of basic facilities and financial support.

The representatives pointed out that several differently-abled persons are living in

rented accommodations and struggling to meet daily expenses. They also requested authorities to conduct proper verification of electricity bills related to eligible beneficiaries.

Responding to the appeal, the Additional Collector advised applicants to submit necessary documents, including Aadhaar cards, electricity bills, and address details, for further verification. He assured that the matter would be examined and forwarded to the concerned departments for appropriate action. A large number of differently-abled persons participated in the Prajavani program and expressed hope for early government intervention to address their long-pending demands.



SPECIAL FOCUS NEEDED ON CHILD HEALTH: COLLECTOR HARICHANDANA DASARI



Hyderabad TSIT: District Collector Harichandana Dasari emphasized the need for special attention towards the health and well-being of children in child care institutions across Hyderabad district. During her visit to Shishu Vihar at Ameerpet on Monday, the Collector distributed birth certificates to children and reviewed the facilities. She directed officials to ensure that all children are provided with essential documents, including birth certificates, caste certificates, Aadhaar, and SADAREM certificates in a timely manner. The Collector stated that certificates have already

nutritious food on time and maintaining cleanliness in children's rooms and surrounding areas. RDO Ramakrishna, Joint Director Moti, Child Welfare Committee Chairperson Shailaja, member Pramoda, CDPOs, and Shishu Vihar staff were present during the visit.

been distributed in two phases, and a total of 2,150 certificates will be issued to children in 50 child care institutions between April 20 and 25. She added that the process is currently underway at seven centres across the district. In view of rising summer temperatures, Harichandana Dasari instructed staff to take extra precautions regarding children's health. She stressed the importance of providing nutritious food on time and maintaining cleanliness in children's rooms and surrounding areas. RDO Ramakrishna, Joint Director Moti, Child Welfare Committee Chairperson Shailaja, member Pramoda, CDPOs, and Shishu Vihar staff were present during the visit.

84-Year-Old Liver Cancer Patient with Cardiac Risks Successfully Treated via Minimally Invasive Surgery in Bengaluru

Bengaluru: In a significant medical achievement, an 84-year-old man diagnosed with intrahepatic cholangiocarcinoma - a rare form of liver cancer - has been successfully treated using a minimally invasive laparoscopic procedure, despite being considered high-risk due to his advanced age and multiple comorbidities.



The elderly patient had presented with persistent abdominal discomfort and loss of appetite. Further evaluation revealed a 4 cm tumour in the liver. The case was further complicated by the patient's existing health conditions, including diabetes, hypertension, a previous heart attack, and dependence on blood thinners for his cardiac health. Given his fragile cardiac profile and advanced age, conventional open surgery posed significant risks. Following a detailed assessment and multidisciplinary planning, the surgical team at SPARSH Hospital, Yelahanka, opted for a Laparoscopic Left Lateral Hepatectomy. This minimally

invasive approach allowed removal of the tumour through small incisions, significantly reducing surgical trauma and blood loss.

Dr. Raghavendra Babu, Senior Consultant - Gastrointestinal and HPB Surgery, GI Oncology & Liver Transplantation at SPARSH Hospital, Yelahanka, said, "Treating liver cancer in an elderly patient with a significant cardiac history and multiple comorbidities required a highly cautious and well-planned surgical approach. In this case, the laparoscopic technique helped reduce operative stress and supported faster recovery, demonstrating how minimally invasive surgery can play an important

role in managing complex cases safely."The procedure was completed successfully, and the patient showed encouraging recovery soon after surgery. He was started on an oral diet on the same day of the procedure, and his post-operative recovery remained stable and uneventful. He was discharged within just two days - a remarkable outcome that highlights the potential value of minimally invasive liver surgery in selected elderly and high-risk patients. This case underscores the growing role of advanced laparoscopic techniques in managing complex liver conditions, particularly among elderly patients where reduced surgical stress and faster recovery are especially critical.

VAIBHAV JEWELLERS OPENS 21ST SHOWROOM IN CHANDANAGAR

Chandanagar, Hyderabad: Vaibhav Jewellers (M/s. Manoj Vaibhav Gems 'N' Jewellers Limited) inaugurated its 21st showroom on Monday at ICRISAT Colony, Main Road, Chandanagar.

The brand already operates 20 stores across Coastal Andhra Pradesh and Telangana. The inauguration was performed by Smt. Dr. Ch. Preeti Reddy, Vice Chairman of Malla Reddy Vishwavidyapeeth; actress Ms. Manasa Varanasi; Dr. Anil Kumar, IPS (ADGP Operations); Dr. M. Ramesh, IPS (Cyberabad CP); and Kankatala Mallikarjuna Rao, CMD of Kankatala



Textiles. The event was held in the presence of Smt. Bharata Mallika

Ratnakumari Grandhi, CMD, and Sri Gontla Rakhal, JMD of Vaibhav

Jewellers. Speaking on the occasion, Dr. Preeti Reddy praised the brand's exquisite craftsmanship and said the expansion benefits Chandanagar customers. Actress Manasa Varanasi said she was "super excited" to be part of Vaibhav's journey of 32+ years of trust, 30+ million happy customers, and 3+ million designs. J. Raghunath, Assistant Vice President, announced inaugural offers: up to Rs.777 off per gram on 916 Hallmark gold jewellery, 100% off on diamond making charges, and no making charges on silver items and payals. He invited customers to experience world-class shopping at the new showroom.

EDITORIAL

Lights, Camera, Sarkar

The neon-lit history of Tamil Nadu politics isn't written in ink; it is etched in celluloid and projected at 24 frames per second. The silver screen has never been just entertainment. It has been the primary incubator for political power for over 50 years. The celluloid screen is where a man's mythology is manufactured before it is tested at the ballot box. The journey from reel life to real life, from the cinema hall to the secretariat is the climactic career arc. Joseph Vijay Chandrasekhar, "Thalapathy," the Commander is the newest debutante switching roles as the state heads to the polls on April 23, 2026. Public attention will measure his bid to be a real-life Jana Nayagan; this is Vijay's riskiest production. It is moot whether Vijay is the new Enga Veettu Pillai the state has yearned for or another Puli whose roar fades after the show.

History is replete with many film stars aspiring to aspire. Does Vijay have it? The gold standard for the transition from films to politics is MGR - the celluloid giant who turned films into a political laboratory. MG Ramachandran - MGR, Makkal Thilagam, "Darling of the People" evangelised as he acted. The films, the script and the dialogues were verily aspiration wrapped in ideology, ambition in motion. In Enga Veetu Pillai, he said, "Once I take oath the poor will not suffer," and Tamil Nadu roared in approval. He was the labourer-messiah of the poor in Rickshaw Karan, the wandering king of Nadodi Manan who delivered justice - a manifesto disguised in a double role. He was always the sub-altern avatar, the mama's boy, the lady's saviour. By the time he completed his two-decade internship in the DMK, he was ready to step out of the reels and into real life. He and his 80,000 fan clubs wrote a new script in 1972 forming the AIADMK.

His protege, Jayalalithaa, learnt at his feet and rose from his leading lady to propaganda secretary to heir-at-large. Jayalalithaa leveraged resilience from Adimai Penn, to survive a brutal and public inheritance battle after MGR's death. Her rise is an all-time masterclass on capitalising opportunity in grief. Her grasp of politics and gravitas in administration enabled her to take the seat of chief minister five times. Every welfare idea of hers - Amma canteen or Amma medicine - is a legend and has been dubbed in other states. Vijayakanth, "Captain," had political acumen and challenged the status quo. Displaying innate screen sense he arrived at his party's launch in MGR's old van, positioning himself as the dark-skinned avatar of MGR. He had done the tutorials, paid obeisance to mass misery. Ramanaa, Rajadhi Raja portrayed the patriotic, anti-corruption hero who takes on a broken system with bare hands. In real life he had the potential to disrupt the duopoly of DMK-ADMK but his party, the DMDK which won 29 seats in 2011 lacked the cadre and organisation to leverage his halo.

The lesson from history is clear: the screen character must morph into the street character, bleed and blend into the landscape and yet retain the messianic presence. The transition is not easy nor is it automatic. For years folks would quote Rajnikanth 'Naan late-aa vandhalum, latest-aa varuvein'. (Even if I come late, I will come as the latest) from his hit Baba to argue, insist that the mega star would join politics and that hope has faded with the credits.

Like Rajnikanth aka Shivaji Gaekwad, Vijay has been auditioning for the role, seen with folks from the national parties and strategists of the regional parties. The superstar brings with him an arsenal none of his predecessors could imagine. Vijay arrives with an army of Gen Z (and a chunk of millennial fans) who have watched and whistled as he broke systems on screen. Unlike Kamal Hassan, whose appeal was limited to the cerebral types, Vijay straddles mass not class, rural and urban appeal. However, he has rarely been heard before his debut this year to speak on issues or take a stand. Vijay and his team would like the voters to believe that he has spoken through his films. Mersal attacked GST and healthcare inequity, and the outrage only made it more popular. Sarkar mobilised the "common man" against dynastic corruption; its hero returns NRI wealth and demands accountability. Master placed an idealist inside a broken institution and asked whether a flawed man could still be the right man. Kaththi was an agrarian crisis wrapped in a mass entertainer. Bigil used women's football as a metaphor for collective dignity against caste and entitlement. There is a clear attempt, at least in the titles, to forge a broad coalition. Vijay consciously promoted the concept of whistle revolution, egging folks to blow the whistle on wrongdoing, a kind of vigilante reformer through his films, for some time before he put up the first posters and founded the TVK. His party shadow-marketed and tested his ideas; his fan clubs won over a hundred seats in local body polls. If private polls are to be believed Vijay and the TVK are a draw among the 30 to 45 age band, those who have voted for and experienced both Dravidian parties and who ostensibly are looking for a third alternative. The fact that his draw survives his and his party's missteps -including the stampede in Karur- is a worry for both the AIADMK and DMK fronts. Typical of Tamil Nadu assessments of Vijay's prospects are tags based on his hit or flop films; it ranges from being tagged as the next Prashant Kishore-led Jan Suraj to a super disrupter like Vijayakanth and DMDK. Pollsters are divided on who the TVK will damage more - the anti-incumbency votes which AIADMK is wooing or the minority and youth votes DMK is betting on.

Vijay is challenged by a gap on his CV which cannot be upskilled - the lack of an active internship and the absence of an ideological north star is a glaring vulnerability. MGR had Dravidian foundationalism as his political DNA. Jayalalithaa apprenticed under MGR for over a decade before she bid for and seized the throne. Vijayakanth confronted and then collaborated with the Dravidian parties, Kamal Hasan tried the lateral entry. Vijay is attempting to crash through the barricades. He has played footsie with the Congress during the GST drama, then with the AIADMK folks and again with Congress. In Tamil Nadu, politicians cannot wait for the dialogue to be written when confronted with questions such as Cauvery waters or imposition of Hindi. His positioning, secular social justice, may offend nobody but could end up inspiring none either given the hard binaries holding Tamil Nadu politics.

Pakistan's Ever-Running Saudi 'Lifeline' Has Its Limits

Pakistan's announcement of Saudi Arabia extending a fresh financial aid of an additional USD 3 billion is being framed as a geopolitical achievement, and with good reason. The funds arrived with a decision to extend an existing USD 5 billion deposit for an expanded term, thus replacing the annual rollover arrangement. The breakthrough reportedly followed a series of high-level engagements, including a meeting between Pakistan's Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb, the governor of the State Bank, Pakistan's envoy to the US, and Saudi Arabia's foreign minister on the sidelines of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank Spring Meetings in Washington. The loan is expected to help Pakistan achieve its target of taping its reserves to USD 18 billion by the end of the fiscal year.

THE TIMING

The Pakistani minister acknowledged that the financial aid came at a critical juncture for Pakistan's external financial requirements, as it will reinforce foreign exchange reserves and support external accounts. This also comes amid strict obligations under the current International Monetary Fund (IMF)-supported loan programme. The announcement comes at a time when Pakistan was due to repay a total of USD 3.5 billion in debt to the UAE by the end of April, after the Gulf nation ended its rollover support; Pakistan's reserves stood at USD 16.4 billion as of March 27. In January, while addressing exporters and businessmen in Islamabad,



Pakistan Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif had said, "seeking foreign loans had forced Pakistan to 'bow' its head and make compromises at the cost of self-respect". "How should I describe the way we requested loans from friendly countries? The friendly countries didn't disappoint us. But the one who goes to seek a loan has their head bowed. When you go seeking loans, you pay the price at the cost of your self-respect. You have to compromise... Sometimes, an undue demand may come up, and you have to implement it even when there is no reason to fulfil it." The timing of the recent announcement is not incidental, with Pakistan's economic

reprieve arriving as the country finds itself playing an unusually key role as a mediator in the West Asian conflict between Iran and the US and Israel.

The combination of its Islamic credentials, ties with stakeholders, and Pakistan army chief Field Marshal Asim Munir's cultivation of a personal rapport with US President Donald Trump has opened a space for Pakistan to function as an interlocutor.

MEDIATION FOR PERSONAL GAINS?

While the durable influence of this mediation and its outcome is yet to play out, the optics signal attempts to convert cur-

rent strategic positioning into domestic gains. That said, to treat this announcement as a consequential movement in the longer arc of the Saudi Arabia-Pakistan relationship would be short-sighted.

Historically, Pakistan has served as a security partner to Saudi Arabia in return for the Kingdom's financial assistance in times of acute balance-of-payments situations. For instance, Pakistan stationed approximately 10,000 Pakistani troops in Saudi Arabia in return for USD 1 billion in economic aid. Saudi Arabia further offered concessional loans to Pakistan to fortify its military in the late 1970s. The immediate gains

for Pakistan are clear. Saudi Arabia's recent support acts as a short-term stabiliser for an economically fragile Pakistan. It further reinforces Pakistan's standing as a state that retains strategic relevance despite internal weaknesses. Internationally, Pakistan is punching above its economic weight by leveraging its strategic assets to compensate for its structural issues.

THE RENTIER MODEL

That said, Pakistan's utility as a security provider to Saudi Arabia as an interlocutor in the West Asian conflict will not translate into long-term resilience. The vicious cycle of external dependence, with

recurring financial inflows rather than facilitating structural reforms, is unlikely to alter Pakistan's deep-rooted reality. However, this will not prevent Pakistan's significance from diminishing for Saudi Arabia, especially amid insecurities among the Gulf countries towards the US's ability to provide security guarantees.

Pakistan's geostrategic location and its rentier state model have worked favourably. Added to this is its status as the Muslim world's only nuclear power and religious linkages. Additionally, its significant labour force also remains crucial to Gulf economies.

While security and economic relationships have historically persisted, tectonic shifts in the geopolitical landscape will sustain a gap between what Pakistan seeks from its Gulf partners and their willingness to offer it in an interest-driven foreign policy environment. In the context of Pakistan's dispute with India, Saudi Arabia is unlikely to take a partisan stand on the Kashmir conflict - this was seen in the Kingdom's mediatory role in the recent Pakistan-Taliban conflict

STUCK IN A LOOP

As such, the latest development is less of a transformative moment and more a continuation of an established system. It highlights Pakistan's sustained relevance in West Asia; it also underscores structural shortcomings of its financial, governance, and bureaucratic infrastructure. Even as the country gains geopolitical momentum, its economic weaknesses will limit its strategic potential.

What Data Can See, And What It Cannot, In Children's Lives



Across education systems today, data plays an increasingly central role in decision-making. It helps governments track progress, identify gaps, allocate resources, and strengthen programmes at scale. Used thoughtfully, data can illuminate patterns that would otherwise remain invisible. It can support accountability and improve outcomes for millions of children. But there is a distinction we must hold carefully. Data can show us trends. It cannot show us a whole child. This matters because children's development does not unfold in neat, linear ways. It moves through bursts, pauses, regressions, leaps, and moments that resist measurement altogether. A child may appear disengaged in one environment and deeply curious in another. A learner marked "behind" in one metric may be thriving in ways that the metric does not capture. When systems rely heavily on measurable indicators, they inevitably privilege what can be counted. Attendance, completion rates, assessment scores, timelines. These are important. But they are not complete descriptions of learning or development. They do

not tell us whether a child feels safe. They do not reveal whether curiosity is growing. They cannot capture the tone of a caregiver's voice or the steadiness of an adult's presence. One example shared in a recent discussion illustrates this clearly. A child was assumed to be struggling with colouring tasks. Only later did a caregiver notice that the child disliked the sensation of paint on their hands. The issue was not ability. It was sensory experience. No dashboard would have detected that without an adult paying close attention and interpreting what they saw. This is where human judgment remains indispensable. Monitoring systems are powerful tools. They can strengthen delivery and reveal where support is needed. But they should not be asked to do what they are not designed to do. When data is treated as a complete picture rather than a partial one, it can lead to premature conclusions, especially when applied early in a child's life. Labels assigned too quickly, "not ready," "delayed," "behind", can follow children in ways that shape expectations long before their capacities have had time to unfold.

4 suicides at National Institute of Technology Kurukshetra

(Why are students breaking up?)



DR. SATYAWAN SAURABH

Prestigious Indian technical education institutions, once known as "dream factories," are now becoming factories of mental stress for many young people. The suicides of four students within just two months at the National Institute of Technology, Kurukshetra, Haryana, have shocked the entire nation. This is not just the end of four lives, but the failure of a system that is destroying talent instead of nurturing it. These incidents, which occurred between February and April 2026, are not isolated incidents but indicate a dangerous chain—one incident follows another, as despair spreads from one person to the next. Diksha Dubey's suicide note—"I could not achieve anything"—is not just the anguish of one student, but a reflection of a mindset in which achieving something has become the ultimate goal of life. In India, exams like JEE Mains and JEE Advanced have long been considered the key to success. Millions of students work tirelessly for years to crack these exams and gain admission to institutions like the National Institute of Technology, Kurukshetra. But ironically, admission to an institution, considered a life's greatest achievement, becomes a battleground for many students. Once there, students must not only excel academically but also face the pressure of proving themselves on every front. The 75% attendance rule, constant assignments and proj-



ects, the stress of semester exams, and the uncertainty of placements—all of these add up to an invisible but heavy burden on students' minds. This pressure isn't just academic, but also psychological and social. When a student who has been at the top of their school or coaching class suddenly finds themselves among hundreds of talented students, their self-image is affected. Where they once considered themselves "the best," they now feel "average" or, at times, "weak." This change is mentally very difficult for many students. They are unable to accept their failures and gradually become victims of self-doubt and inferiority complex. The role of the family is also crucial in this entire crisis. In Indian society, education is linked to social prestige. Parents have high expectations for their children, and this expectation often inadvertently turns into pressure. National Crime Records Bureau data shows that family pressure is a major factor in suicides among youth. This pressure is especially acute

for students from economically disadvantaged backgrounds. Their parents spend a significant portion of their limited income on their education and expect success in return. Therefore, if a student fails to perform as expected for any reason, they feel they have let down not only themselves but their entire family. Social media has further complicated this situation. Today's youth are constantly surrounded by glimpses of others' "success" and "happy lives." The glitz and glamour displayed on Instagram, YouTube, and other platforms creates a world far removed from reality. However, students begin to compare themselves to others, believing it to be real. When they feel they fall short of this "ideal life," dissatisfaction and frustration grow within them. French sociologist Emile Durkheim viewed suicide not just as an individual problem, but as a social one. His theory of "anomic suicide" suggests that when societal norms and expectations become unclear or unbalanced, individuals begin to feel isolated. This

same situation is evident in many technical institutions today. Students are placed in an environment where high expectations are placed on them, but they lack adequate emotional or social support. As a result, they begin to break down internally. This problem is even more acute for students from rural backgrounds. They are suddenly thrust into an environment where the language, lifestyle, and social behavior are all different. They find it difficult to connect with those around them. This isolation gradually turns into isolation, and loneliness can become a major threat to mental health. Many students are unable to share their problems with anyone because they feel that doing so is a sign of weakness. For female students, this struggle occurs on many levels. They have to balance academics with safety, social expectations, and self-reliance. Often, they are made to feel like they have to "prove" themselves, not only as students but also as women. This dual pressure further impacts their mental health.

Oil prices rise after Trump says Iranian ship seized

AGENCY
Tehran: Global oil prices have jumped after US President Donald Trump said its navy had intercepted and seized an Iran-flagged cargo ship. The Brent crude benchmark oil price jumped 5% to around \$95 (£70) a barrel, reversing the slump on Friday when Iran said the Strait of Hormuz would be "completely open" to commercial vessels for the remainder of the ceasefire. On Saturday, Iran said it was closing the strait again and that any ship that approached it would be targeted. The waterway is of key importance as usually about 20% of the world's oil and liquefied natural gas passes through it. Energy markets have seen wild swings since the US and Israel attacked Iran on 28 February and Tehran responded with threats to target shipping in the strait. Trump has said his representatives will be in Pakistan on Monday for negotiations. A White House official said Vice-President JD Vance would lead the US delegation. But Iran's state media said



Tehran had "no plans for now to participate" in the talks, although Iranian officials have not clarified the country's position yet. "Oil markets continue to gyrate in response to oscillating social media posts by the US and Iran, rather than the realities on the ground which remain challenging for oil flows to resume in a rapid fashion", analyst Saul Kavonic from financial services firm MST Marquee told the BBC. "This is all

part of negotiations, physically playing out in real time on the Strait of Hormuz." Shanti Kelemen, co-chief investment officer at 7 Investment Management, said there was "a bit of fatigue" in the market given the "chopping and changing" in the situation. "I think the market stopped believing the words, and will look more towards the actions," she told the BBC. The Strait of Hormuz remained closed on

Sunday, a day after the Islamic Revolution Guard Corps (IRGC) said it was ending a temporary reopening over the US blockade, which it said violated the terms of their ceasefire agreement. Iran said it would stay closed until the US ended its naval blockade. Trump had said on Friday that the naval blockade would continue until a deal was agreed by the two countries. Stock markets were mixed on Monday. In

Europe, the FTSE 100 index of the biggest firms listed in the London fell 0.7%, while Germany's Dax and France's Cac 40 were both down more than 1%. However, Asian markets had risen earlier, with Japan's Nikkei index closing up 0.6% and South Korea's Kospi climbing 0.4%. Energy prices have seen volatile trading since the start of the Iran war. Brent crude, a benchmark for oil futures prices, was trading at around \$70 per barrel before the conflict. On 9 March it reached almost \$120. Futures contracts are an agreement to buy or sell assets at a set price on a specified date in the future. The Brent futures contract currently being quoted is for crude oil to be delivered in June. The conflict has triggered a global energy crisis with prices rising sharply, while some countries are facing fuel shortages. Asia has been hit particularly hard as the region relies on shipments that usually pass through the Strait of Hormuz for around 90% of its energy needs.

STOCK MARKET HIGHLIGHTS:

Nifty Ends Little Changed Amid Renewed US-Iran Tensions, Sensex Falls 500 Points From Day's High

AGENCY
Mumbai: Indian equity benchmarks ended little changed after a topsy-turvy trade on Monday amid weak global cues over renewed tensions in the middle east. The NSE Nifty 50 and the BSE Sensex ended marginally higher at 24,364 and 78,520.30 respectively. Tensions between the US and Iran increased after attacks on commercial ships near the Strait of Hormuz. The US said its Navy fired on an Iranian container ship in the Gulf of Oman and later took custody of the vessel after it attempted to cross a naval blockade. The action followed an earlier tanker attack in the Strait of Hormuz, where ships were hit during the weekend. Meanwhile, Crude oil prices climbed on Monday. West Texas Intermediate futures rose nearly 7% to \$89.53 a barrel, while Brent crude gained 6.2% to \$96.05 a barrel. Elsewhere, US index futures traded lower, indicating a weak start for Wall Street. Dow Jones futures fell 358 points, or 0.72%. S&P 500 futures declined 0.58%, while Nasdaq-100 futures slipped 0.53%. Indian benchmark indices ended little changed



after a volatile session on Monday as weak global cues and renewed Middle East tensions kept sentiment cautious. The Nifty 50 closed marginally higher at 24,364, while the Sensex ended at 78,520.30. Markets tracked rising tensions between the US and Iran after attacks on commercial ships near the Strait of Hormuz. Crude prices climbed sharply, with WTI up nearly 7% and Brent gaining 6.2%. US futures also traded lower, pointing to a weak Wall Street start. The Nifty 50 ended lower by over 0.1% and closed below the 24,350 mark. Jio Financial and Hindalco were the top losers in the

index, both falling more than 2.25%. Broader markets underperformed the benchmark. Nifty MidCap 150 ended down 0.3%, while Nifty SmallCap 250 fell over 0.5%. PI Industries, Godfrey Phillips, IEX and GMDC were among the key losers. Sectoral trends were mixed. Nifty Media and Nifty PSU Bank rose more than 0.5%, led by Zee Entertainment, Bank of Maharashtra and SBI. Nifty IT was the worst performer, down nearly 1%, with Persistent Systems and Coforge among the top drags. US index futures traded lower, indicating a weak start for Wall Street.

Nestle Dividend Announcement: How Much Shareholders May Receive?

AGENCY
Mumbai: Nestle India's FY26 dividend is estimated at Rs 14.56 per share, according to Bloomberg data. The forecast puts the company's payout in focus after recent years delivered mixed outcomes against Street expectations. The analyst range is wide. Among analysts tracked by Bloomberg, the lowest estimate stands at Rs seven per share, while the highest estimate is Rs 32 per share. During the ongoing financial year, Nestle had already announced an interim dividend of Rs 7 per share. The estimates matter because dividend trends often shape investor expectations on shareholder returns. A payout near the consensus forecast would mark a rise from the Rs 13.5 per share dividend announced for FY25. Dividend Announcements To Watch This Week: Infosys, HCLTech, Oracle Financial Services, IEX Among 57 Stocks — Check Estimates, Potential Yield Mixed Trend Nestle India's



actual dividend announced for FY25 stood at Rs 13.5 per share, marginally above the Bloomberg estimate of Rs 13.26 per share. The company spent Rs 2,458.6 crore on dividends in that year. In FY24, the company announced Rs 7.75 per share against an estimate of Rs 21.28 per share. Dividend spending for the year stood at Rs 1,494.4 crore. Between FY21 and FY24, the divi-

dend announced had marginally missed Bloomberg estimates, based on the data provided. Past Payouts For FY22, Nestle India announced a dividend of Rs 11 per share versus an estimate of Rs 11.1 per share. The amount spent on dividend was Rs 2,024.73 crore. For FY21, the company announced Rs 10 per share against an estimate of Rs 10.18 per share, while divi-

dend outgo stood at Rs 1,928.3 crore. For FY20, Nestle India declared Rs 10 per share compared with an estimate of Rs 9.63 per share. In FY19, it announced Rs 17 per share against an estimate of Rs 10.16 per share, with Rs 5,032.9 crore spent on dividends. Bloomberg estimates data were not available for FY23. The company announced a dividend of Rs 14 per share in that year. Key Watch Investors will track whether Nestle India delivers a payout above consensus, as past years show estimates have not always matched the final dividend. With forecasts ranging from Rs seven to Rs 32 per share, the final announcement could become a key trigger for income-focused shareholders. A dividend near the upper end of estimates would signal a stronger cash return than expected. A payout closer to the lower end could revive questions over how accurately the Street is reading Nestle India's distribution trend.

BANK OF MAHARASHTRA Q4 RESULTS:

Shares Hit Two-Month High As Profit Zooms 35%, Asset Quality Improves

AGENCY
Mumbai: The shares of Bank of Maharashtra rose over 5% on Monday to hit nearly two-month high after it announced its fourth quarter results. However, it pared the gains to trade over 3% higher. The state-owned bank posted 34.9% rise in net profit to Rs 2,014 crore for the fourth quarter ended March 2026 with rising interest income. The Pune-based lender had posted a net profit of Rs 1,493 crore in the January-March period a year ago, Bank of Maharashtra said in a regulatory filing. The net interest income—the difference of interest earned and interest paid—for the quarter grew 18.9% to Rs 3,702 crore in the fourth quarter of as against Rs 3,116 crore in the same period of the last fiscal. Bank of Maharashtra's asset quality also improved during the quarter under review, with the gross non-per-



forming assets ratio at 1.45% of gross loans by the end of March 2026 from 1.6% in the previous quarter. In absolute terms, the gross NPA was at Rs 4,245.97 crore from Rs 4,387.79 crore in the previous quarter. The net NPA ratio fell 10 basis points to 0.1% from 0.2% in the preceding quarter. In absolute terms, the net NPA fell to Rs 383.74 crore from Rs 412.29 crore. As a result, the bank's provision and contingencies

declined to Rs 617 crore as against Rs 983 crore in the same period a year ago. At the same time, Net Interest Margin (NIM) of the bank advanced to 3.91% from 3.86%. The bank in addition said that it will raise capital up to Rs 7,500 crore through equity and debt. It will also raise Rs 10,000 crore through long-term Infra Bonds in fiscal 2027.

The bank also plans to raise \$500 million through Foreign Currency bonds in this financial year. Bank of Maharashtra Share Price Today The Bank of Maharashtra shares rose as much as 5.8% to Rs 76.95 apiece, this is the highest level since Feb. 27. However it ended 2.87% higher at Rs 74.82 per share. The shares rose 20.58% year-to-date and 54.59% in the last 12 months. All five analysts tracking the company maintain a 'buy' rating according to Bloomberg data. The average 12-month consensus price target stands at Rs 83.33 indicating an upside of 11.4%.

The shares of Bank of Maharashtra rose over 5% on Monday to hit nearly two-month high after it announced its fourth quarter results.

Fresh Flour at Home, Every Day: SOFTEL Brings Back Traditional Grinding to Modern Kitchens

The aroma of freshly ground atta or spices is more than just food. It is a memory of a time when ingredients were pure, processes were slower, and taste was never compromised. As kitchens evolved for speed and convenience, that experience quietly faded from everyday life. SOFTEL, with over 35 years of manufacturing expertise, is bringing that experience back, redesigned for modern homes. Its compact ghar ghanti makes fresh grinding simple again. Small enough to fit on a kitchen platform yet powerful enough to grind grains, millets, and spices with ease, it brings traditional methods back into daily use without adding complexity. At its core is a stone grinding process that helps retain natural taste, texture, and nutrition. With a grinding capacity of 7.5 to 10 kg per hour and



energy consumption of just one unit per hour, it is built for consistent, everyday performance. To match different household needs, SOFTEL offers three models: Fully Automatic, Semi Automatic, and Manual, giving users the flexibility to choose their level of control and convenience. Managing Director Mr.

Anil Kumar Jain shares, "Fresh food is not a luxury, it is the foundation of good health. Grinding fresh is the simplest way to bring purity, nutrition, and trust back to what we eat every day." With this launch, SOFTEL is not just introducing a product. It is making fresh, honest food a daily habit again.

Meesho allots over 94.79 lakh equity shares to employees under ESOP



AGENCY
New Delhi: E-commerce firm Meesho has allotted nearly 94.8 lakh equity shares to its eligible employees under the company's employee stock ownership plan. "We wish to inform you that the Nomination and Remuneration Committee of the Board of Directors of Meesho Ltd, by way of a circular resolution passed on April 20, 2026, has approved the allotment of 94,79,380 equity shares of face value of Re 1 each to the eligible

employees, upon exercise of vested options under the company's Employee Stock Ownership Plan (ESOP) 2024 Plan. The said equity shares shall rank pari-passu with existing equity shares of the company in all respects," Meesho said in a regulatory filing. Following this allotment, the issued, subscribed, and paid-up equity share capital of the Bengaluru-headquartered company has increased from Rs 456,40,55,196 to Rs 4,57,35,34,576.

NISSAN MOTOR INDIA EXPANDS NETWORK IN ECIL, HYDERABAD

Hyderabad, 20 April 2026: Nissan Motor India Pvt. Ltd. (NMIPL) has further strengthened its footprint in Hyderabad with the inauguration of a new, state-of-the-art Lakshmi Nissan showroom in ECIL, Hyderabad. This expansion aligns with Nissan's ongoing commitment to enhancing its reach and delivering seamless sales and service experiences in key markets across India. The newly inaugurated facility features a modern 4,000 sq. ft. showroom with a display capacity of four vehicles. Designed in line with Nissan's global retail standards, the outlet is equipped with premium amenities and supported by a team of well-trained and passionate professionals dedicated to delivering an exceptional ownership experience. Speaking on the occasion, Mr. Saurabh Vatsa, Managing Director, Nissan Motor India, said: "We are pleased to strengthen our presence in emerging growth corridors like ECIL, Hyderabad. This region continues to show



strong customer demand and promising growth potential for the Nissan brand. This expansion is part of our broader nationwide network strategy, reinforcing our commitment to being closer to our customers and delivering seamless ownership experience. As we accelerate our product-led resurgence with the recently launched Nissan GRAVITE and an exciting pipeline ahead, network expansion remains a key pillar of our strategy." Mr. K Jai Ram, Dealer Principal at Lakshmi Nissan, said:

"We are proud to partner with Nissan Motor India to expanding the brand's presence in the developing areas such as ECIL, Hyderabad. This new facility reflects our commitment to delivering world class retail experience, backed by Nissan's strong product portfolio and customer-first approach. We look forward to serving customers in ECIL and surrounding areas with high standards of retail experience." The expansion comes at a pivotal time as Nissan builds strong momentum in the Indian market.

Tehran says 'no plans' for new talks after US seizes Iranian cargo ship

AGENCY
Tehran: Pakistan's federal interior minister Mohsin Naqvi has met Iran's ambassador Reza Amir Moghadam to review preparations for the second phase of the Islamabad talks, the Ministry of Interior says. While Iran has not yet confirmed its participation in new talks, Naqvi says arrangements have been finalised, with "foolproof security" in place for visiting delegations. He also briefed the ambassador on his recent visit to Iran. The minister says a negotiated settlement between the US and Iran is essential for lasting regional stability. According to the ministry, Moghadam has welcomed Pakistan's "positive and constructive role" in efforts to ease tensions. Senior Islamabad officials, including the chief commissioner, inspector general of police, and deputy commissioner, attended the meeting. Iran is "certainty not optimistic" over its dealings with the United



States, but it is "realistic", the spokesman for the Iranian foreign ministry says. "To the extent that one could say there is a certain degree of pessimism... and this is entirely reasonable," Esmail Baghaei tells a press conference in Iran. "Being pessimistic about the enemy is the same as being wise." His remarks come as the US sends a delegation to Pakistan for fresh talks, but Iran is yet to con-

firm it is participating. Following the declaration of Lebanon's ten-day ceasefire with Israel, "huge numbers of people" returned to their homes in southern Lebanon over the weekend, UN Humanitarian Chief Tom Fletcher told the Today programme earlier. The latest pictures show people navigating the destruction caused by Israeli strikes. There are currently two ceasefires in place

in the Middle East - one agreed between the leaders of Lebanon and Israel, and another between the US and Iran. Iran and US This two-week ceasefire between Iran and the US is due to end on Wednesday. Iran's military headquarters accused the US of a "violation of the ceasefire" after the US Navy fired at and took control of an Iranian-flagged cargo ship in the Gulf of Oman. It is unclear whether

a second round of negotiations slated to take place in Pakistan today will go ahead. The US delegation is led by Vice President JD Vance, and an Iranian spokesperson says they have "no plans" to attend the negotiations. Lebanon and Israel This ceasefire, which came into effect on Friday, 16 April and will last ten days, was agreed by Lebanese President Joseph Aoun and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. The two countries requested that the US continues to facilitate further direct talks. According to details from the US State Department, Lebanon must take "meaningful steps" to prevent Hezbollah and all other "rogue non-state armed groups" from carrying out attacks against Israeli targets. Hezbollah has also signalled a willingness to participate but said it must include "no freedom of movement for Israeli forces". Lebanese President Joseph Aoun says upcoming negotiations with

Israel are "separate" from US-Iran peace talks, or "any other negotiations". In a statement on X, Aoun says Lebanon will be represented in upcoming talks by a delegation led by Simon Karam, the former Lebanese ambassador to the US, and that "no one from Lebanon will participate in this mission or replace him". He says the objectives of the talks are to "halt hostile actions", end Israel's "occupation of the southern areas" of Lebanon and to deploy Lebanon's army up to the "internationally recognized southern borders". US President Donald Trump has "expressed full understanding" of Lebanon's demands, says Aoun, and has assisted in setting up the upcoming negotiations. "I am full of hope that we will be able to save Lebanon," he adds. Despite the announcement of a ceasefire between the two countries, Israel's Benjamin Netanyahu has said Israeli troops would remain stationed 10km-deep (6.2 miles) into southern Lebanon.

Iranian woman arrested in US for allegedly trafficking arms to Sudan



AGENCY
Tehran: US authorities have arrested an Iranian woman for trafficking arms to Sudan on behalf of her country, federal prosecutors have said. Shamim Mafi, 44, was arrested at Los Angeles airport on Saturday and is accused of "brokering the sale of drones, bombs, bomb fuses, and millions of rounds of ammunition manufactured by Iran and sold to Sudan", First Assistant US Attorney Bill Essayli said on X. The alleged sales were to Sudan's defence ministry, including a 60m (\$70m; £52m) drone contract, court documents show. Mafi, who has not yet commented on the allegations, is expected

to appear in court later on Monday. If convicted, she could face a jail sentence of up to 20 years. An FBI criminal complaint filed in court, a copy of which was obtained by the BBC, says Mafi coordinated a "Sudanese delegation's travel to Iran, received over 6m in payments, and issued payment receipts" for the drone deal. She submitted "a letter of intent" to Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) to broker the sale of 55,000 bomb fuses to Sudan's defence ministry, it adds. According to Essayli, Mafi is "an Iranian national who became a lawful permanent resident of the United States in 2016".

Rebel Wilson's claims against actress are 'malicious concoctions', Australian court hears



AGENCY
Cranberra: Claims by Rebel Wilson that a young Australian actress was sexually harassed by a producer but then hid it to better her career are "malicious concoctions", a Sydney court has heard on the first day of a defamation case against the Hollywood star. In 2024 and 2025, Wilson posted on Instagram that Charlotte MacInnes - who stars in Wilson's film The Deb - had felt "uncomfortable" after sharing a bath with one of its female producers. The Pitch Perfect star claimed MacInnes had retracted a complaint - which MacInnes denies making - in exchange for a major theatre role and a record deal. MacInnes says the allegations have tarnished her reputation for integrity and honesty, and is seeking damages. Lawyers for MacInnes have said she made no complaint to Wilson about the bath incident but that Wilson later used it as "leverage" in a dispute with producers about the film's budget and contracts. On the first day of the case, the court saw a series of

private texts between Wilson, the producer Amanda Ghost and MacInnes as well as detailed emails about the bath and alleged sexual harassment. The incident happened on 5 September 2023 when MacInnes and Ghost went for a late afternoon swim at Bondi Beach. Ghost had an allergic reaction to the water, known as cold urticaria, breaking out in red welts and shaking uncontrollably, the court heard. The pair went back to Ghost's beachside apartment with MacInnes running a hot bath for Ghost, who had got into a shower to warm up. Both later got into the bath - described by MacInnes' legal team as "oversized" - with both wearing their swimsuits. They "were not even touching at all", Sue Chrysanthou SC told the court. Ghost's assistant made hot drinks for the pair and sat with them in the bathroom for a short while. The next day, Wilson spoke to MacInnes who told her she felt uncomfortable about the bath incident, according to Wilson, who then raised it with Ghost.

Rumen Radev's party wins Bulgarian election

AGENCY
Bulgaria: Rumen Radev's Progressive Bulgaria (PB) party has won a landslide victory in Sunday's Bulgarian election - the eighth general election in five years. With almost 100% of the vote counted, his PB movement, only set up 4 months ago, won 44.7% and has secured a majority of 135 seats in the 240-seat parliament. It is the first time since 1997 that a single Bulgarian party has sufficient seats to govern alone. Ex-prime minister Boiko Borisov's GERB party came second with 13.4%, with the liberal PP-DB coalition third with 12.8%. The election was called after the previous government tried to push through a controversial budget in December, prompting mass protests which Radev, as president, support-



ed. "People rejected the self-satisfaction and arrogance of old parties and did not fall prey to lies and manipulation. I thank them for their trust," Radev said, in his victory speech. He promised to build "a strong Bulgaria in a strong Europe". "What Europe needs right now is critical thinking, pragmatic actions and good results, especially to build a new security architecture and ... recover its industrial power and competitiveness.

Tehran will never cede control of Strait of Hormuz: Senior Iranian politician

AGENCY
Tehran: "Never." That's when a senior Iranian lawmaker says they'll be ready to give up their control of the Strait of Hormuz. "It's our inalienable right," Ebrahim Azizi, a former commander in Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps (IRGC), tells the BBC in Tehran. "Iran will decide the right of passage, including permissions for vessels to pass through the Strait." And he says that's about to become enshrined in law. "We are introducing a bill in parliament, based on article 110 of the constitution, which includes the environment, maritime safety and national security - and the armed forces will implement the law," says this member of



parliament who heads the Committee for National Security and Foreign Policy. As worry mounts about the closure of this strategic waterway causing growing economic shocks worldwide, it's becoming clear this is not a short-term crisis to be resolved in a day. War has handed Tehran what it sees as a new weapon - Azizi described

this highly strategic strait Iran has managed to weaponise during this conflict as "one of our assets to face the enemy". He's a key player in a parliament dominated by hardliners. Azizi also reflects the thinking among some of the senior decision-makers emerging in the new order born of this war, which has become increasingly militarised and

also dominated by hardliners, most of all the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC), after a series of high-level assassinations in Israeli strikes. Tehran now sees its ability to control the passage of vital maritime traffic, including critical oil and gas tankers, not just as a bargaining chip in current negotiations, but as long-term leverage. "The first priority for Iran after the war is to restore deterrence and the Strait of Hormuz is among Iran's principal strategic leverages," explains Mohammad Eslami, a research fellow at the University of Tehran. "Tehran is open to discussing how other nations can benefit from Iran's new framework for the strait, but control is the bottom line."

Man kills seven of his children, and an eighth child, in Louisiana mass shooting

AGENCY
Texas: A father has killed seven of his children and another child in Shreveport, Louisiana, in a mass shooting that police called a "domestic disturbance". Officers said the shooting began about 05:00 (10:00 GMT) on Sunday. After attacking the children at a property, the suspect drove away in a stolen car, police said. Officers then chased and killed him. Two adult women, including the children's mother, are in critical condition after they, too, were hurt by gunfire. And a ninth child was taken to hospital after jumping from the roof of the home while escaping. The suspect was identified as Shamar Elkins, Shreveport

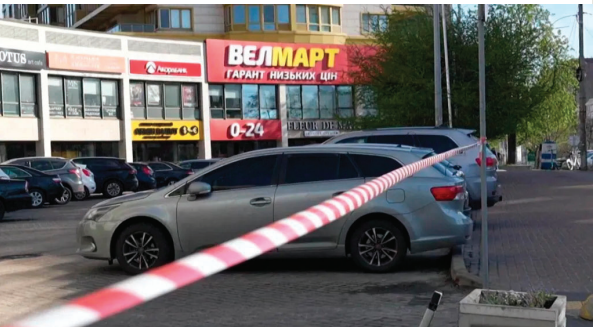


mayor's communications director told the BBC. "We do believe him to be the only individual that fired gunshots at these locations," said Shreveport Police Department spokesperson Chris Bordelon in a news conference earlier on Sunday. Officials have not yet suggest-

ed a motive on the gunman's part. The children, siblings and one cousin, were three boys and five girls. They were aged between three to 11, the Caddo Parish coroner's office said. Local police had earlier said on Sunday the children ranged in age from one to 14. The coroner's office said the

children were identified by their mothers as Jayla Elkins, 3, Shayla Elkins, 5, Kayla Pugh, 6, Layla Pugh, 7, Markaydon Pugh, 10, Sariah Snow, 11, Khedarrion Snow, 6, and Braylon Snow, 5. Neighbours described their shock to US media. Mack London, 71, told NBC News he had lived in the area for decades and that "nothing like this has ever happened on this street". The attack occurred across multiple locations. The father is alleged to have first shot a woman, before moving to a second location where he fired further shots at the children. One of the victims was able to run away to a nearby home and called the authorities, police said.

UKRAINE POLICE CHIEF RESIGNS AFTER OFFICERS ALLEGEDLY FLED DEADLY SHOOTING



AGENCY
Kyiv: The head of Ukraine's patrol police, Yevhen Zhukov, has resigned after two of his officers faced criticism for allegedly fleeing a deadly mass shooting in the capital, Kyiv. Six people died and 14 others were injured on Saturday after a man opened fire on people in the street in Kyiv's southern Holosiivskiy district before taking others hostage in a nearby supermarket. He was later killed in a shootout with police. Footage has since been shared online appearing to show officers leaving civilians and running away from the scene. Ukraine's Interior Minister Igor Klymenko said the officers in question had been suspended and that an investigation into their actions was under way. "Serve and protect" is not just a slogan. It must be supported by appropriate professional actions. Especially at critical moments, when people's lives depend on it," he wrote on Telegram. However, Klymenko cautioned: "It is not entirely correct to make generalisations about the entire police only by the actions of two employees." Zhukov told a news conference on Sunday that

the officers had "failed to assess the situation properly and left civilians in danger". He also said they acted "unprofessionally and unworthily". "As a combat officer, I have decided to submit my resignation from the position I currently hold," Zhukov said. The Ukrainian authorities say they are treating Saturday's shooting as a terrorist act but have not yet spoken about a motive. Klymenko described the man's mental state as "clearly unstable". Eight people remain in hospital, of whom one adult was in an "extremely serious condition" and three were in a serious condition, officials said. Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelensky said in an update on Sunday that the two officers had been "at the scene of the crime, but did not stop the murderer, and fled on their own". He accused them of "inaction" and said a criminal case into the matter - which will also check their previous work - was being handled by Ukraine's national investigations bureau. "We are going through a war and every day, unfortunately, there are human losses from Russian strikes," Zelensky said.

JAPAN TSUNAMI WARNINGS DOWNGRADED AS PEOPLE DESCRIBE 'LOW RUMBLING' AS EARTHQUAKE HIT

AGENCY
Tokyo: A 7.7 magnitude earthquake occurred off Sanriku, off Japan's northeast coast, at 16:52 (08:52 BST) local time and had a depth of 19km (11.8 miles). Its strength was revised up, after previously being recorded at 7.5 and 7.4. The Japanese Meteorological Agency warns of aftershocks that could continue throughout the week. A tourist in Japan told the BBC he experienced the building "swaying and everyone's phone sounded the emergency alarm". Following the quake, tsunami warnings were triggered, covering much of the northeast. All the warnings have been downgraded to advisories, but people are still advised to remain away from the coast



and large bodies of water. The first tsunami waves reached the Iwate prefecture, with one as high as 40cm recorded in Miyako port. The Japan Meteorological Agency initially forecast tsunami waves

of up to 3m (10ft) reaching the Pacific coast of Hokkaido and Iwate prefectures - footage shows waves swelling in Hokkaido. As for public services, around 100 households are without power, according

to the cabinet secretary, and some bullet train services have resumed after earlier cancellations, the operator announced. The East Japan Railway Company says its bullet train operations

between Tokyo and Hachinohe have resumed. The services between the capital and Morioka Station and Fukushima have also started back up again. Operations remain suspended between Morioka and Akiita. There is currently no time scheduled for these services to resume. There are delays remaining between Fukushima and Shinjo. The operator said it had to suspend services due to the earthquake. The Japanese Meteorological Agency (JMA) says that the possibility of a large earthquake following today's 7.7 one is "relatively high". It has issued a subsequent earthquake advisory off the coasts of Hokkaido and Sanriku, but says that in such

cases, the probability of the larger earthquake is only about one in 100. This represents a roughly tenfold increase in risk compared to normal conditions when it's usually 0.1% or less. Japanese authorities say it is essential that people remain vigilant for about a week, and are advised to make preparations to evacuate and confirm what routes they would take to do so should the need arise. The JMA says that it's not guaranteed a large quake will happen again, adding that there is no need for advance evacuation. Sophia Kapsalis and her partner Daniel Wilkinson have been travelling for six months and are currently at the end of a road trip around Hokkaido.



FAREWELL BROCK LESNAR

Brock Lesnar's battle with Oba Femi on the second night of WWE WrestleMania 42 turned out to be an emotional affair, a classic passing of the torch moment from the 'Beast Incarnate'. After what can only be described as an 'electric battle' between Lesnar and Oba Femi, the former removed his gloves and boots, signalling that his time in the ring had come to an end. The conclusion of the match transformed a high-octane encounter into a heavy, historic moment that marked the end for one of the company's biggest performers. Lesnar soaked in the applause as the crowd burst into deafening 'Thank you, Brock' and 'Thank you, Lesnar' chants. The entire chain of events fuelled immediate speculation about the wrestler's future, and the legendary Kurt Angle has confirmed what fans feared

was true. "Love you, my brother. There will only be one like you. Enjoy retirement, Brock," Kurt Angle wrote on X (formerly Twitter). In a sport where gestures often speak louder than words, Lesnar provided the ultimate signal of an end. The loss to the rising powerhouse, Oba Femi, saw Lesnar leaving his gear in the centre of the squared circle—a universal sign of retirement. He signalled that the most dominant era in modern wrestling history has reached the end of the road. The moment became clearer when Brock's long-time associate and 'Wiseman', Paul Heyman, entered the ring. In a rare display of vulnerability for both men, they shared a heart-warming hug before making their way out of the ring together for what may be the final time. The wrestling world

was quick to react to the departure of the former world champion, with farewell messages flooding social media. A post on X read: "An emotional Brock Lesnar has removed his gloves and shoes after losing to Oba Femi at Mania. He put them in the middle of the ring and waved to the crowd. And then a big hug with his long-time friend, Paul Heyman. Is this really it? Sure seemed that way." As the curtain falls on one of the most decorated careers in sports entertainment and MMA history, the sentiment across the industry is clear: there will never be another athlete quite like Brock Lesnar.



IPL 2026: JASPRIT BUMRAH'S 1ST BALL MAGIC AFTER TILAK VARMA SLAMS RECORD-BREAKING 100



Tilak Varma smashed an incredible century off just 45 balls to power Mumbai Indians (MI) to a total of 199/5 in 20 overs against Gujarat Titans (GT) in their crucial IPL 2026 clash in Ahmedabad on Monday. Tilak struggled at the start but went berserk in the final few overs, slamming eight sixes en route to his century. Kagiso Rabada's three wickets rattled MI in the powerplay but Naman Dhir (45) and Tilak rescued the ship. GT captain Shubman Gill won the toss and opted to bowl. MI are looking to end their four-game losing streak, while GT are eyeing their third win in a row.

Vaibhav Sooryavanshi Inconsolable As KKR Beat RR In Last-Over Thriller, Video Breaks Fans' Hearts

AGENCY
Mumbai: The youngest Indian Premier League (IPL) sensation, Vaibhav Sooryavanshi, had his heart broken after his team, the Rajasthan Royals were beaten by the Kolkata Knight Riders on Sunday. Sooryavanshi, who gave the team another blazing start at the top, scoring 46 runs off 28 balls, wasn't happy to see his side suffering a defeat despite being well ahead at one point in the game. Seeing Rinku Singh inspire KKR to their first win of the season, Sooryavanshi was absolutely distraught on the sidelines. In a video that has surfaced on social media, the teenage opener could be seen hiding his face with his cap, wiping tears as he saw



his team lose out on two points from a winning position. The 15-year-old had to be consoled at that point. Yesterday Vaibhav Sooryavanshi was spotted crying after the game... This guy is unbelievable! Whether he gets out early or the team loses, he wears his

heart on his sleeve. Honestly, that's that 15-year-old mindset I know I would've been doing the exact same thing at that age! Former India all-rounder Irfan Pathan praised young Sooryavanshi after another impressive outing against the Kolkata franchise, say-

ing the emerging batter continues to prove a growing theory that he tends to rise especially when facing big-name bowlers. Pathan noted that Sooryavanshi once again showed his talent against quality opposition, reinforcing the belief that he is a "special player" with a bright future ahead. He added that the youngster has the potential to stay at the top level for many years if he continues developing at this pace and temperament. "The theory of Vaibhav Sooryavanshi needing big-name bowlers in the opposition is proving true again :) This kid is a special player with many years at the top level ahead of him," Pathan wrote in an X post.

MCA Inaugurates Champions Trophy 2026 As Key Build-Up To T20 Mumbai League

AGENCY
Mumbai: The Mumbai Cricket Association (MCA) today inaugurated the MCA Champions Trophy 2026 at the MCA BKC Ground, marking the start of a key preparatory tournament ahead of the highly anticipated T20 Mumbai League 2026. The inauguration ceremony was attended by MCA President Ajinkya Naik, Chief Guest Rajeev Kulkarni, former India captain Diana Edulji, MCA Secretary Prof. Dr. Unmesh Khanvilkar, Joint Secretary Nilesh Bhosle, Treasurer Arman Mallick along with Apex Council members, and players. The tournament, scheduled from April 20 to April 30, will feature eight teams



selected by MCA selectors from a pool of registered players for the T20 Mumbai League. Matches will be played across four venues: MCA BKC, MCA Sachin Tendulkar Gymkhana in Kandivali, Dadoji Konddev Stadium in Thane, and

Western Railway in Mahalaxmi. Designed as a high-performance platform, the MCA Champions Trophy 2026 will provide valuable match exposure to emerging players, while helping franchises assess player form, fitness, and

readiness and fine-tune combinations ahead of the T20 Mumbai League 2026 auction. The tournament is also expected to play a pivotal role in shaping team strategies and identifying key performers ahead of the league.

PHILIPP LAHM ON WHAT MAKES 'GRIZZLY BEAR' MANUEL NEUER SPECIAL AT 40 AND TONI KROOS' CRITICISM

AGENCY
Mumbai: As Bayern Munich arrived at the Allianz Arena to face VfB Stuttgart, they stood just one point away from securing a historic 35th Bundesliga title. True to form, the Bavarians dismantled Stuttgart 4-2, despite resting key players such as Harry Kane, Dayot Upamecano, and Michael Olise. With Bayern on the cusp of another league triumph, few figures are better placed to comment on the 'record champions' than Philipp Lahm – the man who captained the club to their famous 2013 treble and led Germany to FIFA World Cup glory in 2014. Speaking with NDTV in a media roundtable setup by



Bundesliga just hours before kick-off, Lahm shared his thoughts on Manuel Neuer, whom he recently dubbed a 'Grizzly Bear' following the goalkeeper's heroics in the first leg of the UEFA Champions League quarter-final against Real Madrid. Lahm

also addressed Toni Kroos' recent criticism regarding Bayern's struggle to close out high-stakes matches – a vulnerability that was evident during both legs of their European clash with Madrid. Furthermore, Lahm expanded on his own critiques of the German youth system. He argued that the current coaching philosophy focuses too heavily on developing 'all-round' players who can perform various roles, rather than producing the distinct 'specialists' that defined previous generations. Question 1: You've previously noted that while there are minor signs of age in the Bundesliga, his composure, presence, and focus remain vital for winning titles.

Vaibhav Sooryavanshi Wins Over Shreyas Iyer, PBKS Skipper Makes Bold "Future" Remark



AGENCY
Mumbai: There's not a single soul in the Indian Premier League (IPL) that has been left untouched by the impact of Vaibhav Sooryavanshi. The Rajasthan Royals (RR) opening batter hasn't just made a mark on his teammates but also the opponents. Even Punjab Kings captain Shreyas Iyer could-

n't stop himself from lauding the 15-year-old Sooryavanshi, admitting that he is a rare talent who's 'one for the future'. Iyer, who himself is vying for a spot in India's T20I team, added that all adjectives will be very inadequate to describe his explosive batting skills. So far, Sooryavanshi has amassed 246 runs in six innings, averaging 41 at a strike rate of 236.53. "He is a spectacular talent, and all the adjectives would be pretty less for him. The way he has that bat flow, the rhythm and momentum he creates before the

delivery, I think he is one for the future," said Iyer on JioStar's 'Believe'. Iyer himself has been in good nick, amassing 208 runs in six innings at an average of 52 and a strike-rate of 182.45. He also reflected on his instinctive stroke off Jasprit Bumrah in the second qualifier of IPL 2025, a moment that stood out in PBKS becoming runners-up in the competition. "It was completely instinctive. I was trying to hit him straight down the ground.

Hardik Pandya Grilled By Ex KKR Star: "When Was Your Last Match- Winning Knock?"



AGENCY
Mumbai: Mumbai Indians skipper Hardik Pandya hasn't had much going his way in the Indian Premier League (IPL) 2026 season. While MI are languishing at the bottom of the 10-team points table, Hardik hasn't been able to create much impact on the field, be it with the bat or with the ball. The all-rounder has even had his captaincy skills questioned, including his inability to get the best out of Jasprit Bumrah, the finest fast bowler in the world. Ahead of MI's clash against GT, former Kolkata Knight Riders (KKR) star Aakash Chopra has asked Hardik when his last match-winning knock was for MI. Hardik, widely con-

sidered as India's most prominent pace-bowling all-rounder, has struggled this season. He has only scored 81 runs in 4 matches this campaign for Mumbai. Chopra, in a video on his YouTube channel, has asked some tough questions to the MI skipper. "You have corrected the batting order now. I won't talk about Surya because he played many match-winning knocks last time, but Hardik, I don't remember when the last match-winning knock you played was. We have seen many good cameos, but that match-winning 70 or 80 runs where you win the match alone, Hardik is capable of that," Chopra said.

AFC CHAMPIONS LEAGUE 2:

Cristiano Ronaldo Scores 969th Career Goal As Al-Nassr Thrash Al-Wasl 4-0

Cristiano Ronaldo moved one step closer to the historic 1000-goal milestone by netting his 969th career goal, leading Al-Nassr to a commanding 4-0 victory over Al-Wasl in the quarter-finals and sealing their place in the AFC Champions League Two semi-finals. Al-Nassr delivered a dominant performance from start to finish, combining attacking sharpness with midfield control to overwhelm their opponents. The breakthrough arrived early, with Ronaldo striking in the 11th minute. Positioned well inside the box, he calmly converted from close range to give the visitors an immediate advantage and set the

tone for the evening. With momentum firmly on their side, Al-Nassr tightened their grip midway through the first half with two quick goals that effectively put the contest beyond reach. João Felix played a key role, delivering a pinpoint corner that was headed in by Inigo Martinez to double the lead. Moments later, another dangerous delivery caused confusion in the Al-Wasl defence, allowing Abdulrah Al-Amri to rise highest and make it 3-0. Al-Wasl struggled to respond, finding it difficult to break through a well-organised Al-Nassr backline. Their attacking efforts were limited, with only a handful of attempts failing to

seriously trouble goalkeeper Bento. In contrast, Al-Nassr continued to create chances, with Ronaldo going close to adding another before being substituted shortly after the hour mark. The visitors maintained their dominance after the break, controlling possession and dictating the tempo through Marcelo Brozovic in midfield. Their superiority was evident in both territory and chance creation, as Al-Wasl remained pinned back for long periods. The rout was completed in the 80th minute when Sadio Mane latched onto a through ball and finished from a tight angle to add a fourth goal. The emphatic victory not only underlined Al-Nassr's

credentials as strong contenders in the competition but also highlighted Ronaldo's enduring influence. With his 969th career goal, the Portuguese forward continues his remarkable pursuit of the 1000-goal landmark while guiding his team confidently into the semi-finals.



Natural Star Nani gave the ceremonial clap to officially launch the prestigious film starring Vijay Deverakonda, directed by Shouryuv, under the Vyra banner



Actor Vijay Deverakonda is taking a bold step toward elevating Indian cinema to a global level. He is teaming up with “Hi Nanna” fame director Shouryuv for a massive global project. Notably, several top international technicians are working on this film. The prestigious project is being produced under the Vyra banner. The film was formally launched today in Hyderabad with a traditional pooja ceremony, where Natural Star Nani sounded the clap for the muhurat shot. The recently released announcement poster has already created high expectations. The film brings together an impressive technical crew: Alejandro Martinez, who has worked on Hollywood projects like “House of the Dragon” and “Fallout,” serves as the Director of Photography. Eric Durst, known for his work on “Gods of Egypt,” “Batman Forever,” and “Snowpiercer,” is the VFX Supervisor. Suresh Selvarajan, who worked on films like “Animal” and “Om Shanti Om,” is the Production Designer.

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KAMAKSHI BHASKARLA AS MAHADEVI IN MS RAJU’S AGADHA!

Legendary filmmaker M. S. Raju, the man behind cult films like *Devi*, *Satruvu*, *Okkadu*, *Varsham*, *Manasantha Nuvve*, *Nuvvosthanante* and others is coming up with another super interesting film. Raju is known for presenting his characters with depth and purpose, and the introduction of Mahadevi from his next film *Agadha* adds a new layer of intrigue to this mystical divine thriller. The makers are carefully unveiling the world of *Agadha* piece by piece, building anticipation with every reveal. The curiosity sparked by the first look of *Agadha* has now moved to its next reveal. The makers have officially

announced that the mysterious girl seen standing before the divine idol in the earlier poster is none other than Kamakshi Bhaskarla. She plays the pivotal female lead Mahadevi in the film. With this announcement, the visual imagination that MS Raju created through the first poster now finds a face and a powerful screen presence. Draped in a traditional black saree, seated intensely before the mystic backdrop of tridents, lamps, and the towering idol, Kamakshi Bhaskarla’s look itself suggests that her character carries significant weight in the narrative. Her fierce expression, traditional appearance, and the spiritual aura around the setting hint that Mahadevi is not just a regular character but someone deeply

connected to the mystical core of the story. Meanwhile, overwhelmed by the response to the first look, MS Raju released a heartfelt note expressing his gratitude to the audience, well wishers, directors, and actors for their encouraging words and appreciation. He shared that the love pouring in through calls, messages, and social media has strengthened his belief in the story he is telling. As a writer and director, he said this encouragement motivates him to give his absolute best and ensure that every aspect of *Agadha* lives up to expectations. He concluded by thanking everyone for their constant support and belief, saying it truly means everything to him. Being made on a grand scale under Sri Adi Varaha Productions by producer Kasi Visalakshi Balusu, *Agadha* is currently in post production. With 45 minutes of VFX, extensive set work, and 85 days of shoot, the film promises a unique cinematic experience across Telugu, Tamil, Kannada, Malayalam, and Hindi.



Marking His Return to Telugu Screens, Dhanush Starrer ‘Kara’ Officially Fixes April 30, 2026 as Its Telugu Release Date



The much-awaited film *Kara*, starring Dhanush and directed by Vignesh Raja, is all set for a theatrical release in Telugu on April 30, 2026. The Telugu version will be released by CH Sathish Kumar & Rajesh Kumar Bobbara under Vigneswara Entertainments - R Star Logistics, ensuring the widest reach across the Telugu States. Produced by Dr. Ishari K. Ganesh under Vels Film International Ltd, in association with Think Studios and Vigneswara Entertainments, *Kara* has been steadily building strong momentum across Tamil, Telugu, and overseas markets. Dhanush, who enjoys a strong and consistent fan base in Telugu, has delivered successful films like *Raghuvaran*, *B.Tech* (VIP), *Asuran*, and *Saar*

(Vaathi), all of which Telugu audiences received well. With *Kara*, he returns with a film already carrying strong expectations and growing curiosity. The film’s buzz has been built across multiple fronts. The Telugu version of the song *Kannamma Naa Kannamma* has clocked over 4.1 million views on YouTube, creating a strong emotional connection with Telugu audiences. While this is the only song released in Telugu so far, it has played a key role in introducing the film’s tone and world. At the same time, Telugu audiences have widely followed the Tamil songs, promotional glimpses, and interviews, with viewers actively engaging with the content beyond language barriers. This cross-language traction highlights how *Kara*

is not just gaining attention in Tamil, but is equally building its presence in the Telugu market, alongside growing interest in international territories. Directed by Vignesh Raja, who earned acclaim for *Por Thozhil*, the film is expected to offer a compelling narrative driven by strong performances and rooted storytelling. The film stars Mamitha Baiju as the female lead, along with a notable supporting cast including Jayaram, K. S. Ravikumar, Karunas, and M. S. Bhaskar. On the technical front, *Kara* brings together a highly accomplished team. Cinematographer Theni Eswar, known for *Peranbu*, lends a naturalistic visual tone, while editor Sreejith Sarang of *Vikram Vedha* fame ensures a sharp narrative flow.

“Gedela Raju” is something special to me. I believe all movie lovers will like “Gedela Raju” – actor and music director Raghu Kunche



command over it, which helped a lot while composing the music. The background score (BGM) in our movie is very natural. These days, in many films, background music tends to dominate the characters. But if you observe older films like “*Shiva*” and “*Geethanjali*,” the BGM used to enhance the character subtly, like cream over milk. Now BGM often feels like just noise. I was careful about this in our film—I made sure the BGM never dominates the character and remains settled. The songs are situational and help move the story forward. Out of the three songs, I sang one, Babekka sang another, and Mangadevi sang the third. I was given 45 days for the BGM. Harish handled the sound design for our movie. He is the assistant to Rajarathnam, who worked on sound design for films like “*KGF*” and “*Kalki*.” Watching it in Dolby will give a great audio experience. My character in the film needed to look intimidating, so I gained 12 kg for it. Mythri Sasi said after watching the film that he thought I would be soft based on my earlier television appearances, but I was quite frightening in this role. Everyone who watched the film said my character has strong mass appeal. Initially, we planned to release the movie on the 17th, but theaters weren’t confirmed. At that time, Madhura Sridhar Reddy suggested postponing to the next week. We reconsidered, and eventually everything fell into place. In the Nizam region, Mythri group is releasing the film in over 100 theaters.

The film “*Gedela Raju*,” in which Raghu Kunche plays the title role, comes with the tagline “*Kakinada Taluka Cinema*.” Along with Raghu Kunche, the film stars Ramachandram Punyamurtula, Vikas, Tina Shwavy, Mounika, Ravi Chinnibilli, and others. The teaser, trailer, and songs of the film have already been released and received a good response. Presented by Raghu Kunche under the banner of Moturi Talkies, the film is directed by Chaitanya Moturi and produced by Vani Ravikumar Moturi. The movie is set for a grand theatrical release on the 24th of this month. In a recent interview, actor and music director Raghu Kunche shared the highlights of the film. I have previously worked as both an actor and music director for several films. But “*Gedela Raju*” feels something special to me. Since I played a character that runs throughout the film, I developed a strong

“Chiranjeevi” Will Be Supported by Audiences for Its Strong Content – Hero Kiku Yanamala at Glimpse Launch Event

Chiranjeevi” stars Kiku Yanamala and Kashish Khan in the lead roles. The film also features Tanikella Bharani, Eeshwari Rao, Goparaju Ramana, Srikanth Bharat, Viva Raghava, and others in key roles. The movie is being produced by Deepti Nadiminti under the banner of Kiku Entertainments, with Shubha Sai Venkat as the director. “*Chiranjeevi*” is gearing up for a summer release. Today, the film’s glimpse launch event was held grandly in Hyderabad. Art Director Murthy said that director Venkat took care of every aspect of the film. The team shot in locations like Araku and Rampachodavaram, creating sets in certain areas. He added that the film has



turned out very well. Editor Chota K. Prasad shared that director Venkat approached him with the story, and even after hearing just half of it, he understood how promising the film would be. He assured his full support to the project. He mentioned that “*Chiranjeevi*” will be gripping throughout and highly engaging. He also noted that the glimpse itself gives a hint of the core conflict, and appreciated the director’s dedication in extracting the best output from the team.

Music director Sekhar Chandra said that although he usually works on love stories and horror films, this is the first time he has composed for a film that blends action and romance like “*Chiranjeevi*.” He found the concept interest-

ing, and while working on the background score, he was surprised by the intensity of each scene. He especially mentioned that the climax was completely unexpected and that the film contains a clever narrative element. He enjoyed working on the project. Actor Rajeev said that “*Chiranjeevi*” is also the name of Megastar Chiranjeevi, and just like the name, their film will also be impressive. He expressed confidence that if Megastar Chiranjeevi watches the film, he would appreciate the team. He added that every scene is gripping, and from the second half to the climax, audiences will be fully engaged without distractions. He requested everyone to support their hard work. Actor Ram Jagan said that direc-

tor Venkat has executed the film even better than how he initially narrated the story. He mentioned that the twists in the film are truly unpredictable. He praised producer Deepti for making the film on a grand scale without compromising on production quality. He also highlighted the strong performances by the cast and requested the media to help take the film to audiences. Producer Deepti Nadiminti said she comes from a traditional family. She recalled how her father once took her to a movie but made her leave before the interval, as he felt she shouldn’t watch it. Despite that background, she always had a strong attraction toward cinema. Her passion led her to become a producer.

OM SHANTHI DISCO SHANTHI

Already caution kiya. Already! Title, Motion Poster Released

From the creator of ‘*Anando Brahma*’ and ‘*Save The Tigers*,’ Mahi V Raghav comes up with a new comedy horror, titled ‘*Om Shanthi Disco Shanthi*.’ But with a twist never seen before. Get ready for another laugh riot! While ghosts are known to scare humans what happens when they meet their worst nightmare? What if they encounter people who don’t even know what fear is? Welcome to a world where ‘madness meets the supernatural.’ *Om Shanthi Disco Shanthi* is an outrageous confusion comic adventure of Ghosts vs. the Mad. Will the ghosts succeed in haunting them? Or will the mad turn the



tables and scare the ghosts? Experience the spooky, yet fun ride with jump scares, witty conversations, and unexpected twists. This September... in theatres.

Pithapuramlo... Ala Modalaindi’ — A Family Drama. In this film, we have beautifully portrayed the bond between a father and a daughter



Under the banner of Mahesh Chandra Cinema Team, Dundigalla Balakrishna, Akula Suresh Patel, and F.M. Murali (Godavari Kittayya) have produced the film *Pithapuramlo... Ala Modalaindi*.

This movie took shape under the direction of veteran filmmaker Mahesh Chandra. Dr. Rajendra Prudhviraj, Kedar Shankar, Manichandana, Annappurnamma, Sunny Akhil, Virat, Sai Praneth, Srilu, Prathyusha, and Rehana played the lead roles in the film. The movie is scheduled for a grand release on May 1st. In this context, producers Dundigalla Balakrishna, Akula Suresh Patel, and F.M. Murali

(Godavari Kittayya) interacted with the media and shared details about the film. Speaking on the occasion... Producer Dundigalla Balakrishna stated: * “Our director is a staunch supporter of the Jana Sena Party; he actively campaigned for the party in Pithapuram. He hails from Chebrolu. He made a promise that if Mr. Pawan Kalyan were to win the election, he would shoot his next film in that very region. That is precisely why we filmed there. We completed nearly 75 percent of the shooting in that location. We also filmed certain portions in Hyderabad and Goa. We have shared a long-standing relationship with Mr. Mahesh Chandra spanning many years. Initially, Mr. Mahesh Chandra intended to make a film with Mr. Akula Suresh; subsequently, we joined the project.”