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SCAN FOR E-PAPER



OM NAMO VENKATESAYA



20-04-2026
Total pilgrims: 80,084
Tonsures: 28,929
Hundi kanukalu: 3.69 CR
Waiting Compartments: 12

WEATHER
38 °C | °F
Precipitation: 5%
Humidity: 34%
Wind: 8 km/h

GOLD RATE
24K ₹
1,53,992/-

INDIA-LINKED TARIFF REFUNDS IN US MAY TOUCH \$12 BILLION

New Delhi (TSIT): India-linked tariff refunds on exports to the United States are expected to be in the region of \$10 to \$12 billion after the US authorities opened a \$166 billion claims window for customs duties imposed by the Donald Trump administration that

were later struck down by the courts, according to a report by Global Trade Research Initiative. The refund process opened on April 20, and claims can be filed only by US-based importers, which means Indian exporters have no direct legal route to seek repayments. Indian companies are now dependent on talks with American buyers if they want to secure any share of the refunds. Exporters may need to seek rebate-sharing deals, price changes, or improved terms in future contracts.

MODERATE 5.2 MAGNITUDE QUAKE JOLTS PARTS OF MANIPUR

Imphal (TSIT): A moderate earthquake measuring 5.2 on the Richter scale shook Manipur's Kamjong district and adjoining areas, as well as neighbouring Myanmar, on Tuesday morning, officials said. Disaster Management authorities in Imphal confirmed that there were no immediate reports of loss of life or damage to property following the tremor.

According to data from the National Centre for Seismology (NCS), the earthquake struck at a depth of 62 km below the surface, affecting Kamjong and nearby regions. Tremors were also felt in neighbouring Ukhrul district and state capital Imphal, and even in certain parts of Meghalaya, but no casualties or damage have been reported from these areas so far. Tuesday's tremor marks the second earthquake in the mountainous northeastern region within less than a week.

Telangana ideal for MedTech manufacturing: Minister

**Hyderabad TSIT:**

IT and Industries Minister Duddilla Sridhar Babu stated that Telangana offers world-class infrastructure for the manufacturing of advanced medical devices, positioning the state as a global hub for MedTech innovation.

The Minister made these remarks during a meeting at the Secretariat on Tuesday with a delegation of MedTech industrialists and university researchers from the Netherlands, led by Innovation Councilor Jan Reint Smit. Sridhar Babu explained

that facilities at the Medical Devices Park and Genome Valley are fully equipped to enable immediate commencement of production. He highlighted that Telangana provides an ideal ecosystem for medical research, artificial intelligence applications, and advanced manufacturing.

Emphasizing the state's strengths, he noted that Telangana is already a leader in pharmaceutical production, innovation, and vaccine manufacturing. Recalling the COVID-19 pandemic, he said biotech companies from the state sup-

plied vaccines to over 120 countries, showcasing Telangana's global capabilities.

The Minister said the government, under the leadership of Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy, is committed to transforming Telangana into a central hub for medical device manufacturing by extending full support to investors.

He pointed out that the state offers abundant availability of power, water, and land, along with a highly skilled workforce. Sridhar Babu also highlighted emerging opportunities in areas such as imaging technology, clinical validation, and digital health profiles, where investments can be scaled rapidly. Encouraging global collaboration, he invited the visiting delegation to explore partnerships with universities in Telangana to strengthen research and innovation in the life sciences sector. Senior officials including IT Advisor Sai Krishna, TGIIC MD Shashank, Industries Commissioner Nikhil Chakravarthy, Special Secretary Raghurama Sharma, Telangana Life Sciences CEO Sarvesh Singh, and other representatives were present at the meeting.

'Meant people being terrorised': Kharage stresses didn't call PM Modi 'a terrorist'

Chennai (TSIT)

Congress President Mallikarjun Kharge on Tuesday clarified his controversial remark on Prime Minister Narendra Modi, stating that his comments were misinterpreted and that he did not intend to call the Prime Minister a "terrorist." Addressing a press conference here, Kharge said his statement was meant to highlight what he described as an atmosphere of fear and intimidation under the current government. "I did not mean that Modi is a terrorist. What I meant was that people are being terrorised, and institutions and agencies are being used to intimidate them," he clarified. The Congress chief alleged that key institutions, including investigative agencies, were functioning under political pressure, thereby weakening democratic norms. He further claimed that the Election Commission was not acting independently and accused it of behaving like an "extension office" of the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP).



TN can regain past glory only through NDA: CM Naidu

DMK, Congress opposition to Women's Reservation Bill a blow to women, southern states

**Chennai (TSIT)**

N. Chandrababu Naidu asserted that Tamil Nadu can regain its past prominence only under the leadership of the National Democratic Alliance (NDA), emphasizing that coordinated governance with the Centre is key to development, employment, and welfare. Addressing a press conference in Chennai during his two-day election campaign, Naidu, accompanied by Union Minister Piyush Goyal, highlighted the strong historical and cultural ties between Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu. He praised Tamil Nadu's legacy and contributions to the nation through eminent personalities and civil servants.

Naidu observed that Tamil Nadu, once a leading economic hub in South India, is now facing stiff competition from cities like Bengaluru and Hyderabad. He urged voters to support parties focused on develop-

ment and progressive governance.

Criticizing the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam and Indian National Congress, he alleged that their opposition to key legislations, including the Women's Reservation Bill, has negatively impacted women and southern states. On delimitation, Naidu stated that increasing constituencies by 50 percent, irrespective of population, would ensure fair representation and 33 percent reservation for women. He recalled opposing population-based delimitation during the tenure of former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee to safeguard southern interests. Expressing concern over slowing growth, Naidu pointed to migration from Chennai and issues such as law and order challenges and drug abuse. He credited the Centre for supporting major infrastructure projects, including railway modernization and the proposed high-speed corridor connecting Chennai, Bengaluru, and Amaravati.

Six dead in explosion at fireworks manufacturing unit in Kerala's Thrissur

Thrissur (TSIT)

At least six people were killed, and several others were injured following a massive explosion at a fireworks manufacturing unit in Mundathikkodu, Thrissur, in Kerala during preparations for the Thrissur Pooram, an annual Hindu temple festival being held in the city. A state government official who reached the spot said there were around 40 people who were working in the unit as the organisers had got lunch for the employees.

"We have got reports that seven people managed to run away," said the official.

The explosion occurred at a fireworks unit used for preparing firecracker samples for the Thiruvambadi faction of the Thrissur Pooram. A large quantity of explosives was reportedly stored at the site, which caught fire and triggered the blast during ongoing preparation work.

Earlier information had indicated that around 40 people were injured, with at least eight in critical condition. Ambulances rushed to the scene, and authorities instructed Thrissur Medical College



and other nearby hospitals to remain on alert to handle the emergency.

ploded materials at the site. Officials, including police personnel and emergency teams, reached the location to manage the situation.

The explosion was so powerful that its sound was heard several kilometres away, underscoring the intensity of the blast and the scale of the fireworks materials involved. Staff members at the state-

KERALA CM ORDERS EMERGENCY RESPONSE

Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan directed that the entire government machinery be placed on high alert to ensure immediate rescue and medical assistance. He held discussions with the Chief Secretary and instructed that specialist treatment be provided for the seriously injured. If required, expert doctors from outside the state will also be deployed. The Chief Minister said rescue operations are being closely monitored through a dedicated system, with coor-

Thick smoke and fire engulfed the area, and rescue operations faced difficulties due to the presence of unex-



ordinated efforts involving the Police, Fire and Rescue Services, Health Department, Revenue Department, and Disaster Management authorities. He also expressed deep condolences over the loss of lives.

run KILA told that they were surprised to hear a massive sound and felt it might be an earthquake.

India gifts 2 tonnes of medical supplies to Tanzania

Dar es Salaam (TSIT):

India has handed over a substantial two-tonne consignment of essential life-saving medical supplies to the Shree Hindu Mandal Hospital in Tanzania's Dar es Salaam, underscoring New Delhi's commitment to international cooperation and humanitarian support. According to the Indian High Commission in Dar es Salaam, the formal handover took place on Monday (local time) during a press conference held at the mission, where the Indian High Commissioner, Bishwadip Dey, presented the consignment of medicines to Kaushik L. Ramaiya, Trustee of the Shree Hindu



Mandal Hospital. "This comprehensive contribution is designed to bolster the hospital's diagnostic and treatment capabilities, featuring a wide array of critical items including oxygen concentrators, suction units, oximeters, microscopes, and stethoscopes.

Campaigning ends in Tamil Nadu ahead of polls, silence period begins

Chennai (TSIT):

Campaigning for the 2026 Tamil Nadu Assembly elections drew to a close at 6 p.m. on Tuesday, and the state has officially entered the crucial 48-hour "silence period" ahead of polling scheduled for April 23. The tenure of the present government will end on May 10, and the Election Commission had announced the poll schedule on March 15, fixing a single-phase election on April 23 and counting of votes on May 4.

In the run-up to the polls, political parties have completed seat-sharing arrangements and candidate selection and carried out intense campaigning across the



state. The contest in Tamil Nadu is largely four-cornered, with the ruling DMK leading the Secular Progressive Alliance, while the AIADMK heads the National Democratic Alliance.

Apart from these fronts, the Naam Tamilar Katchi and actor Vijay's Tamilaga Vetttri Kazhagam are also in the fray independently. Top leaders criss-

crossed the state over the past few weeks, addressing rallies and undertaking extensive outreach programmes despite soaring summer temperatures.

With campaigning now over, strict regulations have come into force to ensure a free and fair election process. Tamil Nadu Chief Electoral Officer Archana Patnaik, in a statement, outlined the guidelines that will remain in effect from 6 p.m. on April 21 until the close of polling on April 23, under Section 126 of the Representation of the People Act, 1951. As per the rules, no public meetings, processions or campaign-related gatherings are permitted during this period.

Attempts being made to divide people on religious, linguistic lines: Bhagwat

AGARTALA (TSIT):

RSS chief Mohan Bhagwat on Tuesday alleged that attempts were being made to create divisions among people on religious and linguistic lines, asserting that India's strength lay in its unity amid diversity. Addressing a gathering after the consecration ceremony of Maa Chinmayi Soundarya Temple at Fakrimgura, around 23 km from Agartala, Bhagwat said certain "evil forces" were worried that their "shops" would shut down if India progressed by drawing on its centuries-old civilisational strength.



NITIN GADKARI PUSHES FOR 100 PC ETHANOL BLENDING AMID WEST ASIA OIL CONCERNS



New Delhi: Road Transport and Highways Minister Nitin Gadkari on Tuesday, April 21, said India should aspire to achieve 100 per cent ethanol blending in the near future, as vulnerabilities in oil exports amid the West Asia crisis have made it necessary for the country to become self-reliant in the energy sector. Gadkari further said the Corporate Average Fuel Efficiency III standards, which will be implemented from April 1 next year, will have little impact on electric and flex-fuel vehicles.

"In the near future, India should aspire to achieve 100 per cent ethanol blending... Today, we are facing an energy crisis due to the war in West Asia, so it is necessary for us to become self-reliant in the energy sector," he said, while addressing the Indian Federation of Green Energy's Green

Transport Conclave. Currently, Indian vehicles can run on E20 petrol with minor changes to the engine to prevent corrosion and other issues.

Countries like Brazil have 100 per cent ethanol blending.

"We import fossil fuels worth Rs 22 lakh crore, which is also causing pollution... so we need to work on increasing production of alternative fuel and bio-fuel," he said.

Noting that green hydrogen is the fuel of the future, Gadkari said there is a need to reduce the cost of running a hydrogen fuel station to make it financially viable.

"Transport of hydrogen fuel is a problem. Also, we need to produce 1 kg of hydrogen at USD 1 dollar, to make India an exporter of energy," he said. The minister said that there is a need to produce hydrogen from waste.

HCA BOOSTS CRICKET DEVELOPMENT IN TELANGANA

HYDERABAD (TSIT) The Hyderabad Cricket Association (HCA), under the leadership of Manney Jeevan Reddy, is strengthening cricket development with a focus on transparency, grassroots growth and innovation. The association has launched talent identification drives across districts and introduced the District Cricket Development Programme to improve infrastructure, coaching and league matches beyond Hyderabad. HCA has also adopted digital systems for player registration, performance tracking and transparent selections to ensure merit-based opportunities.



Collector orders steps to tackle water issues

Karimnagar: Karimnagar Collector Chitra Mishra has directed officials to take urgent measures to prevent drinking water shortages in villages. During an inspection of freshwater wells in Mallannapally villages of Choppadandi mandal, along with Additional Collector Ashwini Tanaji Wakade and officials, she stressed that water supply must meet the needs of the population. The Collector instructed officials to complete pending works using sanctioned funds and repair pipeline leakages immediately to avoid disruptions.



TWO KILLED IN ORR ROAD ACCIDENT

Ranga Reddy (TSIT) Two persons, including an 11-year-old boy, were killed and two others injured in a road accident near Wonderla on the ORR service road under Adibatla police limits on Tuesday. The victims were identified as Prashanth Goud (41) and his son Srihan (11). His wife Vani (38) and daughter Shashika (10) were injured and are undergoing treatment. Police said the family was travelling on a motorcycle to Suryagiri Ellamma Temple when an unidentified vehicle hit them. Prashanth died on the spot, while the boy succumbed at a hospital.



Persistent "Acidity" Turns Cancer; Robotic Surgery Saves Patient at CARE Hospitals



Hyderabad (TSIT) A 53-year-old patient's seemingly routine symptoms of acidity and persistent cough turned out to be a serious case of gastroesophageal junction cancer, highlighting the dangers of ignoring prolonged discomfort. Doctors at CARE Hospitals successfully treated the condition through a complex robotic-assisted surgery. The patient, Ramarao, initially experienced mild upper abdominal discomfort and a persistent cough, which he assumed to be a minor gastric issue. However, upon evaluation at the hospital, he was diagnosed with cancer at the gastroesophageal junction—a condition often difficult to detect due to vague symptoms. A team led by Dr. N. Karunakar Reddy, along with Dr. Mustafa Hussain Razvi, performed a total gastrectomy using the advanced Da Vinci Surgical System. The procedure involved removal of the stomach and reconstruction of the digestive tract, ensuring precise tumour removal and improved recovery outcomes. Doctors noted that such cancers are particularly complex due to their location between the oesophagus and stomach. The patient responded well to treatment and was discharged in stable condition after post-operative care. Hospital officials emphasized that early diagnosis is critical, as gastrointestinal cancers often go unnoticed until advanced stages. The case underscores the importance of seeking timely medical attention for persistent symptoms like unexplained cough or prolonged discomfort.

INSTALLATION OF A NEW POWER LINE IN WARD 22: COUNCILOR JALIGAM VIGNESH,



Yadadri Bhongir TSIT: Councilor Jaligam Vignesh announced that a new power line has been installed in New Ram Nagar, located within the limits of Ward 22 of the town, to accommodate the new constructions that have recently

taken place in the area. Speaking on the occasion, he explained that after receiving representations regarding the difficulties faced by ward residents due to the lack of a power line, MLA Kumbham Anil Kumar Reddy immediately issued directives to the concerned officials to lay a new line. Locals Sahadev, Brahmachari, Pokala Sudhakar, and Rajeswari participated in this event.

District Collector review meeting with welfare department officials

WARANGAL, April 21, TSIT : District Collector Dr. Satya Sharada participated in the review meeting organized with the officials of the Welfare Department as part of the Public Governance-Progress 99-Day Action Plan.



Anganwadi Services Must Be Strengthened Through Effective Use of Mobile Phones: Minister Vivekananda.



Mancherla correspondent , April 21, TSIT: State Labour and Mines Minister Vivekananda said that Anganwadi services should be delivered more effectively by making proper use of mobile phones provided by the government. On Tuesday, the

Minister distributed mobile phones to Anganwadi teachers at the Chennai MLA camp office under a state government initiative. Speaking on the occasion, he emphasized that the use of technology would significantly improve the quality of services provided through Anganwadi centres.

He stated that digital tools would help ensure faster and more transparent delivery of services to beneficiaries. The mobile phones would be particularly useful in enhancing services for children, pregnant women, and lactating mothers, he added.

The Minister urged Anganwadi staff to utilize the devices responsibly and perform their duties efficiently. He noted that bringing services closer to the people would help achieve the government's welfare objectives.

Nine-month-old infant airlifted from Chhattisgarh, saved after 45-day treatment at KIMS Cuddles

Hyderabad, April 21, 2026: A nine-month-old infant suffering from severe respiratory complications was successfully treated and saved after being airlifted from Chhattisgarh to Hyderabad and undergoing intensive care for over a month at KIMS Cuddles, Kondapur. According to Dr Parag Dekate, Clinical Director of Paediatrics and Head of the Paediatric Intensive Care Unit (PICU), the infant, a native of Raipur in Chhattisgarh, was initially admitted to a local hospital with symptoms of cold and cough. However, within a week, the child's condition deteriorated rapidly. Despite being placed on a ventilator, oxygen levels continued to fall, leading to a critical situation.

The infant was diagnosed with severe adenoviral pneumonia, a serious lung infection caused by adenovirus, resulting in respiratory failure.



As the condition turned critical, KIMS Cuddles Kondapur Paediatric Intensive care transport team reached Raipur. After stabilising the infant on a ventilator, the team coordinated with aviation services to safely airlift the child to Hyderabad.

Upon admission to the PICU at KIMS Cuddles, Kondapur, doctors identified severe Acute Respiratory Distress

Syndrome (ARDS) along with pneumothorax (air accumulation around the lungs). Advanced treatments, including High-Frequency Oscillatory Ventilation (HFOV) and inhaled nitric oxide, were administered, but the infant showed no significant improvement.

Given the worsening condition, the cardiothoracic surgery and PICU teams initiated VA-ECMO

(Veno-Arterial Extracorporeal Membrane Oxygenation), a life-saving support system that temporarily performs the functions of the heart and lungs by oxygenating the blood and removing carbon dioxide.

The infant remained on ECMO support for 25 days, during which the medical team managed multiple complications, including high viral load, secondary

infections, air leaks, bleeding, and fluctuations in blood pressure.

Gradually, the child's condition improved, allowing doctors to successfully wean the infant off ECMO and ventilator support. After a total of 45 days of intensive treatment, the infant recovered fully and was discharged.

The multidisciplinary team involved in the treatment included PICU specialists Dr Kalyan Kunchapudi, Dr. Avinash Reddy P., Dr. Vinod Kumar, and Dr. Madhuri K.; cardiothoracic surgeon Dr. Sandeep; and infectious disease specialist Dr. Ravi Teja. "This case highlights the importance of timely intervention and access to advanced rescue therapies like ECMO. Airlifting a critically ill infant on ventilator support and managing prolonged ECMO requires a highly skilled and coordinated medical team," said Dr Parag Dekate.

GITAM Scholar Awarded Ph.D. for Antidiabetic Research

Hyderabad (TSIT) GITAM Deemed to be University has awarded a Ph.D. in Pharmacy to Dr. Sunkara Muni Sireesha for her research on developing novel antidiabetic compounds. Her doctoral thesis, titled "Design, Synthesis, and Biological Evaluation of N-Heterocyclic Compounds as Putative Antidiabetic Agents," was carried out under the guidance of Dr. Beda Durga Prasad.

The research focused on identifying new therapeutic molecules for managing Type 2 Diabetes Mellitus. Using innovative medicinal chemistry and green synthesis techniques, the study developed heterocyclic compounds that showed strong inhibitory activity against enzymes responsible for post-meal blood glucose levels. Some of these compounds demonstrated efficacy comparable to the standard



drug Acarbose.

The findings contribute significantly to the development of safer and more effective treatments for diabetes and provide a strong foundation for future preclinical and clinical research. University leaders, including Prof. D. S. Rao, D. V. V. S. R. Varma, and Prof. G. Shiva Kumar, congratulated Dr. Sireesha for her achievement and praised her contribution to pharmaceutical research and healthcare innovation.

TRANSPARENT DELIVERY OF WELFARE SCHEMES ESSENTIAL: MP VAMSI KRISHNA



MANCHERLA CORRESPONDENT Peddapalli MP Gaddam Vamsi Krishna held a Praja Darbar in Mancherla on Tuesday, emphasizing that welfare schemes must reach only eligible beneficiaries transparently. He reviewed around 200 public grievances and directed officials to ensure swift action. Focusing on SC Corporation matters, he stressed that loans and benefits be sanctioned strictly to genuine candidates. The MP also instructed the District Employment Officer to organize camps for youth job placements. He assured continued accessibility to address public issues.

COLLECTOR SURABHI DIRECTS OFFICIALS TO ENSURE SUCCESSFUL WELFARE WEEK CELEBRATIONS IN JOGULAMBA GADWAL

Jogulamba Gadwal (TSIT). Jogulamba Gadwal's In-Charge District Collector, Adarsha Surabhi, has called on officials to ensure the smooth conduct of Welfare Week celebrations under the "Praja Palana Pragathi



Pranalika - 99 Days Programme." During a review meeting on Tuesday, she ordered the appointment of special officers at mandal and district levels for welfare hostels, Kasturba schools, and Gurukul institutions. A week-long schedule includes repair assessments, parent-teacher meetings, skill development awareness, summer camp training, and a concluding "Badibata" programme on April 26.

AICTE IDEA Lab Inaugurated at Kalasalingam University to Boost Innovation



Srivilliputhur (TSIT): A new AICTE IDEA Lab was inaugurated at Kalasalingam University, marking a major step toward enhancing practical learning and innovation among students. Established with the support of All India Council for Technical Education, New Delhi, the lab has been set up at a cost of Rs.90 lakh and is equipped with 16 precision and CNC-controlled machines to provide hands-on training in modern design, fabrication, and prototyping technologies.

The programme was presided over by Pro-Chancellor Dr. S. Arivazagi, while Vice President Dr. S. Shasi Anand formally inaugurated the facility. Speaking on the occasion, he said the lab will promote innovation, creativity, collaborative projects, and practical technical learning among university students as well as those from nearby institutions.

Vice Chancellor Dr. S. Nayanan and Registrar Dr. V. Vasudevan felicitated the initiative. Lab

Coordinator and Director (R&D) Dr. M. Pallikonda Rajasekaran outlined a one-year action plan, stating that the lab will be integrated into the academic curriculum and utilized by engineering students from their first year. The facility features advanced equipment including 3D scanners, multi-color and basic 3D printers, CNC machines, laser cutters, welding tools, PCB milling machines, and electronic workbenches, enabling interdisciplinary collaboration and skill development. The functioning of the equipment was demonstrated by technicians and student ambassadors. Directors, deans, heads of departments, faculty members, and industry representatives attended the event and appreciated the initiative.

The programme was organized by Dr. M. Murali, Dr. R. Kottaimalai, Dr. V. Muneeswaran, and Dr. Ramesh.

Strict Action on Vacant 2BHK Houses, Collector Orders Immediate Occupancy

Rangareddy (TSIT) Rangareddy District Collector C. Narayana Reddy has directed officials to ensure that all beneficiaries allotted double-bedroom (2BHK) houses occupy them without delay, warning of strict action against those failing to comply.

During a video conference held on Tuesday with Housing Department officials, RDOs, Tahsildars, and Municipal Commissioners, the Collector emphasized that both completed and under-construction houses must be allocated promptly to eligible beneficiaries. He instructed officials to identify deserving poor families from the L2 list through Indiramma Committees and complete the allotment process within the stipulated timeline.

The Collector made it clear that beneficiaries who have already been allotted houses must reside in them immediately. In cases where beneficiaries fail to occupy the houses, officials have been directed to issue notices and cancel allotments if necessary, reallocating them to other eligible applicants.

He also urged beneficiaries to report any genuine issues preventing them from shifting into the houses, assuring that necessary support would be provided. Stressing accountability, Narayana Reddy called for coordinated efforts among all departments to achieve targets efficiently and ensure that housing benefits reach the truly needy.



NMDC Wins 10 PRSI Awards for Corporate Communication Excellence

Hyderabad (TSIT) NMDC Limited, India's largest iron ore producer, has been honoured with 10 awards at the 4th National Conference of the Public Relations Society of India, held as part of National Public Relations Day celebrations in Hyderabad.

The recognitions highlight NMDC's growing strength in corporate communications and its ability to present impactful, people-centric narratives from its on-ground initiatives.

The event was attended by several dignitaries, including Ch. Priyanka, Special Commissioner, I&PR Department; K. V.

Ramana Chary; K. Nageswar; and other senior officials. The Corporate Communications team received the awards on behalf of NMDC.

NMDC secured first prizes in categories such as Corporate Communication Excellence, Sustainability Report, Annual Report, Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), Digital Public Relations, Internal House Journal Khanij Bharati, and Employee Engagement. It also won second prizes for its Wall Calendar, Diary, and Digital and Social Media Campaigns.



Tamil Nadu’s Future Lies with DMK Alliance:Shivakumar

Krishnagiri (TSIT): Karnataka Deputy Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar asserted that the future of Tamil Nadu lies with the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam-Congress alliance, expressing confidence that it will return to power under the leadership of M. K. Stalin.

Addressing a roadshow in support of Congress candidate Chellakumar in Krishnagiri, he criticized the Bharatiya Janata Party, questioning its political strategies and alleging attempts to weaken regional parties like the All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam.

Shivakumar emphasized the need to protect South India’s identity, highlighting its linguistic and cultural diversity. He called upon people to support the DMK-Congress alliance to safeguard regional interests and ensure justice.

He alleged that southern states were being deprived of their fair share of tax revenues and warned



against attempts to alter parliamentary representation through delimitation. “The entire country is watching. We must stand for justice and truth,” he said. Referring to welfare initiatives, he said both Congress and DMK are committed to people-centric governance. He cited Karnataka’s guarantee schemes and promised

that similar benefits, including financial assistance for women, would be implemented in Tamil Nadu. He also took a swipe at political opponents, remarking that “movie-style dialogues may entertain on screen but do not translate into real governance,” stressing the need for practical policies that improve people’s lives.

Shivakumar further said that leaders like Mallikarjun Kharge and Rahul Gandhi have placed their trust in the candidate, urging voters to support experienced leadership. He concluded by expressing confidence that the DMK-Congress alliance would once again form the government in the state.

Storm over Kharge’s ‘terrorist’ remark at PM Modi, ministers and MPs rip into Cong chief

New Delhi, April 21 : Congress President Mallikarjun Kharge found himself in the firing line of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) on Tuesday, as Union Ministers, MPs and party leaders launched a blistering attack at him for calling the Prime Minister Narendra Modi a “terrorist”. The political storm arising over Kharge’s comments, saw Union Ministers and leaders from the BJP launching a fierce and swift response at the Congress and its Chief.

Union Minister Piyush Goyal, while taking a strong objection to the highly deplorable remarks, demanded an outright apology and warned



that such personal attacks on the Prime Minister won’t go unpunished in the elections. “I feel ashamed that the

ongress and the DMK have stooped so low that they are insulting the Prime Minister who is democratically elected

by the people of India, by calling him a terrorist. Rahul Gandhi and M.K. Stalin must apologise for this downright insult to the Prime Minister Modi as well as the people of India who have voted him in,” Union Minister Goyal said, taking to his official X account. The Union Minister said that objectionable words against the Prime Minister was an insult to 140 crore Indians, including Tamil brothers and sisters, and said that such personal attacks against the Prime Minister Modi won’t reverse their electoral fate, that has already been sealed by the anger of the people who have suffered their misrule.

Prepare DPR for Flyover Construction at Iblur Junction: Maheshwar Rao

Bengaluru : The Chief Commissioner, Maheshwar Rao, has instructed officials to prepare a Detailed Project Report (DPR) for the construction of an additional flyover at Iblur Junction on the Outer Ring Road.

He spoke at a progress review meeting held today at the GBA central office auditorium regarding the development of Suraksha-75 junctions and white-topping works across the GBA jurisdiction.

He stated that constructing an additional flyover at Iblur Junction on the Outer Ring Road would help ease traffic congestion. In this regard, officials have been directed to immediately prepare the DPR and formulate a comprehensive plan to execute



the flyover project at the earliest.

Under the Suraksha-75 project, development work at Iblur Junction is already in progress. Officials have been instructed to coordinate with the Traffic Police Department and complete the work swiftly. Additionally, directions were given to acquire nearby vacant land under city corporation control and undertake necessary

works to reduce traffic congestion.

Work in Coordination: Coordination meetings have been conducted with the Traffic Police Department for 32 junctions under the Suraksha-75 project. GFCs have been finalized and handed over to the respective city corporations. Work has commenced at 10 junctions, and officials have been instructed to ensure timely completion.

Officials were also directed to take up and complete the remaining junction works in coordination with the Traffic Police at the earliest.

In areas where metro corridors exist, joint inspections should be conducted by officials from the city corporation, BMRL, and traffic police

departments to finalize designs and begin work promptly.

Resolve Issues and Expedite Works:

White-topping works are being undertaken on several roads in the city. Officials were instructed to obtain necessary permissions from the BWSSB and Traffic Police Department for works involving pipelines and underground drainage, and to accelerate execution to ensure completion within the stipulated time.

The meeting was attended by city corporation commissioners including Pommalla Sunil Kumar, K.N. Ramesh, Dr. Rajendra K.V., Chief Engineers, and officials from B-SMILE, BWSSB, BESCOM, BMRCL, and other departments.

‘DODMANSA’ TEASER TEASER

A ‘FILM’ OF THE LIFE OF AN AUTO DRIVER IN BANGALORE

Bengaluru: Young talent Sharath Krishna’s new film ‘Dodmansa’ is all set to hit the screens. The team, which has already completed most of the work, has now released the first teaser of the film ‘Dodmansa’.

The film ‘Dodmansa’, which has a fictional storyline revolving around the events that happen in the life of an auto driver in Bangalore, stars actor-cum-director Sharath Krishna as an auto driver. Reshma Lingarajappa appears as



the heroine in the film, while other artists like Huli Karthik, Balrajwadi, Shilpa and others have played important roles in the film. Speaking at the teaser launch of the film ‘Dodmansa’, the film’s actor-cum-director Sharath Krishna said,

‘How does an ordinary auto driver become a big man in the life of an auto driver? This film is about what makes a common man ‘Dodmansa’ in life. We have made this film with mass entertainment in mind. These are the words of the lead actor and director of the film ‘Dodmansa’, Sharath Krishna. Speaking about ‘Dodmansa’, lead actress Reshma Lingarajappa said, ‘Usually in most films, the role of the lead actress is less important. But in this film, my role has its own importance. The film has done very well, and we will come before the audience as soon as possible.

Kumaraswamy unaware of discussions on Bengaluru ward delimitation: DCM D K Shivakumar

Bengaluru : Deputy Chief Minister D K Shivakumar today hit back at Union Minister H D Kumaraswamy for his comments on ward delimitation in Bengaluru and said the decision was taken after consultations with the Opposition members. Speaking to reporters at his Sadashivanagar residence, he said, “The redistribution of GBA corporations and wards was done in accordance with democratic principles, after taking opposition MLAs and the public into confidence. However, Kumaraswamy is unaware of this. If he wants, he can ask his own MLAs and find out.”

When asked about Union Minister Kumaraswamy’s allegation, while defending Centre’s Delimitation Bill, that no discussions were held during ward delimitation in Bengaluru, the



DCM said, “During the Bengaluru ward delimitation process, a committee was formed that included MLAs from all parties. MLAs from his own party were part of that committee. The final decision was made only after discussions with JDS and BJP MLAs and obtaining their opinions.”

“Kumaraswamy may be a senior leader. I too have some experience. Based on that experience, I know how to take opposition MLAs and leaders into confidence in a democratic setup. It would be appropriate for Kumaraswamy to first find out how many hours I spent discussing

with his MLAs, and how many hours were spent in dialogue with the public, before speaking,” he noted.

When asked when elections for the GBA corporations would be held, he said: “We have indicated that we are ready for elections. Beyond that, there is the State Election Commission and the courts to conduct that process.”

When asked about Muslim community leaders writing to High Command alleging that the community was being targeted with hostility, Shivakumar said: “All of that is false. No one is being hostile. The party is prioritizing discipline. Everyone must follow discipline.” On the question of managing Bengaluru’s water shortage in the context of summer, he said: “Discussions have already been held with BWSSB officials on this matter.

Commissioner Inspects Yelahanka Underpasses, Orders Swift Civic Action

Bengaluru (TSIT): Commissioner Pommalla Sunil Kumar of the Bengaluru North City Corporation conducted a detailed field inspection of key civic issues in the Yelahanka area, directing officials to take immediate steps to resolve public concerns.

During the visit, he inspected the Judicial Layout Railway Underpass and, based on residents’ requests, noted the need to increase its depth to improve vehicular movement. He instructed officials to coordinate with the Indian Railways to take up the required works.

Reviewing ongoing infrastructure development in Judicial Layout, the Commissioner also visited the Coffee Day Underpass, where he observed severe waterlogging issues during the monsoon season. He directed officials to implement immediate technical



solutions to prevent flooding and ensure smooth traffic flow. Emphasizing long-term measures, he called for strengthening drainage systems, improving water outflow mechanisms, and ensuring regular maintenance to avoid stagnation in underpasses.

Expressing concern over poor sanitation along the airport corridor, the Commissioner instructed officials to coordinate with the National Highways Authority of India and maintain continuous cleaning operations along the stretch. He also directed the BSWML Yelahanka Division to take strict and sustained action.

Strong Water Storage in Minor Irrigation Tanks Boosts Farmer Confidence

Bengaluru (TSIT): Minor irrigation tanks across Karnataka are maintaining abundant water levels even during the peak summer, offering strong assurance of water security for farmers, said N. S. Boseraju, Minister for Minor Irrigation, Science and Technology. According to official data, out of 3,788 minor irrigation tanks in the state, a significant number continue to hold substantial water. Around 165 tanks are completely full, while 1,355 tanks have more than 51% storage capacity. Additionally, 1,143 tanks are at around 50% capacity, and 959 tanks retain nearly 30% water levels. The tanks collectively support irrigation across a vast command area of approximately 4.45 lakh hectares, benefiting a large farming population. The state currently holds around 50 TMC of water in these tanks. District-wise, Davanagere and Chikmagalur are leading with high storage levels, fol-



lowed by Hassan, Tumakuru, and Kolar. The Minister attributed the encouraging situation to good monsoon rains and effective government initiatives, including tank rejuvenation and lift irrigation projects. Around 1,184

tanks are being actively filled through 145 lift irrigation schemes, ensuring sustained water availability even during dry months. He stated that the government’s proactive water management strategies, including supplying treated and sur-

face water to dry regions, have prevented tanks from depleting. These efforts, he noted, are yielding strong grassroots results and will directly benefit lakhs of farmers by ensuring stable irrigation during the agricultural season

Sattva Group and Knowledge Realty Trust launch Karnataka Zero Waste Initiative on Earth Day

Mangaluru : On the occasion of Earth Day, Sattva Group, in partnership with Knowledge Realty Trust and rePurpose Global, has announced the launch of the Karnataka Zero Waste Initiative, a multi-year programme focused on building structured, community led waste management systems across the state’s coastline.

At Sattva Group and Knowledge Realty Trust (KRT REIT), growth is approached with the understanding that it must remain aligned with the environment and communities. As organizations engaged in building and managing high quality, sustainable environments for modern India, there is a clear recognition that environmental health and community wellbeing are fundamental to meaningful progress. The Karnataka Zero Waste Initiative extends this approach by enabling systems that improve ecological outcomes while strengthening local livelihoods.

Spanning three years, the initiative addresses the growing challenge of plastic waste along Karnataka’s 320 Km coastline, where plastic accounts for 60 percent coastal litter. The programme is designed to put in place waste management systems that are locally run, financially viable, and capable of delivering consistent and measurable results.

The initiative will connect over 80,000 households to formal waste management systems and integrate 50 coastal villages into formal waste management systems, improving waste handling at the source. It will support 200 waste workers through stable livelihoods, skill development, and safer working conditions, helping build a more secure and dignified waste value chain. In parallel, it is expected to enable the recovery and responsible processing of approximately 4.5 million kilograms of waste, improving coastal conditions and reducing environmental leakage into marine ecosystems.



tems. Commenting on the initiative, Shivam Agarwal, Vice President, Strategy, Sattva Group, said: “Protecting Karnataka’s coastline and addressing the growing challenge of waste is essential to sustaining the environment and improving the overall quality of life. The coastline is a vital ecological and economic asset, and improving its condition has a direct impact on local livelihoods and communities. Through the Karnataka Zero Waste Initiative, we are enabling structured, community-led waste management systems that strengthen local practices while creating more secure and dignified livelihoods. With a strong focus on awareness and participation, the initiative is designed to deliver measurable improvements and contribute to a cleaner, more resilient coastline for the state.”

A strong focus on awareness and everyday behavior change is central to the programme, encouraging communities to adopt more sustainable habits and take greater ownership at the local level. Better segregation, collection, and processing systems will also help move towards a more circular approach to material use, reducing dependence on landfills. Jiji Thomas, Head – ESG & Sustainability, Knowledge Realty Trust said, “As a responsible REIT, Knowledge Realty Trust (KRT) recognizes that environmental stewardship extends beyond our asset boundaries. Coastal waste is a material ESG risk with implications for climate resilience and long-term asset value. By supporting integrated waste systems, we are embedding sustainability into our operations and the eco systems that support

them. While our implementation partner will spearhead mid-stream interception and downstream actions like clean up to control waste leakage to sea, our focus will be on creating awareness on upstream control to be exercised by urban centers to reduce land-to-sea waste burden”

The Karnataka Zero Waste initiative is being implemented in collaboration with rePurpose Global, a leading packaging sustainability and compliance platform, and the Centre for Applied Research and People’s Engagement (CARPE), the designated non-profit recipient of programme funds. While rePurpose Global brings expertise in designing and executing waste recovery systems aligned with global best practices and will lead on-ground implementation, CARPE, a social enterprise, contributes deep capabilities across solid waste management, green cover enhancement, and water body restoration through data-driven and research-led methodologies. Knowledge Realty Trust further strengthens the programme through its focus on governance, transparency, and stewardship, ensuring a structured, accountable, and scalable approach to impact.

Aditya Siroya, Chief Impact Officer and Founder, rePurpose Global added, “Addressing waste at scale requires systems that are locally embedded and operationally robust. This partnership is focused on building models that reduce environmental impact while enabling communities to participate meaningfully in the process.”

The Karnataka Zero Waste Initiative reflects a broader shift towards development approaches that are more responsible and inclusive. By combining measurable outcomes with community ownership, the programme aims to create a model that can be sustained and expanded over time, contributing to a cleaner and more resilient Karnataka.

EDITORIAL

Iran's Game Of Thrones:
Inside The 'Group' That
Wants Ghalibaf
Gone, And No Deal

Amid uncertainty over the second round of talks between Tehran and Washington, Iran's President, Masoud Pezeshkian, made a comment on Monday morning in support of negotiations. "War benefits no one, and while standing firm against threats, every rational and diplomatic route should be used to reduce tensions," said Pezeshkian. His comment came shortly after Iran's Foreign Ministry spokesman, Esmail Baghaei, told reporters in Tehran: "We have no plan for the next round of negotiations."

Hours later, Tasnim News Agency, which is close to the Iranian Republican Guards Corps (IRGC), insisted that Iran had not "altered its decision to abstain" from the talks in Islamabad. It wasn't long before Pezeshkian issued a social media statement questioning the usefulness of any dialogue with the US, accusing it of seeking Iran's surrender. "Iranians do not submit to force," he added in the post on X. His first comment was ignored by Iran's semi-official media, but they all reported his post on X. Monday's developments showed how helpless the Iranian president is. They also echoed a dispute last Friday over a social media post by the country's Foreign Minister, Abbas Araghchi, in which he declared the Strait of Hormuz "completely open". President Trump quoted the post, distorting and exaggerating it to suggest Tehran was ready to compromise. A furious IRGC attacked Araghchi through its loyal news agencies. Later, Tehran's military and the IRGC reinforced the blockade of the waterways with even greater determination. On Monday, speculation grew that Araghchi could soon be replaced by the Islamic regime.

Who Is Running Iran?

These two developments suggest that some factional fighting, if not a full-fledged power struggle, is underway within the current Iranian regime. Hardliner clerics and IRGC commanders, on the one hand, and moderate civilian politicians, on the other, disagree on the terms and conditions of negotiations with the US, if not on the conduct of the war itself. Araghchi, a career diplomat with limited decision-making authority, is the weakest of the three internationally known public faces of Iran. The other two are President Masoud Pezeshkian and the speaker of Iran's parliament, Mohammad Bagher Ghalibaf. Pezeshkian, a reformist, was elected in 2024 following the death of hardline President Ebrahim Raisi. He is widely regarded as the weakest president in Iran's history. Last month, he was rebuked by hardliners for apologising to Iran's Gulf neighbours for retaliatory attacks on their energy and civilian infrastructure. Ghalibaf, on the other hand, is certainly more powerful than the President, as he also serves as Secretary of the National Security Council, a post he was appointed to after the killing of Ali Larjani by Israel.

Why Doubts Are Brewing About Ghalibaf

Although Ghalibaf, Iran's chief negotiator in the talks, has taken a hard line against the United States in his public statements, he is not trusted by hardliners. He is ambitious and opportunistic. Despite holding positions in the past as a commander in the IRGC, the head of the police, and the mayor of Tehran, he was never a close confidant of the assassinated Supreme Leader, Ayatollah Khamenei. In a state TV interview on Sunday, Ghalibaf reportedly branded Saeed Jalili, a member of Iran's National Security Council, and hardline Iranian MP Amirhossein Sabeti as extremist, militia-like actors who would destroy Iran. This follows posts on a domestic media platform linked to Jalili that accused Ghalibaf of betrayal, or even of attempting a coup, during the Islamabad talks, according to anti-regime media reports. In the interview, the parliament's speaker strongly defended the talks. Ghalibaf is concerned he could be sacked as speaker because of his support for a negotiated settlement to the conflict. Internal disagreements within the regime are said to have disrupted the first round of talks, prompting more senior Iranian officials, including the IRGC, to order Ghalibaf and his team to return home. Different factions within the Iranian regime are reported to hold markedly different positions on how to deal with the US. A section of the IRGC is firmly opposed to any negotiations and would like the war to continue in the hope of a total victory. Another faction would like negotiations, but with maximalist demands on the US. Neither of these two factions is in favour of making any compromises on Iran's nuclear enrichment and would like to keep the option of making a weapon open. Ghalibaf heads the more pragmatic group, which favours trading concessions with the US and using the current opportunity to strike a deal.

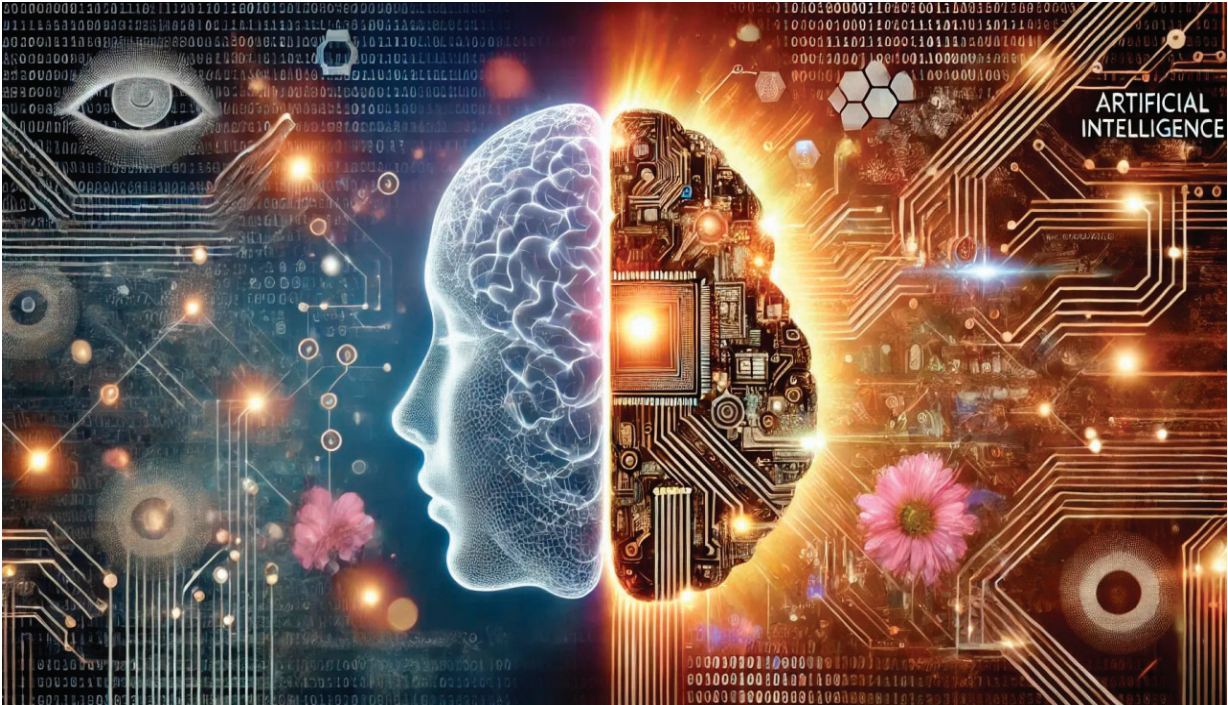
When Khamenei Was The 'Arbiter'

In the past, the late Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei served as an arbiter between hardliners and moderates. His ruling was the final word on any dispute. But his death has left Iran without an overall arbiter. Khamenei's son Mojtaba is the new Supreme Leader. He is closer to the IRGC and more hardliner than his late father. Along with his father, several other members of his family were killed in the US and Israeli strikes on the first day of the war, making him vengeful and less inclined to offer concessions to the United States. Interestingly, the pragmatic group's position appears similar to that of the late Supreme Leader, Ayatollah Khamenei. He had declared that Iran would not build a nuclear bomb and allowed his government to negotiate with the Obama administration, resulting in the 2015 Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, or the JCPOA. Trump abandoned the deal during his first term, even though Tehran was complying with its terms. Even after that, Khamenei allowed Iran to hold talks with the Trump administration twice in less than one year, but as we know, the US and Israel attacked the nation while the talks were ongoing. This has made the United States untrustworthy for Iran in any talks. Weakening Of The Moderates Trump believed the Israeli Prime Minister, Benjamin Netanyahu, that the Islamic regime was the weakest in its 47-year history.

Artificial Intelligence: Innovation's
Triumph or Humanity's Test?

-Lalit Gargg-

If we examine the history of human civilization, it becomes evident that every new technology arrives with a duality—bringing both possibilities and perils. Our present era is no exception. The rapid advancement of Artificial Intelligence has undoubtedly made life easier, faster, and more efficient; yet, it has simultaneously emerged as a serious challenge to human values, ethics, and social balance. Thinkers, philosophers, and spiritual leaders across the world have repeatedly expressed concerns about this emerging reality. Recently, the apprehensions voiced by Pope Leo XIV have brought this issue to the center of global discourse. He clearly warned that if this technology is used beyond ethical boundaries, it could foster division, fear, violence, and conflict across the world. This is not merely an emotional reaction of a religious figure, but a reflection of a deeper worry—a concern that resonates within the collective conscience of humanity. Technology, in itself, is neither moral nor immoral; it is the manner of its use that defines its direction. In the present time, Artificial Intelligence is no longer confined to constructive and beneficial applications. It is increasingly being used to generate misinformation, create fabricated images and voices, and manipulate public opinion. Its misuse in electoral processes has the potential to weaken the very foundations of democracy. When



a voter cannot distinguish between truth and manufactured illusion, their ability to make informed decisions is compromised. This erosion of clarity ultimately undermines trust in democratic institutions. On social media platforms, numerous instances have emerged where individuals are falsely depicted alongside prominent leaders like Narendra Modi, despite no such interaction ever taking place. This is not merely an individual deception—it is a systemic assault on the very structure of social trust. When the line between truth and falsehood becomes blurred, society inevitably descends into suspicion, instability, and distrust. Another alarming dimension of Artificial Intelligence

is its growing use in cyber-crime. Criminals can now mimic a person's voice with remarkable accuracy, deceiving their acquaintances into transferring money under false pretenses. Impersonating family members or officials has become dangerously easy. Such incidents have wiped out the lifetime savings of many individuals within moments. This is not just financial loss—it is a profound violation of trust and a blow to the sense of security. In the financial sector, too, the misuse of AI poses significant risks. Automated cyberattacks can exploit vulnerabilities in banking systems. If such attacks occur on a large scale, the consequences would extend far beyond individual losses,

potentially destabilizing national and global economies. The danger intensifies when regulatory institutions fail to keep pace with the complexity and speed of these evolving technologies. From an environmental perspective as well, Artificial Intelligence is not entirely benign. The establishment of massive data centers, excessive energy consumption, and the extraction of minerals place additional pressure on nature. The rising demand for resources like cobalt and lithium contributes not only to environmental degradation but also to human exploitation. Thus, AI is not merely a social or ethical challenge—it is an ecological one as well. Amid all these concerns, it is

important to recognize that Artificial Intelligence cannot be rejected. It has become an integral part of modern life, and its contributions in fields such as healthcare, education, disaster management, and industrial productivity are invaluable. The issue lies not in the technology itself, but in the manner of its application. If aligned with human values, ethics, and social responsibility, it can indeed become a powerful force for good. To achieve this, it is essential to establish clear and robust regulatory frameworks governing its development and use. Governments and institutions must ensure that AI operates in a transparent, secure, and accountable manner. Companies must develop mechanisms capable

of detecting and controlling misleading content. Equally important is public awareness. No society can confront this challenge without digital literacy. People must learn to question what they see and hear, understanding that not everything presented to them reflects reality. The habit of verification is no longer optional—it is essential. At the ethical level, it is crucial that the data used to train AI systems is unbiased and of high quality. A biased foundation inevitably produces biased outcomes, reinforcing inequality and discrimination. Therefore, principles such as fairness, transparency, privacy, and accountability must form the core of AI development. From a cultural perspective, it is equally important to ensure that technological progress remains in harmony with our traditions and values. The digitization and preservation of cultural heritage can be a positive step, but it must be carried out with respect and sensitivity. In conclusion, Artificial Intelligence is a powerful instrument that has the potential to redefine human existence. However, if divorced from ethical considerations, it can become a force of destruction with equal intensity. The need of the hour is to strengthen our moral foundations alongside technological advancement. The balance between scientific progress and human sensitivity is the only path that can lead us toward a secure, stable, and prosperous future.

The Dawn Of
'Jhalmuri' Politics



Jhalmuri'. Across India, almost every region has its own version of 'muri' (puffed rice) as a snack. Each state gives it a distinct character. The jhalmuri business spans across West Bengal, from different districts to the footpaths of Kolkata - whether it is Burrabazar, Lalbazar, or Gariahat. It represents a vast, unorganised sector. For years, Mamata Banerjee's politics, and her brand of populism, have been closely associated with such grassroots elements. Wherever she goes, she engages spontaneously - stepping into tea stalls to make tea, preparing momos in Darjeeling, or even cooking at someone's home. This kind of outreach has become increasingly common among politicians, especially during election periods. However, despite Modi's repeated visits to West Bengal during elections in 2019, 2021, and 2024, he never previously used jhalmuri as a mode of outreach. This time, however, he bought a pack for ten rupees from a roadside vendor in Jhargram, a tribal, rural, and economically challenged area. The moment quickly went viral. The reaction from the Trinamool Congress (TMC) was sharp. Party spokesper-

son Kunal Ghosh remarked that PM Modi was merely copying Mamata Banerjee, and that such imitation would not translate into votes. On social media, TMC pointed out that the vendor, Vikram Sau, is originally from Bihar, and that his shop-like many others-had earlier been demolished during highway construction. More than 50 such shops were later permitted by Mamata Banerjee to set up permanent roadside structures. Sau was among those beneficiaries. A delegation of affected shopkeepers had earlier met Banerjee, seeking intervention. According to TMC, her action enabled their rehabilitation - what they describe as the real story behind the setup. Be that as it may, the episode clearly marks an outreach attempt by Modi. His campaign is not limited to religiosity or development; it is increasingly multifaceted. Earlier, the BJP focused primarily on its own agenda, often distancing itself from Mamata Banerjee's methods. There was hesitation about adopting her style of populism. Instead, it positioned itself as a proponent of development-driven job creation. That approach alone, however, did not yield electoral success. Now, the BJP appears to be shifting strategy.

Cultural attack on festivals

(Tradition, Market and Changing Identity)

-Dr. Priyanka Saurabh

The place of festivals in India's cultural fabric is not limited to mere joy and celebration; rather, they are deeply intertwined with society's historical memory, economic structure, relationship with nature, and human sensibilities. Here, festivals touch every aspect of life—farming, seasonal changes, family ties, collectivity, and faith. But today, the question is being seriously raised: are our traditional festivals drifting away from their original spirit? Are they facing a kind of 'cultural attack', gradually altering their true identity? While the term "cultural invasion" may seem offensive, it is not meant to be an accusation directed at any one class or group. It refers to the slow, subtle, and often unseen process by which traditions, outside their original social and cultural context, begin to take on new meanings. This change can sometimes be natural, and sometimes the result of deliberate economic and ideological influences. Indian festivals are primarily rooted in agriculture and nature. Much of India's society has been agriculturally dependent for centuries, and therefore, it has a deep connection with crops, seasons, and the land. The joy of harvest, the beginning of new sowing, and the arrival of rain—all of these were expressed through festivals. The farmer was central to these celebrations, as he was the producer of food and maintained the lifeline of society. Such festivals were less ostentatious and more participatory. People would gather together to sing and play music, share feasts, and express gratitude to nature. But as society became increasingly urbanized, industrialized, and market forces strengthened, the nature of festivals began to change. Festivals were now viewed not only from a cultur-



al or social perspective, but also as economic opportunities. The market linked festivals to consumption—where shopping, decoration, and display became central. Ideas like "offers," "discounts," and "auspicious shopping" became associated with festivals, which impacted their original form. This change isn't just external, but also in mindset. Previously, festivals were about gathering, sharing, and expressing gratitude to nature. Now, in many places, they have become a competition—who spent how much, who bought what, whose celebration was more grand. In this process, the spirit of festivals has been lost. When discussing the "cultural invasion" of festivals, another important aspect emerges—the marginalization of folk traditions. Every region in India has had its own unique traditions, rooted in local lifestyles, languages, and resources. However, today, under the influence of media and the market, a kind of cultural homogenization is being observed. Certain festivals and their specific practices have become standardized across the country, leading to the gradual disappearance of local variations.

For example, many folk festivals that were once associated with agriculture and rural life have now been transformed into urban and religious interpretations. Their original spirit—connected to labor, nature, and collectivity—is now being overshadowed by mythology and market-driven symbols. This is diminishing the role of the segments of society that were truly the heart of these festivals—farmers and laborers. It's also important to clarify that it's unfair to view every change negatively. Culture is inherently changeable. New elements are added to it over time, and this is proof of its vitality. However, problems arise when this change becomes unbalanced—when it begins to undermine the very foundations of society. The biggest question in today's context is whether we understand the true meaning of our festivals. Do we recognize that they are not merely religious rituals but also reflections of social and economic life? If festivals forget the role of the farmer, if the respect for labor is ignored, this signals a serious cultural imbalance. It is impossible, nor is it necessary, to completely separate

festivals from the market. The market is a part of society and plays its role. However, it is essential that the market does not overpower the spirit of festivals. Maintaining a balance between consumption and ostentation is essential to ensure that the true spirit of festivals remains alive. Social awareness can play a crucial role in this direction. If people themselves understand the true meaning of festivals, they will strive to celebrate them with the same spirit. Reviving local traditions, promoting community events, and strengthening our connection with nature—these are some steps that can mitigate this cultural imbalance. Education and the media also play an important role in this. If they accurately present the depth and social context of festivals, they can increase awareness in society. Furthermore, policymakers should consider how to preserve and promote folk culture and rural traditions. Ultimately, combating the "cultural attack" can't be accomplished on a single day or in a single effort. It's an ongoing process, in which every segment of society must play its part.

TCS VS WIPRO VS HCLTECH:

Which IT Stock Offers Highest Yield After Final FY26 Payout?

India's top IT companies have announced their latest shareholder payouts, but the biggest dividend cheque does not automatically mean the best return. Based on the latest market price, Wipro leads TCS and HCLTech on dividend yield. That gap is where many investors get caught, because a higher dividend per share can still produce a lower yield if the stock price is much higher. Dividend yield for Wipro stands at 5.39%, followed by HCLTech at 4.16%, while TCS is at 1.18%. For investors seeking regular income, yield often gives a clearer comparison than the headline payout amount.

Payout Details
Wipro currently offers the highest dividend yield among the three IT majors based on the latest market price. HCLTech ranks second, while TCS comes third despite declaring the largest total payout in rupee terms. This means investors comparing income potential may look beyond the absolute divi-



dend number and focus on what they earn relative to the share price. Wipro's board declared no fresh dividend with its March quarter results announced on April 16. That leaves its total FY26 dividend at Rs 11 per share, after Rs 5 per share in Q1 and Rs 6 per share in Q3. Earlier, analysts tracked by Bloomberg had projected a dividend of Rs 10.56. The board also considered a Rs 250 per share buyback,

Wipro's first in three years, taking the cumulative buyback size to Rs 15,000 crore. HCLTech announced a final dividend of Rs 24 per share on April 21 for FY26. It fixed April 25 as the record date, while payment will be made by May 5. The final payout takes HCLTech's total FY26 dividend to Rs 60 per share, after three interim dividends of Rs 12 each earlier in the year. Bloomberg estimates had valued FY26 divi-

dend at Rs 57.12, with analyst estimates ranging from Rs 60.7 to Rs 72.6 per share. Tata Consultancy Services recommended a final dividend of Rs 31 per share on April 9 alongside its fourth-quarter results. That takes TCS' total FY26 dividend to Rs 110 per share, including Rs 79 per share already paid earlier in the year. The earlier figure included a Rs 57 per share third-quarter payout with a special dividend.

India's top IT companies have announced their latest shareholder payouts, but the biggest dividend cheque does not automatically mean the best return. Based on the latest market price, Wipro leads TCS and HCLTech on dividend yield. That gap is where many investors get caught, because a higher dividend per share can still produce a lower yield if the stock price is much higher.

Analysts had expected a final dividend of about Rs 40 per share to align with Bloomberg-tracked full-year estimates of Rs 120 per share. TCS has yet to announce the record date for the final dividend.

Investor Takeaway
TCS has the highest annual payout in rupee terms, but its dividend yield is the lowest among the three because of its higher share price. For investors focused on income rather than headline dividend numbers, the latest ranking places Wipro first, HCLTech second and TCS third.

From Classrooms to Careers: Samsung Innovation Campus Certifies 5,000 Youth in Tamil Nadu for an AI-Driven Future



SIC equips students with industry-relevant, future-tech skills across high-demand domains — Artificial Intelligence (2,200), Coding and Programming (1,700), Big Data (600) and Internet of Things (500) — enabling them to transition more effectively from education to employment. In addition, it focuses on soft skills to boost employability, combining technical training with modules on problem-solving, communication and workplace readiness. Tamil Nadu accounts for nearly one-fourth of the 20,000 youth trained across India under the programme, underlining the state's importance as a key hub for technology, manufacturing and skilled talent development. Notably, 71% of the

participants in Tamil Nadu are women, reflecting strong progress in expanding access to technology education and enabling more women to participate in the digital economy. Training and certification were conducted in collaboration with leading institutions across the state, including University of Madras, Anna University, Queen Mary's College (Chennai), Mohamed Sathak AJ College of Engineering (Chennai), and KPR Institute of Engineering and Technology (Coimbatore). "India's growth story is being shaped by its young, skilled workforce, with Tamil Nadu playing a leading role in this transformation. As technology reshapes industries, the need for a future-ready workforce is more critical than

ever. Building digital skills at scale, while ensuring inclusion, will be key to sustaining India's growth momentum. As Samsung completes 30 years in India, we are enabling youth to develop capabilities aligned with the evolving needs of the global economy through Samsung Innovation Campus," said Shubham Mukherjee, Head of CSR and Corporate Communications, Samsung Southwest Asia. The programme continues to expand its reach, training and certifying 20,000 youth across the country. Nationally, SIC has witnessed around 48% women participation, reflecting Samsung's commitment to building an inclusive and equitable technology ecosystem.

Three Times the Chocolate, Three Times the Love:

One 'Dildaari' Moment - Dinshaw's Unveil New Campaign featuring Vinod Kambli

April 21, 2026: This summer, Dinshaw's is bringing a richer, more indulgent twist to one of India's most cherished dessert rituals, the final bite of an ice cream cone. With the launch of its new 'Dildaari' campaign, the brand has unveiled a reimagined cone experience featuring three times more solid chocolate at the bottom of the cone, turning the most anticipated indulgence into the hero of the story. Fronted by former Indian cricket icon Vinod Kambli, the campaign brings together emotion, nostalgia and generosity to land a clear, compelling insight: the smallest gestures often create the greatest impact. At its core is Dinshaw's upgraded cone, an experience that truly embodies 'Dildaari'. Now featuring three times more solid chocolate at the bottom tip, it transforms the final bite consumers instinctively save into a differentiated, category-defining experience. By elevating this often-overlooked moment, the brand reshapes an everyday indulgence into a more



rewarding and memorable experience. The campaign film unfolds through a warm, emotionally resonant narrative led by Vinod Kambli, whose journey of promise, setbacks and resilience lends authenticity and depth to the story. Anchored in the line, "Jinko life mein thoda kam mila, unke liye thoda zyada" the film captures Dinshaw's philosophy of thoughtful generosity, where giving a little more can make a meaningful

difference. Speaking about the campaign, Zervin Rana, Director, Dinshaw's, said, "We have always believed that the most meaningful innovations come from understanding what consumers truly love. For many people, the last bite of a cone is the most satisfying part of the experience. By making it richer and more indulgent, we wanted to create something that feels both joyful and thoughtful. 'Dildaari' is our way of celebrating the

spirit of giving a little extra in a way that feels simple, relatable and memorable." The new 3x chocolate cone range is available in nine indulgent flavours: Badam Roasted, Butterscotch, Caramel Dolce, Choco Chip, Chocolate Brownie, Chocolate Ganache, Cookies n Cream, Mississippi Dark and Mocha Black and White. Each variant has been designed to complement the richer chocolate finish and deliver a more satisfying last bite.

The Leela Mosaic 2026 Makes Its Hyderabad Debut, Concludes Amidst Strong Engagement and Meaningful Interactions

Hyderabad, April 2026: The Leela Hyderabad opened its doors to The Leela Mosaic 2026 for the first time, hosting the Hyderabad chapter of the brand's national roadshow at Isfahan, its signature banquet space. The third stop on an April circuit that spans India's key business cities, the edition drew together corporate clients, MICE planners, senior business partners, event planners, wedding partners, travel agents, and hospitality partners for a day of structured engagements and an exclusive gathering of the brand's most valued partners. With 150+ partners and over 300+ business interactions through the course of the day, each designed to give guests direct access to the people and properties that make up The Leela's portfolio of fourteen hotels. Rather than a presentation, The Leela Mosaic works as an introduction: guests move through immersive showcases, encounter the brand through its people, culinary heritage, brand-owned labels —



Signatures by Leela and Tishya, and the Aujasya by The Leela wellness philosophy, including its sustainability initiative Leela ke Phool, and leave with a sense of the whole. Isfahan, the grand ballroom, lent the occasion both elegance and warmth - a versatile space that reflects the full range of hospitality that The Leela Hyderabad is built to offer. Through the day, The Leela Hyderabad drew on its identity as a destination for refined gatherings.

"Hosting The Leela Mosaic in Hyderabad for the first time, and at Isfahan, has been a defining moment for The Leela Hyderabad. It gave us the opportunity to present not just our spaces, but the depth of experiences we offer within them — from curated culinary journeys and wellness touchpoints to immersive destination storytelling. The energy, conversations, and connections we witnessed through the day have been incredibly encouraging," said Mr. Rajesh

Gopalakrishnan, General Manager, The Leela Hyderabad, on hosting The Leela Mosaic in the city for the first time. The Hyderabad edition continues The Leela's intent with the Mosaic format: to move the MICE conversation away from inventory and towards experience, and to give partners a reason to return to the brand. The Leela Mosaic 2026 roadshow travels onward to its remaining cities through April, carrying the same brief.

NMDC's Ground Stories Strengthen National Bonds, Clinch 10 PRSI Awards

Hyderabad, April 19: NMDC Limited, India's largest iron ore producer, was honoured with 10 awards at the 4th National Conference of the Public Relations Society of India, held as part of National Public Relations Day celebrations. The recognitions reflect NMDC's growing strength in corporate communications and its ability to translate on-ground impact into meaningful, people-centric narratives. The event was attended by dignitaries including Ch. Priyanka, IAS, Special Commissioner, I&PR Department, Government of Telangana; K. V. Ramana Chary, Chairman of the Telangana Press Academy; Srinivas Reddy, K. Nageswar, Retd. Professor of Osmania University and former MLC; along with senior officials from the Information and Public Relations Department.



The Corporate Communications team received the honours on behalf of NMDC. The national miner secured first prizes in Corporate Communication Excellence, Sustainability Report, Annual Report, Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), Digital Public Relations, Internal House Journal, Khanij Bharati, and Employee Engagement, while also winning second prizes for its Wall Calendar, Diary, and Digital and Social Media Campaigns. These recogni-

tions shine a light not only on NMDC's operational excellence in mining but also on its sustained CSR efforts in education, healthcare, sanitation, and livelihoods. Together, they form a larger narrative of responsible growth. At a time when public sector enterprises are increasingly expected to demonstrate both impact and accountability, NMDC's approach shows how authentic storytelling can go beyond information building credibility, inspiring trust, and strengthening its bond with the nation.

Aakash Educational Services Limited (AESL) Telangana Leads JEE Main 2026 Performance: 48 Students Achieved 99 Percentile and Above from Telangana



Hyderabad, April 2026: Students of Aakash Educational Services Limited (AESL), Telangana, have once again demonstrated strong performance in JEE Main 2026, reflecting consistent academic outcomes and a high level of preparedness across batches. Leading the cohort is Jayanth Shekhar, who secured an outstanding 99.996952 percentile and achieved a AIR Rank of 93, emerging as the top performer from Telangana. Apart from Jayanth Shekhar, other 29 top performers include Hanzalah Abedeen (189 AIR with 99.9921864 percentile), Shiva Tejanshu A

(366 AIR with 99.98 percentile), Alamuri Chaitanya (523 AIR with 99.97percentile), Rishit Kyatham (664 AIR with 99.96 percentile), and Harish (1285 AIR with 99.92 percentile). Commenting on the results, Mr Dheeraj Kumar Misra, Chief Academic and Business Head for South India, AESL, said: "The success of the students from Telangana reflects their commitment to academics and the strength of the Aakash learning ecosystem. Their dedication, discipline, and consistent efforts have been instrumental in achieving these results.

Geopolitical Risks and 15% Earnings CAGR Shape Nifty Outlook at 27,080: PL Capital

Mumbai, April 21st, 2026: PL Capital, one of the most trusted financial services organisations in India, in its recently published India Strategy Report, says that the current growth path of India is entering in challenging phase due to increasing geopolitical tensions, growing cost of crude oil, and disruptions in the global supply chain. Though the drivers of economic growth continue to remain the same, the factors that affect them externally have increased and hence, earning projections are being lowered. As per PL Capital's study, The Nifty has fallen by 6.6% over the last three months due to continued foreign institutional investor (FII) redemptions against the backdrop of geopolitical instability, especially the West Asia crisis. Though there has been a significant rally after touching the lowest levels recently, market conditions remain choppy on the back of global risks and increasing commodity prices. The earnings visibility outlook has improved



marginally, with an expected 4% growth in Nifty EPS for fiscal year '26. The medium-term forecast suggests a compounded annual growth rate (CAGR) of 15% over fiscal years 26-28. The macro environment in India is seeing new challenges arising due to high oil prices, where the country imports around 85% of its total oil needs. The rise in the price of crude oil will lead to higher costs in the import of oil by over \$70 billion each year, which may lead to inflation rising above 5%. Furthermore, disruptions in the supply chain and the possibility of El Niño effect on the monsoon season might lead to inflation becoming higher. Growth in GDP is currently at around 6.5% and can further dip to 6%. Oil prices have seen a sharp spike and are unlikely to

revert to pre-war levels. India, which imports 4.3 million barrels of crude per day (valued at USD 180 billion), could see its import bill rise by over USD 70 billion annually. While supply chain realignments and diversification of import sources may provide some relief, key shipping routes such as the Strait of Hormuz remain critical risk factors. The impact of higher crude prices is expected to be relatively lower than past shocks due to reduced oil and gas imports as a percentage of GDP. However, rising freight and insurance costs, along with constrained refining capacity, are likely to keep prices elevated. We expect second-order effects of higher crude prices to weigh on inflation, demand, and manufacturing in the coming months.

Trump says he 'expects to be bombing' if no progress made in Iran talks

Pakistan is yet to receive a formal response to confirm whether Iran will attend peace talks in Islamabad, according to the country's minister for information and broadcasting. Attaullah Tarar says "Pakistan, as the mediator, is "in constant touch with Iranians and pursuing the path of diplomacy and dialogue", adding that a decision from Iran to attend the talks before the end of the two week ceasefire "is critical". "Pakistan has made sincere efforts to convince the Iranian leadership to participate in the second round of talks and these efforts continue," he adds in a statement on X. Pakistan's foreign ministry has posted on X sharing details of a meeting today between deputy Prime Minister Ishaq Dar and Natalie Baker, deputy chief of mission at the US embassy in Islamabad. The post says Dar underscored "Pakistan's consistent emphasis on dialogue and diplomacy as the only



viable means to address challenges and achieve lasting regional peace and stability." The foreign ministry goes on to say Dar "stressed the need for engagement between the United States and Iran, urged both sides to consider extending the ceasefire, and to give dialogue and diplomacy a chance." It adds that Baker "conveyed US appreciation for Pakistan's constructive and positive role in promot-

ing regional peace and facilitating dialogue." There's a metaphorical door, deep in Islamabad's blocked off red zone, marked "US-Iran Deal". Holding the door open, looking nervous, is the government of Pakistan, conscious that its newly found reputation as a mediator is being sorely tested. The scene is set, but the guests have yet to arrive. The last 48 hours have been something of a roller-

coaster. American and Iranian ambassadors have been meeting Pakistani government officials. Giant American C-17 aircraft have been arriving at a nearby military airbase. Streets around the Serena Hotel, where the last round of negotiations took place, have been sealed off. There's talk of snipers posted on nearby buildings. Will it be Vance and Ghalibaf again? Or, since he himself

mooted it in a social media post, President Trump himself? On the face of it, the omens don't look good, but neither side wants to come to Islamabad only to see the delicate diplomatic process blow up in their faces. The frenzied nature of the contacts going on suggests some kind of deal is being thrashed out behind the scenes. Something in which both sides make concessions, but which both can sell as a win. With the two-week ceasefire due to expire at the end of Wednesday, a deal would at least buy more time for negotiation. Could we see the mutual lifting of Iranian and American naval blockades? That would be a significant start. An Iranian government spokesperson has told the state news agency IRNA that Tehran has got its "hand on trigger" during potential negotiations and that defence forces are in "full readiness". Fatemeh Mohajerani did not explicitly confirm or deny whether Iran

will take part in the next round of negotiations in Islamabad. "We have two strategies in front of us: the first is the strategy of war and the second is the strategy of diplomacy," Mohajerani said. "We do not want to be attacked again, but if such attacks occur, we will definitely respond more harshly than before." She also said Iran's negotiating team would "not compromise even slightly on national interests". US President Donald Trump has suggested that he may offer financial assistance - or a currency swap - with Gulf countries he believes have proven to be reliable allies with the war in Iran. Earlier this week, the Wall Street Journal reported that Emirati officials have opened talks with the US about a "backstop" in case the Iran war deepens an economic crisis in the country. During the CNBC interview, Trump specifically said that a currency swap with the UAE is "under consideration".

ROLE OF US OFFICIALS KILLED IN CRASH IN MEXICO UNDER SCRUTINY



Mexican President Claudia Sheinbaum has ordered an investigation into the role played by two US officials in a counter-narcotics operation in the northern state of Chihuahua. The two died alongside two Mexican officials when their car crashed on their way back from an operation to destroy illegal drug labs, Chihuahua officials said. Sheinbaum said that neither she nor senior members of the federal security team had been informed about any joint US-Mexican operations. The Mexican leader has been adamant that foreign officials can only operate on

Mexican soil if given prior clearance at the federal level. Sheinbaum has come under pressure from her US counterpart, Donald Trump, to do more to stem the flow of drugs from Mexico to the United States but she has insisted that Mexico's "sovereignty" cannot be breached. On Monday, Sheinbaum said "we did not have knowledge of any direct work between Chihuahua state and personnel from the US embassy". She also said the government needed "to understand the circumstances under which this was taking place, and then assess the legal implications".

Japan loosens arms export rules in break from post-WW2 pacifism



Japan has relaxed decades-old restrictions on its arms exports, clearing the way for it to sell weapons to more than a dozen countries. The announcement on Tuesday marks a milestone in Tokyo's shift away from the pacifism that has characterised its post-war defence policy. It also comes at a time of heightened tensions in the region. Restrictions that limit arms exports to just five categories - rescue, transport, warning, surveillance and minesweeping - will be lifted. This means Japan can now sell lethal weapons to the 17 countries with which it has defence agreements, including the US and the UK. A ban on arms sales to countries involved in conflict will stay, although it does not cover those that have defence pacts with Japan. Authorities in Tokyo say they will allow for exceptions "in special circumstances". "In an increasingly severe security environment, no single country can now protect its own peace and security alone," Japanese Prime Minister Sanae Takachi wrote on X on Tuesday. However, she

also said there was "absolutely no change in our commitment to upholding the path and fundamental principles we have followed as a peace-loving nation for over 80 years since the war". "Under the new system, we will strategically promote equipment transfers while making even more rigorous and cautious judgments on whether transfers are permissible," she wrote. Chief Cabinet Secretary Minoru Kihara said in a press briefing that the move was "intended to safeguard Japan's security and further contribute to the peace and stability of the region". China has said it is "seriously concerned" about what it described as Japan's "reckless militarisation". "China will remain highly vigilant and resolutely opposed [to the move]," Beijing's foreign ministry said in a routine media briefing on Tuesday. The new arms export rules were announced as Japan's Self-Defence Forces took part in annual war games between the US and the Philippines. Japan is joining the war games as combatants for the first time, instead of mere observers.

South Africa's police boss charged in connection with controversial health contract

South Africa's police chief has been formally charged with failing in his duties to provide proper oversight in his role following a health contract that has become the subject of a criminal investigation. General Fannie Masemola, 62, was summoned to court over his alleged part in the awarding of a controversial \$21m (£15.5m) tender, which has since been cancelled. He has been charged with violating part of South Africa's Public Finance Management Act, which governs how public finances are managed. The case comes amidst a national inquiry examining allegedly widespread corruption involving police officers and politicians. Masemola told journalists after the hearing



that he denied the charges. "I know that I'm not guilty, I'm not wrong, but the [law] must take its course," he said after his brief appearance at the Pretoria Magistrate's Court. The court case relates to a tender awarded to controversial businessman Vusumuzi "Cat" Matlala's company Medicare24 Tshwane District in 2024, which was meant to provide health services to the police.

Zelensky says failure of US envoys to visit Kyiv is 'disrespectful'

President Volodymyr Zelensky has said he considered visits by US envoys Steve Witkoff and Jared Kushner to Moscow but not Kyiv "disrespectful". The pair visited the Russian capital late last year as ceasefire talks aimed at ending the war in Ukraine gained pace, and again in January. Witkoff, who has been to Moscow eight times, met Vladimir Putin on many occasions. Neither he nor Kushner, however, has ever visited Kyiv in an official capacity. "It's disrespectful [for them] to come to Moscow and not Kyiv, it's just disrespectful," Zelensky said in an interview with a Ukrainian outlet. "I understand we have complex logistics... If they don't want to, we can meet



in other countries," he added. Witkoff, a former real estate magnate, is Donald Trump's special envoy and Kushner is the US president's son-in-law. Earlier in April Zelensky said the two were planning on visiting Ukraine, but that trip never materialised amid the US-Israel war with Iran. The last trilateral summit between Russia,

the US and Ukraine was in mid-February. Less than two weeks later, the US and Israel began striking Iran and attention switched away from ending the Ukraine war, which has been raging for more than four years. Witkoff and Kushner are part of the US negotiating team travelling to Pakistan for ceasefire talks with Iran, and

Zelensky acknowledged that the attention of the US was on the Middle East. "But... in any case, for us it is important to continue cooperating with the Americans," he added. Ceasefire talks gained pace in autumn 2025, when it emerged that Russian and US officials had been working on a plan to end the war in Ukraine that appeared to include several terms unfavourable to Kyiv. Ukraine pushed to be involved in the talks, and several meetings and summits ensued. By February, both Moscow and Kyiv said they had reached an agreement on some "military issues", including the location of the front line and ceasefire monitoring.

Unprecedented ruling finds Hungary's anti-LGBTQ laws in breach of EU values

The European Union's top court has ruled that Hungarian anti-LGBTQ laws violate EU rules and infringe its values of equality and minority rights. The laws were brought in by Viktor Orbán's government in 2021 and banned so-called promotion of homosexuality or gender change to under-18s, arguing it violated child protection laws. The European Court of Justice ruled that the Orbán reforms breached EU rules on a number of levels, and significantly that it also broke the founding values of Article 2 of the EU Treaty - an unprecedented finding. The ruling comes nine days after Hungarians voted to end Orbán's 16-year era of contin-



uous rule. The ECJ ruled that the Hungarian law interfered with rights such as a ban on discrimination based on sex and sexual orientation, respect for private and family life and freedom of expression and information. The law also stigmatised and marginalised people who were transgender

or not heterosexual and associated them with people convicted of paedophilia, the court found. The Hungarian law was "contrary to the very identity of the Union as a common legal order in a society in which pluralism prevails", it ruled. John Morijn, professor of law and politics in interna-

tional relations at the University of Groningen in the Netherlands, said the Court's ruling was historic in its symbolism, in that it meant the rights of a group in society could not be negotiated away. "You cannot equate what is totally natural - that 10% of the population loves the same sex - with egregious crime," he told the BBC. Orbán's Fidesz party was able to push through the legislation with the help of a super-majority - with control of two-thirds of parliament. Last year, it passed a further amendment that enabled a ban on public events involving the LGBTQ community such as Budapest's popular Pride march.

Madonna offers reward for return of missing Coachella costume

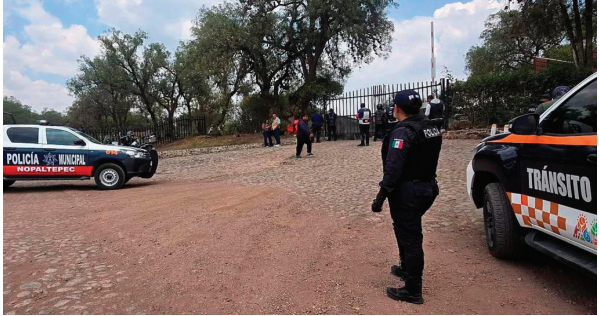


Madonna has offered a reward for the return of the outfit she wore on stage at Coachella last weekend, after several of her vintage costume pieces went missing following the festival. "These aren't just clothes, they are part of my history," the Queen of Pop wrote on Instagram. Among them were the purple jacket, corset and dress she wore during her surprise guest appearance with Sabrina Carpenter at the California event on Friday night. "I'm hoping and praying that some kind soul will find these items and reach out to my team," Madonna wrote, adding that she was "offering a reward for their safe return". The outfits are particularly special to the singer because she wore the same boots, corset and jacket during her Coachella performance 20 years ago. "It's like a full-

circle moment, very meaningful for me," she told the crowd as an adoring Carpenter looked on. Several other items from Madonna's personal archive "from the same era" have also disappeared, she wrote. In a statement, the Indio Police Department said clothes and jewellery were last seen "on a golf cart" on the festival grounds at 01:30 local time on Saturday. It added that there was "no evidence to suggest the bags were intentionally stolen", but they may have fallen off the cart on the way to being loaded onto a bus. During the performance, Madonna and Carpenter sang duets of Vogue and Like a Prayer. Madonna also debuted a song from her forthcoming album Confessions II, a sequel to 2005's Confessions On A Dancefloor, which is due to be released in July.

Canadian killed in shooting at Mexico's ancient Teotihuacán pyramids

A 32-year-old Canadian woman has been killed and 13 people injured after a man opened fire at a historical site in Mexico, according to Mexican officials. The gunman killed himself after the attack. President Claudia Sheinbaum of Mexico has expressed her solidarity with the victims of a shooting at one of the country's most important tourist destinations, the ancient pyramid complex of Teotihuacán. It comes with seven weeks to go before the first match of the Fifa World Cup is held in Mexico City. "There was a big push and panic of everybody running at the same time to get out," a British couple told the BBC, describing chaotic scenes amid the



sound of gunfire. Local prosecutors identified the shooter as Julio César Jasso Ramírez, a Mexican national, without providing further details in a post on X. In a separate post, the Mexican government's security cabinet said 13 people, whose ages range from six to 61, had been treated in hospital after being injured in the incident.

On Tuesday, Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney expressed condolences to the family of the woman who was killed, calling it "a terrible circumstance". The woman has not yet been identified by authorities. Carney also thanked Sheinbaum for her response, and said Canada is working with Mexican

authorities on the incident. The pre-Hispanic pyramids and ruins at Teotihuacán are a Unesco World Heritage Site and among the most popular tourist attractions in the country. Police recovered a firearm, a bladed weapon, and live cartridges at the scene. Sheinbaum said she was following updates and was in touch with the Canadian embassy. She wrote on social media that she had instructed her security cabinet to investigate the incident and provide all necessary support. "What happened today in Teotihuacán deeply pains us. I express my most sincere solidarity with the affected individuals and their families," she wrote in Spanish.

ARRESTS IN NIGERIA AFTER ABDUCTION OF LOCAL MONARCH 'HELD FOR RANSOM'

Police in western Nigeria have arrested 42 suspected illegal miners as part of an investigation into the abduction of a local monarch. Oba Salman Olatunji Aweda, the ruler of the Olayinka community in Ifelodun in Kwara state, was kidnapped on Saturday evening when armed men stormed his palace. The kidnappers have reportedly demanded a ransom of \$300,000 (£221,000) to free the traditional ruler, though the authorities have not confirmed this. Police are conducting search operations in the surrounding area as fears grow about security in Kwara state, which has seen a recent rise in attacks on rural communities. For years, members of criminal gangs - known locally as bandits - have car-

ried out killings and kidnappings for ransom, mainly targeting those in the north-west - but they have been moving to other parts of the country more recently. It has led to the rise of vigilante groups, set up to protect local communities from bandits. The jihadist group Mahmuda has also been active in rural parts of Kwara - and in February launched a brazen attack on a Muslim community, killing at least 75 people and targeting the family of a traditional ruler after he refused to allow them to preach in the vicinity. Kwara State Commissioner of Police Adekimi Ojo said about 10 heavily armed men forced their way into the palace shortly after miners operating in the area had visited the monarch.

IPL 2026: Sunrisers Hyderabad Set 242/2-Run Target for Delhi Capitals

SRH Vice-Captain Abhishek Sharma slammed a career-best, unbeaten 135 off 68 balls to power his side to a daunting 242/2 against Delhi Capitals. Recording his second IPL century, Abhishek clobbered 10 sixes and 10 fours to lead the Hyderabad charge. Heinrich Klaasen provided the late fireworks, smashing 37 off just 13 balls at a strike rate of 284.6 to ensure a massive finish. For DC, Axar Patel was the lone wicket-taker in an otherwise tough outing for the visitors. Another 20-run over for SRH and they finish at 242/2! Abhishek with his 2nd IPL century as he finishes unbeaten on 135 off just 68 balls. Klaasen with a stunning cameo (37* off 13) to push SRH's total over 240. He scored his 37 at a strike rate of 285. Huge cheer from the crowd for Abhishek at the end of the innings. Even SRH co-owner Kavya Maran gave him a standing ovation. Klaasen has teed-off! The big



South African has smashed back-to-back sixes, taking down his compatriot Lungi Ngidi. The second maximum was a monster-launched deep into the upper deck far over the extra cover boundary. It's pure carnage in Hyderabad! unlucky? That is a bizarre dismissal! Ishan Kishan gets run-out at the non-striker's end. Abhishek drilled the

ball hard at Rana, who deflected the ball on to the stumps. Kishan tried to get back with a desperated drive but falls short. Unlucky dismissal! Ishan Kishan run out (Rana) 25 (13) Abhishek Sharma reaches his century in spectacular style! With back-to-back sixes, the SRH Vice-Captain storms to his second IPL ton in just 47 balls. It's a moment of pure

redemption, made even sweeter by the fact that he was dropped earlier by Nitish Rana. Dropped! Nitish Rana spills a sitter! Abhishek survives for the second time tonight. It was a low full toss that he slashed flat and hard toward deep backward point. Rana got both hands to it, but the ball popped out at the final moment. A massive let-off

for the set batter! Chennai Super Kings were dealt a big blow in their IPL 2026 campaign, with top-order batter Ayush Mhatre being ruled out for the remainder of the season due to a hamstring injury. Mhatre, who recently led India at the U-19 World Cup, was one of the better batters for CSK this season. His strike rate of 177.88 ensured that CSK never fell behind in the initial overs. The franchise said Mhatre, who sustained the injury during CSK's previous game against Sunrisers Hyderabad on April 18, will require a rehabilitation period of six to twelve weeks. "Ayush Mhatre has been ruled out of the remainder of IPL 2026 due to a left hamstring injury sustained while batting during the match against Sunrisers Hyderabad on April 18. "Ayush's injury will require a rehabilitation period of 6-12 weeks," CSK announced on its social media on Tuesday.

AXAR PATEL JOINS ELITE CENTURY CLUB FOR DELHI CAPITALS IN IPL 2026



Axar Patel, the Delhi Capitals captain, entered an elite club on Tuesday by becoming only the second player to feature in 100 Indian Premier League (IPL) matches for the franchise. The DC vs Sunrisers Hyderabad match in Hyderabad marked Axar's 100th IPL appearance for Delhi Capitals. Before him, only Rishabh Pant had played 100-plus IPL matches for Delhi Capitals (earlier Delhi Daredevils). Delhi Capitals skipper Axar Patel won the toss and opted to field against Sunrisers Hyderabad (SRH) in the ongoing IPL on Tuesday in Hyderabad.

Gujarat Titans Coach Matthew Hayden Contradicts Skipper Shubman Gill After 99-Run Defeat To MI

Gujarat Titans' batting coach Matthew Hayden was scratching about their 99-run defeat to Mumbai Indians, blaming a "horror" batting display and poor death bowling for the heavy loss in the IPL. From being 44/3 in 5.5 overs, MI hammered 73 runs in the last four overs to post a challenging 199/5 here on Monday. In reply, GT were bundled out for 100. "I expect our margins to be a lot smaller than 100 (99). That is an unacceptable scorecard for our batting unit," the legendary Australian opener told media in the post-match interaction. "It was just a horrible day for us today. Truth be told, there was nothing good about this day, really, apart from Rabada's performance with the ball.



So we've got some work to do, definitely," said Hayden as captain Shubman Gill solely blamed the bowling unit for the defeat. "Honestly, I think we gave away too many runs in the middle overs. On a wicket like that, I think 160-170 was a par score. But I think there are a lot of learnings for us from this game," Gill had said after the loss.

GT boast a strong batting line-up in Sai Sudharsan (759 runs), Shubman Gill (717), and Jos Buttler (538). They have also added New Zealand's explosive Glenn Phillips in the middle order alongside Shahrukh Khan and Rahul Tewatia. "When you look down at our batting line-up, we've got wonderful players that have to be in a

better mindset and better position to take their opportunities. That is our expectations and has been since the conception of this Gujarat Titans franchise... "So you can't be sitting here and being happy about, a 100-run (99) margin game in a 20-over game. I mean, back in my day, 100 runs was almost a winning total in 50-over cricket!" The 54-year-old said GT lost the game in the powerplay. "Well, middle order was undoubtedly exposed today. When they're coming in with six overs, you know that you're in deep trouble. The thing about the power plays is that you can't win it from there, especially in a run chase, but you can definitely lose it, and we lost it in the power play.

"Hopefully He Can Join Me": Novak Djokovic Makes His 'Virat Kohli Wish' Public

Cricket isn't one of the most popular sports in Serbia, but tennis icon Novak Djokovic found a connection with the "Gentleman's game" through none other than Team India legend Virat Kohli. The two stalwarts of their respective sports haven't shared a stage often, but they have engaged in several social media interactions that have mesmerised their fans. Speaking at the Laureus World Sports Awards, Djokovic expressed his admiration for Kohli, revealing that the iconic batter is the reason he started following cricket. In the digital age, two people no longer need to be in the same vicinity to be "friends". Despite living



thousands of kilometres apart, Djokovic found a friend in Kohli and vice-versa. "Yes, Virat is a friend and someone I, of course, respect and admire. He's actually, to be honest, the reason why I started following cricket. I hadn't fol-

lowed it before, but through him, I started following it more. We keep in touch, and hopefully, when I come, I don't want to say if, but when I come to India, hopefully he can join me. We could do a little bit of tennis and a little bit of

cricket, have fun, and just spread positive, good vibes while celebrating sport," Djokovic told Times Now. Asked about his message for India, Djokovic said that he has admired the country and its fans for a long time. The Serb also mentioned that he has plans to visit India soon. "My message is always love, respect, and appreciation for all the support I have personally been receiving from Indian tennis and sports fans around the world over the years. I've met so many of them during this time. My message would also be: 'See you very soon in India,' because I need to go there. I've been feeling a calling to visit for the last couple of years.

Carlos Alcaraz May Skip French Open Rather Than Rush Injury Comeback



French Open champion Carlos Alcaraz insisted Monday he would rather miss defending the Roland Garros title in May rather than rush treatment on a "serious" wrist injury. The 22-year-old pulled out of the Barcelona clay-court tournament last week when he felt his wrist "give out on a return" and then revealed the injury to be "a more serious injury than any of us expected". He then pulled out of the Madrid Open on Friday, casting doubt on his participation in Paris as of May 18. On Monday that doubt deepened when he told press at an award ceremony he was taking a long term view. "I'd rather come back a little later but in great shape than come

back early, rushing around, and unwell." "God willing, I have a very long career ahead of me, many years, and pushing myself too hard at this Roland Garros could seriously harm me in future tournaments," he said Monday. "Things happen in the professional world. You have to accept them," he said. "I need to recover really well if I don't want it to affect me later on." The world number two lost his top ranking following his defeat by Jannik Sinner in the Monte Carlo Masters final April 12. Before that Alcaraz had won his past 17 matches on clay, dating back to last season when he lifted titles in Rome and at Roland Garros.

BOLT ADVISES GOUT NOT TO FORGET TRACK AND FIELD

Sprint legend Usain Bolt has urged rising Australian star Gout Gout not to forget track and field and find a good support network to keep him focused on his career as the spotlight and distractions intensify. Gout, 18, retained the 200m title at the Australian Athletics Championships on 12 April in a time of 19.67 seconds, beating USA sprinter Erriyon Knighton's world under-20 record (19.69) and bettering Bolt's time of 19.93 from 2004 – the Jamaican's fastest time as a teenager. Gout, who also claimed the under-20 100m national title, went under the 20-second mark at last season's championships with a wind-assisted 19.84 and previously set the quickest time by a 16-year-old over 200m when he ran 20.04 in 2024. Offering advice to Gout, who he has previously said "looks like young me", Jamaican eight-time Olympic champion Bolt told CNN, external: "At that young age, because I was there, you start getting put left and right and then you forget track and field. "Hopefully he has the right set of people to guide him and keep him focused



on track and field because the rest of the stuff will always be there. "But if you mess up on track and field, then it all goes away." Gout is set to make his Diamond League debut in the 200m in Oslo on 10 June but has indicated he will skip the Commonwealth Games in Glasgow to focus on the World Under-20 Championships in Oregon in August.

ETPL, Led By Abhishek Bachchan, Announces Glasgow Franchise. Chris Gayle, Mugafi Group Acquire Team Ownership



The European T20 Premier League (ETPL), Europe's first ICC-sanctioned T20 franchise league, today announced the 'Glasgow Mugafians', the league's Glasgow-based franchise representing Scotland. Backed by the Mugafi Group as founding partner, the franchise is owned by Tansha Batra, with West Indies legend Chris Gayle joining as Co-Owner and Global Brand Ambassador. Mugafi Group, the media, entertainment, and IP platform founded by Vipul Agrawal, will provide the commercial, content, and digital infrastructure to support the franchise's global ambitions. The inaugural edition of the ETPL will take place from August 26

to September 20, 2026, featuring six franchises representing Glasgow, Amsterdam, Edinburgh, Dublin, Belfast, and Rotterdam, competing in 33 matches. Speaking about the Glasgow franchise, Mr. Abhishek Bachchan, Co-owner, ETPL said: "We are delighted to welcome the Mugafi Group and Chris Gayle to this journey. Europe represents one of the most exciting frontiers for cricket, a region rich in sporting culture, diversity and untapped potential. With the ETPL, we are not just building a league but creating a platform that can unlock talent, unite markets and establish Europe as a powerful new centre of the global game."

IRAN KEEPS FIFA WORLD CUP 2026 PARTICIPATION UNDER REVIEW AMID SECURITY CONCERNS

Iran's participation in the upcoming FIFA World Cup 2026 remains uncertain, with the country's Sports Minister Ahmad Donyamali confirming that a final decision will depend on evolving security and political conditions in the ongoing tensions between US and Iran as per Iranian media. Addressing mediapersons on Tuesday, Donyamali said, "We had a discussion about the national team itself, the conditions of the national team, and we also formed a committee. Today we also have a meeting in the framework of this dis-



cussion, and we are fulfilling our legal duty. We must be prepared. In any case, it

might be decided not to go. And if it is decided to go, we should be prepared anyway,

so that our presence, if it is to be, is a strong presence. But again, I emphasise, in

this area, the decision-making is anyway based on the conditions that exist today, with the government and probably the National Security Council." His remarks come amid growing uncertainty over Iran's participation in the tournament, which is set to be co-hosted by the United States, Canada, and Mexico from June 11 to July 19 this year. Despite the concerns, FIFA president Gianni Infantino has publicly backed Iran's involvement, reiterating that the team remains part of the competition. Infantino recently met the Iranian squad in Turkey and praised

their determination to compete on the global stage. Iran has qualified for the expanded 48-team tournament and is placed in Group G, alongside Belgium, New Zealand, and Egypt. As per the current schedule, their matches are slated to be held in Los Angeles and Seattle. However, geopolitical tensions have cast doubt over their participation on US soil. Comments from former US President Donald Trump intensified the situation after he expressed reservations about the team's safety, suggesting it might not be appropriate for Iran to play in the United States.

MEGA POWER STAR RAM Charan, Buchi Babu Sana’s Peddi Shoot Wraps In 6 Days

Mega Power Star Ram Charan's much-awaited rural sports and action drama Peddi has been quietly building a solid buzz, thanks to its impactful promotions. The songs have struck a chord with listeners, while the glimpses revealed two completely different shades of Charan, sparking curiosity among fans. The special glimpse released on his birthday especially amplified expectations, hinting at a film that blends intensity with scale. Directed by Buchi Babu Sana, the film is being mounted on a grand canvas by producer Venkata Satish Kilaru under Vriddhi Cinemas, with Mythri Movie Makers and Sukumar



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Writings serving as presenters. In an official update, the team confirmed that the entire shoot of Peddi will be wrapped up in 6 more days. Alongside the production, the post-production formalities are also happening simultaneously. Their aim is to ensure the film reaches audiences in its best possible form, without compromising on quality.

The makers have also confirmed that Peddi will grace the cinemas in June. The team has also unveiled a fresh set of on-location stills that capture the vibrant mood on the sets. In these candid moments, Ram Charan is seen alongside director Buchi Babu Sana, both sharing warm, cheerful smiles that reflect the positive energy driving the shoot. Charan's look, in particular, stands out strikingly. He sports a rugged yet effortlessly stylish avatar, complete with flowing long hair, a thick beard, and shades that add a sharp edge to his persona. The combination not only enhances his raw, earthy appeal but also hints at the intense, rooted character he portrays in the film.

"Surya Be Positive" movie Teaser Launched by Directors Koushik Pegallapati and Muralikanth Devasoth

The teaser for the upcoming film "Surya Be Positive" was grandly launched by Dandora director Muralikanth Devasoth and Kishkindhapuri director Koushik Pegallapati, who graced the event as chief guests. Produced under the banners of Kaali Krafts and Nirmalam Dramaz, the film is written and directed by Subba Madhavarapu. It features Charan Pesarla as the lead actor, with Annie Diana and Divya Vishwakarma playing the heroines. Key roles are portrayed by Rohith Satyan, Sujatha Deekshith, Chandra Gautam, Balagam Satya, Surabhi Lalitha, and Geethan Sai Teja. The technical team includes DOP Arun Kumar Parvataneni, Music Director Gyani, and Editor Muralikrishna Manyam. On this occasion, Actor Balagam Satya said... "Hello everyone. I was surprised when the hero, Charan, personally approached me for this role. He believed in me and gave me a very unique character. We acted together and had a great time. A very good movie is coming to the audience, and I request everyone's blessings." Actor Rohith Satyan said... "I thank our chief guests, Kaushik Pegallapati and Muralikanth Devasoth. I have been acting in minor roles since 2017, but this is the first time I am speaking on stage thanks to this film. The director gave me a challenging role that is much older than my actual age. Even while in the US, he made sure everything was handled perfectly. The



audience must experience this fresh content in theaters. Telugu audiences always encourage good content, and I hope they support us." Actress Sujatha Deekshith said... "Thank you to the guest directors. Usually, I am a very loud and talkative person, but in this film, my character is completely silent. Unlike my previous roles filled with dialogue, the director made me act with my eyes here. It is a completely contrasting role for me. Everyone worked incredibly hard. It is a relatable, everyday story being brought to the screen." Actress Divya Vishwakarma said... "Thank you to everyone who attended. Standing on this stage for a Telugu film feels very special. Even though Telugu is not my native language, the love, acceptance, and opportunity I

have received make me overjoyed. I sincerely thank the directors for trusting me, as well as my co-stars and the technical team for their immense support." Actress Annie Diana said... "Thanks to the guests and the media for attending our teaser launch. I want to express my special gratitude to the director, cast, and crew. I hope everyone liked our teaser. This is my debut film, and I hope you all support us." Lead Actor Charan Pesarla said... "Hello everyone. I am forever grateful to directors Kaushik Pegallapati and Muralikanth Devasoth for taking the time to support our film, never forgetting the struggles of making a new movie. Our director managed his job in the US while working on this film day and night. Our producer has invested

years of hard work and trust in us. I am introducing myself as an actor and asking for the audience's validation. I have acted in three films before this, but due to unavoidable reasons, they weren't released. This is my fourth film, and I hope the audience appreciates me. I will never stop; I will keep moving forward. I believe any insults faced today will turn into honors tomorrow."

Lyricist Rambabu Gosala said... "The main reason I wrote songs for this film is Music Director Gyani. He provided excellent tunes. Charan worked very hard, and I hope he establishes himself as a great hero in Tollywood. The director gave me continuous inputs, resulting in great songs that will be released soon."

" 'Paramapada Sopanam' will be a big hit" : Senior star Director Bhimaneni Srinivasa Rao at pre release event"



Action thriller 'Paramapada Sopanam', starring Ambati Arjun and Jennifer Emmanuel in the lead roles, is gearing up for a grand theatrical release on April 24. The film is directed by Naga Shiva and produced by Ganaparthi Narayana Rao and Telaprolu Prasanna Anjaneyulu under the Swayambhu Creations banner. As part of the promotions, the makers hosted a grand pre-release event on Tuesday, which was attended by prominent directors Bhimaneni Srinivasa Rao, Veera Shankar, and V. Samudra as the chief guests. Speaking at the event, director Bhimaneni Srinivasa Rao recalled his long association with producer Telaprolu Prasanna

Anjaneyulu and appreciated his growth in the production sector. He extended his best wishes to director Naga Shiva, the lead pair, and the entire technical team for a blockbuster success. Director V. Samudra appreciated the makers for choosing a pure and traditional Telugu title. He highly praised Ambati Arjun's screen presence and acting skills, confidently stating that he has all the qualities to become a big star in the future. He also wished heroine Jennifer Emmanuel a bright career in Tollywood. Director Veera Shankar noted that working as an assistant to Puri Jagannadh has taught director Naga Shiva a lot of patience, which helped him overcome several hurdles to complete this film.

Are Theatres Ready for Another Dhurandhar Blast?

In a unique move, Aditya Dhar and Ranveer Singh's Dhurandhar making documentary is set for a theatrical release. The behind-the-scenes feature will showcase the film's scale and action. This rare Bollywood experiment highlights the franchise's massive success and aims to give audiences an inside look at its grand filmmaking process. Actor Rakesh Bedi has clarified that there are no official plans for Dhurandhar Part 3. Reports suggest the story concludes with the second instalment, closing the main arc. However, strong buzz indicates the makers may continue the franchise in a different format or spin-off projects, expanding the "Dhurandhar universe" with new stories and characters in future. The Bombay High Court has asked filmmaker Aditya Dhar and writer Santosh Kumar to settle their dispute over Dhurandhar 2. The court advised against escalating the issue publicly and suggested resolving it through proper legal channels instead of turning it into a prolonged conflict. The dispute revolves around writer Santosh alleging that his script was used for Dhurandhar 2 without proper credit or consent. The Dhurandhar franchise has rewritten box office history, emerging as

a true game-changer in Indian cinema. Led by Ranveer Singh and directed by Aditya Dhar, the two-part saga has now crossed a staggering ?3000 crore worldwide, becoming the first Indian franchise to achieve this milestone. What makes this achievement even more remarkable is the pace at which Dhurandhar 2 has contributed to this total. The sequel alone has already grossed over ?1700 crore globally and is still going strong at the box office. Trade analysts now suggest that it has not only caught up with Pushpa 2 but has already edged past it in certain territories, with a strong possibility of over-

taking Baahubali 2 in the coming days if the momentum continues. The success of the franchise highlights a significant shift in the Hindi film industry, proving that Bollywood can deliver pan-India blockbusters on par with the biggest South Indian hits. For years, films like Baahubali and Pushpa dominated the all-time charts, but Dhurandhar has now disrupted that hierarchy. Interestingly, the film has achieved these numbers despite facing challenges like limited international markets and stiff competition from events like IPL.

are Theatres Ready for Another Dhurandhar Blast?



The film “Gedela Raju” made with a fresh murder mystery storyline, is set to impress audiences - Director Chaitanya Moturi

The movie “Gedela Raju,” starring Raghu Kunche in the title role, carries the tagline “Kakinada Taluka Cinema.” Along with Raghu Kunche, the film features Ramachandram Punyamurthula, Vikas, Teena Shwavy, Mounika, Ravi Chinnibilli, and others. The teaser, trailer, and songs of the film have already been released and received a positive response. Presented by Raghu Kunche under the Moturi Talkies banner, 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, director Chaitanya Moturi shared the highlights of the film. “Our native place is



Amalapuram. My family wanted me to become a doctor. After intermediate, I studied physiotherapy and even started a clinic. Though I was good at studies, I always had an interest in cinema and literature. Since childhood, I used to write stories and poems, and that passion kept growing. While

running the clinic, I started a short film club and brought together local enthusiasts. Gradually, I built a team with artists and technicians. During my time making short films in Kakinada, I approached 'Dear Comrade' director Bharat Kamma. He asked me to bring some pleasant visuals from Amalapuram and Kakinada. I shot good visuals, including drone shots, and showed him. He liked them and took me into his direction team as an assistant director. That's how my journey in the film industry began. I learned filmmaking during 'Dear Comrade' and later worked on 'Ambajipeta Marriage Band.' I used to narrate stories to producers, and though they liked them, they suggested doing a second film instead.

Laugh Riot Purushaha Nears Completion, Set to Arrive as a Summer Entertainer



Backed by presenter Saraswati Battula, the upcoming film Purushaha is being made under the Kalyan Productions banner, with Battula Koteswara Rao bankrolling the project. The film introduces Pavan Kalyan Battula in a lead role, while director Veeru Vulavala takes charge of delivering a full-fledged comedy entertain-

er packed with commercial appeal. The film boasts a vibrant ensemble featuring Saptagiri, Kasireddy Rajkumar, Rayancha Kokkura, Vishika, Hasini Sudheer, Ananth Sriram, and Vennela Kishore, each expected to bring their own flavor of humor and energy, contributing to the film's overall charm. Promotional mate-

rial released so far, including posters, teaser, and initial glimpses, has struck a chord with audiences, hinting at a lively and engaging narrative. The music album has also gained traction online, with songs trending and adding to the growing anticipation. Now in the concluding phase of post-production, the team is gearing up for a May release, aiming to tap into the summer holiday season. With a blend of comedy, entertainment, and family-friendly elements, Purushaha is being positioned as a crowd-pleasing package. The film's technical crew includes music composer Shruvan Bharadwaj, cinematographer Satish Muthyala, and editor Koti, all contributing to shaping this colorful entertainer.