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Mamata Banerjee warns women against BJP tactics ahead of West Bengal polls

NATION | NEWS

Bahrain says it has intercepted more than 450 drones since war began

WORLD | NEWS

Priyanka shares a glimpse of her morning

Priyanka Chopra Jonas gave a peek into her morning rou-tine as she headed to work in Hyderabad. Priyanka took to Instagram stories, where she shared a video of herself where she is seen prepping her skin with a hydrating face mask and a wand.

CINEMA | PAGE

SCAN FOR E-PAPER



OM NAMO VENKATESAYA

03-04-2026
Total pilgrims: 68,445
Tonsures: 31,383
Hundi kanakalu: 3,79CR
Waiting Compartments... Out side line at Silathoram.

Approx. Darsan Time for Sarvadarshanam (with out SSD Tokens) - 15 H

WEATHER

35°C
RealFeel® 33°

GOLD RATE

24K ₹
1,53,500.00

IN BRIFS

'AM WOUNDED, THAT'S WHY I'M LETHAL'



New Delhi (TSIT) : Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) Rajya Sabha member Raghav Chadha on Saturday rebutted "false and coordinated allegations" levelled against him by fellow party leaders, asserting that the accusations were aimed at silencing his voice in the Parliament. In a video on X, a defiant Chadha claimed that a "scripted campaign" had been launched against him, with repeated and identical accusations being circulated. "From yesterday, a scripted campaign is working against me. The same language and the same accusations are being used. This is not a coincidence, but a coordinated attack," he added. The AAP leader said that he initially chose not to respond but felt compelled to speak out.

IRAN'S IRGC SAYS HIT ISRAEL-LINKED VESSEL, SHIP ABLAZE

Tehran, April 4 : Iran's Islamic Revolution Guard Corps (IRGC) Navy said Saturday that it had hit an Israel-linked vessel with a drone, setting it on fire. The IRGC Navy said in a post on social media platform X that it hit the vessel in the Strait of Hormuz. Meanwhile, in a statement on its official news outlet Sepah News, the IRGC confirmed the attack, saying its forces had targeted an Israeli-owned commercial ship in a port in Bahrain. It said the ship, which was sailing under a third country's flag and identified as "MCS Ishika," was targeted by its Navy's "powerful projectiles" in Khalifa Bin Salman Port during the 95th wave of the attacks against the US and Israeli targets in the West Asia region. There was no immediate comment from the Israeli side, Xinhua news agency reported. The statement added that the Israeli targets were in cities including Tel Aviv and Ramat Gan, which were hit "heavily and continuously" by the multiple-warhead Qadr missiles.

BJP is attempting snatch rights : Mallikarjuna Kharge

Bengaluru (TSIT): AICC President Mallikarjuna Kharge on Saturday accused the BJP of attempting to "snatch away" key rights introduced during the Congress-led UPA era, including the Right to Food, Right to Education, Right to Information, MGNREGA, and the Forest Rights Act.

Addressing a public gathering in Puducherry, Kharge urged voters to oust the ruling NDA government in the upcoming polls and elect a "clean and honest" Congress administration. He said the election presents an opportunity to counter what he termed as "divisive forces" led by the BJP-RSS.

Invoking leaders like Subramania Bharati, Bharathidasan, Periyar E. V. Ramasamy, and K. Kamaraj,



Kharge highlighted their contributions to social justice and equality. He alleged that Puducherry is facing "massive corruption" under the NR-BJP regime, claiming inflated project costs, misuse of public funds, and stalled development. He also criticised the

government of promoting a liquor-driven economy. He pointed to rising youth unemployment and exam paper leaks as signs of systemic failure. Contrasting governance models, Kharge said Congress had built Puducherry's infrastructure, including health-care and education institutions like Jawaharlal Institute for Postgraduate Medical Education and Research, while accusing the current regime of weakening public welfare systems.

Calling for full statehood to Puducherry, he alleged interference by the Lieutenant Governor in the functioning of the elected government. He urged voters to choose "accountability over corruption" in the upcoming elections.

CM Revanth Reddy Plans Tirumala-Style Temple Rules; Reviews Basara Development



Hyderabad (TSIT): On the lines of the renowned Tirumala Temple, Hon'ble Chief Minister A.Revanth Reddy has directed officials to formulate and implement new regulations governing the functioning of temples across Telangana. Emphasizing the need to preserve spiritual sanctity, Chief Minister instructed that political meetings, flag hoisting, and demonstrations be strictly prohibited within temple premises.

Chief Minister conducted a high-level review meeting on the development of the famous Basara Gnana Saraswathi Temple. During the meeting, officials from the Endowments Department presented a detailed master plan outlining develop-

ment works estimated at 225 crore. Reviewing the proposals, the Chief Minister suggested several modifications and stressed that all development activities must strictly adhere to established rituals and traditions of the temple. He also directed officials to construct spacious roads to cater to the growing influx of devotees and pilgrims. Highlighting the importance of environmental aesthetics, the CM proposed large-scale plantation within the temple premises to ensure lush greenery with majestic trees in the future.

He also called for the establishment of a well-equipped healthcare centre with adequate doctors and medical staff

to serve devotees, particularly during major events like Godavari Pushkaralu. To address traffic congestion, the Chief Minister ordered that vehicles, including those of VIPs and dignitaries, must be parked outside the temple complex. Movement within the temple premises should be facilitated only through electric vehicles (EVs).

He also instructed officials to install solar rooftop systems at parking areas as part of sustainable initiatives. Reiterating the importance of maintaining sanctity during development, the Chief Minister warned that strict action would be taken against officials if quality standards are compromised in execution of works. State Endowments Minister Konda Surekha, Government Advisor Sudarshan Reddy, MP Vem Narendar Reddy, Chief Secretary K.Ramakrishna Rao, CM's Principal Secretary K. Srinivasa Raju, Principal Secretary (Endowments) Shaillaja Ramaiyer, Commissioner Hanumantha Rao, and other senior officials attended the meeting.

CM Naidu Reviews Amaravati Works; Pushes for Faster Completion



Amaravati (TSIT): Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu conducted a high-level review of capital city construction works in Amaravati, directing officials and agencies to accelerate execution and meet strict timelines.

At the meeting, attended by Minister P. Narayana, CRDA officials, and construction agencies, it was revealed that works worth Rs.57,821 crore are currently underway. These include housing, roads, trunk infrastructure, Land Pooling Scheme (LPS) works, and iconic structures such as the Assembly, High Court, and Secretariat.

Officials informed that issues related to stalled or cancelled works during the previous YSR Congress Party regime have been resolved, allowing construction to resume. Despite rising costs, tenders have been finalised and projects awarded.

Around 20,000 workers and

experts are currently engaged in the capital works. The Chief Minister reviewed project-wise progress, including manpower deployment and machinery utilisation, and directed agencies to set weekly and monthly targets to ensure timely completion, particularly ahead of the monsoon.

Emphasising the importance of the project, Naidu said building Amaravati is a historic opportunity and urged all stakeholders to contribute towards making it a world-class, future-ready capital. He stressed maintaining quality standards, adopting cost-effective practices, and leveraging green energy and advanced technologies. Reiterating his firm stance, the Chief Minister directed that all works must be completed within stipulated deadlines without compromise, instructing agencies to scale up manpower wherever necessary to ensure projects are completed and inaugurated on schedule.

CM Stalin alleges Centre's 3-language formula 'covert' mechanism to impose Hindi

CHENNAI (TSIT): Tamil Nadu Chief Minister MK Stalin, referring to the CBSE's recently unveiled curriculum framework, on Saturday alleged the "so-called three-language formula" is in reality a "covert" mechanism to expand Hindi into non-Hindi speaking regions. Youths surround Vijay's vehicle in Puducherry; police resort to mild lathi charge Stalin, also the president of the ruling DMK, alleged the curriculum framework by the CBSE, aligned with the National Education Policy 2020, was not an innocent academic reform. It was a calculated and deeply concerning attempt at linguistic imposition that vindicates our long-standing apprehensions.

The chief minister alleged that under the guise of promoting "Indian languages", the BJP-led NDA government was aggressively advancing a centralising agenda that privileges Hindi while systematically marginalising India's rich and diverse linguistic heritage. "The so-called three-language formula is, in reality, a covert mechanism to expand Hindi into non-Hindi speaking regions," he alleged in a statement.

For students in southern states, this framework effectively trans-



lates into "compulsory Hindi learning." He alleged: "Yet, where is the reciprocity? Will students in Hindi-speaking states be mandated to learn Tamil, Telugu, Kannada, Malayalam—or even languages like Bengali and Marathi? The complete absence of such clarity exposes the one-sided and discriminatory nature of this policy. The irony is stark and unacceptable."

The same Union government that has "failed" to make Tamil a mandatory language in Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan schools—and has consistently failed to appoint adequate Tamil teachers, now seeks to lecture states on promoting Indian languages. "This is not commitment, this is rank hypocrisy," Stalin wondered if the



Visakhapatnam (TSIT): In a major boost to India's defence self-reliance, Union Defence Minister Rajnath Singh laid the foundation stone for a state-of-the-art Large Cavi-tation Tunnel (LCT) facility at Naval Science and Technological Laboratory, a premier unit of Defence Research and Development Organisation.

Describing the project as a milestone in achieving Atmanirbhar Bharat, Singh said the facility would reduce India's dependence on foreign testing infrastructure and enhance indigenous capabilities in defence technology. He expressed confidence that the country would emerge as a global leader by designing and testing advanced systems domestically.

Following the ceremony, the Defence Minister visited the Seakeeping and Manoeuvring Basin and inspected advanced defence systems including torpedoes, autonomous underwater vehicles (AUVs), naval mines, and decoys. He appreciated scientists after witnessing live demonstrations.

The LCT facility will serve as a strategic national asset, enabling advanced hydrodynamic research for both sur-

face ships and submarines at a single location. It is expected to significantly improve propulsion efficiency, reduce vessel noise, and enhance stealth capabilities, while supporting the design and development of major naval platforms such as warships and aircraft carriers.

The event was attended by Chief of Defence Staff Anil Chauhan, Chief of Naval Staff Dinesh K Tripathi, Eastern Naval Command Vice Admiral Sanjay Bhalla, and DRDO Chairman Sameer V Kamat, among other senior officials.

CM Stalin alleges Centre's 3-language formula 'covert' mechanism to impose Hindi

Union government had any understanding of ground realities; of availability of teachers, training capacity, and infrastructure? He asked: "Where are the qualified teachers to implement this sweeping exercise."

And crucially, where is the funding to support this enormous burden on the education system? Hence, this appears to be yet another ill-conceived policy announced without planning, resources, or accountability. This was not merely a question of language, it was a question of fairness, federalism, and equal opportunity. "By structurally privileging Hindi-speaking students, this policy risks creating entrenched advantages in higher education and employment, further widening regional disparities. At a time when the world is moving forward at an unprecedented pace, our children must be prepared for the future. The priority should be to equip them with skills in emerging sectors like artificial intelligence, AVGC (Animation, Visual Effects, Gaming, and Comics), and to strengthen scientific temper and critical thinking. Instead, this regressive and rigid language burden threatens to derail their progress, the CM claimed.

the illegal war that is imposed

on us," he stressed.

The Wall Street Journal reported on Friday that Iran has officially told mediators that it is not willing to meet US officials in Islamabad in the coming days and considers US demands unacceptable.

Iran's semi-official Fars news agency early Friday quoted an informed source as saying that Iran had rejected a US proposal for a 48-hour ceasefire sent through a "friendly" country the preceding day, Xinhua news agency reported.

Iranian Minister says Tehran seeks 'conclusive, lasting' end to war



Tehran (TSIT): Iran's Foreign Minister Seyed Abbas Araghchi said on Saturday that Tehran seeks to secure the terms of a "conclusive and lasting" end to the US and Israeli war imposed on the country.

He made the remarks in a post on social media platform X while highlighting one of Iran's main preconditions for an end to the ongoing conflict, and reacting to US media reports that the country has refrained from attending ceasefire talks with the United States in the Pakistani capital Islamabad.

Araghchi said that Iran's position is being misrepresented by the US media as it has not refused to attend the talks. "What we care about are the terms of a conclusive and lasting end to the illegal war that is imposed

on us," he stressed. The Wall Street Journal reported on Friday that Iran has officially told mediators that it is not willing to meet US officials in Islamabad in the coming days and considers US demands unacceptable. Iran's semi-official Fars news agency early Friday quoted an informed source as saying that Iran had rejected a US proposal for a 48-hour ceasefire sent through a "friendly" country the preceding day, Xinhua news agency reported.

PM Modi announces 3-day special Parliament session to push 33 per cent women's quota

New Delhi (TSIT): Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday announced that the government will extend the ongoing Budget Session of Parliament by three days -- April 16, 17 and 18 -- to fast-track steps for operationalising 33 per cent reservation for women in the Lok Sabha and state legislative Assemblies, with the aim of implementing it from the 2029 general elections. In a strong pitch centred on women's empowerment, PM Modi said his government had the resolve to enact the "Nari Shakti Vandan Adhiniyam", which provides one-third reservation for women in legislative bodies.



"We want 33 per cent of the seats in Parliament to be occupied by our sisters starting from the 2029 Lok Sabha elections," he said.

The Prime Minister said the special sitting would focus on enabling provisions, including statutory and constitutional measures required to make the quota effective. He outlined two key objectives for the three-day session.

First, to provide a legislative assurance that no state will lose Lok Sabha seats due to population control efforts. He referred to concerns raised by southern states such as Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana and Goa, which have performed well in family planning and fear a reduction in representation. Second, the government is considering creating women-reserved seats as "additional seats", thereby increasing the overall strength of the Lok Sabha and state Assemblies. This, he indicated, would help preserve existing representation while expanding space for women. PM Modi appealed for unanimous support from all political parties, urging the Congress and other Opposition members, including those in the INDIA bloc, to participate constructively. "The rights of our mothers and sisters have remained pending for nearly 40 years. They should not be delayed again for the 2029 elections," he said.

Mamata Banerjee warns women against BJP tactics ahead of West Bengal polls

New Delhi, Apr 4: West Bengal chief minister Mamata Banerjee on Saturday accused the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) of attempting to mislead women voters, urging them not to share bank account details over fears of financial fraud. Addressing a public rally, Banerjee claimed that BJP workers could visit homes pretending to represent the West Bengal government or the Trinamool Congress (TMC), asking for bank account information under the guise of providing financial benefits. “Mothers and sisters, stay alert. The BJP people will come to your homes in the name of the West Bengal government, in the name of the TMC government, and ask for your bank account number, saying they’ll give you money. Don’t give them your account number, even by mistake; they’ll take away the money from your Lakshmi Bhandar. This is their trick,” she said. Banerjee highlighted



the state government’s Lakshmi Bhandar scheme, launched in 2021, which provides monthly financial aid—Rs 1,200 for women from SC/ST households and Rs 1,000 for others aged 25-60. She claimed the scheme had benefited

women and warned that BJP promises could be temporary and misleading. The Chief Minister also criticised the Indian National Congress for failing to coordinate with TMC on electoral issues,

alleging that Congress did not join TMC in raising protests before the Election Commission. Banerjee raised concerns about election-related cash circulation and urged voters to remain vigilant. During a previous rally in Purulia, she accused the BJP of interfering with Bengal’s food culture and religious practices, claiming the party opposed the consumption of fish, meat, and eggs, and cited instances of exploitation and attacks in BJP-ruled states. She further criticised Union Home Minister Amit Shah, alleging that the BJP leadership had a history of communal violence, referring to past riots in Gujarat, and questioned their moral authority to accuse TMC of wrongdoing. Banerjee’s remarks align with the TMC’s broader campaign narrative portraying the BJP as culturally insensitive and disconnected from Bengal’s traditions.

Rare Heart Defect in Two-Month-Old Infant Successfully Treated at KIMS Cuddles, Kondapur



Hyderabad, April 4, 2026: Doctors at KIMS Cuddles, Kondapur, successfully performed a complex life-saving surgery on a two-month-old infant diagnosed with a rare congenital heart defect, giving the child a new lease of life. Sharing details, Dr. Aparna C., Clinical Director, Head of Neonatology and Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU), and Senior Consultant Neonatologist and Pediatrician, said that the infant, hailing from Khammam district, was brought to the hospital with symptoms of breathing difficulty and signs of heart failure.

Investigations revealed a defect in the heart. An echocardiogram performed by Pediatric Cardiologist Dr. Sudeep Varma identified a rare condition known as ARCAPA (Anomalous Right Coronary Artery from the Pulmonary Artery). In this condition, the right coronary artery, which normally arises from the aorta and supplies oxygen-rich blood to the heart, originates abnormally from the pulmonary artery. The diagnosis was further confirmed through an aortogram. The medical team proceeded with an open-heart surgery. During the procedure,

the right coronary artery was carefully detached from the pulmonary artery and reimplanted into the aorta using a specialized “hood” technique. This restored the normal flow of oxygenated blood to the heart. Post-surgery, the infant received anticoagulant therapy to prevent blood clot formation. The baby was closely monitored in the NICU and was provided ventilator support, inotropes, and, when required, peritoneal dialysis as part of the critical care management. Dr. Aparna noted that performing heart surgery on such young infants is

highly challenging due to the small size of blood vessels, limited physiological reserves, and the complexity of maintaining blood circulation and body temperature during the procedure. Despite these challenges, the surgery was successful, and the infant has now recovered well and has been discharged from the NICU. The surgical team included Senior Pediatric Cardiac Surgeon Dr. Anil, Cardiac Anesthesiologist Dr. Nagarajan, and the neonatology team led by Dr. Aparna C., along with Dr. Vishwanath, Dr. Amit, Dr. Ishita, and Dr. Rajashekhar, all of whom played crucial roles in the treatment. ARCAPA is an extremely rare congenital heart anomaly, seen in approximately 0.25% of cases. In severe instances, it can lead to sudden infant death if not treated promptly. This case highlights the importance of early diagnosis and timely intervention in congenital heart diseases. Dr. Aparna emphasized that with the availability of advanced neonatal cardiac care facilities, even critically ill infants can be successfully treated and saved.

Assassination Bid on Gaddar: A Turning Point in Revolutionary Cultural Politics

DR. G.V. VENNELA GADDAR, CHAIRPERSON, TELANGANA SAMSKRUTHIKA SARATHI

April 6, 1997 In a shocking incident that underscored the tense political climate of the time, revolutionary balladeer Gaddar survived an assassination attempt at his residence in Hyderabad. Unidentified gunmen opened fire on the poet-singer, leaving him critically injured with multiple bullet wounds one of which remained lodged in his spinal cord, becoming a lasting symbol of alleged state repression. The attack is widely believed to have been politically motivated, with suspicions pointing toward state-backed elements or a covert police unit reportedly known as the “Green Tigers.” Gaddar, known for his powerful songs that resonated with the marginalized, had been a vocal critic of the government and a supporter of the banned PWG.

POLITICAL CONTEXT AND MOTIVE

The incident occurred during the rule of the Telugu Desam Party, a period marked by intensified crackdowns on Naxalite movements and their sympathizers. Gaddar’s cultural activism and mass appeal were perceived as a threat, as his songs inspired many to align with revolutionary ideologies.

THE ATTACK AND AFTERMATH Gaddar was shot multiple times, and although doctors managed to remove several bullets, one remained due to medical risks. Despite the severity of the attack, he survived, and the case was later categorized as “undetected,” leaving many questions unanswered. The assassination attempt triggered widespread outrage across intellectual and cultural circles. Hundreds of poets, writers, and activists condemned the attack, producing songs, poems, and essays in solidarity. A notable folk refrain, “Jamedari koyilo,” echoed the collective grief and hope of the masses during his recovery.

A VOICE THAT COULD NOT BE SILENCED

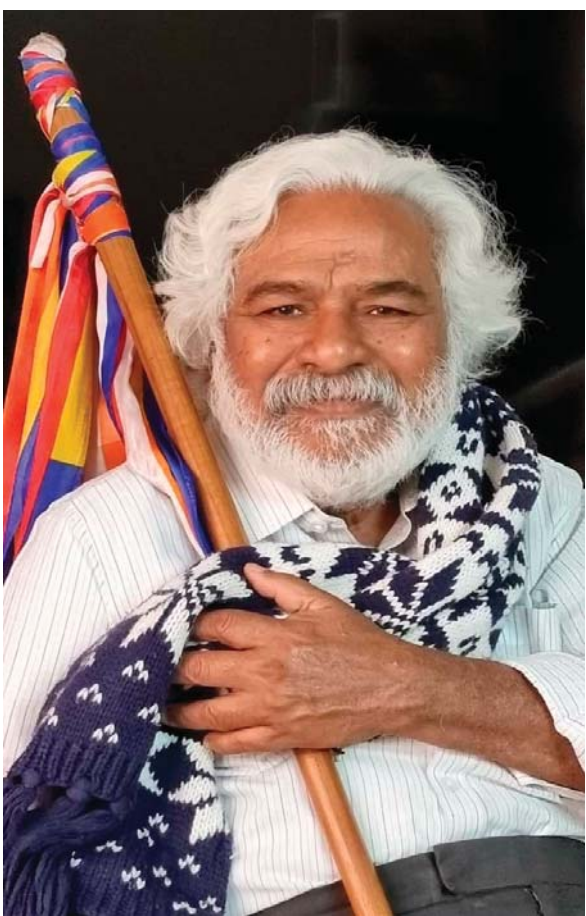
Far from silencing him, the attack amplified Gaddar’s influence. He continued to champion the cause of the oppressed and later emerged as a prominent voice in the Telangana movement. His performances marked by intense physical expression, rhythmic movements, and emotional depth transcended conventional artistic boundaries, making him a unique cultural force. Scholars and contemporaries have described Gaddar as more than a performer—he was a poet, composer, choreographer, political thinker, and above all, a communicator who connected deeply with the masses. His work drew inspiration not only from Marxist thought but also from Indian social reformers like B. R. Ambedkar, Jyotirao Phule, and Kabir.

ENDURING LEGACY

Despite controversies and internal debates within revolutionary circles, Gaddar’s adaptability and engagement with issues like caste and social justice only strengthened his bond with the people. His ability to evolve with changing socio-political realities made him a beloved figure across movements Dalit, tribal, and working-class struggles alike. The 1997 assassination attempt, rather than diminishing his spirit, cemented Gaddar’s place as an enduring symbol of resistance and revolutionary cultural politics in India.

THE CULTURAL CATALYST

The second phase of the



people across caste, class, and regional divisions, creating a shared Telangana identity. Alongside him, several upcoming singers, artists further strengthened this cultural resistance, though Gaddar remained its most powerful and symbolic voice. Gaddar played a decisive role in this transformation by turning folklore into a medium of revolutionary expression. The movement also drew strength from symbols like Amaraveerula Stupams, which commemorated martyrs and reinforced collective memory. Gaddar’s songs immortalized these sacrifices, deepening emotional unity and resolve among the people.

A LIFE OF RESISTANCE

Gaddar’s life mirrored his art, marked by struggle and courage. He survived an assassination attempt in 1997, carrying a bullet in his body as a lasting symbol of state repression. In 2004, he acted as a mediator in peace talks between the Peoples War group and the government. Despite ideological associations, his appeal transcended divisions, reaching both rural masses and urban audiences alike.

THE VOICE THAT MADE TELANGANA SING

Gaddar’s contribution to the Telangana movement is immeasurable. In the second phase especially, he converted culture into a powerful political force, transformed songs into instruments of mass mobilization, and gave Telangana its emotional and cultural identity. His revolutionary folk songs addressed a wide spectrum of social realities, including feudal oppression, caste discrimination, migration, farmer suicides, drought, and cultural alienation. These themes resonated deeply with the people and played a significant role in the eventual formation of Telangana state in 2014.

Gaddar was not just a singer; he was a movement, an ideology, and a cultural revolution. His era in Telugu literature and activism is rightly remembered as the “Age of Gaddar.” As history will remember, politics may have demanded Telangana, but it was Gaddar’s song that made people feel it, fight for it, and ultimately achieve it.

“DRAWING THE LINE: TELANGANA’S BID TO CURB HATE SPEECH”



AMARAVAJI NAGARAJU

In an era where words travel faster than thought and misinformation can inflame divisions within moments, the Telangana government’s move to introduce the “Telangana Hate Speech and Hate Crime Prevention Bill - 2026” marks a significant legislative intervention. Spearheaded by Chief Minister , the bill seeks to reinforce the foundations of social harmony by drawing a firm line against hate speech and its dangerous consequences. The rationale behind such a law is rooted in contemporary realities. Social media platforms, while democratizing expression, have also become fertile ground for misinformation, communal provocation, and targeted vilification. Posts, videos, and speeches that incite hatred based on religion, caste, language, or ethnicity have increasingly posed threats to public order. In this context, the proposed legislation is not merely reactive; it is preventive, aiming to curb the escalation of divisive rhetoric before it manifests into violence. At its core, the bill addresses two interlinked concerns: the regulation of hate

speech and the prevention of crimes arising from it. Its scope is notably comprehensive. Unlike traditional legal provisions that focus primarily on public gatherings or printed material, this bill extends its ambit to digital platforms, electronic media, and online communications recognizing the evolving nature of public discourse in the digital age. The proposed penalties underscore the seriousness of the offence. A first-time violation could attract imprisonment of up to seven years along with a fine, while repeat offences invite harsher consequences. Importantly, the bill empowers state authorities to direct media platforms to remove hateful content, thereby enabling swift intervention in volatile situations. These provisions are designed to work in tandem with existing sections of the Indian Penal Code, such as those dealing with promoting enmity and outraging religious sentiments, while updating enforcement mechanisms for a digital-first society. Legislation, however, is only as effective as its implementation. The Telangana government appears to have acknowledged this by backing the bill with substantial financial commitments. In the 2026-27 budget, increased allocations to the Home Department signal a clear intent to strengthen policing infrastructure, expand forensic capabilities, and improve surveillance mechanisms. Plans for reorganizing policing in urban centres and establishing new commissioner-

ates could enhance the state’s ability to respond swiftly to hate-related incidents. Parallel investments in the judicial system aimed at expanding court capacity and expediting trials are equally critical. Swift justice not only deters potential offenders but also reassures victims that the system is responsive and fair. Additionally, targeted welfare allocations for Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, Backward Classes, and minorities reflect an understanding that communities most vulnerable to hate speech require both legal protection and socio-economic support. Yet, no law that touches upon speech can escape scrutiny. Critics have raised concerns about potential overreach and the risk of infringing upon the fundamental right to freedom of expression guaranteed by the Constitution. These concerns are not without merit. The challenge lies in ensuring that the law distinguishes clearly between legitimate criticism an essential pillar of democracy and speech that incites hatred or violence. The government, for its part, has emphasized that the bill is not intended to stifle dissent but to prevent harm. Whether this assurance translates into practice will depend on the integrity and transparency of enforcement. Safeguards against misuse, clear definitions of what constitutes “hate speech,” and robust oversight mechanisms will be crucial in maintaining public trust. From a broader societal per-

spective, the bill reflects Telangana’s unique cultural context a region marked by linguistic diversity, religious plurality, and a shared historical legacy. Preserving this pluralism requires not just tolerance but active protection against forces that seek to divide. In this sense, the legislation can be seen as a normative statement: that coexistence is not incidental but essential. Equally important is the role of citizens. Laws can deter and punish, but they cannot by themselves cultivate empathy or responsibility. Public awareness campaigns, digital literacy initiatives, and community engagement will be vital in fostering a culture where individuals understand the impact of their words and the importance of respectful discourse. Ultimately, the success of the Telangana Hate Speech and Hate Crime Prevention Bill - 2026 will hinge on balance between authority and liberty, enforcement and restraint, law and ethics. If implemented with fairness and clarity, it has the potential to serve not just as a regulatory framework but as a moral compass for public communication. In a democracy, the freedom to speak is sacred. But equally vital is the responsibility to ensure that speech does not become a weapon. Drawing that line is never easy. Telangana’s attempt to do so through legislation is both timely and consequential. Whether it becomes a model for others will depend, as always, not on intent alone but on execution.

BOSCON 2026 Showcases Future-Ready Orthopaedic Care in Bengaluru

Bengaluru, April 4, 2026: BOSCON 2026, the 29th Annual Conference of the Bangalore Orthopaedic Society, concluded successfully in Bengaluru, bringing together leading orthopaedic experts, surgeons, and young clinicians for two days of intensive academic exchange and clinical discussions. Organised in association with HOSMAT Hospitals, the conference was held on April 4 and 5 at The Koramangala Club. The event was inaugurated by Dr. Shantharam Shetty, Pro Chancellor of NITTE University and former IOA President.

With the theme “Keeping PACE in Orthopaedics: Evolving with Evidence,” the conference emphasised Practical Academic Case-based Education (PACE), focusing on real-world clinical learning backed by scientific evidence. The two-day event featured subspecialty scientific sessions, case-based discussions on complex surgeries, expert-led panel debates, and academic plat-



GUEST OF HONOUR DR. SHANTHARAM SHETTY, PRO CHANCELLOR, NITTE UNIVERSITY AND PAST IOA PRESIDENT, LIGHTS THE CEREMONIAL LAMP DURING THE INAUGURATION OF BOSCON 2026. ALSO SEEN ARE DR. SUBODH M SHETTY, PRESIDENT, BOS; DR. RAMESH B, GENERAL SECRETARY, BOS; DR. HEMANTH H P, ORGANISING TREASURER; DR. SHASHANK G, ORGANISING SECRETARY; DR. SACHIDANANDA RAI, PRESIDENT, KOA; AND DR. HARISHMURTHY, SECRETARY GENERAL, KOA.

forms for postgraduate students and emerging surgeons. Key topics included the growing role of robotics, artificial intelligence, biologics, and minimally invasive techniques in orthopaedic care, alongside the need for ethical and evidence-based adoption. Dr. Subodh Shetty,

President of the Bangalore Orthopaedic Society, highlighted that modern orthopaedics stands at a crossroads of tradition and innovation, stressing responsible integration of advanced technologies. Dr. Shantharam Shetty added that orthopaedic practice must balance clinical

expertise with scientific validation, ensuring patient-centric outcomes. BOSCON 2026 reinforced the importance of such academic platforms in advancing orthopaedic education, research, and clinical excellence, contributing to improved healthcare outcomes across the country.

Nara Lokesh Credits H. D. Kumaraswamy for Vizag Steel Revival

Raichur (Sindhanur): Andhra Pradesh IT and HRD Minister Nara Lokesh on Saturday credited Union Steel and Heavy Industries Minister H. D. Kumaraswamy for steering the revival of Rashtriya Ispat Nigam Limited (RINL) at Visakhapatnam, which had faced the threat of closure and privatisation.

Addressing a large gathering, Lokesh said the Vizag Steel Plant carries deep emotional value for the people of Andhra Pradesh, recalling the popular sentiment that it is their rightful asset. He noted that due to earlier policy decisions, the plant had



reached a critical stage before intervention by the Centre. Lokesh stated that upon assuming office, Kumaraswamy assured protection of the plant and fulfilled his promise. "Today, the plant is on the path to recovery and moving towards profitability," he said, expressing gratitude on behalf of the people of the state.

He also recalled his efforts through Visakhapatnam MP M. Sriharat to raise the issue with the Union Minister, including a direct phone interaction where Kumaraswamy assured support. "He stood by his word

and safeguarded the plant," Lokesh added.

Highlighting industrial growth, Lokesh pointed to a major green steel project at Anakapalli, being developed by ArcelorMittal and Nippon Steel, describing it as one of India's largest investments in the sector. He credited Kumaraswamy's role in facilitating the project in Andhra Pradesh.

Lokesh further reflected on the longstanding political association between his family and that of former Prime Minister H. D. Deve Gowda, while also acknowledging the contributions of his father N. Chandrababu Naidu.

Impose fines on those encroaching on footpaths: Maheshwar Rao

Bengaluru : Chief Commissioner Maheshwar Rao instructed officials to take action against those who have encroached upon footpaths along Old Madras Road by imposing fines and clearing the encroachments, while also ensuring the development of smooth and accessible pedestrian pathways.

He gave necessary instructions during an inspection conducted on foot today along Old Madras Road, from Swami Vivekananda Metro Station to Ulsoor Lake, within the jurisdiction of

detailed presentation should be prepared regarding the ongoing development works at Ulsoor Lake. He also instructed officials to install information boards to keep the public informed about the ongoing projects.

Comprehensive Development of Ulsoor Lake:

Ulsoor Lake, spread across 106 acres, is undergoing comprehensive development at a cost of Rs.33.50 crore. The works include desilting, development of a two-tier walkway, installation of grills,



the Bengaluru Central City Corporation.

He directed that teams be deployed to undertake mass cleaning drives on footpaths. The footpaths must be completely cleaned of dust and made visually appealing. Any waste or debris found should be cleared immediately to maintain cleanliness. Officials were also instructed to repair damaged slabs and curb stones on footpaths to facilitate smooth pedestrian movement.

During the inspection, it was noticed that waste was being dumped at a damaged portion of the MEG compound wall on Old Madras Road. Additionally, iron wires protruding toward the footpath from the top of the wall posed a potential danger. He instructed the concerned authorities over the phone to address the issue immediately.

Near the Anjaneya Temple on Old Madras Road, footpaths had been encroached upon by a nursery, a granite shop, and along Murphy Road. He directed officials to clear these encroachments and impose fines on the violators. He also instructed the removal of tree branches that obstruct pedestrian movement.

Commissioner Rajendra Cholan of the Central City Corporation stated that a

construction of inlet box culverts, repair of six islands, and bund development, among others. The Executive Engineer informed that the works will be completed before the monsoon.

The construction of a bridge connecting the adjoining park to the lake is nearly complete. The old Kalyani has been removed, and a new one is being constructed.

Other instructions issued during the inspection: Bamboo saplings should be planted and maintained along footpaths on Old Madras Road. Tipplers should be procured and used for sanitation work instead of tractors. Shoulder drains along roadsides must be desilted before the monsoon. Unauthorized construction on BMRL land at the 100 Feet Road junction must be removed immediately by BMRL.

Road damage caused by BWSSB wall issues must be repaired. Vehicles parked on footpaths must be cleared and fines imposed on violators. On this occasion, Additional Commissioner (Development) Daljit Kumar, Joint Commissioners Ranganath and Hemanth Sharan, CEO Ramamani, Chief Engineer Vijay Kumar Haridas, and other officials were present.

H. D. Kumaraswamy Calls for Politics-Free Development; Inaugurates Sainik School in Raichur

Raichur: Union Minister H. D. Kumaraswamy on Saturday emphasised the need to rise above political differences to accelerate development in Karnataka, while inaugurating a new Sainik School at Sindhanur in Raichur district.

The school, established at the Shri Krishnadevaraya Education Society, was inaugurated in the presence of Minister of State for Defence Sanjay Seth and Andhra Pradesh Minister Nara Lokesh. The initiative is aimed at strengthening defence-oriented education and creating opportunities for youth to join the armed forces.

Addressing the gathering, Kumaraswamy said



that under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, India is making significant strides in the defence sector. He thanked Defence Minister Rajnath Singh and Sanjay Seth for supporting the establishment of the school, fulfilling a long-pending demand of the region.

Stressing that "develop-

ment must rise above politics," he called for collective efforts to address key issues in Raichur and across Karnataka. He highlighted major proposals such as setting up an AIIMS in Raichur and constructing the Navile Reservoir alongside the Tungbhadra reservoir to boost irrigation and agriculture.

Please find below quotes from RCB's Jitesh Sharma at the Pre-Match Press Conference ahead of their clash against CSK on 5th April 2026.

Bengaluru: RCB's Jitesh Sharma speaking on team approach vs CSK "I think it's very simple, we are just focussing on our own process rather than thinking about what they have done in the last one week. We are just focussing on our preparation, that's it, that's the simple thing." Jitesh speaking at the Pre-Match Press Conference ahead of their clash against CSK

Speaking on leadership responsibility as Vice-Captain and batting impact:

"I think whenever you get the responsibility, you feel grateful and privileged and I take extra effort to give something to my team. Whatever possible, how I



can contribute to the win, I think that gives you extra responsibility when you are in the leadership role."

Speaking on record (3-0 vs CSK) and pressure:

"After coming here, I came to know about the 3-0 equation. As a player, as a unit, we always focus on one game at a time rather than thinking about the records. We are just trying to be present

and plan what our strengths are and what are their weaknesses."

Speaking on playing against fast bowling:

"Recently I played in Australia, I think I scored a little bit of runs there, so I am working on it against fast bowlers. As a player there is always scope, no one is perfect in this world, I think improving is the key for every successful player."

Ashoka Slams Congress Over 'Cuts' to BC, SC Corporations; Questions Vote Outreach

Bagalkot : Chief Minister Siddaramaiah and Congress leaders, who have cut grants to Backward Classes and Scheduled Castes Corporations, are now holding meetings with backward class and Dalit leaders ahead of the elections. Opposition Leader R. Ashoka questioned: "With what face are they going to these people and begging for votes?"

Speaking at a press conference along with MP Basavaraj Bommai, Ashoka said that during the BJP regime under Basavaraj Bommai's leadership, Rs.100 crore was allocated to the Ambedkar Corporation's self-employment scheme. But the current Congress government has given only Rs.45 crore.

- For the Tanda Development Corporation, BJP had given Rs.110 crore, while "community champion" Siddaramaiah has given Rs.60 crore.
- For the Bhoji Corporation,



BJP allocated Rs.95 crore, Siddaramaiah gave Rs.45 crore.

- For the Devaraju Arasu Corporation, BJP gave Rs.190 crore, Congress gave Rs.100 crore.
- For the Sangolli Rayanna Corporation, Siddaramaiah (whom he sarcastically called "Kuladevaru") gave Rs.50 crore, whereas BJP had given Rs.106 crore.

- For weavers (Nekara), BJP allocated Rs.125 crore, while Congress gave only Rs.10 crore.

Overall, the BJP government had given Rs.1,643 crore to backward classes, while Siddaramaiah has given only Rs.1,000 crore — swallowing Rs.1,055 crore in the process. Yet they are holding meetings with Dalits and backward classes and begging for votes. "Now even

Siddaramaiah's own seat is not guaranteed. Dr. G. Parameshwara is going to Dalit colonies saying 'make me CM'," he added.

Ashoka alleged that ever since Congress came to power, there has been infighting for the Chief Minister's chair and as many as 30 scams have occurred in three years. These include the Valmiki Corporation scam, allegations of 60% commission to contractors, and ministers sending crores of rupees to Delhi through the liquor lobby, among others.

He said that when Basavaraj Bommai was CM, four medical colleges were established. Now, instead of building medical colleges, doctors are being transferred from community health centres. No tenders have been called for medicine supply. "He promised to wipe the tears of Krishna (referring to the Krishna river basin), but has

not released funds for any irrigation projects," he charged.

Siddaramaiah who ate biryani in Badami and disappeared

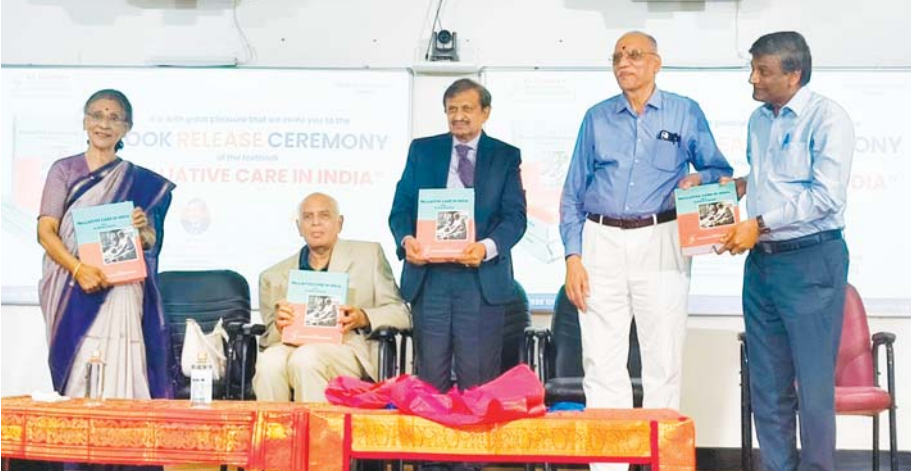
"Siddaramaiah came to Badami, ate biryani, contested the election and won. He did not develop his home turf Mysuru and lost by 30,000 votes. At that time, Badami supported him. But he abandoned Badami and ran away. Now he has come back to Bagalkot, campaigning and promising to shower development. For so many years Congress MLAs were here but no development happened. When Basavaraj Bommai was Irrigation Minister, he had sanctioned Rs.700 crore for irrigation. Former MLA Veeranna Charantimath also brought improvements. But now they say there is no money in the government for

MP Dr. C. N. Manjunath Releases 'Palliative Care in India Book', Calls for Patient-Centric Cost Effective Treatment

Bengaluru: In a significant milestone for the medical community, the textbook Palliative Care in India, edited by eminent medical expert Professor Dr. Athama Prasanna, was ceremonially released at Sri Shankara Cancer Hospital & Research Centre.

The event was graced by Chief Guest Padmashri C. N. Manjunath, Member of Parliament (Lok Sabha), Bengaluru Rural, who formally unveiled the book and addressed the gathering. In his address, Dr. Manjunath praised the editor for his outstanding effort in compiling a comprehensive volume with contributions from over 100 experts. He described the publication as a remarkable and timely contribution to the advancement of palliative care in India, especially at a time when structured care systems are still evolving.

Recalling his long-standing association with Dr. Athama Prasanna during their academic years at KMC Manipal (1985-1988),



he appreciated his dedication, academic excellence, and lifelong commitment to the medical profession. He noted that bringing out such a monumental work reflects exceptional perseverance and vision.

Emphasizing the core purpose of healthcare, Dr. Manjunath stated that the objective of treatment is not only to cure disease but also to ensure dignity, comfort, and quality of life for patients, particularly in cases where complete recovery may not be possible. He also commended the efforts of Sri Shankara

Cancer Hospital in providing quality and affordable cancer care to the public. Highlighting the rising cost of treatment, he stressed the importance of making healthcare more accessible and patient-centered.

Referring to recent policy initiatives, he noted that the Government of India has exempted customs duty on several essential cancer drugs, a progressive step aimed at reducing the financial burden on patients. He also mentioned his efforts in raising this

issue with the Union Government in the larger public interest.

The programme was attended by distinguished dignitaries, including Founder Trustee Dr. B. S. Srinath, Dr. Amita Prasanna, Dr. Shankar Patil, and leading members of the medical fraternity. The book "Palliative Care in India" is expected to serve as a valuable reference for healthcare professionals and a guiding resource in promoting compassionate and patient-centered care across the country.

FIR should be filed against Pratap Simha and strict action should be taken: Surjewala

Bengaluru: AICC General Secretary Randeep Singh Surjewala has demanded that an FIR should be filed against Pratap Simha and strict action should be taken. Taking to social media, he alleged that Pratap Simha's derogatory "cut" statement about Chief Minister Siddaramaiah in Bagalkot has once again exposed the BJP's nefarious politics.

It is now clear that Pratap Simha's anger is born out of frustration. The BJP is deliberately using Pratap Simha to insult Siddaramaiah, the most senior leader of the backward community. With the sole intention of sending a message that they see the backward classes, Scheduled Castes and minorities as inferior and subordinate according to their Manuvadi perspective. He said that such behavior exposes the complete bankruptcy of the ideology, morality and leadership in the BJP. Chief Minister Siddaramaiah and Deputy Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar have also received life threats from these divisive forces in the past, including the despa-



ble threat of "killing and stuffing the body in the fridge". This is not the whim of one person, this is the political culture of the BJP. This is the same Pratap

Simha who, on the instructions of the BJP central leadership, has repeatedly called the Congress Karnataka government, elected by the people, a "Taliban government". BJP leaders are repeat offenders in spreading poisonous speech. Former MP Ananth Kumar Hegde, when he was a Union Minister, openly insulted the wife of Minister Dinesh Gundurao.

BJP MLA C.T. Ravi humiliated Minister Lakshmi Hebbalkar inside the Karnataka Legislative Council and stooped to the lowest level. Other BJP leaders are repeat offenders in making insulting, disrespectful and derogatory statements against individuals, communities and religions. When abuse is the Magna Carta of BJP leaders.



Muthoot Homefin (India) Ltd.

Corporate Office : Unit No. 19-NE, 19th Floor, The Ruby, Senapati Bapat Marg, Near Ruparel College, Dadar (West), Mumbai, Maharashtra- 400 028

POSSESSION NOTICE (As per Appendix IV read with rule 8(1) of the Security Interest Enforcement Rules, 2002)

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Sr. No.	Name of the Borrower(s)/ Co-Borrower(s)/ Loan Account No./Branch	Brief details of secured assets	Date of Demand Notice & Total Outstanding Dues (Rs.)	Possession Taken Date
1.	Bini Joshy/ Joshy George/ KOM-HL-000233/ Kottayam	All That Part And Parcel of Property Having An Extent of 4.45 Ares in Sy.No. 790/9A And All Other Rights Mentioned in Registered Sale Deed Number 1247/1/2023 in Kaduthuruthy Sub-Registrar Office, Kottayam District, Sub District: Kaduthuruthy Taluk: Vaikom, Village Muttuchira, Local Authority Kaduthuruthy Grama, East: Private Road And Balance Property of Seriyak, West Thondu, South Property of Melukunnathu And Kozhanthadam Families, North: Property of Kozhanthadathil:	25-Oct-25/ Rs. 15,59,189/- Rupees Fifteen Lakh Fifty Nine Thousand One Hundred Eighty Nine Only.	30-Mar-2026

Date: April 05, 2026, Place: Kottayam

Sd/- Authorized Officer, Muthoot Homefin (India) Limited

EDITORIAL

450 Missile, 2,000 Drone Attacks Later, Why Is UAE Still Not Fighting Iran?

According to the latest statistics released by the UAE Ministry of Defence, the country's air defences have engaged 457 ballistic missiles, 19 cruise missiles, and 2,038 drones launched by Iran. This makes the UAE the biggest target of Iran since the joint US-Israel war on it began on February 28. In fact, on the very first day, Dubai airport, the city's famed Burj Al-Arab hotel, the landmark Palm Jumeirah, and Jebel Ali port were hit by missiles. Exasperated by these attacks, the UAE, reports say, has asked the US to continue the war in Iran and complete the job there. In the latest update, however, it has ruled out putting boots on the ground in Iran but has signalled its willingness to join any multi-nation endeavour to open up the Strait of Hormuz to international shipping. These developments spotlight a complex relationship between the two neighbouring states that share waterways, communities, and extensive trade links. The UAE is Iran's second-largest trading partner, with bilateral trade amounting to around \$25-27 billion annually. In 2024, Iran imported over \$20 billion worth of goods from the UAE, making it Iran's largest single source of imports. At the same time, Iranian non-oil exports to the UAE were more than \$6 billion. Around half a million Iranians live and work in the UAE, with the community having stayed there for decades, preceding the birth of the Islamic Republic in 1979.

A Tense History
Yet, tensions have persisted - territorially since the UAE's birth in 1971, and ideologically since the Iranian Islamic revolution in 1979, spilling over into wider geo-strategic considerations. Territorially, Iran and the UAE are locked in a dispute over three tiny islands - Abu Musa, Greater Tunb and Lesser Tunb. The largest, Abu Musa, has a population of only around 2,000 people. But they occupy an extremely strategic location - sitting as they are at the entrance to the Strait of Hormuz, whose importance by now needs no further explanation. These islands serve as useful bases to monitor maritime traffic through the Strait and are critical to Iran's naval defence architecture. Britain had occupied the islands in 1908. When the UAE gained freedom from the British in 1971, the British withdrew from these islands. Iran, under Shah Reza Pahlavi, occupied the islands, citing old maps, including those by the British. The UAE, however, maintained that they are the rightful owner. Given Iran's size and its military muscle, the UAE has been restrained, relying mostly on diplomatic tools to manage the tensions. The UAE's size - 83,600 sq. km in total - and its population - the local Emirati population is only 1.33 million out of a total population of 11.57 million, comprising expatriates - has shaped its approach towards Iran, as also towards the region as a whole.

The Revolution And The American Turn
The 1979 Islamic revolution in Iran, which overthrew the Shah and established a Republic, added another layer of complexity to regional politics. All five Gulf Sheikdoms, along with the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, are hereditary monarchies, with some, like the UAE, also representing a federative union with a constitution, to give it some semblance of a democratic polity. But they all remain absolute monarchies. Furthermore, as Iran began exporting its revolutionary ideology, small sheikdoms sought to hedge themselves and their enormous oil wealth by constituting the Gulf Cooperation Council and investing in American security and defence procurement. Today, all GCC states house US air bases. Of them, the UAE hosts the Al Dhafra Air Base, which hosts American, French, and Emirati air forces, while the Jebel Ali port in Dubai hosts US Navy ships, making the UAE a key logistical hub. There are, besides the US, UK and French military bases as well.



PRIYANKA SAURABH

(When the investigative agency becomes the center point of politics)

In India's federal structure, the jurisdiction of the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) over the states has become a sensitive and multi-layered issue, not limited to legal debate but also involving political, constitutional, and ethical questions. The withdrawal of general consent granted to the CBI by various states—especially opposition-ruled states—over the past few years has further intensified this debate. The question is repeatedly raised as to whether the CBI is truly an impartial investigating agency or whether it is becoming a subservient entity under the influence of the central government. On the other hand, the central government claims that state governments are obstructing the investigation agencies' paths to suit their political convenience. The truth lies somewhere between these two extremes. To understand the powers and jurisdiction of the CBI, it is essential to understand the Delhi Special Police Establishment Act, 1946 (DSPE Act). This is the law that provides the CBI with its statutory basis. Section 6 of this Act clearly states that the CBI must obtain the consent of the state government to exercise its powers within a state. This provision reflects the spirit of Indian federalism, which respects the autonomy of states. However, it is equally important to note that this consent is not absolute and mandatory. The law provides several exceptions where the CBI can investigate without the state's consent. For example, if the Supreme Court or the relevant High Court orders a CBI investigation, the state government's consent is waived.



Furthermore, the CBI has the authority to take independent action in corruption cases involving central government employees, or in cases involving violations of central laws. A significant decision by the Supreme Court in 2025 is noteworthy in this context, clarifying that state consent is not required to register an FIR against central government employees under the Prevention of Corruption Act. This decision underscores the limited power of the state and its ability to yield to national interest and the judicial process. The federal structure of the Indian Constitution also plays a crucial role in understanding this entire controversy. India is considered an example of "cooperative federalism," but it is not fully decentralized. Law and order is placed in the State List in the Seventh Schedule, meaning that under normal circumstances it is a state subject. However, under Articles 246 and 254, the central government has primacy in special circumstances. This arrangement was designed to ensure that national unity and the rule of law are not undermined under any circumstances. This is where the conflict arises.

While states cite their constitutional autonomy, the central government argues that it should have the right to intervene to ensure national interest and a comprehensive justice system. Since 2018, West Bengal, Punjab, Telangana, Kerala, Jharkhand, Rajasthan, Chhattisgarh, and several other states have withdrawn the general consent granted to the CBI. General consent meant the CBI could initiate investigations in the state without seeking permission each time. After its withdrawal, the CBI had to seek separate permission for each case, slowing and cumbersome the investigation process. States allege that the central government uses the CBI to target political opponents. In several cases, it has been alleged that investigations against opposition leaders are initiated abruptly, while cases involving ruling party leaders are lax. The West Bengal government expressed similar concerns when it withdrew general consent in 2019. Other states have similarly cited this move as a move to protect their autonomy. On the other hand, the central government argues that state governments are hindering investigations into cor-

ruption and crime by withholding consent. If political approval is required in every case, impartial investigations will be impossible. The Supreme Court also expressed concern about this trend in 2021, stating that the general withdrawal of consent by states hampers investigations into interstate and complex crimes. This observation indicates that the judiciary is viewing this issue not solely from a political perspective, but in the context of broader judicial interests. The most serious aspect of this entire controversy is that it is affecting the credibility of investigative agencies. When an investigative agency is accused of political bias, public trust is undermined. In a democracy, the credibility of institutions is their greatest asset. If the CBI is not seen as an impartial and independent agency, its investigations and actions will also be questioned. Additionally, the tendency for states to withdraw consent sets a dangerous precedent. If individual states begin restricting central agencies' entry based on their own political convenience, national crime control and anti-corruption efforts could be undermined.

In Tamil Nadu, Vijay Attempts A Hostile Takeover Of AIADMK's Very Soul

Around 100 seconds into the election campaign song unveiled by the Tamilaga Vettri Kazhagam (TVK) on April 1 come the images of CN Annadurai and MG Ramachandran, the two biggest icons of the All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (AIADMK). They are immediately followed by the image of Vijay. It is no oversight or the work of an enthusiastic video editor. It is increasingly clear that the unobtrusive message being driven home is that Vijay is the natural political successor to Anna and MGR. Analyse the moves made by Vijay on Tamil Nadu's political chessboard, and it is very obvious that demolition of the AIADMK dream of a comeback to power is on the agenda before he battles MK Stalin on April 23. What is being undertaken is a less-than-hostile takeover of the AIADMK template, fundamentally replacing the party founded by MGR in the mindscape of the anti-DMK voter. Elections in Tamil Nadu have always revolved around the two-pole narrative. Vijayakanth, popularly referred to as 'Karuppu MGR' ('dark-complexioned MGR') was the last one to try to break the hegemony of the two fronts, but did not quite succeed. Vijayakanth's rugged appearance resonated with the rural masses and the working classes in Tamil Nadu, pitching him as the MGR of the dark-skinned Tamilian. But the 2006 election saw him not being able to go beyond 8% of the vote, which, though impressive, failed to translate into more than one seat. After Vijayakanth, the likes of Kamal Haasan faltered by trying to be the third player - an alternative to the two Dravidian majors - and failed miserably. Now, Vijayakanth's namesake is attempting the invocation of



the MGR legacy. By repeatedly stating that the contest is between the TVK and the DMK, he is attempting to render the AIADMK as a spent force and make the two leaves wilt on the EVM. The bid to appropriate the foundational icons of the AIADMK started last year, when an AI-generated video used a deepfake of Annadurai saying "Thambi vaa, thalaimai thaanga vaa" ("Come brother, come to lead"), as if Vijay was being encouraged to lead the way. The TVK messaging was that the Palaniswami-led AIADMK, which has lost many of its leaders to other parties, is no longer the AIADMK of MGR and Jayalalithaa and that Vijay is now the real political successor to the AIADMK political stalwarts. By calling the BJP his "ideological enemy", Vijay has also indirectly accused EPS of diluting and compromising his Dravidian roots by allying with the saffron party. By

fighting all the 234 constituencies sans an alliance partner, Vijay wants to send across the message that he is the secular alternative to the DMK. Vijay's leadership style has also taken a leaf out of Jayalalithaa's book. Like the late AIADMK supremo, he remains inaccessible, lending a mystique to his persona. Like the former chief minister, the women votebank is the key demographic for Vijay. His public interactions are limited to his speeches at public meetings, and just like AIADMK was Amma during Jayalalithaa's time, TVK today is Vijay. The image of the Supreme leader is a 'Ctrl-C-Ctrl-V' copy of the Jayalalithaa template. Vijay's decision to contest from two constituencies (Perambur and Tiruchy East) is also following in Jayalalithaa's footsteps. Jayalalithaa in 1991 had contested from Bargur and Kangayam. After Jayalalithaa's demise in

2016, the AIADMK's strength - monolithic leadership - was replaced by regional satraps. Though Palaniswami over the years has managed to get rid of his rivals in the party, he still has to prove himself as someone acceptable to all regions and caste groups and not be seen only as a Kongu belt Gounder leader. In contrast, Vijay offers the moniker alternative of the 'Thalapathy' (commander) who reigns supreme. But it won't be so easy to peel away at the AIADMK stronghold votebank in rural Tamil Nadu, particularly in western (Coimbatore-Salem) and southern (Madurai) regions. These belts are dominated by the Gounder and Thevar communities, respectively, and were the backbone of the party during Jayalalithaa's innings. That will be Vijay's challenge, and if he can woo much of the anti-incumbency vote towards himself, the AIADMK may find itself struggling, particularly in the urban pockets. What Vijay is offering is the AIADMK, rebranded. The party was, till 2016, led by charismatic actor-turned-politicians, and Vijay, by chipping away at the AIADMK base, is promising to go back to that era. Interestingly, he is trying to replace the AIADMK in an unconventional way. He is not taking the easy route of poaching leaders from the party. Barring a KA Sengottaiyan, and, to an extent, CT Nirmal Kumar, no senior leader has moved sides to the TVK. Vijay's bold attempt is to take away the voters of the AIADMK instead. In Tiruchy (East) to file his second nomination on April 2, Vijay garlanded the statue of MGR and delivered his speech with the statue in the background. The significance of Vijay hyphenating his politics with MGR was not lost on anyone from Tiruchy.

THE DARK TRUTH of corruption in Haryana universities



DR. SATYAWAND SAURABH

(Financial scams, recruitment irregularities and abuse of power in four major universities have raised serious questions about the education system.)

The recent corruption scandal in Haryana's higher education sector not only tarnishes the reputation of the state's four premier universities, but also raises serious questions about the credibility of the entire educational system. The universities implicated in this controversy—Maharishi Dayanand University, Rohtak; Guru Jambheshwar University, Hisar; Deenbandhu Chhotu Ram University of Science and Technology, Murthal; and Shri Krishna Ayurvedic University, Kurukshetra—have all long been important centers of education in their respective regions. However, allegations of corruption, financial irregularities, recruitment scams, and abuse of power against the top vice-chancellors of these institutions have severely damaged their reputations. The investigation launched by the State Vigilance and Anti-Corruption Bureau (SV&ACB) on April 1-2, 2026, has further exacerbated the matter. It is not limited to the alleged wrongdoings of a few individuals, but rather points to a broader systemic failure, where transparency and accountability are lacking even in a field as sacred as education. These allegations have made it clear how the future of students studying in higher education institutions can be affected if their leadership itself is questionable. The most shocking case involves Deenbandhu Chhotu Ram University of Science and Technology, Murthal. The Vice Chancellor is accused of embezzling approximately ₹50 crore from the student welfare fund. According to the allegations, instead of keeping this money safely in government banks at high interest rates, it was



invested in fixed deposits with private banks at low interest rates, resulting in significant financial losses for the university. This appears to be not just a case of financial negligence, but also a suspected systematic irregularity. If these allegations are proven true, it would be an example of not only administrative failure but also moral turpitude. Allegations of serious irregularities have also surfaced at Maharshi Dayanand University, Rohtak. A massive financial scam is being alleged in the name of tree plantation. Thousands of trees were shown to have been purchased and planted on paper, but in reality, none of them existed. Furthermore, allegations of favoritism and flouting of rules have surfaced in recruitment processes, where qualified candidates were bypassed and preferred individuals were given jobs. Large-scale irregularities have been uncovered in the recruitment of non-teaching staff at Guru Jambheshwar University, Hisar. There are allegations of violation of reservation rules, lack of transparency in the selection process, and appointments made without the required qualifications. This situation not only raises questions about the administrative capability of the institution but also violates the principles of social justice. Similarly, complaints of irregularities in the recruitment process and violations of reservation rosters have surfaced at Shri Krishna Ayurvedic University, Kurukshetra. Such irregularities are deeply concerning at an institution established to promote traditional medical sciences like Ayurveda. All these cases reveal a similar pat-

tern—abuse of power, financial irregularities, and a lack of transparency in administrative decisions. This situation did not arise suddenly, but rather stemmed from a weak and politically influenced system that has existed for years. Vice-Chancellor appointments at universities in Haryana have long been subject to political influence, where proximity and loyalty have been prioritized over merit and experience. This has resulted in weakening accountability and ethics within the institutions. The action being taken by investigative agencies should be welcomed, but it is equally important that these investigations are fair and timely. It has often been observed that initial action is taken in such cases, but later, due to political pressure or administrative laxity, the cases are shelved. If this happens again, it will not only protect the guilty but will also severely undermine public confidence. The biggest impact of this entire issue is on students. Thousands of university students are worried about their future. When an institution's resources are misused, it directly impacts the quality of education. Lack of laboratories, unavailability of qualified faculty, and inadequate infrastructure hinder students' academic development. This leads to a decline in student morale and a crippling impact on their career prospects. In a state like Haryana, where unemployment is already a major problem, scams like this increase frustration and discontent among young people. It also leads to social imbalances when they feel that opportunities are not met fairly despite hard work and merit.

Faced with new energy shock, World asks if reviving nuclear is the answer

With a pit in their stomach, families and industries across Europe are watching gas prices and the cost of filling vehicles with petrol spiral. While the UK government has told voters pretty much to keep calm and carry on, the European Commission - the EU's executive arm - has called on people to work more from home and to travel a lot less. Policymakers warn things could get much worse - depending on what happens next in the Middle East. Yet it feels like only yesterday that Europeans faced a cost-of-living crisis on the back of spiralling energy costs and inflation following Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine. This means conversations in Europe are turning (again) to the issue of energy independence. And nuclear energy seems to be back in fashion as part of a home-grown European energy mix - in the UK as well as the EU. But how quick a fix can nuclear be - and how safe and reliable is it really? At the recent European Nuclear Energy Summit in Paris, European Commission chief Ursula von der Leyen, who perhaps forgot she was a minister in the German government



when it took the decision to phase out nuclear power plants in 2011, described Europe broadly turning its back on nuclear as a "strategic mistake". In 1990, Europe produced around a third of its electricity from nuclear power. That has now fallen to an average of 15%, leaving the continent "completely dependent on expensive and volatile imports" of fossil fuels, she said, putting Europe at a disadvantage compared with other regions of the world. Europe imports more than 50% of its energy. Mainly oil and gas. This leaves the continent vulnerable to unexpected reduc-

tions in supply, as was the case with Russia after Europe imposed energy export sanctions, or price increases on the global market, as we are now seeing because of Iran's strangling of energy exports via the Strait of Hormuz. Gas prices rise at a similar rate across Europe but the impact on electricity prices varies depending on each country's energy mix. In Spain - which has invested heavily in wind and solar power - the average electricity price for the rest of 2026 is forecast at around half of Italy's, where gas sets the electricity price 90% of the time. France is Europe's

largest nuclear producer. It generates about 65% of its electricity from nuclear power. Based on future contracts, German electricity prices for next month are five times those of France - an eye-watering contrast. Germany phased out nuclear power following the 2011 Fukushima nuclear disaster in Japan. This left the energy-hungry industries that traditionally power the German economy - cars and chemicals - hugely gas-dependent. This week, Berlin's top economic research institutes more than halved their growth forecasts for 2026 to a predicted 0.6% of GDP because

of global price hikes for gas. A renewed enthusiasm for nuclear power is palpable in Europe: Italy is preparing draft laws to repeal its longstanding ban Belgium seems to be making a complete U-turn after years of reluctance about investing in nuclear energy Greece, historically cautious because of seismic concerns, has opened a public debate on advanced reactor designs Sweden reversed a four-decade old decision to abandon nuclear technology In the UK, Chancellor Rachel Reeves recently announced streamlining regulation to help advance nuclear projects. "To build national resilience, drive energy security and deliver economic growth, we need nuclear," said Reeves. New polling from YouGov suggests growing support for nuclear energy in Scotland, with the majority of people now backing it as part of the country's energy supply.

No prizes for guessing that France is the loudest nuclear cheerleader. President Emmanuel Macron is ever eager to point to the industry's credentials as a low carbon-emitter, potentially helping the EU towards its net zero goals.

Trump seeks \$1.5tn for defence alongside domestic spending cuts



The White House is asking Congress to boost the US defence budget to \$1.5tn (£1.1tn), a sweeping rise that would mark the largest expansion in military spending since World War Two. It includes funding for the Trump administration's proposed Golden Dome missile defence system, as well as a boost in domestic production of naval vessels, including new Trump-class battle-

ships. The administration said it would pair the proposed increase with a call for cuts across domestic agencies, including eliminating some climate, housing and education programmes. The request, which will need to be approved by the US

Congress, is separate from the \$200bn that the Pentagon has sought for the war in Iran. A summary of the budget posted online notes that the cuts will be achieved by "reducing or eliminating woke, weaponised and wasteful programmes, and by returning local responsibilities to their respective governments". US President Donald Trump has long signalled a desire to increase the defence budget and boost domestic defence manufacturing. At a private event at the White House earlier this week - which was caught on camera - Trump said that military spending should be a national priority going forward. "It's not

How Canada's largest gun control effort in decades is missing the mark

Heidi Rathjen has been calling for a ban on assault-style rifles since 1989, when a gunman opened fire on her classmates at Montreal's École Polytechnique. The shooting, in which 14 women were killed and more than a dozen injured, was a turning point for Canada, changing how the country viewed gun violence. More than two decades later, after another deadly mass shooting in 2020, Ottawa did roll out a ban on some 2,500 models of such "assault-style" weapons. But a scheme designed to buy back these now-prohibited guns from their owners has had a bumpy roll out, and the programme looks likely to miss the mark. Many legal gun owners are distrustful of the process, two provinces have refused to take part, and even gun control activists like Rathjen say the federal efforts, though a win for public safety, are flawed because the ban does not apply widely enough. "Without a com-



prehensive ban on assault weapons, there is no ban... and the money will be wasted," said Rathjen, a spokesperson for gun control advocacy group PolySeSouvient. Even Canada's own minister of public safety, Gary Anandasangaree, was caught criticising his government's plan in an audio clip leaked to the Toronto Star. "Don't ask me to

explain the logic to you on this," he told a Toronto man in a secretly recorded conversation late last year, when pressed on programme's value when most gun crimes in Canada are committed with illegal weapons. Anandasangaree later said his comments were "misguided", and that he believes in the programme's importance. So why is Canada struggling

with a measure that saw success in places like Australia - where 650,000 firearms were bought back and destroyed after the Port Arthur massacre in 1996, according to figures by the Australian government - and New Zealand, which collected around 56,000 firearms after the Christchurch mosque shooting in 2019? Joel Negin, a professor of public health at the University of Sydney, said Australia's measures in 1996 largely worked because they were part of a broad suite of measures implemented "very quickly" after the massacre. Australia's programme was also well-funded thanks to a short-term levy that was placed on taxpayers, he noted. "The situation in Canada is that the gun buy-back has been proposed, but it's not necessarily linked closely to other interventions," Negin said, adding its roll out, along with other gun-related laws after the 2020 Nova Scotia mass shooting, has been fragmented.

Power-washing, pool-cleaning and mowing: Why millions are playing games about mundane jobs

PowerWash Simulator sees players don their cleaning gear and hose down a variety of filthy in-game locations until they're sparkling and spotless. While it may seem like an unusual premise, the original game from 2021 has sold more than 17 million copies. The sequel, released in 2025, has just been nominated for two Bafta Games Awards. Both fall under the category of "mundane job simulations", an ever-growing gaming genre in which people carry out routine and - on the face of it - not very exciting tasks. "We want to make the Graham Norton of video games," says Kirsty Rigden, the chief executive of Brighton-based FuturLab, which makes PowerWash Simulator. Aspiring to emulate a talkshow host who has a reputation for being affable rather than for setting pulses racing is perhaps an unusual ambition for a gaming studio. But she says there is a big market for lower-octane entertainment. "Graham Norton doesn't make you feel stupid, but you also don't have to think too hard," Rigden told BBC



News. "It engages the right amount of brain and at the end of it you go, 'Oh, that was really pleasant.'" One of the core characteristics of the simulation genre is its soothingly repetitive jobs. In PowerWash Simulator's case that means cleaning through one mucky area - say, a fun house or a roller disco - after another; quite literally rinse and repeat. "I think it's really struck a chord with how people are feeling in the world right now - the world is in quite a stressful place," Rigden said. "With the game you are able to focus in on one thing, which kind of blocks all the

other distractions out - it's a pure form of meditation." The initial idea came from a personal interest Rigden had in watching YouTube videos of people power washing and the "simplicity of seeing dirt turn to cleanliness". Social media is awash with influencers - some with hundreds of thousands of followers - making content about cleaning or clearing up, and FuturLab's series is not the only simulator to have tapped into the trend. In Lawn Mowing Simulator players "experience the beauty and detail of mowing the Great British countryside" by running a lawn care

business, using "real-world licensed lawnmowers". A sequel, promising to take players to the "trailer parks and town hall gardens" of America, is currently in the works. David Harper, managing director and founder of Liverpool-based developers Skyhook Games said players often use the game as an "escape" from the pressures of everyday life. "It's basically about the satisfaction of starting with something untidy, learning the skills to bring order to the scene, then looking back at a job well done," he said. The relaxed nature of mundane job simulators has made them a particular hit with YouTube and Twitch streamers, who can strike up a conversation with viewers without needing to pay too much attention to the game. A video of US creator Markiplier playing PowerWash Simulator from 2021 now has more than nine million views. Comedian and games journalist Ellie Gibson started streaming the game to her Twitch community after a friend recommended she try it.

18,000 building, land permits granted through 'BuildNow' portal in Hyderabad



Hyderabad: A total of 17,957 building and layout permissions were granted by the Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (GHMC) through the "BuildNow" portal in the 2025-26 financial year. During this period, 2,427 occupancy certificates were also issued. Out of the total 15,536 building permissions granted, 12,014 were issued under the instant approval category, 2,515 under the single-window system and 972 under

instant registration. Revenue generated through building permissions and occupancy certificates amounted to Rs 1,172.08 crore, marking an increase compared to Rs 1,138.44 crore collected in the previous year. Out of the revenue generated, the Cyberabad Municipal Corporation (CMC) collected Rs 538.09 crore, the GHMC collected Rs 436.47 crore and the Malkajgiri Municipal Corporation (MMC) collected Rs 198.24

crore. The "Build Now" portal was officially launched by Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy in March 2025. The applications were scrutinized and permissions were subsequently granted under three distinct mechanisms called instant registration, instant approval and the single-window system. The GHMC stated that the permissions process has been accelerated and transparency has increased through the BuildNow portal.

X³ Tech Fest 2026 Celebrates Student-Led Innovation at SRM University-AP, Amaravati

The spirit of innovation lit up the APJ Abdul Kalam Auditorium as students took centre stage to bring X³ Tech Fest 2026 to life-a three-day celebration of technology, collaboration, and ambition organised by the AWS Cloud Club at SRM University-AP, Amaravati. The inaugural ceremony began with the traditional lamp lighting, setting the tone for a journey driven not just by technology, but by student leadership and shared vision. What followed was more than a formal event-it was a story of students building something meaningful together. With over 200 participants forming 40 teams from across Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Kerala, and beyond, the fest unfolded as a vibrant platform where ideas met execution. Designed as a continuous hackathon blended with workshops, developer talks, robotics sessions, live prototype demonstrations, and a tech expo, the event offered a prize pool of



₹3,00,000-fueling both competition and creativity. At the heart of this initiative stood Arpan Pramanik, Cloud Club Captain, whose opening address captured the essence of X³ as a unified platform for innovation and collaboration. He emphasised how the fest aimed to foster creativity, meaningful connections, and real-world problem-solving among participants. Supporting this vision was

Avantika Singh, a student volunteer, along with a dedicated team of student organisers, and Naman Pasricha, an MBA student, reflecting a truly interdisciplinary effort. Guiding the student-led initiative, Mr Ajay Kumar Sahu, Faculty Advisor to the AWS Cloud Club and Assistant Professor, Department of Computer Science and Engineering, welcomed participants and

highlighted the fest's focus on Artificial Intelligence and Robotics. He underscored how such platforms empower students to learn, create, and grow beyond classrooms. The event was graced by Mr Chand Gudi, CEO of Vyobotics, as Chief Guest, who inspired participants with insights into entrepreneurship, robotics, and accessing global funding opportunities. In his inaugu-

ral address, Prof. Ch. Satish Kumar, Vice Chancellor, appreciated the evolution of hackathons into holistic learning ecosystems that combine competition with knowledge exchange and industry exposure. He encouraged students to think beyond conventional boundaries and embrace emerging technologies, while also highlighting the university's ongoing technological transformations. Adding to the occasion, Mr Pankaj Belwariar, Director-Communications, urged students to explore not just the campus but their own potential, aligning with the ethos of "explore, exhibit, and evolve." The presence of Prof. C. V. Tomy, Dean, School of Engineering and Applied Sciences, further strengthened the academic support behind the initiative. More than just a fest, X³ Tech Fest 2026 stands as a testament to what student communities can achieve when given ownership.

Bahrain says it has intercepted more than 450 drones since war began

Trump is threatening to rain down "hell" on Iran if it doesn't "make a deal" or open the Strait of Hormuz within 48 hours. He's given many deadlines during the war, with this latest threat matching the 10-day pause in attacks on energy infrastructure he announced on 27 March. Here's a timeline: 21 March: Trump said he would "hit and obliterate [Iran's] various power plants, starting with the biggest ones first" if Iran didn't reopen the Strait of Hormuz within 48 hours 23 March: He then said the two countries had had "very good and productive conversations" and said he would postpone any and all military strikes against energy infrastructure for five days 27 March: Trump said he would pause attacking Iranian energy plants for 10 days, in response to what he called a request from the Iranian government, bringing the deadline to 6 April



Today: He repeats his 27 March deadline, telling Iran it has 48 hours before "all Hell will reign down on them" US President Donald Trump says Iran has 48 hours to "make a deal" or open the Strait of Hormuz before "Hell will reign [sic] down on them". In a post on Truth Social, he writes: "Remember when I gave Iran ten days to MAKE A DEAL or OPEN UP THE

HORMUZ STRAIT. Time is running out. "48 hours before all Hell will reign down on them. Glory be to GOD! President DONALD J. TRUMP." On 27 March, Trump announced he was pausing any attack on Iranian energy plants for 10 days from then. In another post a moment earlier, mostly talking about the benefits tariffs have brought the US economy, he signed off with:

"All of this and, simultaneously, getting rid of a Nuclear Iran. MAGA!!!" Iran's top joint military command has credited new Iranian air defence systems with the downing of two US warplanes on Friday, according to Iran's state-affiliated IRNA news agency. Iran is claiming to have shot down two US warplanes – one F-15E flying over the southwest of the

country and a second plane - an A-10 Warthog - involved in a mission to rescue the F-15's crew. Spokesperson Ebrahim Zolfaghari says Friday was a "humiliation" for the US and Israel, crediting new "domestically-produced" air defence systems, reports IRNA. He adds that Iran will "surely achieve full control of our country's skies" as these new systems are rolled out "one after another". US Central Command has not confirmed the details surrounding the downing of any aircraft. The search for a missing US airman after a warplane was shot down in southern Iran has continued into its second day. Here's the latest. Search operation continues US and Iranian forces are both searching for the missing weapon systems officer, after a US F-15E was downed in southern Iran. Iranian officials are offering rewards of about £50,000

(\$66,100), state media reports. US media says an A-10 Warthog was shot at during the rescue mission, with the pilot reportedly ejecting over the Gulf before being rescued. BBC Verify has mapped what we know based on video footage. Stakes raised for US This moment is fraught with risk and political peril, our chief international correspondent writes. If the airman is taken hostage and images circulated, it will be a propaganda victory for Iran, she adds. Strikes across region Meanwhile, strikes have continued. Iran says the area around the Bushehr nuclear power plant has been attacked and one person killed - it is the fourth time the site has been hit during the war. It also says a major petrochemical complex was targeted. Videos show overnight Iranian strikes on the Israeli city of Bnei Brak, and Israeli strikes on Beirut.

FOOTBALL RALLY IN PERU LEAVES ONE DEAD AND DOZENS INJURED



An incident ahead of a local football derby in the Peruvian capital Lima has left one fan dead and dozens injured. Officials are investigating the cause. Initial reports suggested parts of the stadium's wall and structure had collapsed, which has since been disputed. Confirming the death, Peruvian Health Minister Juan Carlos Velasco Guerrero told media at a Lima hospital that 47 people were hurt - three of whom are in a critical condition. Hundreds had gathered around Alejandro Villanueva Stadium wearing football shirts and waving flags of the home team, Alianza Lima, ahead of a

match against local rivals Universitario de Deportes. Fire Chief Marcos Pajuelo told reporters that the structure of the southern stands appeared to be in good condition. "There are no collapsed walls or sections fallen into the pit," Pajuelo said. Saturday night's match will still go ahead as planned, the football league said. Earlier, the interior ministry published on X that 40 firefighters responded to an emergency at the stadium "involving people trapped in a structure". However, Alianza Lima later published a statement, also on X, that said: "According to the preliminary information available.

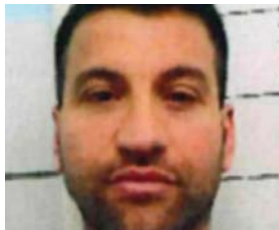
TRUMP SEEKS \$152M TO REOPEN NOTORIOUS ALCATRAZ PRISON



US President Donald Trump is seeking \$152m (£115m) to reopen the infamous Alcatraz prison as part of his proposed budget for the 2027 fiscal year. Located near San Francisco's Golden Gate Bridge, the site, also known as The Rock, was once regarded as one of America's most notorious prisons, but has served as a tourist attraction in recent years. The budget request is seeking money "to rebuild Alcatraz as a state-of-the-art secure prison facility", with funds covering the first year of costs. The plan has been met with scepticism by a number of politicians in California, with questions raised about the final cost of the project and the challenges of running Alcatraz as an active prison. The maximum security facility was closed in 1963. As a tourist site, it is currently run by the National Park Service. Former speaker for the US House of Representatives, Nancy Pelosi, said the budget proposal from the Trump administration was "absurd on its face and should be rejected outright". "Rebuilding Alcatraz into a modern prison is a stupid notion that would be nothing more than a waste of tax-

payer dollars and an insult to the intelligence of the American people." The request will need to be approved by the US Congress. Previous criticism of Trump's plan has pointed to the lack of running water and sewage on the island, and the fact all supplies are required to be brought in by boat. By the time Alcatraz closed, it was three times more expensive to operate than any other federal prison, according to the US Bureau of Prisons. Pelosi also raised a concern echoed by other San Francisco politicians, that turning Alcatraz back into a functioning prison would mean the loss of an iconic landmark. According to the National Park Service, the facility currently brings in \$60m (£45m) in revenue as an attraction. Money being sought to reopen the prison as an active facility is part of a \$1.7bn (£1.3bn) investment into the Bureau of Prisons. Announcing his plans on Truth Social last year, Trump said was directing "the Bureau of Prisons, together with the Department of Justice, FBI, and Homeland Security, to reopen a substantially enlarged and rebuilt ALCATRAZ".

FUGITIVE MAFIA BOSS WANTED FOR MURDER ARRESTED IN AMALFI COAST LUXURY VILLA



A mafia boss wanted for murder has been arrested at a luxury villa on the Amalfi Coast after more than a year on the run, Italian police have said. In a statement, Italy's Carabinieri military police force said Roberto Mazzarella had escaped last January when he was supposed to have been arrested on murder charges. The 48-year-old, arrested in the town of Vietri sul Mare, is considered a powerful figure within the Camorra

organised crime group in Naples, and is listed as one of Italy's most dangerous fugitives. Police said Mazzarella was with his wife and two children at the time of his arrest, and did not resist arrest. The Mazzarella clan is famed for its involvement in counterfeiting in Naples, which has long been associated with banknote forgery. A number of patrol boats were also involved in the arrest, positioning themselves off the coast. Footage of the arrest was released by the Carabinieri, showing heavily armed officers entering the villa. Police last month detained 16 people allegedly linked to the Mazzarella clan on charges of cyber fraud.

Rescue team in Iran face 'harrowing and dangerous' search for US crew member

Early reports indicate that the pilot of a US F-15 fighter aircraft downed over Iran was rescued - which, if confirmed, would be the latest in the long history of US combat search-and-rescue missions over decades. The search operation is ongoing deep inside Iran for a second crew member, according to CBS, the BBC's US partner. Combat search and rescue (CSAR) missions are considered among the most complex, time-sensitive operations that US and allied militaries prepare for. In the US, elite units of the air force are specially trained for CSAR missions and are often pre-emptively deployed near conflict areas where aircraft could be lost. What is Combat Search and Rescue? Put simply, CSAR missions are military operations aimed at find-



ing, aiding and potentially rescuing personnel in need, including downed pilots and isolated troops. In contrast to conventional search-and-rescue efforts - which could take place during humanitarian operations or after disasters - CSAR missions occur in hostile or contested environments. In some cases - as in Friday's reported recovery effort in Iran - the operations may happen deep in enemy

territory. CSAR missions are often conducted by helicopters, with refuelling aircraft in support and other military aircraft on hand to conduct strikes and patrol the area. A former commander of a pararescue jumpers squadron told CBS News that a rescue operation like the reported one in Iran would involve at least 24 pararescue jumpers scouring the area in Black Hawk helicopters.

They added the team would be prepared to jump from planes if needed, and once on the ground their priority would be to contact the missing crew member. Upon locating them, the pararescue jumpers would deliver medical aid if necessary, evade the enemy and get to a place where they can be rescued, according to CBS News. "Harrowing and massively dangerous is an understatement," the former commander told CBS News. They added: "This is what they train to do, all over the world. They are known as the Swiss Army knives of the Air Force." Verified video that emerged from Iran on Friday appeared to show US military helicopters and at least one refuelling aircraft operating over Iran's Khuzestan province.

Artemis II crew now halfway to Moon as they take 'spectacular' image of Earth

Nasa has shared the first high-resolution images of the Earth taken by the Artemis II crew as they pass the halfway point between the Earth and the Moon. The mission's commander, Reid Wiseman, took the "spectacular" images, Nasa says, after the crew completed a final engine burn that set them on a trajectory towards our closest celestial neighbour. At about 07:00 BST, Nasa's online dashboard showed the Orion spacecraft was now 142,000 miles (228,500 km) from Earth, and 132,000 miles from the Moon. Astronaut Christina Koch said the crew had a collective "expression of joy" upon



being told of the milestone, which was hit around two days, five hours and 24 minutes after blast off. The first image, called Hello, World, shows the vast expanse of blue that is the Atlantic Ocean, framed by a glow of the atmosphere as the Earth eclipses the Sun and green

auroras at either pole. The Earth appears upside down, with the western Sahara and Iberian peninsula visible to the left and the eastern portion of South America to the right. Nasa identified the bright planet to the bottom right as Venus. The images were taken after the crew

successfully completed a trans-lunar injection burn in the early hours of Friday. The burn took the Orion spacecraft out of Earth orbit as the four astronauts aboard aim to travel the more than 200,000 miles to the Moon. Artemis II is now on a looping path that will carry the crew around the far side of the Moon and back again. It is the first time since 1972 that humans have travelled outside of the Earth's orbit. The spacecraft blasted off from the Kennedy Space Center in Florida, and the crew should pass around the far side of the Moon on 6 April and return to Earth on 10 April with a splashdown in the Pacific Ocean.

After 16 years in power, could Viktor Orban finally be unseated?



"All they stand for is anger, hatred, and destruction," roared a hoarse Viktor Orban. The Hungarian prime minister was speaking at a mass election rally in Győr in western Hungary on 27 March, referring to opposition protesters who chanted "Filthy Fidesz" during his speech. For just a moment, his carefully cultivated image as the voice of calm navigating his country through stormy seas was shattered. His bad-tempered outburst showed a different side of a man used to cracking jokes and charming even his critics. Most opinion polls put the opposition Tisza party and its leader Peter Magyar far ahead of Orban's Fidesz - the latest by 58% to Orban's 35%. And he is doing everything he can to close the gap. After 16 years of virtually unchallenged rule, Orban has been forced to take to the road again. In the past three elections, he gave few rallies. Now Europe's longest-serving leader is trying to mobilise his supporters and reach the undecided. He has just a week left to rescue his government, and the international populist move-

ment he embodies, from a crushing defeat. In power since 2010, Orban has had the support of both US President Donald Trump and Russian President Vladimir Putin. He has long been a thorn in the side of the EU - and one of the few EU leaders not supportive on Ukraine. For Europe's growing band of nationalist parties, in power or on the brink of it, he is the model. The 12 April Hungarian parliamentary election is being watched closely all over the world. "We can notice a big change in public perception," said Endre Hann of the Median agency, a public-opinion research firm. In January, 44% of those asked said they thought Fidesz would win, compared with 37% for Tisza. By March, 47% believed Tisza would win, while 35% believed Fidesz would. "This reflects a huge change of trust. People believe that it can be changed," he says. An intriguing dynamic is playing out in this election - the same voter anger against those seen as "corrupt ruling elites" across Europe, is now working against him.



Russian attack on Ukraine market kills five

Rapper Gucci Mane kidnapped and robbed by fellow artist, prosecutors say



Rapper Gucci Mane was allegedly kidnapped at gunpoint in Dallas earlier this year, leading to the arrests of eight men, including a fellow artist signed to his label, officials say. Prosecutors allege rapper Pooh Shiesty, born Lontrell Williams Jr, led the ambush under the guise of a meeting, holding

Mane captive inside a recording studio and forcing him to sign papers releasing him from his contract. Mane is an Atlanta-based artist who has collaborated with Usher, Doja Cat, Drake and other stars. He founded his label, 1017 Records, in 2007 and Williams Jr signed as an artist in 2020. The defendants, who are yet to enter their pleas, could face life in prison if convicted. Eight of the nine defendants were arrested on Wednesday in Dallas, Memphis and Nashville, and charged in federal court with kidnapping and armed robbery.

Virat Kohli Breaks Silence On Being Called "Overseas Player"

Royal Challengers Bengaluru (RCB) stalwart Virat Kohli doesn't need many reasons to become a topic of intense chatter on social media. Even though he only plays one format for the Indian national team at present, fans find a way to drag him to a conversation, even when he has not been active for weeks. Kohli, who spends most of his time with wife Anushka Sharma and his children in London, has unfortunately seen even his move to England questioned by many. Already making his bat do the talking for RCB in the ongoing Indian Premier League (IPL), Kohli was asked about the joke "RCB playing 5 overseas players this season". His reaction said it all. The joke stems from the fact that no franchise is allowed to field more than 4 overseas players in the team. With Kohli now spending most of his time in England,



fans often joke that he is also an 'overseas player'. When asked about his take on this joke by Mr. Nags in a video shared by RCB on social media, Kohli was left in splits. As the host said, "I am not understanding what they are asking actually"

Kohli responded: "I don't know why are you asking me? Ask the overseas players. I am not an overseas player". He further asked the host if he thinks he is an overseas player. "Am I an overseas player?" Kohli asked. The host replied,

"no". Kohli commenced the IPL 2026 season in imperious form, reinforcing his reputation as the "Chasemaster" during the tournament opener against Sunrisers Hyderabad (SRH). Chasing a target of 202 at the M. Chinnaswamy

Stadium in Bengaluru, Kohli anchored the innings with a brilliant unbeaten 69 off 38 balls, striking five boundaries and five sixes. His clinical performance guided the Bengaluru side to the fastest 200-plus chase in IPL history, completing the task in just 15.4 overs. Other than the match-winning impact, this season has already seen Kohli reach multiple milestones. During his opening knock, he surpassed Shoaib Malik to become the Asian cricketer with the most T20 runs. He also became the first player in IPL history to accumulate over 4,000 runs specifically in run chases. Kohli, opening the innings for RCB, appears primed to challenge his own record-breaking legacy as he eyes the 9,000-run mark in IPL history and further consolidates his legendary status at his home ground in Bengaluru.

Mumbai's Stasya Pandya Clinches Dual Team Medals at Delhi Horse Show 2026

Rising equestrian talent Stasya Pandya from Mumbai delivered an outstanding performance at the Delhi Horse Show 2026, securing two team medals in the prestigious Young Champion category. Competing against a field of over 200 equestrians across multiple categories, Stasya demonstrated exceptional skill across disciplines. In Dressage, she rode Consul, earning a Team Silver medal with a composed and technically refined performance. Building on this success, she went on to secure a Team Bronze medal in Show Jumping astride Cougar De Fees. Navigating a challenging course of 12 jumps set at a height of 1.10 metres, Stasya showcased precision, control, and competitive grit. The event, held at the Army Polo and Riding Club, Brar Square, Delhi Cantt, from March 25 to April 5, 2026, is regarded as one of India's premier equestrian competitions. Training at the Amateur Riders' Club under the guidance of coach Bobin Tshering, Stasya's



performance reflects her consistent dedication and disciplined training. Speaking on her achievement, Stasya Pandya said, "The Delhi Horse Show is one of the most competitive platforms in the country, and I'm really proud to have contributed to the team results in both Dressage and Show Jumping. Riding Consul and Cougar De Fees was an incredible experience, and I'm grateful for the trust and partnership I share with both horses." Her

coach, Bobin Tshering, added, "Stasya has shown tremendous growth as a rider. Her ability to stay composed under pressure and adapt across disciplines is commendable. These results are a reflection of her hard work and commitment, and this is just the beginning for her." Stasya's dual podium finishes mark a significant milestone in her equestrian journey, reinforcing her position as a promising young talent in India's competitive equestrian circuit.

PAT CUMMINS LEAVES SRH CAMP AND RETURNS TO AUSTRALIA

Will will IPL 2026 see Pat Cummins? The designated skipper of Sunrisers Hyderabad (SRH) in the Indian Premier League, has left the camp and returned to Australia to undergo a final scan on his back injury, according to ESPNcricinfo. Cummins' scan is a planned procedure to be carried out under the supervision of Cricket Australia (CA), the report added. Cummins left India after Sunrisers Hyderabad's most recent match against Kolkata Knight Riders in Kolkata on Thursday. He is expected to rejoin the squad on April 17, subject to clearance from CA. Cummins, who has been largely inactive since July last year,



apart from featuring in a single Ashes Test in Adelaide, earlier said that he has resumed bowling in the nets and is gradually building up his workload as part of a structured rehabilitation plan. Speaking on the Business of Sport podcast, as quoted by ESPNcricinfo,

Cummins said, "I'm still recovering from a back injury, but it's good. I'm back bowling in the nets." The fast bowler has acknowledged that he is set to miss the initial phase of the IPL but remained optimistic about making a timely comeback. "The IPL is starting

soon. I won't make the start of that, but it shouldn't be too long before I'm back out there playing," Cummins said. In Cummins' absence, Indian wicketkeeper-batter Ishan Kishan is leading SRH during the 2026 season. SRH began their IPL 2026 campaign on a poor note, suffering a six-wicket defeat against Royal Challengers Bengaluru in their campaign opener, but bounced back strongly in their second game, defeating Kolkata Knight Riders by 65 runs at Eden Gardens. SRH will next face Lucknow Super Giants in their third match of IPL 2026 at the Rajiv Gandhi International Stadium on April 5.

"Shreyas Iyer Was No.1": Ricky Ponting On How PBKS' Auction Masterstroke Built An Ideal Team

Punjab Kings, a franchise that often pressed the reset button in the Indian Premier League auctions, finally seems to have found a squad that it can bank upon. With head coach Ricky Ponting at the helm, the Punjab Kings went all the way to the final last year and have gone unbeaten in the first couple of games this season. The shift in the Punjab Kings' fortunes, as visible through, under the guidance of Ponting, has been built over a high-calibre Indian spine over the traditional reliance on overseas superstars. By making skipper Shreyas Iyer the focal point of their auction strategy and surrounding him with the proven international pedigree of Arshdeep Singh and Yuzvendra Chahal, Punjab



have insulated themselves against the unpredictability of the IPL. During a chat on JioHotstar, Ponting opened up on how retaining just two players before the IPL 2025 mega auction allowed him the opportunity to work with the players of his choice, with the No. 1 choice being Iyer. "The toss went our way again, and we were

really keen to chase on that pitch. It looked like a belter of a wicket with a little bit of grass on it, something that we're not used to seeing in Chennai," Ponting said on the victory against the Chennai Super Kings. PBKS raised a few eyebrows by retaining just two players - Shashank Singh and Prabhsimran Singh - in

ahead of the mega auction. But, Ponting said that is exactly what he wanted. "Some of our young Indian talent, the guys at the top of the order, are pretty special. To build some of those Aussie guys around them, we had a really clear strategy going into the auction last year about trying to rebuild this whole team from the bottom up, and change and be different as a franchise. By just keeping Prabhsimran and Shashank, it gave us an opportunity for me to pick the guys that I wanted to work with. Shreyas was obviously number one on the list. But it was really important to get the highest-quality Indian players into our team with Arshdeep and Yuzi. So far, so good."

Yuvraj Singh Namedrops Virat Kohli, Questions Shubman Gill's T20 World Cup Axe

Former Indian cricket team all-rounder Yuvraj Singh gave his honest verdict on Shubman Gill not getting selected for the T20 World Cup 2026 despite being the captain in Tests and ODIs. Gill was excluded from the squad, with Ishan Kishan, Sanju Samson and Abhishek Sharma getting selected as the openers. While Gill performed well in red-ball cricket, his performances in white-ball cricket were not as good, and the team management decided to go with a wicketkeeper-batter who can bat at the top of the innings instead of the star batter. Yuvraj said that it is extremely difficult for any batter to perform consistently in all three formats and pointed out that it is a "tough call" to exclude someone who has played in T20Is for India



for the entire year. "To perform consistently in all three formats is very difficult and also to remain as captain." "Virat Kohli is the only player in the last generation who has performed consistently in all three formats and has also been a successful captain. In between, we had Rohit Sharma also. But I feel

if you have put someone in the T20I team and he has played in that format the entire year and then in the last moment, he doesn't make the team because of performances, then that's a tough call". Yuvraj said in conversation with Sports Tak. Yuvraj also called for greater clarity over the futures of senior batters Rohit Sharma and Virat Kohli as the team begins shaping its plans for the 2027 ODI World Cup, which will be played in South Africa, Zimbabwe and Namibia. Both Rohit and Kohli have stepped away from Test and T20I, but the veteran duo remain integral to India's 50-over setup. However, their long-term roles continue to be a subject of discussion amid an ongoing transition phase in the national side.

With MS Dhoni Out, CSK Coach Says: "Don't Think There's A Thing Called Finishers"

With MS Dhoni missing the first couple of games of the Indian Premier League (IPL) 2026 season, the Chennai Super Kings have lacked the 'finisher' that can take them to bigger totals. Dhoni, who developed a reputation of being one of the finest finishers in the game, isn't someone around whom CSK's season can be built. In fact, head coach Stephen Fleming doesn't even think the traditional 'finisher's role' exists in modern T20 cricket anymore. He cited the shift towards all-out aggression from the outset, but expressed confidence in his side's resources. CSK have overhauled their squad, with the batting unit dominated by top-order specialists, leaving gaps in the middle and lower order, particularly in the finisher's role.



"Look, I don't think there is a thing called finishers anymore. It's right from ball one, everyone is going at a rate of knots. It's not build up to the 16th over and then go harder. Everyone's going hard from ball one," Fleming told reporters after CSK's five wicket loss to Punjab Kings. "So, the run rates of 10, 11, 12 all the way through are what's expected, and you're not really getting the big

peaks towards the end. It's just a more aggressive approach to get to 40. So, you actually have to have players all the way through that are going to be aggressive, and that's certainly the team that we've got. "Keep in mind, we've got Brevis on the sideline, and we've got one of the best finishers in MS who's injured, so there's some power there, but Brevis through the middle."

'SHELL OF A FIGHTER' - CHISORA V WILDER PREDICTIONS



Heavyweights Derek Chisora and Deontay Wilder will reach a combined 100 professional fights when they meet at London's O2 Arena on Saturday. British veteran Chisora, 42, made his professional debut in 2007 and has recorded 36 wins and 13 defeats.

Former world heavyweight champion Wilder, 40, was once considered the most feared puncher in boxing. However, he has lost four of his last six bouts, leaving his record at 44-4-1. Chisora says this will be his final fight. If he is to be believed, can he bow out on a high? And with Wilder no longer at his peak, could a win on the road reignite his career? BBC Sport asks figures from across the boxing world for their predictions. Joe Calzaghe - former world champion "It's a tough fight to call. I really like Del Boy," I still remember him coming and training in our gym and my dad making him very ill doing runs up and down our steps. I'm not sure how much either of these guys have left in the tank if I am honest, I think it is one of

those fights that could go either way and will probably end with one punch. I'm going to side with Derek on this one."

Prediction - Chisora Natasha Jonas - former two-weight world champion "Surely it's ending in a knockout. I'd love to see Derek get the win but I also do fear a win keeps him in the mix and he stays for more fights. I do think, for safety reasons more than anything, that this should be his last fight. But I feel like I say that every time. "Both men have got a chance. Chisora has been through the harder fights and more longevity in his career, but then again Wilder isn't coming off the best results. If I was pushed to make a decision, I'd go with Chisora." Harlem Eubank - welterweight boxer "I am going to edge t Chisora on Saturday. At this stage of their careers, he is a bit more compact and I think he will be able to grind Wilder down, sit on his chest, and let heavy shots go. I think it'll be Chisora, by stoppage, in the second half of the fight."

Erling Haaland hat-trick helps Man City thrash Liverpool

Erling Haaland scored a superb hat-trick to help Manchester City continue their formidable FA Cup run under Pep Guardiola by booking a record-extending eighth consecutive semi-final with a ruthless dismantling of insipid Liverpool. Manager Guardiola had to watch from the stands as he served the second game of a touchline ban and he witnessed his team take apart toothless Liverpool in a result that will increase the pressure on boss Arne Slot. City's previous game was at Wembley, when they triumphed over Premier League leaders

Arsenal in the Carabao Cup final, and the hosts backed that up with another impressive victory to close on a domestic cup double. City had done little to threaten Giorgi Mamardashvili's goal until taking the lead on 38 minutes when Haaland converted from the penalty spot, just as he did at Anfield in the league this season, following Virgil van Dijk's clumsy trip on Nico O'Reilly. The Norway striker had been on a relatively barren run in front of goal before this game but he then added a second by guiding a header into the far corner from Antoine Semenyo's cross on

the stroke of half-time. Liverpool had played fluently earlier in the game at Etihad Stadium - with Florian Wirtz prominent - but their inability to convert the chances they created proved costly. City failed to deal with a long ball over the top but Mohamed Salah, playing for the first time since announcing he will leave Anfield this summer, hesitated when through on goal and his effort was blocked wide. He also later had a penalty saved by James Trafford while Hugo Ekitike's strike from inside the area flew wastefully over. City were much more

clinical, as Semenyo clipped in a delightful finish early in the second half to make it 3-0 before Haaland completed his treble to seal City's serene progression to the last four. City have made the national stadium their second home under Guardiola and two huge banners reading 'Wembley again, ole ole' were unfurled at the Etihad after they secured their return visit. With top-flight teams including Arsenal, Chelsea, Leeds United and West Ham United all still remaining in the competition, a tantalising tie awaits for City later this month.



Sri KlinKaara Celluloid's ‘Aasmaan’ Launched Grandly – Meghamsh Srihari Leads a Suspense-Driven Mythological Thriller



Sri KlinKaara Celluloids marked a grand beginning with the auspicious launch pooja of its Production No. 1, Aasmaan, setting the tone for an ambitious and exciting cinematic venture. Produced by Kondaru Venkatesh and Srikanth Mannem, the film is directed by Ram Nandhan and stars in the lead role.

The launch ceremony was held in a vibrant atmosphere with several prominent guests in attendance, including Sai Durgha Tej, Sundeeep Kishan, Niharika Konidela, Roshan Kanakala, and Narne Nithiin. Sai Durgha Tej gave the ceremonial first clap, while Sundeeep Kishan switched on the camera. Ram Nandhan directed the first shot, and Niharika Konidela formally launched the script. Aasmaan is being crafted as an edge-of-the-seat mythological thriller, blending suspense with rooted storytelling and high-concept

narrative elements. The film stars Meghamsh Srihari in a role expected to showcase him in a new and intense avatar. Ram Nandhan wrote and directed the film, making his Telugu debut with Aasmaan. Having previously directed two commercially successful Arabic films, he brings a fresh cinematic perspective to the project. He has also worked as an assistant to Kodu Ramakrishna, adding to his grounding in the genre. Produced by Kondaru Venkatesh and Srikanth Mannem, the film marks Sri KlinKaara Celluloids' maiden venture, with plans to back multiple projects going forward. The technical team includes music by Prashanth R Vihari, cinematography by Shoyabh, and art direction by Krishna Mohan Talluri. Swapna Kondaru serves as CEO, while Praveen Gundlathoti is the Executive Producer. Publicity designs

are handled by Dhani Aelay, with SK Naidu - Phami Kandukuri as PRO. Director Ram Nandhan said, "Aasmaan marks my debut opportunity in the Telugu film industry. I would like to thank producers Venkatesh and Srikanth for placing their trust in me and giving me this opportunity. It has been a pleasure working with Meghamsh. We plan to complete the film across three schedules. We are coming up with a seat-edge thriller; it is going to be something truly fresh and unique." Speaking at the event, producer Srikanth Mannem said, "I wholeheartedly welcome all the media who attended the launch ceremony of Sri KlinKaara Celluloids." I sincerely thank all the chief guests who graced the occasion. I'm happy to begin this journey along with my brother Venkatesh, and together, we are planning to line up multiple exciting projects.

The trailer of “Gedela Raju”, starring Raghu Kunche, was launched by journalist friends. The movie is set for a grand theatrical release on the 17th of this month

Music director, actor, and singer Raghu Kunche plays the title role in “Gedela Raju.”* The film also stars Ravi Anand Chinnibilli, Ramachandram, Shravy, Vikash, and Mounika in key roles. Presented by Raghu Kunche under the Moturi Talkies banner, the movie is directed by Chaitanya Moturi and produced by Vani Ravikumar Moturi. The trailer launch event was held grandly in Hyderabad today with journalists.

Actress Shravy said - “We are happy to have our trailer released by journalist friends. We hope you take our film to the audience. Acting alongside Raghu Kunche was a great experience. My character in this film will impress everyone.”

Actress Mounika said - “The movie is even better than how interesting the trailer looks. Raghu Kunche has given great music for this film. I played an important role. Please watch the movie in theaters on the 17th and share your response.”

Actor Ravi Anand Chinnibilli said - “Our entire team worked very passionately on this film. Most of the crew are from Kakinada. Raghu Kunche guided us well and led from the front. We hope for your support for newcomers like us.”

Co-producer Tadala



The film also stars Ravi Anand Chinnibilli, Ramachandram, Shravy, Vikash, and Mounika in key roles.

Veerabhadra Rao said - “Along with great music, Raghu Kunche will impress everyone with his acting. ‘Gedela Raju’ has all the elements audiences expect and will entertain thoroughly in theaters.”

Producer Vani Ravikumar Moturi said - “Director Chaitanya Moturi is my son. We produced this film to encourage his passion for cinema. The trailer is receiving great appreciation. We hope you bless him as a director and support our film.”

Actor Ramachandram said - “I’ve known director Chaitanya since working as an assistant director. This is my first film as an actor. We are very confident about the movie, which is why we released the trailer

with the media. Please come to theaters on the 17th—you will definitely enjoy it.”

Actor Kishtayya said - “Is there anything Raghu Kunche cannot do? You will see his versatility in this film. He reminds one of legends like SVR and Kaikala Satyanarayana in acting, and singers like SP Balasubrahmanyam and Ghantasala in voice. His composing reminds me of Ilaiyaraaja.”

Actor and Presenter Raghu Kunche said - “Everyone says they worked hard on their film and that it’s good. But ultimately, only content brings

audiences to theaters. If the audience feels the film has good content, they will support it. We believe our film has strong content. If you like the trailer, please come to theaters on the 17th and make our film a success.”

Director Chaitanya Moturi said - “Our tagline says, ‘One truth if you watch, a hundred doubts if you don’t.’ That itself reflects the story. It’s a murder mys-

tery and crime thriller presented crisply within 2 hours and 1 minute. The story engages from the first scene. There are no heroes or villains—only characters and their lives. The last 40 minutes are very strong. We didn’t want to waste even a minute or a rupee of the audience’s time. We experimented a lot, including using new rural singers. Raghu Kunche composed the music and also played the lead role and sang a song. The background score is superb. We shot across 84 locations and staged a 2.5-minute fight sequence with 60 newcomers. We also filmed among real crowds in Kakinada. I would need a book to thank everyone involved—I’ll speak about them at the success meet.”

DIAMOND DACOIT TRAILER UNVEILED, WINS PRAISE AHEAD OF APRIL 10 RELEASE

The trailer of “Diamond Dacoit” was officially launched by Chintakayala Ayyannapratrudu, Speaker of Andhra Pradesh, and noted producer and FDC Chairman Dil Raju, drawing attention within the Telugu film industry. The film Diamond Dacoit, produced by and starring Partha Gopal and directed by Surya G. Yadav, is already creating buzz.



as a suspense-thriller entertainer. After watching the trailer, both Ayyannapratrudu and Dil Raju appreciated the efforts of the film’s team and extended their best wishes. The event was attended by senior producer and

distributor Vakada Appa Rao, Shivaji Raja, and Prithvi Raj, popularly known as “Thirty Years Industry” Prithviraj, along with several other film personalities who conveyed their congratulations to the team. As a special guest, star producer Shirish Reddy also appreciated the

trailer, stating that Diamond Dacoit appears highly gripping. He noted that the visuals, background score, and the thrilling elements of the storyline create a strong impact and expressed confidence that the film would entertain audiences effectively. Speaking on the occasion, producer-hero Partha Gopal expressed his happiness over the trailer being unveiled by Ayyannapratrudu and Dil Raju. He thanked them for their encouragement and said the positive response to the trailer has been very motivating.

Kiran Abbavaram's KA Productions and Sumaira Studios “Thimmarajupalli TV” next song “Nijamena” lyrical video out Now



Encouraging new talent, Hero Kiran Abbavaram is backing the upcoming project Thimmarajupalli TV, with Teja Velpucharla serving as co-producer under KA Productions and Sumaira Studios banner. The film introduces Sai Tej and Veda Jalandharr as the lead pair, while V. Muniraju makes his debut as a director. Set against a rural backdrop, “Thimmarajupalli TV” is a period drama gear-

ing up for a grand theatrical release on April 17th. The lyrical song “Nijamena” was released today. It is composed with an emotional touch by Vamsikanth Rekha. The lyrics are written by Sanare, and the song is sung by young singer Jayashree Pallem. The track carries a heartfelt tone with lines that express emotional confusion and longing, such as wondering whether what was heard and felt is real, and reflecting on silently following someone without truly understanding oneself.

lowed by her first Bollywood feature in The Hero: Love Story of a Spy in 2003. She was then seen in hits such as Andaaz and Mujhse Shaadi Karogi, and had her breakout role in the romantic thriller Aitraaz. Priyanka gained major stardom by starring roles in the top-grossing productions Krrish and Don,

and later reprised her role in their successful sequels Krrish 3 and Don 2. For playing a troubled model in the drama Fashion, she won a National Film Award. She gained further praise for portraying a range of characters in Kaminey, 7 Khoon Maaf, Barfi!, Mary Kom, Dil Dhadakne Do, and Bajirao Mastani.

DARING SAREE STYLE STEALS EVERY EYE



Payal Rajput, known for her bold roles in Mangalavaaram and many other films, looked stunning in a traditional saree at the Teach for Change event. Even in a saree, she carries a glamorous aura, and this time she was clicked walking gracefully, turning heads with her style and confidence. The actress wore a stunning maroon and gold silk saree that featured a rich, traditional zari border, giving her a regal look. However, the highlight of her outfit was the contemporary

styling of her blouse. She paired the saree with a daring low-neck blouse that featured a deep, plunging neckline, adding a high-fashion edge to the classic drape. To complement the look, she wore exquisite emerald and diamond jewelry, balancing the bold cut of the outfit with sophisticated accessories. Payal was last seen on screen two years ago in the movie Rakshana, which unfortunately flopped. Since then, she has been waiting for strong movie offers, and fans are hoping she will make a big

Priyanka shares a glimpse of her morning



Priyanka Chopra Jonas gave a peek into her morning routine as she headed to work in Hyderabad. Priyanka took to Instagram stories, where she shared a video of herself where she is seen prepping her skin with a hydrating face mask and a wand. The actress was heard saying in the clip: “Goodmorning. On my way to work. Skin prep. Its a beautiful day for a beautiful sheet mask. What’s your morning routine. #Morningroutine #Hyderabad.”

Priyanka is in Hyderabad to shoot for Varanasi. Directed by S.S. Rajamouli Varanasi, the film also stars Mahesh Babu, and Prithviraj Sukumaran. The plot follows the adventures of Rudhra as the city of Varanasi in India faces the impending arrival of an asteroid. The narrative spans across several time-

lines and continents. Rajamouli reportedly conceived the film as a globetrotting adventure rooted in Indian cultural themes, drawing inspiration from the structure and emotional tone of classic adventure cinema. Filming took place extensively in Hyderabad, Odisha and Kenya. With a budget of Rs. 1,000-1,300 crore, it is set to become one of the most expensive Indian films ever made. Varanasi is scheduled to be theatrically released in April 2027. Priyanka, who has been feted with two National Film Awards and a Padma Shri, has also been roped in for the latest instalment in the popular franchise “Krrish 4”, marking Hrithik Roshan’s debut as a director. Priyanka made her acting debut in 2002 with the Tamil film Thamizhan fol-