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CBI UNEARTH'S BUILDER-BANK NEXUS IN HOMEBUYERS FRAUD CASE, FILES CHARGESHEET

New Delhi (TSIT)
The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) has filed a chargesheet in a major homebuyers fraud case, unearthing an alleged nexus between builders, bank officials and proxy buyers that led to significant financial losses for both financial institutions and innocent homebuyers. According to CBI, the chargesheet has been filed against M/s AVJ Developers (India) Pvt Ltd, M/s AVJ Developers Pvt Ltd, M/s Kesar Builders Pvt Ltd, their Directors, and certain bank officials associated with Bank of India, ICICI Bank and UCO Bank, along with several alleged proxy homebuyers. The agency's investigation revealed that the accused builder firms and their Directors, in collusion with public servants and private individuals, allegedly lured homebuyers and investors through false assurances and misleading representations. The accused are said to have secured financial gains through deceptive and illegal practices. CBI officials further stated that certain bank officers abused their official positions to facilitate these irregularities, bypassing established banking norms and procedures.

Rajinikanth meets Stalin after DMK's defeat, expresses solidarity Chennai (TSIT)

In a significant political development following the Tamil Nadu Assembly election results, superstar Rajinikanth on Wednesday met DMK President M.K. Stalin at his residence in Alwarpet, Chennai, amid intense political activity surrounding government formation in the state. According to sources, Rajinikanth expressed solidarity with Stalin after the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam's disappointing performance in the Assembly elections and conveyed that he would continue to stand by the senior leader during difficult political circumstances. The meeting lasted for some time and is being viewed in political circles as an important gesture of personal and political support at a time when the DMK is facing one of its biggest electoral setbacks in recent years. The DMK, which had been in power for one term under Stalin's leadership, managed to secure only 59 seats in the 234-member Assembly, losing power after a high-voltage election campaign dominated by anti-incumbency sentiments and the dramatic rise of actor-politician Vijay and his party,

Siddaramaiah signals full five-year term amid change-of-guard buzz



Mysuru (TSIT)

Amid intensifying speculation over a possible power-sharing arrangement in Karnataka, Chief Minister Siddaramaiah on Wednesday asserted that the Congress high command alone would decide on the continuation of his tenure, while expressing confidence that the government would complete its full five-year term.

Addressing reporters here, Siddaramaiah said he was prepared to continue as Chief Minister for the entire tenure if directed by the party leadership, in remarks widely seen as a response to recurring political discussions surround-

ing a rotational chief minister-ship formula involving Deputy Chief Minister D K Shivakumar.

"If the high command asks me to continue, I will remain Chief Minister for five years. I will abide by the high command's decision. Whatever others may say, the final decision rests with the high command," he said.

The Chief Minister's remarks assume significance amid renewed political chatter within Karnataka Congress circles over leadership-sharing arrangements and speculation surrounding possible consultations with the party leadership in New Delhi.

Seeking to downplay such speculation, Siddaramaiah clarified that Congress leader Rahul Gandhi had neither summoned him to Delhi nor had he sought an appointment with the central leadership.

"I have not sought time from Rahul Gandhi, and he has not called me either. If no meeting has been scheduled, how can there be any agenda?" he remarked.

He also reiterated that there was no immediate plan for a Delhi visit and maintained that the Congress government in Karnataka remained stable.

Shifting focus to the Sringeri by-election controversy, Siddaramaiah accused the previous BJP government of involvement in alleged tampering of postal ballots.

Claiming that irregularities surfaced during the counting process, he alleged that election officials, acting under instructions from the then BJP government and in collusion with BJP leader D.N. Jeevaraj, manipulated postal ballots.

"Marks that were not present on the ballot papers earlier appeared on the day of counting," he alleged. The Chief Minister said the Congress party had decided to approach the court over the issue.

India, Vietnam elevate ties to enhanced partnership; set \$25 billion trade target by 2030



New Delhi (TSIT):

India and Vietnam on Wednesday elevated their bilateral ties to an enhanced comprehensive strategic partnership and set an ambitious target of USD 25 billion in annual trade by 2030. The decision was taken during talks between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and

Vietnamese President To Lam, who is on a three-day state visit to India. The discussions focused on strengthening cooperation in trade, defence, digital connectivity, and critical minerals amid evolving geopolitical challenges.

Following the meeting, both sides signed 13 agreements covering key sectors such as digital payments, rare earth

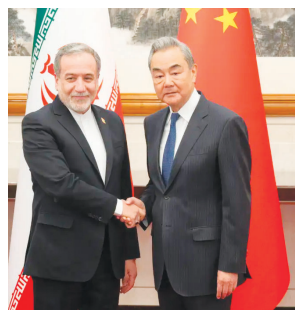
minerals, pharmaceuticals, education, banking, and culture, paving the way for deeper bilateral engagement. The leaders also reviewed the situation in the Indo-Pacific region and reaffirmed their commitment to maintaining peace, stability, and rule of law, particularly in the backdrop of rising tensions in the South China Sea.

Iran seeks 'fair' peace deal with US, says Iranian FM Araghchi

Beijing (TSIT)

Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi held talks with his Chinese counterpart Wang Yi on Wednesday, emphasizing that Iran will accept a peace agreement only if it is "fair and comprehensive." The discussions come as tensions persist over the Strait of Hormuz and regional hostilities. Araghchi's statement comes after US President Donald Trump's pause of "Project Freedom", a naval mission aimed at reopening the Strait of Hormuz.

Trump cited "great progress" in negotiations with Iran as the reason for the temporary halt, without providing further details. "We will only accept a fair and comprehensive agreement," Araghchi said, according to ISNA. He also praised China



for its stance, particularly in condemning the actions of the United States and Israel, describing China as a "close friend of Iran." Araghchi added that under the current circumstances, cooperation between the two countries will only grow stronger.

"The war launched against us is a blatant act of aggression and a clear violation of international law. We will do our utmost to protect our legitimate rights and interests in the negotiations," he

said. The one-on-one meeting between Iran's top diplomat Abbas Araghchi and Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi carries heightened significance as it comes ahead of US President Donald Trump's scheduled visit to China on May 15. Araghchi's stop in Beijing is the latest leg of his diplomatic tour aimed at garnering support for Iran and seeking a resolution to the ongoing conflict with the United States. China has played a key but largely indirect role in the crisis.

As Iran's largest oil importer, it has provided a crucial financial lifeline to Tehran while simultaneously working behind the scenes to mediate the conflict. Trump has even suggested that Beijing helped bring Iran to the negotiating table, highlighting China's strategic leverage in the region.

Congress signals openness to back Vijay's TVK in Tamil Nadu

New Delhi (TSIT)

The Congress on Tuesday indicated that it is considering extending support to actor-turned-politician Vijay and his party, Tamilaaga Vettri Kazhagam (TVK), to form a government in Tamil Nadu, with the final decision to be taken by the party state unit. In a post on X, Congress general secretary KC Venugopal said Vijay had formally approached the party seeking its backing to form the government. "TVK President Thiru Vijay has requested the Indian National Congress for support to form a Government in Tamil Nadu. He has spoken about drawing inspiration from Perumthalaivar K. Kamaraj as well, in his political mission," Venugopal said. He added that the Congress views the electoral verdict in Tamil Nadu as a mandate for a secular government committed to upholding constitutional values. "The INC is clear that the mandate in Tamil Nadu is for a secular government that is



committed to protecting the Constitution in letter and spirit. The INC is determined not to have the BJP and its proxies run the Government of Tamil Nadu in any manner," he said. Venugopal said the party leadership has asked the Tamil Nadu Congress Committee (TNCC) to take a final decision on the request after assessing the ground situation. "Accordingly, the Congress leadership has directed the TNCC to take a final decision on Thiru Vijay's request.

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VMRDA Takes Key Decisions to Drive Urbanization in Rural Areas

Visakhapatnam (TSIT) The Visakhapatnam Metropolitan Region Development Authority (VMRDA) has taken several key decisions to promote the development of rural areas towards urbanization, Chairman M.V. Pranav Gopal stated. The decisions were made during the authority meeting held on Wednesday at the VMRDA conference hall under his chairmanship, where development works, fund allocations, and future plans were discussed in detail. Officials reviewed the progress of ongoing development works across all constituencies under VMRDA lim-



its and examined the utilization of funds. The Chairman emphasized that special priority is being given to areas beyond the Greater Visakhapatnam Municipal Corporation (GVMC) limits. Funds have been allocated for the development of drainage systems, roads, and parks in municipalities such as Narsipatnam, Vizianagaram, Cheepurupalli, Nellimarla, and Payakaraopeta. An amount of approximately Rs.9 crore has been earmarked for the construction of a Sports Village in Gajuwaka. As per the directions of Chief

Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu, steps are being taken to further develop Visakhapatnam as a major tourist destination. As part of this initiative, preparations are underway to inaugurate a Trishul statue at Kailasagiri on the 9th of this month. Efforts are also being made to complete the construction of key roads leading to the Bhogapuram International Airport within the stipulated time frame. Funds have been allocated for beautification works including decorative lighting, greenery in medians, and construction of drains where necessary along these roads.

South Coast Railway Zone Launch Fulfills Long-Pending Demand: Bhisetti Babji

The South India Times, Visakhapatnam : Lok Satta Party State President Bhisetti Babji expressed happiness over the long-pending demand of the people of Andhra Pradesh for the establishment of the South Coast Railway Zone finally being fulfilled. According to the Gazette notification issued by the Central Government, the new zone, with Visakhapatnam as its headquarters, will commence operations from June 1. Speaking at a press conference held at the Lok Satta office near Ushodaya Junction in Visakhapatnam East constituency on Wednesday, Babji recalled that extensive movements



were carried out for the railway zone as part of implementing the assurances under the Andhra Pradesh Reorganisation Act. These efforts were led by Uttarandhra Charchavedika Chairman and former minister Konathala Ramakrishna, along with Lok Satta, left parties, and various public organizations. He stated that delegations had visited New Delhi twice

then would the South Coast Railway Zone be fully effective. He also expressed optimism that Visakhapatnam would develop into a major railway hub, contributing to the state's economic growth. Babji further appealed to the Central Government to expedite the implementation of remaining bifurcation assurances and to introduce new trains, railway lines, and a separate railway board in line with the state's needs. Lok Satta city president M.S.N. Murthy, Marrapu Sudheer, Ippalavalasa Gopi, Pakki Shankar, and Mahila Satta leader Rajeswari, among others, were present at the meeting.

AIG Hospitals, Banjara Hills Launches "Beat the Heat" Public Awareness Campaign to Prevent Heat Stroke and Heat-Related Emergencies

Hyderabad, 6th May 2026: With Telangana witnessing intense summer conditions and several districts including Hyderabad recording temperatures above 44°C in recent days, AIG Hospitals, Banjara Hills has launched "Beat the Heat", a large-scale public awareness initiative aimed at educating citizens on heat stroke, heat-related illnesses, early warning signs, first-aid measures, and preventive action. Though intermittent rainfall and thunderstorms may bring temporary relief, weather advisories continue to underline the need for caution as heat stress remains a serious public health concern. The campaign comes at a time when weather experts are also closely watching the evolving El Niño pattern, which is often associated with increased heat stress, uneven rainfall, and greater weather variability in India. Telangana has also been advised to prepare for heat and uneven rainfall patterns as the season progresses. Speaking on the need for the initiative, Dr. D. Nageshwar Reddy, Chairman, AIG Hospitals, said, "Heat stroke is one of those medical emergencies where awareness can directly save lives. Many people still think of heat-related illness as simple dehydration or tiredness, but in reality, it can rapidly affect the brain, heart, kidneys, and other vital organs. Our goal is to help people recognise danger signs early, protect vulnerable family members, and act correctly in the first few minutes." Heat stroke occurs when the body loses its ability to regulate temperature. It is not the same as ordinary fever. In fever, the body's temperature control system is still functioning; in heat stroke, that system begins to fail. As the core body temperature rises dangerously, it can cause altered mental status, seizures, collapse, and multi-organ damage. Medical guidance from leading health institutions identifies heat stroke as a medical emergency that can quickly damage the brain, heart, kidneys, and muscles if treatment is delayed.



Explaining the clinical seriousness, Dr. Praveen Kumar Koppula, Director & Sr. Consultant - Internal Medicine, AIG Hospitals Banjara Hills, said, "The biggest problem with heat stroke is that it often begins innocently. A person may first feel unusually tired, dizzy, nauseous, or may develop headache and muscle cramps. These are usually dismissed as exhaustion. But when the body is unable to cool itself, symptoms can progress very quickly. Confusion, unusual behaviour, slurred speech, fainting, persistent vomiting, seizures, or not sweating despite extreme heat should never be ignored. These are red flags that the brain and vital organs are under stress. At that point, waiting at home or assuming that the person will recover with rest alone can be dangerous." One of the key objectives of the campaign is to help the public understand the progression from heat exhaustion to heat stroke. Heat-related illnesses may begin with cramps, dehydration, heavy sweating, weakness, dizziness, or headache. If ignored, the condition may progress to heat stroke, where the individual may become confused, restless, drowsy, unconscious, or develop seizures. Delay in cooling and treatment increases the risk of kidney failure, cardiac complications, liver dysfunction, muscle breakdown, and brain injury. The longer the body remains overheated, the greater the chance of serious complications or death. Emphasising the importance of first response, Dr. Imran Shareef, HOD & Sr. Consultant - Emergency Medicine, AIG Hospitals, said, "In heat stroke, the first

further reduce blood volume, making the heart work even harder. For patients with coronary artery disease, heart failure, hypertension, rhythm disorders, or those taking diuretics and blood pressure medications, this can increase the risk of dizziness, low blood pressure, palpitations, worsening heart failure, or even acute cardiac events. Cardiac patients should avoid peak heat hours, maintain hydration as advised by their doctor, never skip medicines without consultation, and seek help immediately if they experience chest discomfort, breathlessness, fainting, or unusual fatigue during hot weather." As part of the "Beat the Heat" public awareness campaign, AIG Hospitals, Banjara Hills will focus on simple preventive measures that can be adopted by every household. These include drinking water regularly and not waiting until thirsty, avoiding direct sun exposure between late morning and afternoon, wearing light-coloured and breathable clothing, using caps or umbrellas outdoors, taking frequent rest breaks, avoiding intense exercise during peak heat, checking on elderly family members, avoiding alcohol and excessive caffeine during extreme heat, and ensuring children and pets are never left inside parked vehicles. The hospital also advises people with diabetes, hypertension, heart disease, kidney disease, and elderly individuals to be extra cautious during heatwave conditions. They should monitor symptoms closely, keep emergency contacts available, store medications safely, and consult their doctor regarding fluid intake if they have any restrictions due to heart or kidney conditions. The "Beat the Heat" initiative will include public awareness camps, doctor-led talks, educational materials, media outreach, community engagement, and practical guidance on recognising and responding to heat-related illness. The campaign's core message is simple: heat stroke is preventable, but only if people recognise the risk early and act in time.

Kiran Mugabasav Appointed to NSUI Central Election Authority



NEW DELHI :Shri Kanhaiya Kumar has appointed Shri Kiran Mugabasav to the Central Election Authority (CEA) of the NSUI to oversee internal organizational elections. A veteran leader from Hubli, Mugabasav previously served as an NSUI Election Commissioner (2016-18) and is recognized as a disciplined party soldier. Key Highlights of Kiran Mugabasav's Career: Organizational Leadership: Currently serves as an AICC Member and General Secretary of the KPCC. Grassroots Impact: Built the Rajiv Gandhi Panchayati Raj Sangathan (RGPRS) in Telangana and served as its National General Secretary. Dedicated Padyatri: Completed the 3,570 km Bharat Jodo Yatra, the 600 km Sarvodaya Sankalp Padyatra, and the 600 km Lok Swaraj Padyatra. Strategic Role: Served as National War Room Coordinator for the AICC in Maharashtra and New Delhi. This appointment leverages Mugabasav's extensive experience in grassroots organizing and his lifelong commitment to the values of Satya and Ahimsa.

Amit Shah to release Yediyurappa speech volumes



Bengaluru (TSIT) In a major political and symbolic tribute to veteran BJP stalwart BS Yediyurappa, union Home Minister Amit Shah will unveil two landmark books documenting the former Karnataka Chief Minister's five-decade-long political and public life journey during the grand 'BSY Abhimanotsava' celebrations in Chitradurga on Saturday. The event, being projected by the BJP as a historic gathering, marks 50 years of Yediyurappa's public life and comes at a politically significant time for the party in Karnataka, where the veteran Lingayat leader continues to wield considerable influence. According to State BJP OBC Morcha president R Raghunath (Kautilya), the two books seek to capture not just Yediyurappa's political rise, but also his aggressive legislative interventions, pro-farmer politics and mass leadership that helped shape the BJP's growth in Karnataka. The first book, titled 'Kendavare - Kamala Aralada Katha' (The Story of the Lotus Blooming from the Ashes), traces

Yediyurappa's journey from humble beginnings to becoming one of the tallest leaders in Karnataka politics. Written by R Raghunath (Kautilya), the biography records key turning points from his childhood, organisational struggles and grassroots mobilisation to his emergence as the BJP's strongest face in the state. The second publication, 'Sadana Shikari - Yediyurappanavara Gudugina Nudigalu,' is a compilation of Yediyurappa's speeches in the Karnataka Legislature over several decades. The book highlights his combative style inside the Assembly and Council, where he frequently raised issues relating to farmers' distress, regional development and governance failures, irrespective of whether.

Antimicrobial resistance a major health challenge for India: Experts

NEW DELHI: Prime Minister Narendra Modi's call to check the indiscriminate use of antibiotics has been lauded by health experts who said that his message drew attention to a major health concern of antimicrobial resistance (AMR) that the country is presently facing and called for regulating over-the-counter sale of such drugs. AMR occurs when bacteria, viruses, fungi and parasites no longer respond to antimicrobial medicines, according to WHO. As a result of drug resistance, antibiotics become ineffective and infections become difficult or impossible to treat. In his monthly 'Mann Ki Baat' radio address, Prime Minister Modi on Sunday said that antibiotics are not medicines that can be taken mindlessly and urged people to take them only on the doctor's advice. He said the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) recently released a report which said that antibiotics were proving ineffective against many diseases like pneumonia and UTI (Urinary Tract Infections). "This is a matter of great concern for all of us," he said. Dr M Srinivas, Director of AIIMS-Delhi, underlined that antibiotics should be consumed only when prescribed by doctors and for the exact duration. "Indiscriminate use of antibiotics will lead to resistance, and if the infection increases, there will be no reserved drugs left to use. The AIIMS has taken the leadership role in this matter... we have SoPs and hospital infection control systems and are creating awareness about the issue," he said. ICMR Director General Rajiv Bahl said, "PM Modi has drawn the nation's attention to a serious issue. Overuse or irrational use of antibiotics for infections like pneumonia can lead to resistance, making them less effective. Antibiotics should only be used when needed and prescribed by doctors," he said. Dr Atul Gogia, senior consultant and Head of Infectious Diseases at Sir Ganga Ram Hospital, said that antimicrobial resistance is one of the greatest challenges India is currently facing. Indiscriminate use of antibiotics - unsupervised and self-medication - is leading to growing morbidity and mortality, he said. The common simple-to-treat infections are becoming increasingly difficult to treat because of the growing antimicrobial resistance, Gogia stressed. "There is a need of the hour to restrict over-the-counter sale of antibiotics as well as restrictions on their use in animals. Ensuring supervised anti-

biotic use in proper dosage and duration is the need of the hour to prevent further aggravation in the AMR situation," he said. The early involvement of physicians and infectious disease doctors for proper implementation of the guidelines is very essential to prevent the onslaught of AMR, he added. India, bearing a silent and large pandemic in terms of high burden of infectious diseases, with UTI and pneumonia being the major ones, easy over-the-counter availability of antibiotics, irrational prescribing, and incomplete treatment courses have accelerated resistance, said Dr Neha Rastogi, Senior Consultant-Infectious Diseases, Fortis Gurugram. "With the strategy to empower the community as a modality to combat antimicrobial resistance, Prime Minister Narendra Modi emphasised on mass awareness," she said. Massive impact of behavioural change, better diagnostics alongside stringent regulation and implementation of national policies on controlling AMR are needed. "Prevention of infections - vaccination, sanitation and environmental factors; pre-empting - early and improved affordable diagnostics, avoidance of self-medication, right dose right duration protocol are key pillars to build and sustain the drive against antimicrobial resistance," Rastogi said. Dr Manisha Arora, Director of Internal Medicine at CK Birla Hospital, Delhi, said that antibiotic resistance has emerged as one of the most serious global public health crises. While it is a worldwide concern, India is among the countries most severely affected due to the widespread misuse and overuse of antibiotics, she said. Studies suggest that nearly 50-70 per cent of antibiotic use in India is inappropriate, she said. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), the rise of drug-resistant "superbugs" is alarming, with antimicrobial resistance currently responsible for approximately 700,000 deaths each year globally. If left unchecked, this number could rise dramatically to 10 million deaths annually by 2050, surpassing cancer as a leading cause of mortality. "In India, the situation is further worsened by self-medication and the easy availability of antibiotics without a prescription. This is a major concern and calls for stricter regulation and enforcement. Antibiotics should only be taken when prescribed by a qualified healthcare professional. In parallel, strengthening infection prevention and control measures.

TRP forms Jogulamba Gadwal district committee to boost BC empowerment

Jogulamba Gadwal, May 6 (TSIT): The Telangana Rajyadhikara Party, founded by Teenmar Mallanna, has completed the Formation of its district executive committee in Jogulamba Gadwal with a focus on strengthening political empowerment. The appointments were made under the supervision of joint district in-charge Vemulawada Madana Mohanachari and led by district president Morugu Veeresh. The newly appointed office bearers have officially assumed their responsibilities. Uppari Gangadhar Sagar from Sindhanur village was named Working President, while Ashok Pujari from Pulikal village was appointed Vice President. Minigi Bharathi from Thatikunta village will serve as District Women's President, R. Thippareddy as Farmers Wing President, Narasimha Raju as Labour Wing President, and Suresh Naidu as District Social Media Incharge. Party leaders said the formation of the district committee aims to strengthen the organisational structure at the grassroots level and expand the party's outreach across the region. The newly appointed leaders expressed their commitment to uphold the party's principles and work actively towards its growth and public service initiatives.

Experts call for integrated action to curb antibiotic resistance

CHENNAI: Antibiotic resistance is a critical global health threat due to excessive and inappropriate use of antibiotics in humans, livestock and agriculture, warn health experts. A major concern is the growing tendency among people to take antibiotics without medical advice. When antibiotics are misused, taken in the wrong dose or stopped midway, bacteria survive, mutate and become resistant, making infections harder to treat. "If antibiotics are not taken properly, some bacteria survive, mutate and become resistant over time. Even simple infections can turn life threatening," infectious disease expert Dr Surendran told DT Next. "Patients often discontinue antibiotics once symptoms improve, instead of completing the full course, enabling harmful bacteria to persist. Self-medication, use of leftover antibiotics and pressure on doctors to prescribe them for viral infections like colds and flu worsen the problem." It warns that antibiotic resistance could lead to 10 million deaths annually by 2050 if urgent action is not taken. In India, surveillance by the Indian Council of Medical Research shows alarming trends. In 2024, analysis of more than 99,000 laboratory samples revealed that gram-negative bacteria continue to dominate serious infections, particularly blood, urine and respiratory illnesses. Declining effectiveness of last-resort antibiotics such as carbapenems against pathogens like Klebsiella pneumoniae has raised serious concern among clinicians. Antibiotic misuse extends beyond humans. Large quantities are used in poultry, dairy and livestock farming to accelerate growth and prevent disease. In agriculture, antibiotics used for crop protection contaminate soil and water. "These residues enter our food chain and water sources, contributing to resistance. It is not only a medical problem but an environmental one too," said environmental activist Sundararajan of Poovulagin Nanbargal.

EDITORIAL

Mafia, Scams and Shifting Loyalties: How Mamata Banerjee Lost The Plot

In any election, there is never just one reason behind how people vote. Outcomes are shaped by multiple forces working together over time. West Bengal has a population of roughly ten crore, with around six crore voters - figures that can be verified - but the larger point remains: no single factor explains such a political shift. Over the past two years, I have travelled across almost every district in the state. Based on those observations, a clearer picture begins to emerge. The first and most visible factor was strong anti-incumbency against the Trinamool Congress government. Fifteen years in power had inevitably created fatigue. Anti-incumbency, after all, is almost a law of nature: what rises must eventually face decline. The second factor was something I noticed consistently across districts: the rise of local strongmen. In many places, groups of 'goons' operated under political protection. They exercised control, often through intimidation, and gradually a culture of extortion took root. This was particularly visible in sectors like real estate - everything from sand supply to cement distribution became part of a larger patronage network. For many, this system became a livelihood, but it also created a coercive structure in which ordinary people had to pay "cuts" not just to local political figures but, in some cases, to the police as well. Small party offices often became centres of local authority, with individuals acting as power brokers. This was not hidden; it was visible on the ground. Even something as everyday as running e-rickshaws became tied to informal payments. Many drivers - sometimes without proper registration - paid local intermediaries to operate. Once such systems took hold, they became difficult to challenge. People endured them, but a growing desire to break free was unmistakable. The third major factor was a sense of disillusionment among sections of civil society. This was not always loud, but it was there. Closely linked to that was the impact of the education scam controversies, which significantly damaged public perception of the government. The RG Kar incident further intensified concerns, particularly around women's safety - and this had a crucial electoral impact, since women had been one of Mamata Banerjee's strongest support bases. That support had not emerged overnight. It was built over years. Even during her tenure as Railway Minister, long before she became Chief Minister, she had introduced measures benefiting working-class women, especially those who commuted daily for domestic work. Later, as Chief Minister, schemes such as health coverage registered in women's names, travel allowances for patients, and direct financial assistance like Lakshmi Bhandar (₹1,500 per month) helped consolidate that base. This time, however, there was visible erosion. One reason was the counter-campaign led by Narendra Modi, who commands his own strong appeal among women voters across India. Issues of safety, amplified by high-profile incidents, weakened the earlier consolidation. Modi emphasised women's security and, notably, promised ₹3,000 per month for women - a pledge he had not made before. In 2021, he had actually opposed such welfare schemes, calling them a driver of unemployment; recognising that approach had been a mistake, the BJP quietly changed course. The party is not averse to adopting the same playbook when it suits them. The fourth factor was law and order - or, more precisely, its deterioration. Violence by TMC-affiliated elements increased markedly, particularly around elections. This pattern is not new to Bengal: when Congress fell, its strongmen migrated to the CPM; when the CPM fell, they migrated to the TMC. The TMC thus inherited and amplified a culture of coercion that previous governments had also relied upon. Another significant shift came from the urban, educated middle class - the so-called bhadralok. Historically aligned with Congress, this group had moved toward the Left during the Singur and Nandigram agitations, and Mamata had shrewdly channelled that discontent into a political movement. But over time, particularly after industrial setbacks such as the departure of the Tata project from the state, confidence in her government began to erode. This erosion was visible even in constituencies like Bhawanipur - cosmopolitan, elite, and politically prestigious, the kind of seat once contested by leaders like Syama Prasad Mukherjee and Siddhartha Shankar Ray. The role of Suwendu Adhikari also stands out. Despite not coming from an elite urban background, he emerged as a credible and effective face for the BJP, particularly in consolidating Hindu votes. This brings us to another critical factor: religious polarisation. Muslim voters had traditionally backed Mamata Banerjee strongly, and there was every expectation that this would continue, especially given anxieties within the community about national politics under Modi and Amit Shah. But the BJP's campaign intensified polarisation through aggressive labelling and pointed narratives. In response, Mamata attempted a counter-balance through visible religious outreach - visiting temples, invoking cultural symbols - yet these gestures did not fully neutralise the BJP's framing. The party managed to consolidate a large section of Hindu voters. There was also a widespread perception, especially in urban areas, that the state government had been overly accommodating toward certain groups even when law and order were at stake. Whether accurate or not, this perception had real electoral consequences. Symbolic issues - such as state involvement in temple affairs - became talking points that fed into the broader narrative. Finally, structural factors also played a role. Processes like voter list revisions (referred to in political circles as SIR) are believed by the BJP to have influenced outcomes, particularly in border districts. Without these factors, many of the shifts described above may not have translated as effectively into votes. In the end, it was not one wave but many currents converging. Anti-incumbency, organisational fatigue, shifting voter loyalties, identity politics, and strategic campaigning all combined to reshape the electoral landscape. Mamata Banerjee did not lose the plot because of a single misstep. It was the cumulative weight of multiple changes - some gradual, some sudden - that altered the outcome.

The Vijay Paradox: How A 'Welfare State' Still Ended Up Dissatisfied

We know it is a case of anti-incumbency vote. We also know that Tamil Nadu is famous for turning movie stars into leading-edge politicians. But we need to look beyond these obvious clichés to figure out what the new normal is in the state's socio-economic dynamics. We need to deconstruct the much-discussed 'Gen Z' factor, under which a new generation of voters has catapulted into power a two-year-old toddler party in assembly elections. The huge mandate for C Joseph Vijay and his Tamilaga Vettri Kazhagam (TVK - or Tamil Nadu's Victory Organisation) is such that one has to see its timing, manner, context, and the demographics surrounding the vote that has given the party a majority only a few seats short of an absolute assembly mandate. Reading the message of a mandate in an election, especially one in a parliamentary democracy, is akin to reading a tarot card that goes into the mystical ways of emotions, relationships, and intellect to predict moods and outcomes. In political terms, you could say that the TVK's surge is like a coming-of-age moment for Tamil Nadu. One is tempted to suggest that this may be the beginning of the end of feudal-era politics, in which kinships based on caste, community, or region are giving way to a broad-based mandate based not just on basic needs but on ambitions and aspirations.



As I told a panel discussion on NDTV, Vijay's arrival matches in political terms a Hindi punline that went viral through an advertisement for Pepsi-Cola, popular when the movie star was rising in the 1990s: "Yeh dil maange more" (This heart wants more). Look at the context. Tamil Nadu has seen about three decades of an IT revolution driven by com-

puters, software, and the business process outsourcing (BPO) industries. There is a whole generation of digital natives in a state that has about 57 million voters, of which about 23 million - or about 25% - are below the age of 40. Smartphone penetration was about 92% a year ago. The state's population is around 85 million, while wireless subscriptions add up to 80 million. Clearly, the younger lot uses social media more. One humourist says elections in the last decade were about WhatsApp, while now they are about Instagram - where Vijay scores magnificently with a cult following. You are looking at a generation that has moved past a previous one that had to survive droughts, severe unemployment, distress migration, and security in relationships and marriages linked to blood relations and traditions. As election day approached, packed special trains ferried hundreds of thousands of young voters from bustling industrial hubs like Chennai and Coimbatore to

remote southern district towns and villages to cast their ballots. They carried not just the voter cards that enabled them to press a button on electronic voting machines (EVMs) but memories of conversations and memes on social media, and aspirations in the companies that they directly or indirectly worked with, such as Microsoft, Infosys Cognizant, Google and Amazon. Read that with the fact that Vijay saluted the portrait of 'Periyar' Erode Venkatappa Ramasamy (EVR) Naicker as he started his political journey. Much is being made out by critics of EVR's controversial anti-Brahmin politics to suggest that the TVK is a break from the Dravida politics of the past because his party does not contain the word "Dravida", which has been a shorthand for non-Brahmin, Hindi-baiting, often atheistic core of the Dravida movement that EVR founded through his Justice Party in the British colonial era. It is true that Vijay is definitely shedding a lot of the Periyar-era baggage.

But what he has retained is EVR's rationalist core that questioned the existing social and political establishment. Status quo has not been fashionable in Tamil Nadu for nearly a century now. That questioning spirit has been repackaged for a Gen Z and/or Millennial bundle of aspirations, much of which will be tested in the coming days. The TVK has to go the extra mile to deliver the goods because the DMK (Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam) under MK Stalin had spread out a slew of welfareist and supportive measures and schemes spanning education, industry, startups, farming, and skill-building, which was good but not enough for the Gen Z voters who wanted more. This could be because the game has shifted to a new normal, in which basic needs such as livelihoods, food, and clothing have been well taken care of. It is common to see in Tamil Nadu migrant workers from northern states like West Bengal and Bihar because locals are either better employed in jobs gained from higher education and migration to developed countries. This new normal is one in which conversations have also gone beyond welfareist handouts and job opportunities. Dynastic politics, corruption, and an entrenched oligarchy of political families collectively signal to a new generation that they may have been short-changed. Liquor barons, sand mafia, illegal stone quarrying and rave parties are as much a part of social conversations as AI jobs. Here is where the "Yeh dil maange more" appeal of a youthful, energetic Vijay kicks in. His rhetoric is embellished by punchlines and dance movements in which the gap between a political speech and a 30-second prime-time commercial gets blurred. It is tempting to draw some corporate analogies to underline what Vijay's aspirational politics represent. Imagine a Sunder Pichai, born in Madurai and raised in Chennai, who now heads Google, one of the world's most towering technology companies. A Sundarapandian raised in Madurai cannot easily aspire for a similar leadership role in a DMK or even an AIADMK. Somewhere deep down, this helps Vijay's political promise. Much like employees who seek stock options, leadership roles, and bonuses beyond the usual salary and an annual raise, the Gen Z voters of Tamil Nadu seem to have raised the bar. What happens next is something we need to watch carefully. After all, electoral politics is not a cola war. (Madhavan Narayanan is a senior editor, writer and columnist with more than 30 years of experience, having worked for Reuters, The Economic Times, Business Standard, and Hindustan Times after starting out in the Times of India Group.)

From Confrontation to Consultation



AMARAVAJI NAGARAJU

The role played by RTC workers in the Telangana movement remains deeply etched in public memory. They were not mere participants but frontline contributors who sacrificed livelihoods, halted services, and risked personal security to support the cause of statehood. In the aftermath of Telangana's formation, there was a widespread expectation that their contributions would be honoured through job security, institutional strengthening, and welfare measures. However, those expectations remained largely unfulfilled during the previous regime. The discontent among RTC workers reached a peak during the 52-day strike in 2019. Far from being a routine labour protest, it was a movement rooted in dignity, livelihood security, and long-pending demands. The response of the then government was marked by rigidity. Declaring the strike illegal, refusing dialogue, and invoking the "self-dismissal" of nearly 48,000 employees created an atmosphere of fear and uncertainty. Reports of worker deaths, including alleged suicides, underscored the human cost of the crisis. Yet, a conciliatory approach was conspicuously absent. The episode revealed a deeper structural issue: the failure to engage with labour concerns through democratic dialogue. Decisions such as delaying pay revisions, withholding retirement benefits, discontinuing union

recognition, and shelving the promise of RTC's merger into the government further eroded trust. For a workforce that had stood firmly behind the Telangana movement, this phase was widely perceived as a betrayal. In contrast, the current Congress government has adopted a markedly different approach. Under the leadership of Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy, there has been a visible shift from confrontation to consultation. The government's handling of recent labour concerns reflects a willingness to engage, listen, and resolve through dialogue a fundamental principle of democratic governance. Transport Minister Ponnampalath Prabhakar's proactive intervention played a key role in resolving the latest strike within days. By facilitating discussions between management and worker unions, the government created space for negotiation and mutual understanding. The acknowledgment that long-pending issues cannot be resolved overnight, but require sustained engagement, reflects administrative maturity. Concrete measures have further reinforced worker confidence. The government has agreed to an 11% fitment, initiated discussions on the long-pending merger issue through a committee, and restored the recognition of unions that were previously dissolved. Additionally, the clearance of pending dues, including ₹280 crore in wage revision bonds and other allowances, signals a commitment to financial accountability. Equally significant has been the government's humane approach from engaging directly with workers to offering assurances on wages during strike periods and withdrawing cases filed earlier. Such gestures, though administrative in nature, carry symbolic weight in rebuilding trust.

THE DAM BREAKS:

Kerala Didn't Reject The Left, It Rejected What It Had Turned Into

There are election results that change governments, and there are verdicts that discipline political cultures. Kerala 2026 belongs to the second category. On the surface, the message is simple: the Congress-led United Democratic Front (UDF) has returned to power after a decade, the Left Democratic Front (LDF) has been thrown out, and the BJP has made a small but symbolically important advance. The Election Commission's current figures show the Congress winning 63 seats, the CPI(M) 26, the IUML 22, the CPI eight, the Kerala Congress seven and the BJP three in the 140-member assembly; alliance-wise, the UDF has won 102 seats and the LDF 35. But Kerala rarely speaks in one register. This verdict is not merely an anti-incumbency wave, though anti-incumbency was undoubtedly its strongest current. It is also a moral correction issued by a politically literate electorate against the tone of power. The Left did not lose simply because voters stopped believing in welfare, social justice, secularism, or the larger grammar of the Kerala model. It lost because too many people, including sections of its own ecosystem, appeared to believe that the Left in office had drifted from the Left as an ethical idea. The charge from within the anti-LDF space was not that Kerala wanted less Left, but that it wanted a humbler, more inclusive, more humane Left. That is why the description of the verdict as a victory for a "Nehruvian Left" is more than just clever phrase-making. It captures the paradox of this election: the Congress has won by occupying, in sentiment if not in party structure, the



moral space that the Left vacated. The scale of the UDF victory makes another uncomfortable truth difficult to ignore. Without leakage from within the Left's social and organisational base, 102 seats would have been almost impossible. This was not simply a Congress mobilisation from outside the fortress; it was also a revolt from within the walls. The Left rank and file, its fellow-travellers, its disappointed voters, and its local rebels together helped convert resentment into a verdict. Reports of the CPI(M) rebels damaging the party in bastions, including G Sudhakaran's UDF-backed independent victory in Ambalappuzha, point to a deeper breakdown rather than just ordinary electoral fatigue. When the Left lost distinction The Left's gravest wound in Kerala was not numerical. It was ideological. For decades, the CPI(M)-led formation could claim, whatever its administrative flaws, a clear distinction from the BJP's politics. This time, that distinction was blurred in the public imagination. The LDF was unable to effectively counter the perception that it had played a soft-Hindutva card to arrest a possible drift of Hindu voters towards the

BJP. Worse, it was accused by critics of enabling or failing to distance itself adequately from communally loaded and Islamophobic voices. In a state where political nuance matters, that was a devastating failure. The danger of such blurring is obvious. If the Left is seen to be flirting with majoritarian anxieties, if it is accused of offering a softer version of what the BJP already offers in full ideological force, why should voters looking for that politics not choose the original? Kerala has not become a BJP state, but the BJP's three-seat breakthrough is not a footnote. It has won Nedom and Kazhakkootam in Thiruvananthapuram and Chathannoor in Kollam, giving it its best Assembly tally in the state. What makes this more significant is geography. The BJP's gains have come from south Kerala, where the Left has traditionally had influence and where the Congress has not always been structurally dominant. This means the old assumption may need revision. The BJP was once expected to first weaken the Congress in Kerala and then confront the Left. The emerging contest may be different: the BJP could increasingly compete with the Left for opposition space in pockets where anti-Congress sentiment sur-

vives, but anti-Left confidence has collapsed. That is bad news for the CPI(M), because a party can recover from defeat; it is harder to recover from losing the ideological terms on which it is opposed. THE UDF'S QUIET SOCIAL ARCHITECTURE The UDF's victory was not built on noise alone. It was built through a quiet, patient, open-door architecture that allowed a wide range of political energies to enter its fold: minorities who felt anxious, Christians who had drifted away in the previous assembly election, Muslims who consolidated sharply, Left rebels who needed a platform, and civil society voices uncomfortable with the arrogance of the regime. This openness had risks. At one stage, critics tried to portray the Congress's broad tent as an excuse to accommodate headline Islamist opinion. But the party did not lose its nerve. It stayed the course, and the Left's own inability to fully reject tactical support from Islamist quarters weakened its ability to attack the Congress on that front. The result was a consolidation that had both social and psychological depth. The IUML's performance reflects this clearly: it won 22 of the 27 seats it contested, its best-ever assembly performance, and reinforced its position as the UDF's indispensable second pillar. Minority consolidation appears to have been decisive. Reports indicate that the UDF won overwhelmingly in constituencies with substantial Muslim populations, while Christian voters who had moved away from the Congress in the previous assembly election returned in significant measure.

Effect of Shah's Chanakya Neeti: From Chhattisgarh to Haryana, Maharashtra, Delhi and Bengal, the Lotus has bloomed everywhere

AMIT SHAH DEFEATED MAMATA BANERJEE IN HER OWN STRONGHOLD OF BHAWANIPUR

TSIT DESK
West Bengal: The land of Bengal, once fragrant with the music of Rabindranath Tagore, the spiritual brilliance of Swami Vivekananda, and the timeless writings of Sarat Chandra Chattopadhyay, had, for decades, wrapped itself in a silence that signalled not development, but the ominous echo of decline. This was the Bengal that once showed direction to the entire nation, yet the wheel of time pushed it into a dark corridor of politics where only the noise of violence and vengeance prevailed. For 35 years, the Communist "Red Corridor" weakened Bengal's industrial backbone, and over the past 15 years, the rule of the All India Trinamool Congress dragged it further into a swamp of corruption, appeasement, and disorder. The closure of jute mills silenced the morning sirens, industries came to a halt, and Bengal's youth were forced to leave their own land in search of employment. In a state known for its rich cultural identity, the melodies of Rabindra Sangeet were replaced by the blasts of bombs and gunfire. From



Sandeshkhali to R. G. Kar Medical College and Hospital, stories of exploitation of women and administrative negligence pierced the very soul of Bengal. But the scorching summer of 2026 began scripting a new chapter. When Amit Shah, often called the modern "Chanakya" of Indian politics, landed at Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose International Airport, there was a visible resolve etched on his face and a clear blueprint of the future in his eyes. He sensed that Bengal was no longer seeking just a change in power, but a restoration of its

lost identity. Shah's Chanakya-like strategy was not merely theoretical; after demonstrating its impact in states like Chhattisgarh, Haryana, Maharashtra, and Delhi, he now set out to implement it on Bengal's fertile political ground. Leaving behind the air-conditioned rooms of Delhi, Shah made the streets of Bengal his base. For 15 continuous days, he immersed himself in the dust and pulse of the state as if he were not campaigning for an electoral victory, but embarking on a mission to revive civilisation. The most defining feature of

Shah's working style is his unwavering determination. In political circles, it is often said that, whether in Bhawanipur or New Delhi, transforming resolve into results defines Amit Shah. The rise of the Bharatiya Janata Party in Bengal is not a one-day miracle, but the result of a decade-long perseverance led by Amit Shah. If we turn the pages of history, in the 2016 Assembly elections, the BJP had to settle for just 3 seats. But Shah did not give up; he began identifying possibilities even in a vacuum. By the time the 2021 elections arrived, his strate-



gy started delivering results, with the BJP's strength rising from 3 to 77 seats, creating the first major crack in the seemingly invincible fortress of Mamata Banerjee. And now, reaching the massive figure of 207 seats in 2026 stands as a testament to Shah's organisational mastery, often described as the pinnacle of "booth management." An unbeatable warrior in the electoral arena, Shah wove Bengal's geography into the threads of his strategy. With more than 50 rallies and countless roadshows, he wasn't merely delivering speech-

es; he was invoking Bengal's glorious past, which he argued had been compromised under the "syndicate raj" and "cut money" culture of the All India Trinamool Congress. From the tea gardens of North Bengal to the creeks of the Sundarbans, the discussion around the "lotus" began to resonate everywhere. Shah built such a formidable organisational structure that the cadre-based dominance of the Trinamool Congress started collapsing like a house of cards. The management strategist Amit Shah had deployed his "silent army" at

every polling booth across Bengal. While Mamata Banerjee appeared absorbed in confidence of incumbency, Shah was quietly making inroads into regions where the Bharatiya Janata Party had traditionally been considered weak. He instilled a strong belief among the people of Bengal that under the leadership of Narendra Modi, the vision of "Sonar Bangla" could truly be realised. The massive crowds at rallies reflected a clear shift where the hunger for development began to outweigh the fear of destruction and the fatigue of violence-driven politics. One

of the most fascinating and historic moments of this electoral battle was the contest in Bhawanipur. Considered an impregnable stronghold of Mamata Banerjee, Shah's organisational prowess turned the tide here. This victory was not merely territorial; it carried deep symbolism, sending a message that public anger can outweigh even the strongest political strongholds. Shah demonstrated that with a precise strategy and motivated cadre, even the mightiest fortresses of opposition can be conquered. His prediction that "Bengal will be in BJP's fold in 2026" was no longer just a statement; it had transformed into a ground reality. His zero-tolerance stance against corruption, combined with the Modi government's infrastructure push, resonated deeply with the people. Finally, when the ballot boxes were opened on May 4, the results made history. The "Modi magic" connected with the hearts of the people, while the "Shah factor" converted that support into a mountain of votes. After nearly five decades of political darkness, a saffron sunrise emerged over Bengal.

Oil prices drop and stock markets rise after reports of deal to end Iran war

AGENCY
Mumbai: Oil prices have dropped and global stock markets have risen following reports that the US and Iran are close to a deal to end the war. Brent crude futures, the global benchmark oil price, fell to \$97 (£73) a barrel after the reports before rebounding. The price was over \$108 earlier in the day. The FTSE 100 index of London's largest public firms and the equivalent German Dax had risen over 2% mid-way through the trading day while the French Cac 40 was up 3%. Asian stock markets closed up. The market movements come after news outlet Axios reported that the US believes it is getting close to a one-page document which will end the war and set up more detailed nuclear negotiations. Oil prices are still much higher than the \$70 a barrel they were hovering around before the start of the US-Israel war with Iran, which has caused production and transportation of oil in the region to slump. Central to the conflict is Iran's threat to attack oil ships crossing the Strait of



Hormuz, a narrow waterway south of the country, in response to US-Israeli strikes since 28 February. About a fifth of global oil and gas shipments usually cross the strait, which has been effectively closed for weeks. Global gas prices have also soared since the conflict began. As for stock markets, the big European bourses are lower than they were at the end of February, while the S&P 500 is higher. The main Asian markets all rose on Wednesday, with the South Korean Kospi closing up 6.45%, the Hong Kong Hang Seng ending the day up 1.22%, and the Japanese Nikkei finishing 0.38% higher. The Hang Seng is down

since the start of war, but the other two are up. On 8 April, the US and Iran agreed a ceasefire, which caused oil prices to slump and stock markets to jump. However, on Sunday, US President Donald Trump said the US military would guide ships through the Strait of Hormuz, dubbing it "Project Freedom", leading to a rise in attacks in the strait from both Iran and the US. Trump then said on social media on Tuesday he would pause the operation "for a short period of time to see whether or not the Agreement can be finalized and signed". He added that "Great Progress has been made toward a Complete and Final

Agreement with Representatives of Iran". Trump said the US would continue to block ships transiting to and from Iranian ports, a move designed to put pressure on Iran's economy. On Wednesday, Axios reported that the US believes it is getting close to a one-page memorandum of understanding to end the war, citing two U.S. officials and two other sources briefed on the issue. That would, it is claimed, declare an end to the war in the region and start a 30-day period of negotiations on a deal to re-open the strait, limit Iran's nuclear programme, and lift US sanctions. The reports suggest this is the nearest to agreement that both sides have been since the conflict got under way. The US is believed to be awaiting response from Iran on several key points within the next 48 hours. US Secretary of State Marco Rubio also told reporters on Tuesday the initial US-Israeli offensive in Iran was over, as Washington's objectives had been met. "We would prefer the path of peace.

Samsung crosses USD 1 trillion valuation as AI boosts demand for chips

AGENCY
Mumbai: Samsung Electronics is now worth USD 1 trillion, joining a tiny club of the world's most valuable companies, after a global rush to build artificial intelligence (AI) systems sent demand for its computer chips soaring. The South Korean company's shares jumped 11 per cent on Wednesday, May 6, completing a stunning four-fold rise over the past year. It is only the second Asian company ever to hit this valuation after Taiwan's TSMC. Why chips are suddenly so valuable Every AI application - from ChatGPT to self-driving cars - needs vast amounts of memory chips to function. Samsung makes more of these chips than almost anyone else in the world, which means the AI boom has been extraordinarily good for its business. In the first three months of this year, Samsung's chip division earned 48 times more profit than it did in the same period last year. Companies building AI data centres



are buying chips as fast as Samsung can make them, and paying top prices to get them. In a potential boost to Samsung's prospects, Apple has reportedly held early-stage talks about getting Samsung to make the main processors for its devices in the United States, which it currently relies on TSMC to do. Will

the rally last? The supply of memory chips is currently tight, and Samsung has itself warned that the crunch will get worse in 2027, which means chip prices are likely to keep rising. Analysts polled by Bloomberg expect the stock to climb another 30 per cent over the next year. However, not everything is

going Samsung's way. While the chip business is booming, its smartphone and screen divisions are struggling with rising costs for raw materials and components. In the first three months of this year, Samsung's chip division earned 48 times more profit than it did in the same period last year.

VODAFONE IDEA SHARES SURGE OVER 5 PC



AGENCY
New Delhi: Shares of Vodafone Idea jumped over 5 per cent on Wednesday, May 6, as Aditya Birla group Chairman Kumar Mangalam Birla will now steer the debt-ridden firm as its new non-executive chairman. The stock climbed 5.37 per cent to Rs 11.38 on both the BSE and NSE during the morning trade. He will replace Ravinder Takkar, who has

stepped down from the position but will continue to assist Birla as non-executive vice-chairman, according to a regulatory filing on Tuesday. Vodafone Idea said that the board of directors has "Approved the appointment of Mr. Kumar Mangalam Birla, a Non-Executive Director, as the Non-Executive Chairman of the Board of Directors of Vodafone Idea Limited with effect from 5th May

2026." The board has also approved the appointment of Takkar as the Non-Executive Vice Chairman. Vi has incurred a loss of Rs 17,418 crore during the nine months ended December 2025, and its net worth stood at negative Rs 87,744 crore. Vi has incurred a loss of Rs 17,418 crore during the nine months ended December 2025, and its net worth stood at negative Rs 87,744 crore.

South Indian Bank Achieves Highest Ever Net Profit of Rs. 1,455 Crores and Recommends Dividend of 45%



TSIT DESK
Hyderabad: South Indian Bank declared net profit of Rs. 1,455.14 Cr for the FY 25-26 registering a growth of 11.69% compared to Rs. 1,302.88 Cr in FY 24-25. **Key Highlights of FY 2025-26** Highest ever business of Rs. 2,23,620 Cr in the history of the Bank Highest ever Net Profit of Rs. 1,455 Cr in the history of the Bank Highest ever Operating Profit of Rs. 2,373 Cr in the history of the Bank

Non-Interest Income of Rs. 2,009 Cr in the history of the Bank PCR including write off increased by 907 bps from 85.03% to 94.10% on Y-o-Y basis PCR excl. write off increased by 810 bps from 71.77% to 79.87% on Y-o-Y basis GNPA dropped by 177 bps from 3.20% to 1.43% on Y-o-Y basis NNPA reduced by 63 bps from 0.92% to 0.29% on Y-o-Y basis Operating Profit of the year increased by 4.55% from Rs. 2,270 Cr in FY 25 to Rs. 2,373

Y-o-Y growth	Rs. in Crores			
	Year ended 31-03-2026	Year ended 31-03-2025	Growth	%
Gross Advance	1,00,274	87,579	12,695	14.50%
Retail Deposits	1,20,116	1,04,750	15,366	14.67%
NRI Deposit	35,371	31,602	3,769	11.92%
Current Deposits	7,146	6,030	1,116	18.51%
Savings Deposits	32,475	27,699	4,776	17.24%
CASA	39,621	33,730	5,891	17.47%
CASA %	32.12%	31.37%	0.75%	
Gross NPA %	1.43%	3.20%	-1.77%	
Net NPA %	0.29%	0.92%	-0.63%	
Net Interest Income	3,437	3,486	-49	-1.41%
Other income	2,009	1,813	196	10.81%
Operating Profit	2,373	2,270	103	4.55%
Provisions excluding tax	417	513	-96	-18.71%
Profit before tax	1,956	1,757	199	11.33%
Net Profit after tax	1,455	1,303	152	11.67%
Bulk Deposit	3,230	2,776	454	16.35%
Total Deposit	1,23,346	1,07,526	15,820	14.71%

	Quarter ended			
	31-03-2026	31-03-2025	Growth	%
Net Interest Income	915	868	47	5.41%
Other income	386	572	-186	-32.52%
Operating Profit	581	683	-102	-14.93%
Provisions excluding tax	34	224	-190	-84.82%
Profit before tax	547	459	88	19.17%
Net Profit after tax	408	342	66	19.30%

Cr to Rs. 32,475 Cr

ADVANCES
Gross advances grew by Rs. 12,695 Cr from Rs. 87,579 Cr to Rs. 1,00,274 Cr showing an increase of 14.50% on Y-o-Y basis Corporate Segment grew by Rs. 2,472 Cr from Rs. 36,198 Cr to Rs. 38,670 Cr showing an increase of 6.83% on Y-o-Y basis, in well rated borrower accounts Share of A and above rated accounts in large corporate segments stood at 99.10% Gold Loan portfolio grew by Rs. 7,747 Cr from Rs. 16,982 Cr to Rs. 24,729 Cr showing an increase of 45.62% on Y-o-Y basis Vehicle Loan grew by 21.39% Y-o-Y from Rs. 1,987 Cr to Rs. 2,412 Cr Business Segment grew by Rs. 1,092 Cr from Rs. 12,686 Cr to Rs. 13,778 Cr showing an increase of 8.61% on Y-o-Y basis Mortgage loan grew by Rs. 1,621 Cr from Rs. 3,814 Cr to Rs. 5,435 Cr showing an increase of 42.50% on Y-o-Y basis

DEPOSITS
Retail Deposit grew by Rs. 15,366 Cr from Rs. 1,04,750 Cr to Rs. 1,20,116 Cr showing an increase of 14.67% on Y-o-Y basis NRI Deposit grew by Rs. 3,769 Cr from Rs. 31,602 Cr to Rs. 35,371 Cr showing an increase of 11.92% on Y-o-Y basis Savings Bank grew by 17.24% Y-o-Y from Rs. 27,699

Iran considering US proposal to end war, official says, as Trump warns of strikes if no deal

AGENCY
Tehran: Reports suggest that the US and Iran are inching closer to a one-page memorandum aimed at ending the war. Experts, however, are warning that any negotiations aimed at bringing the war to an end are incredibly complex, and in the case of Iran's nuclear materials are highly technical. Holly Dages, an Iran expert at the Washington Institute on Near East Policy, told the BBC that unless the Iranians address their nuclear programme as part of the proposed memorandum, the Trump administration is "highly unlikely" to be satisfied. While the one-page memorandum being reported sets a 30-day period to negotiate the issue - as well as the Strait of Hormuz and sanctions relief - Dages said that timeline may be unrealistic. "It's worth emphasising that the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, from which the first Trump administration with-

drew in 2018, was 150 pages long and included technical details," she said. There's also considerable confusion as to the pause in Project Freedom, and whether freedom of navigation in the Strait will, in fact, bring the two sides closer to a deal. "If this Mou [memorandum of understanding] does finalise, it should free up these vessels and be a big step in ending this war," a former top Pentagon official told me. "If it doesn't, this may further embolden Iran." Trump himself seems to be somewhat cautious about a deal. In a brief telephone interview with PBS this morning, Trump acknowledged that he's believed a deal was close in the past only to be thwarted. "I felt that way before with them," he said. "So we'll see what happens." On Tuesday, the US strategy seemed to be newly dependent on unclenching Tehran's grip on the Strait of Hormuz, with the diplomatic path apparently on the backburn-



er. Now, President Trump has ditched that approach and is saying that peace is all but at hand. It's being reported that there's a one-page document that the two sides are close to agreeing. The Pakistani mediators are talking it up, too. The little that's come out of Iran so far is as ever notably less enthused about developments. One official has said that what

'dictation', 'deception', 'extortion' or 'coercion', he adds. There is no direct mention of the US, or an American proposal to end the war, in the post. However, as we've been reporting, Baghaei has told Iranian Students' News Agency (ISNA) that Iran has shared its views on the US proposal with Pakistani mediators. An American proposal to end the war with Iran is still being considered, an Iranian foreign ministry spokesperson tells Iranian Students' News Agency (ISNA). In an interview with ISNA, Esmail Baghaei says that Iran is sharing its views on the US proposal with Pakistani mediators. A senior Iranian parliament member has dismissed US media reports of a deal to end the war with Iran being close as an American "wish-list" rather than a reality. According to a report from US news outlet Axios published earlier today, the White House believes it could be closing in on a 14-

point memorandum of understanding with Iran. Responding to the report, Ebrahim Rezaei, the spokesperson of the Iranian Parliament's national security and foreign policy commission, says the US will "not obtain through a failed war what they failed to gain in face-to-face negotiations". In a statement published on X in Persian, Rezaei says Iran "has its finger on the trigger and is ready". He warns that if the US "do not surrender and grant the necessary concessions", Iran will "deliver a harsh and regret-inducing response". While questions remain over whether the US and Iran could reach a deal to end the war, the Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) has said it is continuing to strike Hezbollah targets in southern Lebanon. In an update earlier today, the IDF said two of its soldiers were injured by two explosive drones in the region, which it says were launched by Hezbollah.

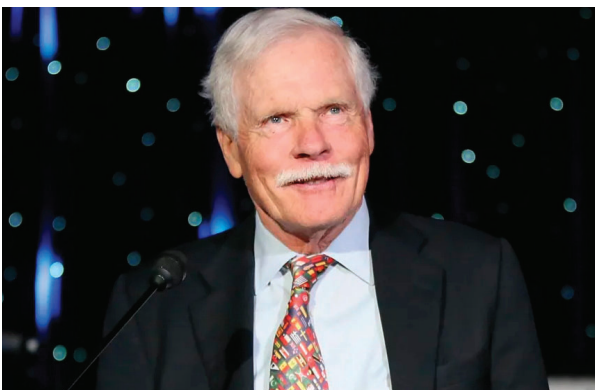
Orphaned baby hippo to be hand-reared by keepers at Kenya sanctuary



AGENCY
Kenya: A baby hippo found desperately nudging its dead mother at a lake in Kenya over the weekend is now being hand-reared at a wildlife sanctuary after being rescued. The calf, which has been named Bumpy, was "just days old" when it became orphaned, according to Sheldrick Wildlife Trust, a charity whose keepers are now taking care of it. The Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS), which rescued the calf and handed it over to the wildlife charity for specialised care, said the mother may have died

from natural causes. Sheldrick said it was possible that the hippo's mother died in a "territorial fight... protecting her calf, as infanticide is common in hippo society". KWS said rescuing the calf from the water was a "logistical challenge", with the calf clinging to its dead mother. It said it had to make a "painful decision" to use the decomposing body "as the only anchor to safely reach the calf". According to Sheldrick, the mother had been dead for more than a day or longer, based on the level of decomposition.

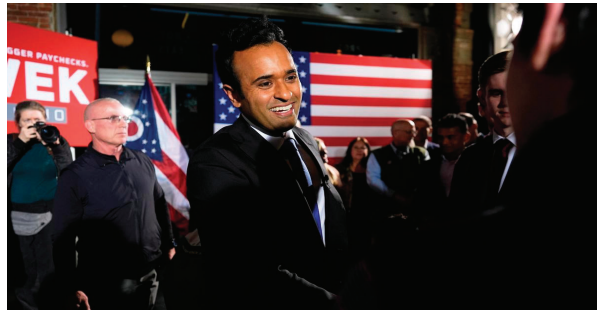
Ted Turner, media mogul who revolutionised TV news by launching CNN, dies at 87



AGENCY
Washington: Media mogul Ted Turner, who pioneered the modern 24-hour news culture when he launched the CNN channel, has died at the age of 87, the network has announced. In 1980, Turner launched Cable News Network as the first dedicated rolling news channel, which soon became a central part of the media landscape. US President Donald Trump paid tribute to him as "one of the greats of broadcast history, and a friend of mine". Current CNN CEO and chairman Mark Thompson described Turner as "the giant on whose shoulders we stand, and we will all take a moment today to recognise him and his impact on our lives and the world". In a statement, Thompson said: "Ted was an intensely involved and committed leader, intrepid, fearless and always willing to back a hunch and trust his own judgement. "He was and always will be the presiding spirit of CNN." President Trump has been a fierce critic of the current CNN, but said of Turner:

"Whenever I needed him, he was there, always willing to fight for a good cause!" CNN initially faced scepticism and struggles - being mocked as the "Chicken Noodle Network" in its early years by those who thought it would not succeed. But the channel proved its worth by providing speedy and continuous updates of stories like the assassination attempt on US President Ronald Reagan in 1981, and the Challenger space shuttle disaster in 1986. The network truly came of age with its live rolling coverage from Iraq during the 1990-1991 Gulf War. President George Bush once said he learned more from CNN than he did from the CIA. CNN's success led other news channels to follow, such as Fox News, launched in 1996 by Turner's long-time rival Rupert Murdoch. But CNN was far from Turner's only outlet. He began his career by taking over the successful family billboard company when his father took his own life, then bought a radio station in Atlanta, Georgia.

Vivek Ramaswamy wins Republican nomination for Ohio governor



AGENCY
Washington: Vivek Ramaswamy will run for the position of Ohio governor in November, after the staunch ally of US President Donald Trump emerged victorious in one of a series of primary contests held in the US Midwest. Projected results on Tuesday night showed the health-tech entrepreneur had defeated Casey Putsch to earn the Republican nomination. Ramaswamy - who gained prominence during his

unsuccessful run against Trump for president in 2024 - said at a victory party that his plan was to "leave this state and this country better than we found it". Meanwhile, Democratic candidate Amy Acton, who ran unopposed for her party's own nomination, told supporters she wanted to make Ohio more affordable again. "It shouldn't be this hard," said Acton, who is the former Ohio public health director. "It is time to put working families first."

British doctor evacuated from virus-hit cruise ship in stable condition, Spanish minister says

AGENCY
London: It was earlier confirmed that three people were evacuated from the MV Hondius; a 41-year-old Dutchman, a 65-year-old German and a 56-year-old Briton. It leaves a total of 146 people on board the ship, operator Oceanwide Expeditions confirmed to the BBC, including a passenger who died on board on 2 May. Prior to this, in a press update on Tuesday, Oceanwide said that there were 61 crew members and 88 passengers. British passengers made up the highest number in Tuesday's update, with 19 on board, as well as four crew members. Meanwhile the Philippines made up the greatest number of crew, with 38 on board. Other nationalities listed include the USA, New

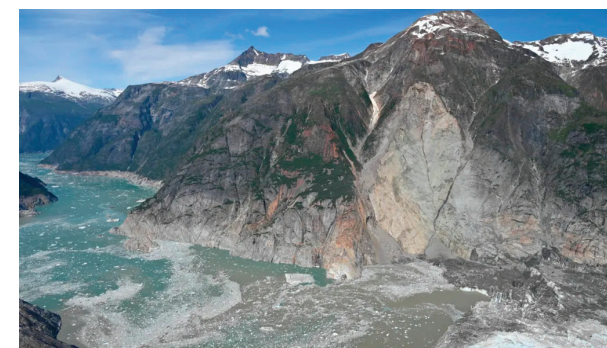


Zealand, India, Belgium, Ireland and Japan, among others. In total, there are 23 different nationalities listed by the operator. Officials at the World Health Organization (WHO) are monitoring 69 close contacts of people who have been on board the ship, health official Marie Roseline Belizaire says in an online briefing. Samples from people on board are being sent

abroad and analysed, the WHO's representative in Cape Verde Ann Lindstrand tells the briefing. But you have to be "sharing a cabin or bring a couple or really being close" to be able to spread the disease from one to another, she adds. Foreign Secretary Yvette Cooper says the UK is working with the UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) to get British nationals on board the MV Hondius "safely home". In a statement, Cooper says she is taking this action "with proper protection for public health" as the UKHSA works with the World Health Organization to lead the UK's response. "The outbreak of hantavirus is very serious and deeply stressful for those affected and their families," the foreign secretary adds. In figures released by Oceanwide Expeditions on Tuesday, 19 passengers and four crew members were listed as British. Since then, a 56-year-old Briton has been evacuated. Cooper says Foreign Office staff "are in direct contact" with Brits on board the vessel, while ministers are working with Dutch and Spanish counterparts to facilitate medical evacuations.

MASSIVE ALASKA MEGATSUNAMI WAS SECOND LARGEST EVER RECORDED

AGENCY
Megatsunami: A massive 'megatsunami' wave created when part of an Alaskan mountain crumbled into the sea is the second tallest ever recorded - and a reminder of the risks posed by melting glaciers, say scientists. Last summer a giant wave swept through a remote fjord in southeast Alaska leaving destruction in its wake. The event went largely unreported at the time, but a new scientific analysis shows it was caused by a massive landslide. An incredible 64 million cubic metres of rock - the equivalent of 24 Great Pyramids - splashed into the water below. The sheer power of that amount of



rock plunging into the fjord in under a minute created a gigantic wave almost 500 metres tall. Only the time it happened - in the early hours of the morning - prevented tourist cruise ships being caught up in the devastation, say the researchers. Dr Bretwood

labelled megatsunamis, happen when a landslide caused by either an earthquake or loose rock hit water below. They are usually localised and dissipate quickly. The other type of tsunamis happen in the open ocean and are directly triggered by earthquakes, or occasionally other powerful events such as underwater volcanoes. They, like the 2011 Japan tsunami, can travel for thousands of miles, hitting populated areas and causing widespread devastation and loss of life. The biggest megatsunami was in the 1950s and was over 500 metres. This latest megatsunami was the second largest.

Russia ignores Ukraine's unilateral ceasefire and attacks kindergarten



AGENCY
Moscow: Volodymyr Zelensky has accused Russia of breaching a unilateral ceasefire announced by Ukraine by launching a wave of drone attacks on several cities. The Ukrainian president said Russia had carried out "active hostilities and terrorist shelling", targeting the front line as well as firing dozens of drones and missiles at civilian areas. In the Sumy border region, one woman was killed when a kindergarten was hit on Wednesday morning, local authorities said. No children were present at the time. Earlier this week the two warring sides had announced rival unilateral ceasefires - with no agreement on their terms, length or monitoring. Moscow was the first to demand a truce on 8 and 9 May to mark Victory Day on Saturday, when commemorations of the Soviet Union's victory over Nazi Germany are due to be held across the country. Kyiv followed on by announcing its own open-

ended ceasefire from midnight on Tuesday, and that Ukraine would act "symmetrically" from that point on. On Wednesday morning Zelensky stated that Russia's choice was "an obvious spurning of a ceasefire and of saving lives". Ukraine had "clearly stated that it would act in kind", he added, and would "decide on our further actions" based on evening reports from its military and intelligence. A slew of attacks on Tuesday left 27 people across Ukraine dead, including 12 victims in Zaporizhzhia alone. Ukraine's foreign minister, Andriy Sybha, said Russia's continued aggression showed "fake calls for a ceasefire on May 9th have nothing to do with diplomacy. Putin only cares about military parades, not human lives". Various events are due to be held in Russia on Saturday, including a grand military parade on Red Square - although authorities have announced this year's event will be a pared-down version due to the "terrorist threat" from Kyiv.

GERMAN POLICE RAID NEO-NAZI CRIMINAL YOUTH GROUPS

AGENCY
Berlin: Police have raided around 50 homes and other locations, targeting people suspected of involvement in far-right criminal youth groups that have recently emerged in Germany. Prosecutors said the suspects were believed to be part of two groups, "Jung & Stark" (JS), or Young and Strong, and "Deutsche Jugend Voran" (DJV), which means Forwards German Youth. No arrests were made in Wednesday's raids, which took place in 12 states, mainly in the east and south of Germany, including Bavaria, Berlin, Brandenburg and Saxony. In a statement, federal prosecutors said the raids targeted individuals suspected of



organising violence through social media and forming nationwide networks. "Some of the accused are said to have attacked members of the left-wing scene or people they believed to be paedophiles. In each case, the victims were beaten by several attackers and sustained significant injuries," prosecutors said. During their

meetings, authorities say, group members have called "for acts of violence against political opponents and against alleged paedophiles". Last year one of the leaders of DJV was sentenced to more than three years in prison after a string of violent attacks against political opponents in Berlin. Twenty-four year-old Julian

Former FedEx driver sentenced to death for killing seven-year-old Texas girl

AGENCY
Texas: A former FedEx delivery driver was sentenced to death on Tuesday after he pleaded guilty to killing a seven-year-old Texas girl, Athena Strand, in 2022. A jury gave Tanner Horner a death sentence after a weeks-long court case, during which the court heard an audio recording of the young girl's last moments inside the attacker's delivery vehicle. "There are no words that truly capture the devastation that Tanner Horner caused us and our family," Elijah Strand, Athena Strand's uncle, said after the sentence was read. Horner was delivering Athena Strand's Christmas gift - a box of Barbie dolls -



to her home when he kidnapped her. She was later found dead not far from the property. Last month, Horner pleaded guilty to capital murder and aggravated kidnapping as his trial began. Jurors hearing the case had a choice of sentencing him to death or life in prison without parole. They ultimately chose a death sentence.



IPL 2026: SUNRISERS HYDERABAD SETS A TARGET OF 235/4 FOR PUNJAB KINGS



IPL 2026: Axar Patel Exposes 'Ineffective' Kuldeep Yadav Against CSK, Says "Missed Him"

AGENCY

Mumbai: Some admissions, some confessions, and a little bit of reflection, that was Delhi Capitals captain Axar Patel's post-match presentation ceremony after the defeat against the Chennai Super Kings on Tuesday. Axar admitted his side was below par in their eight-wicket loss to CSK in the Indian Premier League (IPL) 2026, conceding that the team was 10-15 runs short with the bat, and on a sticky pitch, they missed the point of difference a set batter could offer. On a pitch that was offering some assistance to bowlers, Axar said that he "missed his partner" Kuldeep Yadav, despite the chinaman spinner bowling 3 overs for 34 runs in the game. "Obviously, the way



the wicket was playing in the first innings, I felt that yes, 155 was a good score. But since we were playing with eight batters, I felt we were about 10-15 runs short," Axar said after the match ended, with Sanju Samson hitting an unbeaten 87 in a successful chase for CSK. Reflecting on the surface, Axar said conditions eased

out for set batters but remained tricky for new ones. "I feel it got a little better, but I think the difference was made by the set batter. When a batter is well set, it feels like there is nothing in the pitch, but I still feel there was something in it. "For a new batter coming in, it was not easy. Yes, it wasn't easy for new players because, you

know, the length balls were holding up, sometimes staying low, and occasionally even bouncing after holding. So I feel it was very difficult for new batters. But when set batters were playing, it looked easier. You could see the way Sanju took the game forward." Despite the defeat, Axar took positives from the batting efforts of Sameer Rizvi (40 not out) and Tristan Stubbs (38) despite the top five batters' collapse. Kuldeep, who hasn't had the best of IPL 2026 campaigns, looked ineffective with the ball on the day. "Though Axar didn't criticise the left-arm spinner for the lack of wickets, he made his feelings known about his ineffectiveness. "Yes, obviously, considering our batting, I think that's a positive.

Stefon Diggs 'Not Guilty' Of Assault Charges, But NFL Suspension Looms Large

AGENCY

Texas: Stefon Diggs has emerged victorious following a lengthy court battle involving an alleged assault, a ruling that may very well prove to be the catalyst that gets his Pro Bowl-caliber career back on track. After nearly two hours of deliberations, a panel of jurors cleared the former New England Patriots wideout of all wrongdoing in the high-profile criminal trial. Although the courtroom drama may finally be behind him, there could still be obstacles for the player before he can take the field once again at the professional level. As of now, there is still an active investigation into the case by the National Football League. Stefon Diggs was



accused of slapping and choking Jamila Adams, his former live-in personal chef, during an argument in December at his house in Massachusetts. Stefon Diggs' legal representative, Mitch Schuster, emphasized his innocence and called the incident 'opportunistic targeting.' "The evidence has shown what we've maintained from day



had accomplished. "We were at the airport, taking a seven-hour flight back from Germany to Hyderabad. Nobody even asked us who we were or what medals we had won. There were so many Indians, many Telugus. We were wearing Thomas Cup jerseys, but everyone was busy with IPL, politics, whatever. It was the same thing when we won gold in 2022. We should have celebrated much more. People don't realise these chances might not come again. It is very tough to win

the Thomas Cup; even medalling is difficult. When we landed at the airport, all the players - Prannoy, Srikanth, and Dhruv - were just booking cabs. Nobody around seemed to notice. My friends came to pick me up, but I felt really sad looking around at that airport scene: top athletes trying to book cabs," he said. Chirag, Satwik's men's doubles partner, noted that while he didn't necessarily expect a crowd, he was hit by the realisation that "nobody cares."

Fan Gives IPL Cheerleader A Hand Fan To Beat Delhi Heat, Her Reaction Can't Be Missed

AGENCY

Mumbai: A little fan's heartwarming gesture towards a cheerleader during the IPL 2026 clash between the Delhi Capitals and Chennai Super Kings has gone viral. The video captured a young girl giving a hand fan to one of the DC cheerleaders at the Arun Jaitley Stadium in New Delhi. The cheerleaders had a short interaction with the girl, who then gifted them the fan in return for their kindness. The cheerleader, who was wearing a white top and a red-and-blue skirt, thanked the girl for the fan before passing the device to her colleagues. One of the cheerleaders even gave the little girl a DC flag to thank her for the gesture. Look at the priceless reaction of the cheerleader when a little



girl gifted her a hand fan during the live IPL match in Delhi's 45°C heat. First, the cheerleader interacted with the girl, and moments later, the little girl gifted her the hand fan. New Delhi experienced relatively cool and pleasant weather, with temperatures peaking around 33 degree C to 34 degree C and lows near 20 degree C to 23 degree C. However, the

National Capital Region experienced high humidity, peaking near 90% during early morning fog and averaging over 50% throughout the day due to unseasonal rain. Meanwhile, the BCCI announced on Wednesday that the IPL 2026 final will be held in Ahmedabad on May 31 instead of Bengaluru as originally planned.

Delhi Capitals Attain 'Worst' Record In IPL 2026 With Below Par Display vs CSK

AGENCY

Mumbai: It was another underwhelming display by the Delhi Capitals batters. Delhi Capitals' struggles with the bat at home continued as they faltered on a testing track to end up with a below-par 155 for seven against Chennai Super Kings in the Indian Premier League on Tuesday. On a pitch offering assistance to the spinners, with the odd ball holding up, the home team's batters failed to apply themselves. The free fall began with the loss of opener Pathum Nissanka, who failed to clear the mid-on fielder off a slower ball from left-arm pacer Mukesh Choudhary. Both Nissanka (19 off 15) and K.L. Rahul (12 off 13)



began with crisp boundaries but did not last long. After Nissanka's dismissal, Rahul attempted an inside-out hit off left-arm spinner Akeal Hosein but could not get to the pitch of the ball on the charge and was caught by opposition captain Ruturaj Gaikwad. According to Cricbuzz, DC have been the 'worst' team

in the IPL 2026 powerplays on four parameters. DC in Overs 1-6 in IPL 2026 Wickets lost: 21 Average runs per wicket: 23.85 Run rate: 8.35 Dot-ball percentage: 46.4% DC laboured to 37 for two in the powerplay, with Hosein bowling half of the overs, including one from the other end that produced the wicket of Rahul.

DAVID WARNER RAISES EYEBROWS OVER PAKISTAN SUPER LEAGUE'S TEAM OF THE TOURNAMENT



AGENCY

London: The 2026 Pakistan Super League (PSL) was won by Peshawar Zalmi, who clinched their second title with a five-wicket victory over debutant side Hyderabad Kingsmen in the final. The Babar Azam-led Peshawar were the most dominant team in PSL 11, losing just one match during the league stage before going on to dominate the title clash as well. Amid their title triumph, the PSL released its 'Team of the Tournament'. David Warner, who led Karachi Kings in the competition, questioned why none of his players were named in the side. "Where is (sic) Karachi players?" Warner asked. Karachi Kings finished sixth in the PSL standings. After defeating Hyderabad in the final, Babar praised his team-

mates for their collective effort and also thanked the management for their support. "This is quite an achievement for me, and I think for Peshawar Zalmi and all the fans as well. Throughout the tournament, as a team, we performed very well in all three departments and tried to enjoy our cricket. Every player executed the plans given to them in batting, bowling and fielding. Our aim was to take it match by match, and by the grace of God, we won tonight," Babar said during the post-match presentation. "From a planning perspective, the management always supported us. During our match-to-match discussions, we focused on identifying both the positives and the areas to improve, and we spoke about them openly," he added.

RADUCANU TARGETS WTA TOUR RETURN IN STRASBOURG



AGENCY

London: Emma Raducanu is targeting a return to the WTA Tour in Strasbourg in two weeks' time following her withdrawal from the Italian Open on health grounds. The British number one is, however, reliant on a wildcard having missed the entry deadline. Raducanu, 23, was granted a wildcard for last year's WTA 500 event and beat top 20 player Daria Kasatkina, before losing to American Danielle Collins. The tournament, which starts on 17 May, has not yet confirmed whether a wildcard will be forthcoming. Raducanu

pulled out of the Italian Open late on Tuesday, just minutes after completing a round of media interviews. She does not feel she has recovered 100% from a post-viral infection which has kept her away from the tour since March. Before her withdrawal, Raducanu told BBC Sport: "I had six weeks almost of doing nothing just trying to recover from the virus, and it takes a lot out of you physically." The event in Strasbourg takes place the week before the French Open, for which Raducanu will no longer be seeded - assuming she is fit to compete.

Haiti's record scorer on Paisley, stunning Scotland & escaping Iran



Nithiin's Next with Sithara Entertainments Officially Launched with a Pooja Ceremony

Actor Nithiin's next exciting project has been officially launched with a traditional pooja ceremony



The film is being produced by the prestigious Sithara Entertainments, known for delivering quality and successful films and is directed by talented filmmakers Nari Sirisawada and Somasekhar T. With a strong creative team coming together, the project makes all of us look. The film stars Nithiin in

the lead role alongside Ritika Nayak as the female lead. The project brings together a skilled and dynamic crew including DOP Anith Madadi, Music Director Suresh Bobbili and Production Designer Jonny Shaik each contributing their expertise to craft a visually rich and engaging film. The film is being produced by the

Naga Vamsi and Sai Soujanya under Sithara Entertainments and fortune four cinemas and presented by Srikanth studios. This combo is known for delivering quality and successful films.

'Sathi Leelavathi' is highly entertaining... everyone will enjoy the comedy" – Lavanya Tripathi Konidela



Under the presentation of Anandhi Arts and produced by Naagamohan under the banner of Durgadevi Pictures, the upcoming film 'Sathi Leelavathi' stars Lavanya Tripathi and Dev Mohan in lead roles. The film is directed by Tatineni Satya, known for Bheemili Kabaddi Jattu and SMS (Siva Manasulo Sruthi). The movie is set for a grand worldwide release on May 8. On this occasion, Lavanya Tripathi interacted with the media. Here are the highlights: I have already watched 'Sathi Leelavathi'. It's very good, and I have strong confidence in it. Now we have to see how the audience responds. During the shoot of this movie, I found out that I was pregnant. However, with the team's support, I completed the shoot smoothly. Every day after shooting, I used to go to the hospital for checkups. Minor injuries during filming are common. When I first heard the story, I told Varun about it, but I didn't know I was pregnant then, nor did I have any symptoms. I also understood that the shoot wouldn't be easy. I even lost weight

for this movie. I don't know where I got the strength from. But in the future, if I know I'm pregnant, I will definitely take a break from shooting. In this film, I play a director. The entertainment in the movie is amazing, and everyone will enjoy the comedy. My manager and I laughed a lot while watching it. It also has emotional moments. Though it conveys a good message, it doesn't feel preachy. The kind of relationships shown in 'Sathi Leelavathi' don't exist in the real world, and no woman should face such situations. In real life, I'm fortunate to have a good husband like Varun Tej. I'm currently happy with my husband and son. No changes were made to the script because

I was pregnant, but some adjustments were made to the action sequences. This is my first time doing action. I had a kicking scene, which felt a bit difficult. Ram Charan has always been supportive. He keeps asking if we need any help. It made us happy that he released our trailer, which also increased our reach. Dev Mohan is a good person and a wonderful actor. He also dubbed for the film. I'm trying to dub for my own role too—it feels satisfying. Chiranjeevi always encourages us. If we invite him for promotions, he will definitely come. We're also planning to show him the trailer. Currently, I'm not signing new films. I want to dedicate my time to my family. My son keeps me busy, and I've decided to take a short break.

RASHI SINGH STUNS IN Chocolate Lace and Gold

Rashi Singh may have had a small role in the recently released Telugu film Santhana Prapthirastu, and while the film did not set the box office on fire, Rashi made sure no one forgot her name. Her screen time was limited but her presence was impossible to ignore. Off screen, however, Rashi is turning every head in the room. Her

fashion game is nothing short of stunning, and this latest photoshoot is proof. Draped in a rich chocolate brown one-shoulder lace dress, gold bangles stacked on her wrist, and hair slicked back like she owns the room, she looks every bit the star she is becoming. Tollywood may still be warming up to her talent, but the fashion world

already knows exactly who Rashi Singh is. And from the looks of it, she is just getting started.



MALVIKA NAIR LOOKS EFFORTLESS IN BLACK AND SILVER



Malvika Nair has come a long way since her debut in Yevade Subramanyam. She truly won hearts playing Anandhi, a role that made the whole of Telugu audience fall in love with her quiet charm and natural screen presence. That girl next door energy has never left her. Her recent appearance in Sharwanand's biker film may not have worked out at the box office, but Malvika is not letting

that slow her down. She has been keeping herself busy and her latest pictures are a reminder of exactly why people root for her in the first place. Dressed in a stunning black lehenga with heavy silver embroidery, silver bangles stacked on her wrist and her long hair falling naturally, Malvika looks effortlessly beautiful. Warm golden light behind her, a soft smile on her face. No effort, all elegance.



"My Goal is to be Known as a 'Beauty with Brains'": Jo Sharma on Her Debut Thriller M4M

The Indian film industry is abuzz with the upcoming suspense thriller "M4M (Motive For Murder)." Starring American-based actress Jo Sharma and directed by Mohan Vadlapatla, the film is set for a grand worldwide release on May 8. Distributed by PVR Inox Pictures, the movie will hit screens in five languages: Telugu, Hindi, Tamil, Kannada, and Malayalam. In an exclusive interview, lead actress Jo Sharma

shares insights into her journey, the film's unique concept, and its international acclaim. Highlights of the Interview: - Unique Concept: A "world-first" plot involving murders modeled after legendary paintings. - Global Recognition: Already bagged 15 International Awards before its theatrical release. - Cannes Pride: Received a standing ovation at the prestigious Cannes Film Festival. - Audience Challenge: A cash prize of ₹1 Lakh for identifying the villain on release day.

Q: Tell us about yourself and your upcoming film. Jo Sharma: Hello everyone! I am Jo Sharma, originally from San Francisco, USA. M4M (Motive For Murder) is my debut feature, and it's a massive project releasing in five languages. Directed by Mohan Vadlapatla garu, I play a character named 'Radha'—a fierce crime investigative journalist.

Q: Coming from the US, what was your experience working in the Indian film industry? Jo Sharma: I have a background as a theater artist in America and even run my own theater production company. However, for this film, I trained under Mohan garu for three years. I was also a co-writer for M4M alongside Mohan garu and Rahul Adavala. Being involved in the writing process helped me design Radha's character with a lot of depth and strength.

Q: The film has already garnered significant international buzz. Could you share details about the awards? Jo Sharma: It's been overwhelming! We have won 15 international awards before the release. This includes Best Film at the Los Angeles Film Festival, Best Director in London, and I was honored with Best Actress awards at the New York, Hollywood, and Santa Monica film festivals.

'Ugly Story' Trailer Launched by 'Bheemla Nayak' Director Sagar K Chandra – Film Set for May 22 Release



The much-anticipated trailer of Ugly Story, a bold romantic thriller that explores the darker side of love, has been officially unveiled. The trailer was launched by Sagar K Chandra, director of Bheemla Nayak, adding significant buzz to the film's promotions. Starring Nandu and Avika Gor in lead roles, Ugly Story has already started trending across social media platforms. The trailer impresses with its intense narration, powerful emotions, and unexpected twists, promising a gripping cinematic experience. Music composed by Shrawan Bharadwaj further elevates the impact, and romance seamlessly. Backed by Riya Zia Productions, the film showcases high production values and hints at strong box-

office potential. The grand trailer launch event witnessed the team expressing immense confidence in the film's output. Director Pranava Swaroop shared, "Every love story has a darker side, and our aim was to portray that truth boldly. Nandu and Avika have delivered powerful performances. Our producers Subhashini and Lakshman have supported me immensely in maintaining quality. Audiences will surely have a compelling experience in theatres." Actor Nandu said, "This role is a new challenge for me. The story is filled with thrilling and engaging moments. Avika brought strong emotional depth to her character, and Pranav has crafted the film brilliantly." Avika Gor added, "Through this film, we wanted to showcase the reality of love.

A special poster from Lenin has been released on the occasion of Bhagyashri Borse's birthday: Grand Release on June 26th

The upcoming film Lenin is being produced under the banners of Manam Enterprises LLP and Sithara Entertainments by Akkineni Nagarjuna and Suryadevara Naga Vamsi. It stars Akhil Akkineni and Bhagyashri Borse in the lead roles, with direction by Murali Kishor Abburu. The movie is set for a grand theatrical release on June 26. All the posters and songs released so far have generated strong interest among audiences. Recently, a special poster featuring the heroine was unveiled to mark her birthday. Wishing her a happy birthday, the makers revealed a striking

look where Bhagyashri appears in a regal avatar, wearing a crown, sporting a mustache, and dressed in a unique costume. Her appearance in this look has caught everyone's attention. The background and significance of this look in the film are yet to be revealed. She is playing as Bharathi in the film. The music for the film is composed by Thaman S, and both the songs and background score are expected to enhance the film's overall impact. Leon Britto is handling cinematography, while Naveen Nooli is the editor. The film will release worldwide on June 26th, 2026.

