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President Droupadi Murmu has promulgated the Supreme Court (Number of Judges) Amendment Ordinance, 2026, increasing the sanctioned strength of judges in the Supreme Court of India from 33 to 37, excluding the Chief Justice of India.

INSIDE | PAGE

## TAIWAN INSISTS IT IS INDEPENDENT AFTER TRUMP WARNING

WORLD | NEWS



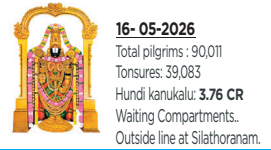
## Shraddha Das' 'Trikaala' Set for Worldwide Release on May 29

CINEMA | PAGE



SCAN FOR E-PAPER

## OM NAMO VENKATESAYA



16-05-2026

Total pilgrims : 90,011

Tonsures: 39,083

Hundi kanakalu: 3.76 CR

Waiting Compartments:

Outside line at Sliathoranam.

Approx. Darshan Time for Sarvadarshanam (with out SSD Tokens) : 16 - 18 H

## 25 VULTURES DIED DUE TO PESTICIDES IN DUDHWA FOREST

Uttar Pradesh forest department has ordered a high-level probe into the death of 25 vultures. Dudhwa forest buffer zone last month reportedly due to poisoning by a pesticide. The principal chief conservator of forests, Uttar



Pradesh has ordered a high-level field investigation by a two-member team of senior forest officials, including Sanjay Pathak (presently posted at NTCA) and DPO Bahraich, Sundaresh. Recent Lab reports from the Indian Veterinary Research Institute 9 (IVRI), Bareilly, confirmed that the 25 vultures died in the area surrounding the Dudhwa National Park from poisoning by "carbofuran", a highly toxic pesticide commonly known by the brand name "Furadan". Initial investigations pointed to the vultures dying after nibbling at the carcasses of the stray dogs. Recovery of some poisonous cooked rice from the spot indicated that the dogs died after consuming the rice and the vultures died due to secondary poisoning after consuming the dogs' carcasses. The lab examination report, analysed the viscera of vultures and dogs. A senior forest official of Dudhwa said that a highly toxic pesticide 'Carbofuran' in the carcasses and food samples collected from the site. Now the department will carry out an awareness programme among the villagers to apprise them about the lethal impacts of such highly toxic pesticides on human health, wildlife and also on the crops. Other required proceedings in the matter would also be ensured. The incident occurred on April 7 in an agricultural field in Semrai village, which falls under the Bhira forest range of the Dudhwa buffer zone. While 25 vultures died, five unconscious vultures were successfully treated and released back into the wild once they were fit to fly. Being an endangered bird species of

## Rahul reiterates demand to sack Dharmendra Pradhan over NEET paper leak

New Delhi (TSIT)

Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha, Rahul Gandhi, on Sunday reiterated his demand for the resignation of Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan over the NEET-UG 2026 exam paper leak, accusing the BJP-led Centre of not taking accountability for such "repeated" instances. Taking to X, LoP Gandhi referred to the alleged irregularities in the NEET-UG 2024 examination and claimed that despite the CBI's investigation and formation of a committee, the exam was not cancelled at that time.

"NEET 2024: Paper leaked. Exam not cancelled. Minister did not resign. CBI set up an investigation. A committee was formed", he wrote. Significantly, the Supreme Court had refused to cancel the 2024 NEET-UG exam due to insufficient evidence of "systemic" leak.

Gandhi drew similarities between the NEET-UG 2026 cancellation and subsequent re-examination, with the 2024 instance. "NEET 2026: Paper leaked. Exam cancelled.



LoP cites repeated exam irregularities, questions PM Modi's silence, and calls out BJP-RSS nexus; NEET-UG 2026

Minister still did not resign. CBI is investigating again. Another committee will be formed," he said. Moreover, Gandhi questioned Prime Minister Narendra Modi for maintaining silence on the issue and asked why the Education Minister is not tendering his resignation despite repeated paper leaks.

"Mr. Modi, the country is

asking you some questions - answer them! Why aren't you dismissing the Education Minister who keeps failing repeatedly?" "Why are paper leaks happening repeatedly? Why are you silent time and again on this 'exam paper dis-

## India, Netherlands Elevate Ties to Strategic Partnership With Ambitious 2030 Roadmap

New Delhi: Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Dutch Prime Minister Rob Jetten have unveiled an expansive five-year roadmap to elevate India-Netherlands relations into a full-fledged Strategic Partnership, signalling a major deepening of cooperation across semiconductors, critical minerals, defense, clean energy, maritime connectivity, water management, healthcare, education, and emerging technologies.

The "Roadmap of India-Netherlands Strategic Partnership 2026-2030," adopted on Saturday (Netherlands time) during Modi's visit to The Hague, lays out time-bound initiatives and institutional mechanisms aimed at transforming bilateral engagement into a comprehensive strategic framework at a time of shifting global supply chains and growing geopolitical focus on resilient economic and technological partnerships.

The roadmap institutionalises annual reviews by the two countries' foreign ministers and calls for regular high-level political engagement between heads of government, cabinet ministers, and senior officials. Both countries also agreed to



intensify coordination across ministries to expand cooperation in sectors identified as strategically important.

A major focus of the partnership is economic cooperation and technology collaboration, particularly in semiconductors and high-tech manufacturing. In one of the most significant announcements of the visit, India's Tata Electronics and Dutch semiconductor equipment giant ASML signed an agreement to support India's first front-end semiconductor fabrication facility in Dholera, Gujarat.

The two sides described the semiconductor partnership as central to building "trusted and

resilient supply chains" and pledged to strengthen cooperation in artificial intelligence, photonics, cybersecurity, quantum technologies, and advanced electronics. The roadmap also seeks to connect the Dutch Semicon Competence Centre with the Indian Semiconductor Mission to support industries, startups, SMEs, and suppliers through talent development and research collaboration.

Prime Minister Modi, while interacting with leading Dutch business executives alongside Jetten, welcomed the growing interest of Dutch firms in India's economic expansion and manufacturing ambitions.

## Amaravati Quantum Valley building world-class quantum ecosystem: Chandrababu Naidu

Amaravati (TSIT)

Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu said on Sunday that Amaravati Quantum Valley is taking an important step towards building a world-class quantum ecosystem driven by innovation, research, and indigenous technology development. The Chief Minister shared his thoughts on social media on the occasion of World Telecommunication and Information Society Day.

"Today is World Telecommunication and Information Society Day. It reminds us that secure communications, trusted digital infrastructure, and cyber resilience are critical to the future of nations," he posted on X.

He said that following the launch of the Quantum Computing Reference Facilities on April 14, the Amaravati Quantum Valley is taking another important step towards building a world-class quantum ecosystem driven by innovation, research, and indigenous technology development. "SRM University-AP, Amaravati, in partnership with C-DOT, the Department of Telecommunications, Government of India, and Amaravati Quantum



Valley, will establish a first-of-its-kind Quantum-Secure Communications Test Bed for communications and cyberspace. The facility will support research and testing of quantum communication hardware, photonic and optical systems, encryption technologies, secure network infrastructure, and next-generation cyber defence solutions," Naidu said.

"This initiative reinforces our commitment to Make in India technologies, secure digital infrastructure, and positioning Amaravati as a leading hub for frontier technologies, advanced manufacturing, and deep-tech innovation. Most importantly, it creates new opportunities for students, researchers, startups, and young innovators from Andhra

Pradesh to participate in building the technologies that will shape the future of the world. My best wishes to all the institutions, scientists, researchers, faculty members, innovators, and students associated with this important initiative," he added.

The World Telecommunication and Information Society Day is celebrated on May 17 every year to mark the establishment of the International Telecommunication Union in 1865 and to highlight the vital role of telecommunications and information & communication technologies in connecting people, promoting digital inclusion, supporting economic growth, and advancing innovation, education, healthcare, and sustainable development worldwide.

## The Agony of a Woman Employee Beyond Words..!

"WHO WILL TAKE CARE OF MY CHILDREN, SIR?" — A MOTHER'S CRY OF DESPAIR

A shocking case of alleged financial exploitation, mental harassment, and workplace intimidation involving a woman government employee in Mahabubabad has become a major topic of discussion across the district. After losing her husband and taking up a government job to secure the future of her two young children, the woman now says she is trapped in a life filled with debt, humiliation, fear, and emotional trauma. "I went out intending to end my life... but I survived because my children cried and stopped me," she says through tears. A Family Destroyed by Tragedy

Lakshmi (name changed), a native of Mahabubabad district, got married in 2010. For a few years, life moved on normally. But in 2019, her husband died while undergoing treatment for fever and jaundice, leaving the family shattered overnight. With two small children to raise and no financial support, she gathered the courage to join a government department in a lower-level position.

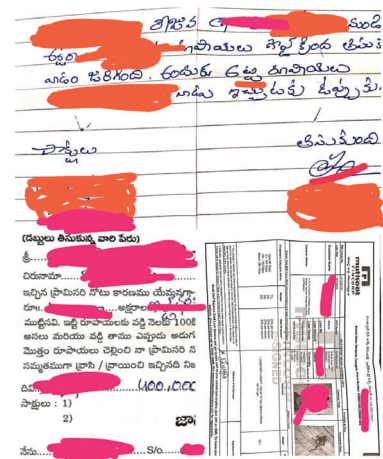
Her only hope was simple:

"If I have a job, I can educate my children and give them a future." But according to her,

the same job that was supposed to provide security eventually became a source of fear and suffering.

"Won't You Help Me as a Colleague?" — The Beginning of the Alleged Exploitation The victim alleges that a senior assistant working in the same office initially approached her with sympathy and kindness. He allegedly told her: "There are health problems in our family..."

"I urgently need some money..." "I'll return it once I receive next month's salary..." "Trusting him, and already living under the fear and pressure of a new government job, she says she began helping financially. She further alleges that threatens such as: "I'll issue memos against you..." "I'll place you under show-cause notice..." "left her terrified and emotionally vulnerable. A Mother Who Pawned Even Her Mangalsutra According to the woman, she first pawned a one-tola gold chain and gave him 50,000. Later, she says she pawned her rings, earrings, mangalsutra, and another gold chain one after another to arrange more money. The gold she had saved for her children's future... The mangalsutra that symbolized her married



life... Everything slowly disappeared into debt. She now claims to be burdened with nearly 8 lakh in loans. "There were days when I couldn't even buy medicine for my children's fever..." "We didn't have money even for food at home..." "Calls from finance companies are terrifying us..." she says while breaking down

emotionally. "Go Die Anywhere..." — Words That Pushed Her Toward Suicide When she reportedly asked for her money back, she alleges that she was insulted and humiliated. According to her, he told her: "Go die anywhere you want..." She also alleges that when she threatened to inform family members, she was warned: "If you tell anyone, I'll kill you." The woman further claims that he once tried to physically assault her in front of others by grabbing her throat. The humiliation, debt burden, workplace pressure, and emotional trauma together allegedly pushed her into severe depression and suicidal thoughts. Her Children's Tears Stopped Her At one point, unable to bear the pain anymore, she decided to end her life. But as she walked out with that intention, her two young children reportedly ran toward her crying: "Ammma..." "That single moment changed her mind. "If I die, what will happen to my children?" she asked herself — and chose to live again. It is a moment that deeply moves anyone who hears her story. Harassment Even After Hospitalization? The woman alleges that even

after she was hospitalized due to health complications, the harassment did not stop. She claims that unknown numbers repeatedly called her, people visited her house unexpectedly, and she was subjected to continued psychological pressure. Since then, she says she has been suffering from severe headaches, dizziness, and fainting spells. Even now, she alleges that threats continue:

"If you don't listen to me, I won't mark your attendance..." "I'll stop your salary..." With her children studying in a private school, she says she is no longer able to pay their fees. Time for Authorities to Respond The case has raised serious questions in public circles: How can society remain silent when a woman employee is allegedly battling workplace fear, financial exploitation, mental harassment, crushing debt, and suicidal thoughts — all while trying to raise two children alone? Residents and social organizations are demanding immediate intervention from the District Collector, Superintendent of Police, Women's Commission, and employee unions. Women's groups and public organizations are calling for immediate protection for the

victim A fair and impartial investigation into the allegations Confidential inquiry through women's committees Financial assistance for the struggling family Educational support for the children Review of whether Internal Complaints Committees (ICC) in government offices are functioning properly "At Least Give Justice for My Children..." "I'm not asking for myself, sir... Please give justice at least for the sake of my children..." Those words, spoken through tears, reflect not just one woman's pain — but the silent suffering of many women employees who continue to endure harassment behind closed doors. A job is supposed to provide dignity and security. But when fear, exploitation, and abuse enter the workplace, the emotional destruction can be devastating. Whatever the final truth of the allegations may be, many social activists say that no woman would publicly speak with such visible mental anguish unless the suffering was severe. Today, one mother's tears are forcing society to ask difficult questions. And one child's silent pain echoes louder than anything else: "Our mother is crying... what mistake did we make?"

BJP LAUNCHES 'MERA BHARAT, MERA YOGDAN' CAMPAIGN  
TO PROMOTE FUEL AND ENERGY CONSERVATION

New Delhi, May 17: The Bharatiya Janata Party has launched a nationwide awareness campaign titled “Mera Bharat, Mera Yogdan” following an appeal by Prime Minister Narendra Modi to reduce fuel consumption amid global energy concerns linked to ongoing conflict in West Asia.

The campaign aims to encourage citizens to adopt energy-efficient habits, reduce dependence on fuel, and prioritise national interest by embracing simpler and more sustainable lifestyles.

As part of the initiative, party leaders and workers are expected to integrate the message into organisational programmes and public outreach activities, reinforcing the importance of conservation in daily life.

Citizens are being encouraged to limit non-essential consumption patterns, including postponing luxury purchases such as gold, avoiding unnecessary foreign travel, and supporting indigenous “Swadeshi” products. The campaign also highlights behavioural changes already being adopted by several political leaders and government representa-



tives, including the use of public transport, metro systems, and electric vehicles, as well as reductions in convoy sizes to save fuel. In several NDA-ruled states, leaders have reportedly scaled down official convoys and increased reliance on shared or sustainable transport options, aligning with the Prime Minister's appeal.

The initiative further promotes carpooling, increased use of public transportation, and the adoption of virtual meetings and hybrid work models, including limited work-from-home arrangements to reduce travel-related energy consumption.

A key target under the campaign is to reduce fuel and electricity usage in party offices by up to 50 percent through effi-

ciency measures and behavioural changes.

Citizens are also encouraged to cut edible oil consumption by 10 percent and support a shift towards organic and natural farming practices by reducing reliance on chemical fertilisers.

The campaign emphasises simplicity in public events, including limiting attendance at receptions and reducing the size of official convoys, as part of a broader push for resource conservation. The nationwide initiative comes amid heightened global concerns over energy supply stability due to geopolitical tensions and the ongoing conflict in West Asia, which has impacted global fuel markets and heightened discussions around energy security.

PM MODI TO VISIT SWEDEN  
TODAY DURING THIRD LEG OF  
ONGOING FIVE-NATION TOUR

New Delhi, May 17 : Prime Minister Narendra Modi will embark on the third leg of his five-nation tour as he travels to Gothenburg, Sweden, on Sunday at the invitation of Swedish Prime Minister Ulf Kristersson.

visit (on May 17-18) is expected to further deepen India-Sweden ties across trade, innovation, green technologies and emerging sectors. According to the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA), “Prime Minister had earlier visited Sweden in 2018 for the first-ever India-Nordic Summit.”

During the visit, Prime Minister Modi will hold bilateral talks with Prime Minister Kristersson to review the full spectrum of India-Sweden relations and identify new oppor-

tunities for cooperation in key sectors. The MEA stated that the leaders will “explore new avenues of cooperation to enhance bilateral trade, which has reached USD 7.75 billion (2025), and Swedish FDI into India which has reached USD 2.825 billion (2000–2025).” The discussions are expected to focus on collaboration in green transition, artificial intelligence, emerging technologies, startups, resilient supply chains, defence manufacturing, space cooperation, climate action and strengthening people-to-people ties. Sweden is regarded as one of Europe's leading innovation-driven economies, and both countries are looking to expand strategic cooperation in future-oriented sectors.



Kerala cabinet formation  
nears final stage as new govt  
readies for swearing-in



Thiruvananthapuram, May 17: The final round of discussions on cabinet formation for the incoming government led by chief minister-designate V D Satheesan is expected to conclude on Sunday, ahead of the swearing-in ceremony scheduled for Monday.

According to officials and political sources, the final list of ministers will be submitted to the Governor around 2 p.m. on Sunday, with intensive consultations continuing between alliance partners and senior leadership throughout the day.

Congress representative and Kerala in-charge Deepa Dasmunshi confirmed that discussions are progressing and a final decision on cabinet composition is expected later

in the day. The new government is expected to have a 21-member cabinet, including the Chief Minister. Early indications suggest that the Congress will hold 11 ministerial positions, including key portfolios.

Several senior Congress leaders are likely to be inducted into the cabinet, with names such as Ramesh Chennithala, Sunny Joseph, K. Murala

Thiruvanchoor Radhakrishnan, A.P. Anil Kumar, P.C. Vishnunath, M. Liju, Chandu Oommen, and Bindu Krishna reportedly in contention.

Sources indicate that Satheesan may retain the Finance portfolio, while final allocation of departments will

be confirmed after official approval of the cabinet list.

Coalition partner Indian Union Muslim League (Indian Union Muslim League) is expected to secure five ministerial positions. Leaders such as P.K. Kunhalikutty, K.M. Shaji, N. Shamsuddeen, and Parakkal Abdulla are among those under consideration.

However, internal differences have reportedly emerged within the IUML over the possible inclusion of P.K. Basheer, with some sections opposing his elevation.

The final cabinet announcement is expected to clarify the power-sharing structure within the newly formed UDF-led government ahead of the official swearing-in ceremony on Monday.

President Droupadi Murmu Promulgates  
Amendment Ordinance

New Delhi, May 17: President Droupadi Murmu has promulgated the Supreme Court (Number of Judges) Amendment Ordinance, 2026, increasing the sanctioned strength of judges in the Supreme Court of India from 33 to 37, excluding the Chief Justice of India.

The decision is aimed at addressing the rising pendency of cases and improving the speed of justice delivery in the country's highest judicial institution. The development was announced by Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Law and Justice Arjun Ram



Meghwal through a post on X, where he confirmed that the President had approved the ordinance to amend the Supreme Court (Number of Judges) Act, 1956. According to the government, the expansion

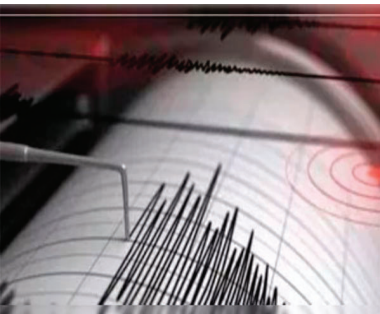
in judicial strength is intended to reduce delays in hearings and enhance the efficiency of case disposal, given the increasing workload on the apex court. The ordinance follows a recent decision by the

Union Cabinet, chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, which had approved a proposal to introduce the Supreme Court (Number of Judges) Amendment Bill, 2026 in Parliament to add four additional judges.

The Supreme Court (Number of Judges) Act, 1956 has been amended multiple times over the decades to reflect changing judicial requirements. The last such revision took place in 2019, when the sanctioned strength was increased from 30 to 33 judges (excluding the Chief Justice of India).

Midnight tremors and loud explosive sound  
trigger panic across Madhya Pradesh towns

Bhopal/Betul, May 17: A series of unexpected seismic tremors coupled with a mysterious loud explosion-like sound created fear and confusion across several parts of Madhya Pradesh late Saturday night, officials confirmed. According to preliminary information from the National Center for Seismology, earthquake activity measuring 3.91 on the Richter scale was recorded in regions including Betul, Pandhurna, and Multai. Tremors were reportedly felt at multiple intervals — around 9:30 p.m., 9:41 p.m., 9:43 p.m., and again at 10:17 p.m. While the earlier tremors caused concern among residents, panic intensified later in the night after a stronger disturbance struck certain localities around 11:24 p.m. Eyewitnesses described hearing a sudden deafening



sound moments before the ground began shaking. Residents said the noise resembled a massive blast and was followed by intense vibrations that shook homes and rattled household objects for several seconds. The unexpected tremors forced many people to rush out of their houses in fear of building collapse

or a larger disaster. Families gathered in open spaces as confusion spread through neighbourhoods, with many residents visibly distressed by the late-night incident. People from different parts of the affected towns reported experiencing the same sequence — a loud booming sound followed immediately by noticeable seismic movement. Several residents said the tremors were strong enough to make walls vibrate and utensils shake inside homes. As panic spread, phone networks became active with residents contacting relatives, friends, and neighbours to confirm their safety and gather information about the situation. Soon after the incident, social media platforms were flooded with videos and firsthand accounts from Multai and nearby areas.

Case filed over posters targeting  
Rahul, Priyanka in Wayanad



Wayanad, May 17: Police have registered a case after posters targeting senior Congress leaders Rahul Gandhi and Priyanka Gandhi Vadra appeared on the walls of the Congress office and nearby areas in Wayanad earlier this week.

According to officials, the case was registered at the Kalpetta police station based on a complaint filed by Congress MLA T Siddique.

The First Information Report (FIR) stated that the posters surfaced on May 13 on the compound wall of the Wayanad District Congress Committee (DCC) office and adjoining areas amid uncertainty over the selection of Kerala's next chief minister.

The posters reportedly warned that Wayanad could become the “next Amethi” for the Congress, referring to Rahul Gandhi's defeat from the Amethi Lok Sabha constituency in 2019.

One poster read: “Mr

Rahul and Priyanka Forget Wayanad... You won't win again from here.” Another stated: “Mr Rahul, KC might be your bag bearer but people of Kerala never forgive you.” The posters were later removed by Congress workers. Police said a case has been registered under various sections of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS) and the Kerala Police Act. CCTV footage retrieved from the area allegedly showed a man pasting the posters, and efforts are underway to identify him. The development comes days after the Congress-led United Democratic Front (UDF) secured a decisive victory in the Kerala Assembly elections, winning 102 of the 140 seats. However, the Congress leadership initially faced difficulty in finalising the chief ministerial candidate, with names such as VD Satheesan, Ramesh Chennithala and KC

Venugopal under consideration. Reports suggested that the party high command favoured Venugopal for the post due to his close association with Rahul Gandhi and Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge, while party workers largely supported Satheesan and Chennithala.

The suspense ended this week after the Congress officially announced VD Satheesan as the next Chief Minister of Kerala. His swearing-in ceremony is scheduled to take place on May 18 in the presence of senior party leaders.

“I am humbled by the trust placed in me by the party and the people. They entrusted me with a huge responsibility, and I am very thankful to team UDF and the workers. I dedicate my CMship to the people of Kerala,” Satheesan said after being chosen for the top post.

Delhi advises private  
firms to adopt 2-day WFH  
for fuel saving

New Delhi, May 17: The Delhi Government has advised private companies and organisations in the national capital to implement a two-day work-from-home policy every week and encourage employees to use public transport and carpooling as part of fuel conservation measures amid prevailing global uncertainties. The advisory, issued by the Delhi labour department on Sunday, also suggested staggered office timings to reduce peak-hour traffic congestion and minimise fuel consumption in the city.

However, private establishments engaged in essential and emergency services, including hospitals, health institutions, electricity, water supply, sanitation and municipal services, have been exempted from the advisory.

The move comes days after Delhi Chief Minister Rekha Gupta launched the 90-day ‘Mera Bharat, Mera Yogdan’ fuel-saving campaign. The campaign mandates two-day work-from-home arrangements for Delhi government employees and promotes the use of public transport. The Chief Minister had stated that the private sector would also be encouraged to support the fuel-saving initiative in response to Prime Minister Narendra Modi's appeal for prudent use of resources.

According to the labour department, commuting to and from offices is among the biggest contributors to daily fuel consumption in Delhi. The advisory noted that work-from-home arrangements had already proven effective during the COVID-19 pandemic and GRAP-related restrictions.

“In order to contribute to national fuel conservation efforts, all employers of industrial establishments, factories, shops and commercial establishments in Delhi, including IT and IT Enabled Services (ITES), are strongly encouraged to implement a minimum of two days of work-from-home per week,” the advisory stated. department also recommended replacing physical meetings with virtual sessions, reducing the use of official vehicles for non-essential travel, and strengthening IT infrastructure to facilitate smooth work-from-home operations.

Private organisations have additionally been urged to sensitise employees about the importance of fuel conservation and encourage conscious commuting practices, including the use of public transport, carpooling, and non-motorised travel options. The advisory also called on organisations to support the domestic economy by promoting the purchase of Indian-made products.

Social Welfare Gurukul Students  
Shine in EAPCET-2026

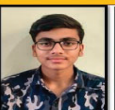
Hyderabad TSIT: Students of the Telangana Social Welfare Residential Educational Institutions Society (TGSWREIS) have once again brought laurels to the State by delivering outstanding results in EAPCET-2026, particularly in the Agriculture and Medicine streams.

Students from the Colleges of Excellence (COEs) functioning under TGSWREIS secured top ranks, further strengthening the reputation of Telangana's social welfare gurukul institutions as centres of academic excellence.

Expressing happiness over the remarkable achievement, Social Welfare Minister Adhuri Laxman Kumar said the results stand as proof that students from poor, Dalit, tribal and other underprivileged rural backgrounds are capable of creating history when provided with the right opportunities and support.

He stated that the gurukul system has laid a strong educational foundation for the aspirations of economically weaker families and has emerged as a new educational revolution in Telangana.

The Minister said the State Government, under the leadership of Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy and with the support of Deputy Chief Minister Bhatti Vikramarka Mallu, has been giving top priority to strengthening the gurukul education system by

| TGSWRIC (B) IIT FOUNDATION GACHIBOWLI AT GOWLIDODDI                                   |                                                                                       |                                                                                       |                                                                                       |                                                                                       |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| TG EAPCET 2026                                                                        |                                                                                       |                                                                                       |                                                                                       |                                                                                       |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| CH SWAROOP<br>Rank: 1448                                                              | N MAHESH<br>Rank: 2299                                                                | U JESHWANTH<br>Rank: 2485                                                             | S RAJU<br>Rank: 2719                                                                  | CH YASHWANTH<br>Rank: 3012                                                            |
| IIT GOWLIDODDI BOYS                                                                   |                                                                                       |                                                                                       |                                                                                       |                                                                                       |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| U SRIRAM<br>Rank: 3338                                                                | P MANASWITH<br>Rank: 3698                                                             | P SARJAM<br>Rank: 4093                                                                | Y NAVADEEP<br>Rank: 4174                                                              | B LOKESH<br>Rank: 4698                                                                |
| IIT GOWLIDODDI BOYS                                                                   |                                                                                       |                                                                                       |                                                                                       |                                                                                       |

releasing funds regularly for quality education, modern infrastructure, digital learning, special coaching and competitive exam training. He credited the success to the sacrifices of parents, determination of students and relentless efforts of teachers. Despite financial hardships and rural backgrounds, students achieved inspiring results through hard work and perseverance, he added.

TGSWREIS Secretary (FAC) Kambhampati Sharada said gurukul students have been consistently achieving excellent results in SSC, Intermediate, JEE, NEET and EAPCET examinations, reflecting the institution's academic standards. She said the society strengthened its academic monitoring system to provide focused and target-oriented training to students. Regular grand tests, daily practice sessions, special study hours, subject-wise mentoring, doubt-clearing classes and interactive sessions with experts helped

improve students' confidence levels.

Sharada specially appreciated Botany, Zoology, Physics and Chemistry faculty members for their dedication towards students' success. She said teachers played a key role not only academically but also in motivating students to overcome exam pressure and build self-confidence.

She further stated that the trust reposed by parents in gurukul institutions has grown stronger with these achievements. Due to quality education, discipline, safety and specialised competitive exam coaching being provided in gurukuls, students from poor families are now securing national-level opportunities.

The TGSWREIS Secretary congratulated the rankers, their parents, principals, faculty members and academic teams, and expressed confidence that the institution would continue to achieve even greater success at the national level in the coming years.

**DEBT RECOVERY TRIBUNAL-II**  
**AT BANGALORE**  
4th Floor, Telephone House, Rajbhavan  
Road, Bengaluru- 560 001

**Original Application**  
**No.2153/2025**

Between : **STATE BANK OF INDIA,**  
RACPC Shankarapuram (64063) Branch  
Basavanagudi, Bangalore - 560 004  
Represented by its Manager, Mr. Basavaraj  
N. S. N. S. Nagappa K. S. Aged about 54  
year. IFSC : SBIN0064063, Email ID :  
racpc.shankarapuram@sbi.co.in, Mobile  
No. 9448944414 .....Applicant  
AND  
Mr. Abdulkarim Lingath Ali and Another  
.....Defendants

**SUMMONS ISSUED UNDER RULE**  
**23(VII) OF THE DEBT RECOVERY**  
**TRIBUNAL (PROCEDURE) RULES 1993**  
**TO THE DEFENDANT NO. 1 THROUGH**  
**PAPER PUBLICATION**

To : Mr. Abdulkarim Lingath Ali S/o. Mr.  
Liakatha Ali, Aged about 44 years, PAN:  
BEEPA0852g, Residing at : 16-30, Anna  
Street, Chennai, Kancheepuram, Tamilnadu-  
600 045.

**1. WHEREAS,** the Applicant has instituted  
an Application under section 19 of  
Recovery of Debts Due to Banks and  
Financial Institutions Act, 1993 against  
Defendant for Recovery sum of  
**Rs.79,82,028/-** (Rupees Seventy Nine  
Lakhs Eighty Two Thousand Twenty Eight  
Only)

**2. The above mentioned Defendant are**  
**directed to appear before the Tribunal in**  
**person or through an advocate or duly**  
**authorised agent in support of your defence**  
**to show cause within 30 days from the date of**  
**publication or on 22.06.2026 at 11.00**  
**a.m. as to why reliefs prayed should not**  
**be granted.**

**3.Take notice that in case of default, the**  
**application will be heard and determined**  
**in your absence.**

Given under my hand and seal of the  
Tribunal, on this **02.03.2026** at Bangalore.

By Order of the Tribunal  
Sd/-Registrar  
Debts Recovery Tribunal-2, Bengaluru

## EDITORIAL

### Trump's Beijing Summit Leaves The Rest Asking: Who Will Stop China Now?

The most-watched summit meeting has ended. Trump had arrived in Beijing with a phalanx of businessmen, with just three of them having a combined net worth of over \$1 trillion. That was unsurprising, given the nature of the Trump presidency, famed for its deal-making and emphasis on trade. But none of that enthused China. Unlike his 2017 visit as an honoured guest, with an unprecedented state dinner in the 'forbidden city', this visit had no great pomp and ceremony attached to it. Major issues on the table were well known, but the devil lay in the details. Critics observed that the US President went to Beijing on a weak wicket, given the Iran war and his low popularity ratings.

#### Weighing Up The Opponent

Even before the visit commenced, the first task for officials on both sides was to assess the strength of the leadership at the table, in terms of a winning hand or a poor one. The agenda points would have been fixed long ago and likely centred around trade, particularly Artificial Intelligence, Taiwan, and the Iran war, in some order of priority for Trump. What mattered was how many cards each assessed the other as holding. First, China would have assessed the US presidency from the considerable drop in Trump's poll approvals, which, at 6% negative, is a lot and hinges mainly on inflation, the highest in two years. Xi, on the other hand, has no poll approvals to worry about publicly, but his recent 'purges' of over 100 senior military officials, among them two top generals - Zhang Youxia, and the chief of the Joint Staff Department, Liu Zhenli - on alleged corruption charges, would have been seen as a minus point. This was touted as a move to end patronage networks and strengthen the imperturbable Xi. But given past ingresses of the US Central Intelligence Agency - not to mention a new video that seeks to tap into unease within the army, especially the middle ranks - the possibility of some of them at least being compromised remains. The reverse also holds true. Very recently, a Southern California Mayor pleaded guilty to being a Chinese agent. The Federal Bureau of Investigation provides a copious list of arrests on such charges - four were in April alone. Fantastically, Trump remarked that both countries spied on each other , an admission that no other president would ever have made. Then there's the flip side. The Trump administration has had its own 'purges', firing some 43% of his 'A' team, including senior-level officers in his office and at least a dozen top cabinet-level officers, who were either forced to resign or shown the door. So, on that count of personal popularity and system degradation, the score remains 1-1.

# THE BEIJING SPECTACLE AND THE RECALIBRATION OF GLOBAL POWER

A striking image recently rippled through digital communication networks globally, capturing the attention of foreign policy observers and laymen alike. It depicts the President of the United States bending noticeably low, his spine curved in a posture that borders on deference, to take the firmly extended hand of Chinese President Xi Jinping. In an era dominated by hyper-realistic deepfakes and algorithmic manipulation, the image may well have been doctored - an artificial artifact designed to provoke the denizens of WhatsApp University. Yet, its viral currency stems from a deeper, psychological truth. The photograph conveys a potent conceptual narrative: Donald Trump travelling east as a diplomatic supplicant, executing a high-stakes charm offensive to court the favour of the Middle Kingdom, while Xi receives him with immaculate, imperial fanfare, offering immense theatrical hospitality but yielding absolutely no structural or geopolitical concessions. Beneath the curated optics of the Great Hall of the People, Beijing drew its red lines with absolute clarity, leaving little doubt that the global architecture is undergoing a profound and permanent architectural shift.

#### That Band Of CEOs

What the international community witnessed in Beijing was, fundamentally, a grand spectacle of statecraft. It was a production punctuated occasionally by transactional commercialism - packaged announcements of Boeing jet purchases and massive bulk orders of American soybeans - designed primarily to provide the American president with tangible domestic trophies to carry home on the weekend. Yet, even these commercial breakthroughs felt archival, functioning as superficial emblems of an older, mercantilist era. The retinue of marquee American chief executive officers who trailed the



president through the crimson corridors of power did not resemble independent, hard-nosed global dealmakers. Instead, they performed a role more akin to modern factotums and courtiers, a corporate vanguard deployed to validate Trump's presence and add a veneer of industrial might to a deeply personalised executive pilgrimage. The images broadcast to the world by Beijing from the Trump visit were meticulously produced, controlled, and distributed by Chinese state media apparatuses, reflecting an unmistakable, classical power aesthetic: a composed, serene, and immovably anchored Xi receiving a restless Western head of state who sought validation without receiving the structural kowtow. Both leaders were performing deftly for their respective domestic audiences, orchestrating a media event with a remarkably brief political half-life. The Thucydides Trap, Reimagined

Yet, beneath the glittering theatre of the summit, a far more durable and historic reality is quietly taking shape. For over a decade, the

transatlantic foreign policy establishment has lived under the dark shadow of the "Thucydides Trap" - the fatalistic realist construct, popularised by academic seminars, asserting that any rising revisionist power must inevitably collide in conflict, and probably warfare, with a dominant status-quo hegemon. Today, with Xi's China showing little appetite for armed conflict, that terrifying framework looks less like an iron law of history and more like a rigid, theoretical abstraction. Indeed, the common deployment of the Thucydides metaphor rests on a fundamental misreading of ancient history. The Spartans and Athenians did not exist in a permanent state of total kinetic warfare; rather, they coexisted across centuries of Greek civilisation, establishing complex networks of deterrence, trade, and regional accommodation. The Peloponnesian War was a tragic, bounded interlude, not the permanent organising structure of the ancient Mediterranean world.

#### Live And Let Live

What is actually emerging from the smoke of the 21st-century trade wars is not an inevitable military apocalypse, but a pragmatically managed, highly segmented spheres-of-influence settlement. Rather than fighting to the death for absolute global hegemony, Washington and Beijing are learning to partition the global commons based on their respective comparative advantages. The United States retains (at least for now) its structural dominance in pioneering high technology - commanding the software architectures, artificial intelligence frontiers, and the unmatched liquidity of Western financial markets. China, conversely, has consolidated its position as the world's foremost manufacturer and its pre-eminent physical trader, controlling the supply chains that undergird global material life. It is a division of labour born of mutual vulnerability and strategic exhaustion: a digital and financial empire in the West balancing a manufacturing and logistical colossus in the East. Within this emerging bilateral matrix, Taiwan remains the one

genuine, highly volatile flashpoint - a geographic and technological node capable of disrupting the entire global peace. Yet even here, a realistic, cold-blooded recalibration appears underway, conveyed by the American president's own characteristically transactional rhetoric during his stay in Beijing. By publicly reflecting on the brutal, immutable mathematics of distance - noting that the island of Taiwan is merely 59 miles from the Chinese mainland while remaining a vast 9,500 miles away from the American coast - Trump signalled an embrace of geographic realism over ideological commitment. This raw calculation reveals a changing strategic calculus. As the United States aggressively "onshores" its advanced semiconductor manufacturing capabilities and builds secure domestic chip foundries within its own borders, the foundational economic rationale for defending Taiwan begins to dissipate. Once the high-tech supply chains are structurally insulated, the old, ambiguous treaty commitments of the mid-20th century risk being quietly minimised, reinterpreted, or forgotten altogether. This geopolitical containment of risk is further stabilised by a mutual recognition of military limitations. The Chinese leadership has consistently demonstrated a remarkable lack of appetite for overt, destabilising kinetic conflict, preferring the patient, asymmetric methods of economic coercion, maritime encirclement, and institutional capture. Concurrently, the American political establishment is learning the hard way that its overstretched empire cannot easily sustain or finance far-flung, prolonged military engagements in the terrifying context of modern electronic, drone-saturated, and hypersonic warfare. Even Iran, a much less formidable foe than China, has been able to hold off the ravages of the American imperium.

## Women's dreams cannot be imprisoned



The recent observation by the Supreme Court of India is not merely a legal observation, but a historic message challenging the deeply ingrained mindset in Indian society that often limits a woman's identity after marriage to her husband, family, and domestic responsibilities. The Court stated unequivocally that a woman cannot be expected to abandon her career, ambitions, and dreams and remain merely an "obedient wife." This observation comes at a time when Indian women are achieving new heights in every field, including education, science, politics, administration, judiciary, military, sports, and business. Despite this, a large section of society still believes that a woman's primary responsibility after marriage should be limited to home and family. This observation by the Supreme Court is significant because it not only reaffirms women's constitutional rights but also strengthens the concept of equality, dignity, and individual freedom in modern India. Indian society has long been governed by a patriarchal structure. In this system, men were considered the decision-makers and economic center of the family, while women were presented as symbols of sacrifice, tolerance, and dedication. From childhood, girls were taught that marriage was the ultimate goal of their lives, and that after marriage, they should adapt to the wishes of their husbands and families. This is why, even today, in many families, girls' education is not taken as seriously as that of boys. If a woman is highly ambitious, prioritizes her career, or wants to make



her own life decisions, she is often criticized as "anti-family" or "too modern." This mindset not only violates women's rights but also limits society's progress. Expecting women to give up their careers or compromise after marriage has been considered normal in Indian society. If the husband's job requires a change of city, the wife is expected to give up her career without question. If balancing family and work is difficult, the responsibility for sacrifice is often placed on the woman. After motherhood, women are burdened with so much domestic responsibilities that millions are forced to leave their jobs despite their abilities and talents. This situation is not only unfair on an individual level but also detrimental to national development. A country that fails to fully utilize the talents of half its population can never reach its full potential. The Supreme Court's observations also reinforce the fundamental spirit of the Indian Constitution. Article 14 of the Constitution guarantees equality to all citizens. Article 15 prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex, and Article 21 guarantees every individual the right to live with dignity. Expecting a woman to abandon her dreams and career simply because she is

married is contrary to these constitutional values. The Court has made it clear that marriage cannot be a means of eliminating a woman's independent identity. A wife is not a subordinate person, but an independent citizen with equal rights. Today, Indian women are achieving remarkable successes in every field. From space to fighter aircraft, from the judiciary to the startup world, women are demonstrating their potential. PV Sindhu, Mirabai Chanu, Saina Nehwal, Falguni Nayyar, Nirmala Sitharaman, Gita Gopinath, and many others have proven that given the opportunity, women can excel in any field. Ironically, despite these achievements, traditional thinking about women's roles in society has not completely disappeared. Even today, in many educated families, it is believed that a wife's success should not "exceed" her husband's. Women's economic independence and self-reliance are often seen as a challenge to male ego. This is why problems like gender discrimination, pay disparity, and mental stress still exist in the workplace. Women's economic independence is a crucial foundation for the true progress of any society. When women are financially inde-

pendent, they are able to make their own decisions with greater freedom and confidence. Economic independence also empowers them to speak out against domestic violence, mental harassment, and unequal treatment. Therefore, a career is not just a means of earning income, but also a symbol of dignity and self-reliance. If a woman is forced to sacrifice her career in the name of marriage, her freedom is actually being limited. The Supreme Court's observations reject this thinking and make it clear that a woman's career is not a "hobby," but a constitutional right and human right. However, judicial observations alone cannot bring about complete change in society. Real change will come only when families change their mindset. Even today, women are often burdened with the sole responsibility of household chores and childrearing. Men's domestic involvement is limited, while working women are expected to juggle every household responsibility alongside their jobs. This dual burden impacts women's mental and physical health. If husbands and wives share household responsibilities equally, women can pursue their careers and dreams without guilt.

## Biggest Takeaway From BRICS Meet? Nobody Knows What It Is Anymore



The 2026 BRICS Foreign Ministers' Meeting in New Delhi exposed the growing internal contradictions of an expanded BRICS at a moment of acute geopolitical instability. Convened under the theme "Building for Resilience, Innovation, Cooperation and Sustainability", the meeting was intended to consolidate momentum ahead of the BRICS Leaders' Summit scheduled for September 2026. Instead, the escalating US-Israel confrontation with Iran transformed the gathering into a revealing display of the strategic fissures increasingly shaping the bloc. The clearest indication of these divisions was the inability of BRICS foreign ministers to agree on a full joint statement. In its place emerged a Chair's Statement and outcome document that reflected consensus on broad developmental priorities while carefully sidestepping irreconcilable disagreements over the Middle East crisis. The absence of a unified declaration was not merely procedural; it underscored the widening divergence in

how BRICS members interpret security, sovereignty, regional order, and relations with the West. The Iran-UAE Showdown The emphasis on protecting maritime commerce and energy routes, especially through the Strait of Hormuz, revealed underlying anxieties among member states whose economic interests are directly threatened by regional escalation. At the centre of the discord stood Iran and the UAE, whose competing regional calculations brought into sharp focus the limitations of BRICS cohesion. Iran sought to use the platform to rally political backing against the United States and Israel, framing the conflict as an attack on the sovereignty of a BRICS member and, by extension, on the broader non-Western order. Tehran pushed for explicit condemnation of what it described as "unlawful aggression" and attempted to portray BRICS as a potential counterweight to Western strategic pressure. Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi adopted a confrontational tone during the discussions. He

described Iran as a "victim of illegal expansionism and warmongering" and urged BRICS to resist "Western hegemony and the sense of impunity that the US believes it is entitled to". Calling for a far more assertive collective response, Araghchi declared: "Iran therefore calls upon BRICS member states and all responsible members of the international community to explicitly condemn violations of international law by the United States and Israel." His remarks reflected Tehran's broader effort to transform BRICS from a developmental coalition into a more overtly political and anti-Western platform. The UAE, however, approached the crisis from an entirely different security perspective. Abu Dhabi viewed the escalation not through the prism of anti-Western resistance but through immediate concerns over Gulf stability, energy infrastructure, maritime security, and the risk of Iranian retaliation spilling across the region. Tensions became especial-

ly visible when Araghchi later accused the UAE of being "directly involved in the aggression against my country", further exposing the depth of mistrust between the two BRICS members. For the UAE and several other Gulf-oriented actors, heightened confrontation threatened both economic stability and domestic security. This divergence made consensus virtually impossible and demonstrated how BRICS expansion has imported regional rivalries directly into the organisation's internal dynamics. A Structural Fault Line The Iran-UAE divide highlighted a deeper structural contradiction within BRICS expansion. The grouping has sought to project itself as the institutional voice of the Global South, yet many of its members remain regional competitors with conflicting threat perceptions and incompatible geopolitical priorities. The inclusion of Middle Eastern rivals within the same forum has amplified these contradictions rather than diluted them.

# Metro To Run Extra Trips Amid Govt's Appeal To Citizens To Cut Private Vehicle Usage

With plans to run 24 additional train trips every Monday, deploy extra security personnel, expand ticketing facilities and strengthen last-mile connectivity services, the DMRC announced a series of measures aimed at encouraging more people to shift from private vehicles to public transport across Delhi-NCR. The Delhi Metro Rail Corporation (DMRC) on Sunday said it will introduce 24 additional train trips with the deployment of six extra trains every Monday from May 18, while similar arrangements may also be made on other days depending on passenger demand. The move comes as part of efforts to strengthen mass transit systems and improve urban mobility amid growing emphasis on energy security, environmental sustainability and reduced dependence on petroleum-based transport. According to the corporation, the additional services are aimed at handling a possible increase in passenger footfall and ensuring smooth and uninterrupted operations during peak travel periods. It said passenger demand will be monitored closely and further steps will be taken whenever required. To manage higher com-



muter volumes, the DMRC will also deploy additional security personnel, open extra ticket counters, activate spare door frame metal detectors and baggage scanners, and take steps to reduce waiting time at frisking points, it stated. Highlighting the metro network's role in integrated transport connectivity, the corporation said several metro stations are linked with railway stations, inter-state bus terminals, airport terminals, Namo Bharat Regional Rapid Transit System (RRTS), Noida Metro and Rapid Metro

Gurugram. The connectivity network enables commuters to move conveniently between multiple transport systems and reduces reliance on private vehicles, it added. The DMRC also underlined the metro network's accessibility to major commercial centres, government offices, educational institutions, corporate hubs and tourist destinations across Delhi-NCR. It said areas such as Connaught Place, Chandni Chowk, Cyber City, Hauz Khas, Nehru Place and key university campuses are

directly connected through the metro network, making daily commuting easier for office-goers, students and tourists. On last-mile connectivity, the DMRC said around 1 lakh passengers use services such as e-autos, e-rickshaws, bike taxis, cab aggregators and bicycle rentals daily across 160 metro stations, according to the DMRC. The DMRC 'Saarthi App' offers integrated journey planning and allows commuters to book metro tickets and last-mile transport services through a single platform, it added. The corpora-

tion also said that hydrogen-powered bus services have recently been introduced in the Central Vista area with support from Indian Oil Corporation Ltd. to improve last-mile connectivity between metro stations and government offices. In addition, around 1,500 Devi buses operated by the Delhi Transport Corporation (DTC) are currently providing feeder services at 52 metro stations, with more buses expected to be added gradually, it mentioned. The DMRC further said parking facilities are available at 126 metro stations across Delhi-NCR under its "park and ride" initiative to encourage commuters to combine personal and public transport. The metro network has also expanded digital ticketing systems, including QR code-based tickets, National Common Mobility Cards (NCMC), WhatsApp ticketing and integration with platforms such as Paytm, PhonePe, Amazon and IRCTC, as per the corporation. The DMRC added the measures are part of its broader commitment towards promoting sustainable and environmentally responsible urban transport solutions in the national capital region.

# Prudential To Acquire 75% Stake In Bharti Life Insurance, Transaction Valued At Up To Rs 4,200 Crore

British insurance giant Prudential Plc will acquire three-fourth stake in the India-headquartered Bharti Life Insurance, according to a release issued on Sunday. Prudential "has agreed to buy 75% stake", Bharti Enterprises said, in the statement issued on the acquisition deal related to its insurance arm. The initial transaction is valued at Rs 3,500 crore, with a potential additional payout of Rs 700 crore, Prudential said in a separate release. The deal marks an entry of Prudential as controlling shareholder in Bharti Life Insurance. The transaction, however, is subject to regulatory approvals and other customary conditions. Through this acquisition, Prudential is expected to leverage Bharti Life platform to expand life and health insurance offerings in India amid rising demand and digital adoption. Sunil Bharti Mittal, Founder and Chairman, Bharti Enterprises, said, "We are delighted to welcome Prudential Plc as the controlling shareholder of Bharti Life, further accelerating its growth trajectory. Prudential's



experience and global scale, combined with Bharti's strong track record, create a formidable alliance to tap into the immense potential of India's life insurance sector. This partnership opens new opportunities for Bharti Life's employees and further reinforces the strategic relationship between India and the United Kingdom." This transaction comes with India's life insurance sector undergoing rapid transformation, driven by digital adoption, increasing awareness, and rising demand for financial protection solutions. The market contin-

ues to present strong structural growth opportunities, supported by favorable demographics and relatively low life insurance penetration, indicating significant unmet demand. "India is a strategically important and exciting market for Prudential. By acquiring a controlling stake in Bharti Life, we are bringing together Prudential's nearly 180 years of global insurance expertise and Bharti's strong and growing local presence to serve the savings and protection needs of Indian consumers," Anil Wadhvani, Prudential Plc's CEO, said.

# SBI Is Turning Some Branch Staff Into Salespeople. CS Setty Explains Why

State Bank of India said it is redeploying branch staff into sales and upselling roles as more banking transactions move to digital channels, signalling how customer behaviour is changing across the country's largest lender. "A large number of transactions have moved to alternate channels. We are redeploying some of the workforce into sales and training our workforce in the branches for upselling," Chairman CS Setty said during the bank's post-results earnings call earlier this month. The comments underscores how digital banking is changing the role of physical branches in India. SBI said more customers are opening accounts online, using mobile banking platforms and buying multiple financial products through the bank's ecosystem instead of visiting branches for routine transactions. The lender said 66% of new savings accounts in FY26 originated through Yono, SBI's digital banking platform. The bank added that Yono crossed four crore registrations within three months of the launch of its



new version, taking its total user base to around 10 crore customers. Changing Branch Roles SBI said the shift to digital banking is allowing it to redeploy employees towards customer acquisition and cross-selling financial products. Setty said customers now use more services from the bank beyond deposits and loans. "There are customers who tell me that they take about eight to 10 different products from SBI," he said during the interaction. He added that the bank currently sees around three products per

customer on average and wants to raise that number to five over time. SBI executives said the bank is also tracking customer engagement at district and branch levels as it looks to expand market share and increase product penetration. The bank said transaction banking products, current accounts, mutual funds, insurance and lending products are becoming part of a wider relationship-driven model. Digital Shift Setty said SBI is focusing on simplifying operations and improving customer jour-

neys as banking activity increasingly shifts online. "We are simplifying the bank at scale through Project Saral," he said in his opening remarks, referring to the lender's process re-engineering initiative. He said the initiative aims to "simplify the customer journey and release capacity within the system to focus more on relationship building and business growth." SBI said it continues to expand digital adoption while reshaping how its branch network operates as customer expectations change.

# INDIA BECOMES LARGEST MARKET FOR KITKAT GLOBALLY FOR NESTLE

**New Delhi:** India has emerged as the largest market globally for KitKat, the iconic chocolate-coated wafer bar of Swiss food and confectionery major Nestlé, driven by strong consumer penetration, product innovation and aggressive marketing investments, according to the company, India, which had been the second-largest market for the brand over the last 2-3 years, has now become its biggest market globally, underscoring India's growing importance for the iconic chocolate wafer brand sold in over 85 countries. "India is now the largest market for KitKat globally, and the brand has accelerated its market share growth over the last few years," Nestlé India Chairman and Managing Director Manish Tiwary said during a recent media interaction. KitKat has now become the second brand in Nestlé's portfolio, after Maggi, to emerge as the largest market globally. A decade ago, India was at number 10 globally for



KitKat. As part of Nestlé India's confectionery portfolio, KitKat contributed to strong momentum in FY26, with the confectionery product group delivering high double-digit growth in both value and volume, backed by robust underlying transaction growth across its key brands, he added. According to reports, Japan, Brazil, and Europe are among the other leading markets for KitKat. Nestlé India Director Confectionery and Cereals Jagatheesan Gopichandrar said KitKat's performance was driven by "strong increase in core penetration and also entry into new consumer

demand spaces" with innovations across mainstream and premium segments. "We entered into gifting with KitKat Celebriate and nibbling with KitKat pops. We accelerated the premium portfolio with the launch of KITKAT Delights range with variants including Salted Caramel and Hazelnut, alongside mainstream innovations such as KITKAT DUO and KitKat Lemon and Lime," he said. To further deepen consumer engagement, Nestlé India has significantly increased advertising spends and rolled out partnerships and campaigns aimed at strengthening brand relevance. The com-

pany also said investments in its visicooler programme (commercial glass-door refrigerator designed to store and display) have helped accelerate growth across urban and rural markets while supporting the rollout of new product innovations. Nestlé India, in its annual report for FY25, had said it had 3,950 million fingers of KitKat after doubling its market share and becoming the fastest-growing brand within the chocolate category in the country. While Maggi's business in India is also the largest market worldwide, where it sold 5+ billion serves. KitKat was created in the 1930s by the British confectionery company Rowntree's. It came under Nestlé's fold after the Swiss multinational acquired Rowntree's in 1988. However, in the US, KitKat is manufactured under licence by the Hershey Company. KitKat has now become the second brand in Nestlé's portfolio, after Maggi, to emerge as the largest market globally.

# HYBRID MUTUAL FUNDS ATTRACT RS 1.55 LAKH CRORE IN FY26 ON DIVERSIFIED INVESTMENT APPEAL

Hybrid mutual fund schemes attracted inflows of Rs 1.55 lakh crore in 2025-26, a 29% increase over the preceding fiscal year, as investors increasingly turned to diversified investment strategies amid volatile market conditions. The category witnessed strong traction despite heightened geopolitical tensions, including the conflict in West Asia, as investors sought balanced investment solutions that could cushion market volatility. "Hybrid funds saw strong traction in FY26 as investors looked for balanced investment solutions during volatile times. Multi asset allocation funds, in particular, gained popularity due to their ability to deliver relatively stable performance across market cycles," Radhika Gupta, MD and CEO of Edelweiss Mutual Fund, told PTI. According to data from the Association of Mutual Funds in India (AMFI), the number of hybrid fund folios rose to 1.9

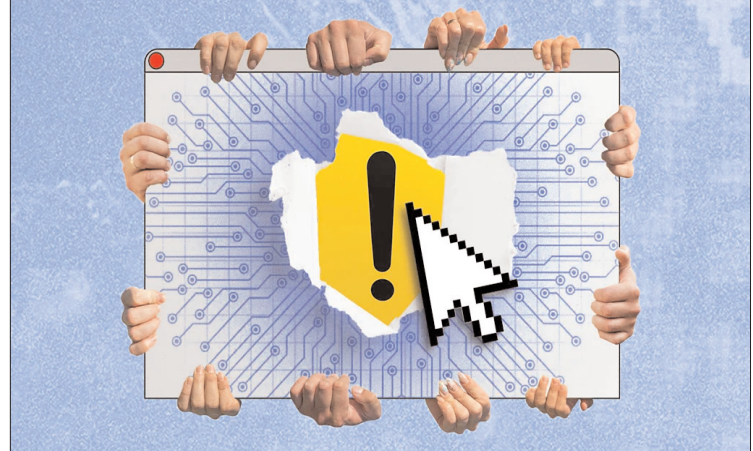


crore in March 2026 from 1.56 crore a year earlier, adding 34 lakh investor accounts. Assets under management (AUM) of hybrid schemes increased to Rs 10.35 lakh crore in March 2026 from Rs 8.83 lakh crore in March 2025, registering a growth of 17 per cent. "The growth in AUM reflects rising investor preference for diversified portfolios and asset allocation-led investing. Hybrid funds have increasingly become a core allocation for investors seeking participation in equities with relatively moderated risk," Gupta said. Equity markets remained volatile

during FY26 due to global uncertainties, including tariff concerns under US President Donald Trump, the ongoing Russia-Ukraine conflict and rising geopolitical tensions in West Asia. During the same period, gold outperformed equities in the short-term, benefiting hybrid categories that maintained exposure to the precious metal. "As a result, many hybrid funds were able to deliver relatively stable and higher near-term risk-adjusted performance compared to pure equity funds, which created recent bias in investors across this category.

# Why AI companies want you to be afraid of them

Stop me if you've heard this one before: a tech company says it's built a new AI that's so powerful it's scary. Apparently, it's too dangerous to release into the world – the consequences would be catastrophic. Luckily for us, they are keeping it locked up for now. They just wanted you to know. That's exactly what AI company Anthropic is telling us about its latest model, Claude Mythos. The company says Mythos' ability to find cybersecurity bugs far surpasses human experts, and it could have world-altering consequences if similar technology lands in the wrong hands. "The fallout – for economies, public safety and national security – could be severe," Anthropic said in an early April blog post. Some breathless observers warned that Mythos will soon force you to replace every piece of technology in your life, down to your Wi-Fi-enabled microwave, to protect from the digital madness. Some security experts doubt these claims, but let's set that aside. This isn't new. Executives at leading AI providers regularly issue warnings about how their industry's products may destroy humanity. Why do AI companies want you to be afraid of them? It's a strange way for any company to talk about its own work. You don't hear McDonald's announcing that it's created a burger so terrifyingly delicious that it would



be unethical to grill it for the public. Here's one theory. According to critics, it benefits AI companies to keep you fixated on apocalypse because it distracts from the very real damage they're already doing to the world. Tech leaders say they're just warning us about an inevitable future, and safety is a top priority whether it's now or later. But others argue what we're actually seeing is fear mongering, which exaggerates the potential of the technology and serves to boost stock prices. And it encourages a narrative that regulators must stand aside, because these AI companies are the only ones who can stop the bad guys and build this technology responsibly. "If you portray these technologies as

somehow almost supernatural in their danger, it makes us feel like we are powerless, like we are outmatched," says Shannon Vallor, a professor of the ethics of data and artificial intelligence at the University of Edinburgh in the UK. "As if the only people we could possibly look to would be the companies themselves." Somebody stop me An Anthropic spokesperson told me the company has been clear about these issues. They shared blog posts from other organisations supporting Mythos' cyber capabilities, but said nothing to address the points in this article, aside from one comment I'll include below. This isn't the first time Anthropic chief Dario Amodei has worked on a tool that's been

declared too dangerous for the public by the company he worked for. In 2019, when Amodei was an executive at OpenAI, the company announced GPT-2. He and other company leaders said they just couldn't release GPT-2 because of "concerns about malicious applications of the technology". This was a tool far less sophisticated than ChatGPT. And months later, they released it anyway. (OpenAI CEO Sam Altman published a blog post which says the company embraces uncertainty, acknowledging that fears about GPT-2 were "misplaced".) Altman criticised Anthropic's "fear-based marketing" in a recent podcast interview. But his own "I've created a monster" playbook goes back years. "AI will probably most likely lead to the end of the world, but in the meantime, there'll be great companies," Altman said in 2015. Years later, Altman claimed he loses sleep wondering if he's "done something really bad by launching ChatGPT". If only someone warned him. Hundreds of tech leaders including Altman, Amodei, Bill Gates and Demis Hassabis, chief executive of Google DeepMind, endorsed a short statement in 2023 that said: "Mitigating the risk of extinction from AI should be a global priority alongside other societal-scale risks such as pandemics and nuclear war."

# IRAN EYES A NEW SOURCE OF POWER DEEP BENEATH THE STRAIT OF HORMUZ

Emboldened by its successful wartime blockade of the Strait of Hormuz, Iran is turning to one of the hidden arteries in the global economy: subsea cables beneath the waterway that carry vast internet and financial traffic between Europe, Asia and the Persian Gulf. The Islamic Republic wants to charge the world's largest tech companies for using the subsea internet cables laid under the Strait of Hormuz, and state-linked media outlets have vaguely threatened that traffic could be disrupted if firms don't pay. Lawmakers in Tehran discussed a plan last week which could target submarine cables linking Arab countries to Europe and Asia. "We will impose fees on internet cables," Iranian military spokesperson Ebrahim Zolfaghari declared on X last week. Iran's Revolutionary Guards-linked media said Tehran's plan to extract revenue from the strait would require companies like



Google, Microsoft, Meta, and Amazon to comply with Iranian law while submarine cable companies would be required to pay licensing fees for cable passage, with repair and maintenance rights given exclusively to Iranian firms. It's also unclear how the regime could force tech giants to comply, as they are barred from making payments to Iran due to strict US

sanctions; as a result, the companies themselves may view Iran's statements as posturing rather than serious policy. Still, state-affiliated media outlets have issued veiled threats warning of damage to cables that could impact some of the trillions of dollars in global data transmission and affect worldwide internet connectivity. As fears grow that the

war could resume following US President Donald Trump's return from China, Iran is increasingly signaling that it has powerful tools at its disposal beyond military force. The move underscores the significance of the Strait of Hormuz beyond energy exports, as Tehran seeks to turn its geographic leverage into long-term economic and strategic power.

Subsea cables form the backbone of global connectivity, carrying the vast majority of the world's internet and data traffic. Targeting them would affect far more than internet speeds, threatening everything from banking systems, military communications and AI cloud infrastructure to remote work, online gaming and streaming services. Iran's threats are part of a strategy to demonstrate its leverage over the Strait of Hormuz and ensure the survival of the regime, a core objective for the Islamic Republic in this war, said Dina Esfandiary, Middle East lead at Bloomberg Economics. "It aims to impose such a hefty cost on the global economy that no-one will dare attack Iran again," she said. "Cascading digital catastrophe" Several major intercontinental subsea cables pass through the Strait of Hormuz. Because of long-standing security risks with Iran, international operators

have deliberately avoided Iranian waters, instead clustering the majority of the cables in a narrow band along the Omani side of the waterway, said Mostafa Ahmed, a senior researcher at the United Arab Emirates-based Habtoor Research Center, who published a paper on the effects of a large-scale attack on submarine communications infrastructure in the Gulf. However, two of those cables, Falcon and Gulf Bridge International (GBI), run through Iranian territorial waters, said Alan Mauldin, research director at TeleGeography, a telecom research firm. Iran has not explicitly said it will sabotage the cables, but it has repeatedly declared through officials, lawmakers and state-linked media of its intent to punish Washington's allies in the region. It appears to be the latest asymmetric warfare technique devised by the regime to attack its neighbors.

## HOW WORRYING IS THE EBOLA OUTBREAK “ IN DR CONGO?



The outbreak of Ebola in the Democratic Republic of Congo is concerning. It has been spreading for weeks undetected in a part of the world where civil war makes getting on top of the virus difficult, and the species of Ebola involved is rare, so there are fewer tools to stop a virus that kills between a third and half of people infected. This is a critical moment in an outbreak where there is uncertainty about how far it has spread, but there are already almost 250 suspected cases and 80 deaths. Most Ebola outbreaks tend to be small, but specialists are haunted by the 2014-16 out-

break. Then, 28,600 people in West Africa were infected in the largest ever outbreak of the disease. The declaration of a public health emergency of international concern by the World Health Organization (WHO) does not mean we are in the early stages of a Covid-style pandemic. The risk Ebola poses to the whole world remains tiny. Even in the 2014-16 outbreak, there were only three cases in the UK and all were healthcare workers who had volunteered to help. "But it does reflect that the situation is complex enough to require international coordination.

## TAIWAN INSISTS IT IS INDEPENDENT AFTER TRUMP WARNING



Taiwan has insisted it is a sovereign, independent nation, after US President Donald Trump cautioned it against formally declaring independence from China. Trump's remarks came after a two-day summit in Beijing, after which he said he had "made no commitment either way" about the self-governing island - which China claims as part of its territory and has not ruled out taking by force. After talks with Chinese President Xi Jinping, Trump also said he would soon decide whether to approve an \$11bn (\$8bn) package of weapons to be sold to Taiwan. The US administration is bound by law to provide Taiwan with a means of self-defence, but has frequently had to square this alliance with maintaining a diplomatic relationship with China. Taiwanese President Lai Ching-te has previously stated that Taiwan does not need to declare formal independence because it already sees itself as a sovereign nation. On Saturday, presidential spokesperson Karen Kuo said it was "self-evident" that Taiwan was "a sovereign, independent democratic country". She added, however, that Taiwan was com-

mitted to maintaining the status quo with China - in which Taiwan neither declares independence from China nor unites with it. Many Taiwanese consider themselves to be part of a separate nation, though most are in favour of maintaining their current status. Washington's established position is that it does not support Taiwanese independence, with continued ties with Beijing being contingent on its acceptance that there is only one Chinese government. In an interview with Fox News after meetings with President Xi, Trump reiterated that US policy on Taiwan had not changed, while making it clear he did not seek conflict with Beijing. "I'm not looking to have somebody go independent," he said. "You know, we're supposed to travel 9,500 miles (15,289km) to fight a war. I'm not looking for that. I want them to cool down. I want China to cool down." On the flight back to Washington, the US presidential spokesperson Karen Kuo said it was "self-evident" that Taiwan was "a sovereign, independent democratic country". She added, however, that Taiwan was com-

## Man drives car into pedestrians in Italy, injuring eight



A man drove his car into pedestrians in the northern Italian city of Modena on Saturday, injuring eight people, four seriously, officials said. They included a woman who had to have both her legs amputated. After the car came to a halt against a shop window, the driver emerged holding a knife and injured a passer-by who gave chase, before the suspect was overpowered. The suspect, 31, has been

identified by officials as an Italian national of Moroccan origin. Italy's Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni, who cancelled a planned trip to Cyprus and described the incident as "extremely serious", visited the injured in hospital with President Sergio Mattarella on Sunday. She also met Luca Signorelli, the passer-by who intervened, and thanked him for his actions.

## WHO DECLARES EBOLA OUTBREAK IN DR CONGO AN INTERNATIONAL EMERGENCY

The World Health Organization (WHO) has declared an Ebola outbreak in the Democratic Republic of Congo a public health emergency of international concern. The agency said the outbreak in DR Congo's eastern Ituri province, which has seen around 246 suspected cases and 80 deaths reported, does not meet the criteria of a pandemic emergency. But it warned it could potentially be "a much larger outbreak" than what is currently being detected and reported, with significant risk of local and regional spread. The current strain of Ebola is caused by the Bundibugyo virus, the health agency said, for which there are no approved drugs or vaccines. Early symptoms include fever, muscle pain, fatigue,



headache and sore throat, and are followed by vomiting, diarrhoea, a rash and bleeding. The WHO said there are now eight laboratory-confirmed cases of the virus, with other suspected cases and deaths across three health zones including Bunia the capital of Ituri province, and the gold-mining towns of Mongwalu and Rwampara. One case of the virus has been confirmed in

the capital Kinshasa, believed to be in a patient returning from Ituri. The WHO said that the virus has spread beyond DR Congo, with two confirmed cases reported in neighbouring Uganda. Ugandan officials said a 59-year-old man who died on Thursday had tested positive. In a statement, the Ugandan government said the patient who died was a Congolese citizen whose

body has already been returned to DR Congo. A laboratory has also confirmed an Ebola case in the eastern city of Goma, currently controlled by the M23 rebels, the AFP news agency reported on Sunday. The WHO said the ongoing security situation and humanitarian crisis in DR Congo, combined with high population mobility, the urban location of the hotspot, and the large number of informal healthcare facilities in the region increased the risk of spread. Countries bordering the DR Congo are considered high risk due to trade and travel. The WHO advised that DR Congo and Uganda establish emergency operation centres to monitor, trace, and implement infection-prevention measures.

## Trump-backed challenger defeats Republican senator who voted to convict president

A Trump-backed challenger has defeated a two-term Republican senator who voted to convict the president at his 2021 impeachment trial. Congresswoman Julia Letlow will advance to a runoff next month, ousting incumbent Bill Cassidy, who President Donald Trump branded a "disloyal disaster" ahead of Louisiana's high-stakes contest on Saturday. State treasurer John Fleming, another Trump-aligned candidate, also advanced to the Republican runoff for Louisiana's Senate seat. The top two candidates, Letlow and Fleming, will face off again in late June as neither won a simple majority. The candidate who wins the runoff



will then run against a Democratic candidate in the general election. Cassidy, 68, was one of seven Senate Republicans who voted to convict Trump when the president was impeached after the 6 January attack on the Capitol in 2021. Trump was acquitted after the Senate

voted 57-43, short of the two-thirds majority required. Of the seven Republicans who voted to convict him, only three still serve in the Senate: Lisa Murkowski of Alaska, who survived a primary challenge in 2022; Susan Collins of Maine; and Bill Cassidy. During his re-election cam-

paign, the Louisiana senator sought to repair his strained relationship with Trump. "I don't really think President Trump likes me that much, but we work really well together," Cassidy told reporters last week, pointing to several bills he sponsored that were later signed into law by the president. But Trump had made it clear he wanted Cassidy gone, and in January encouraged Letlow, 45, to challenge the senator. "I want to say thank you to a very special man - the best president this country has ever had, President Donald Trump," Letlow said in a speech after the late evening results. In his election night remarks, Cassidy did not mention Trump by name.

## CANADIAN FROM HANTAVIRUS-HIT CRUISE SHIP TESTS POSITIVE



A Canadian who sailed on the cruise ship MV Hondius which was hit by a hantavirus outbreak in April has tested positive for the disease, officials in the province of British Columbia say. The individual, one of four people isolating on Vancouver Island after leaving the ship, had developed mild symptoms. The province's senior health officer said the four had not had any contact with the public since arriving in Canada. The case brings the total number of infections to 11, all among cruise passengers. Three people who travelled on the ship have died, with two confirmed to have had the virus. British Columbia health officer Bonnie Henry said the person's test came back as a presumptive positive on Friday, meaning that it still remains to be confirmed by a national microbiology lab. "Clearly, this is not what we hoped for, but it is what we planned for," she said, quoted by national broadcaster CBC. "I want to emphasise that hantavirus is a very different respiratory viruses that we've been dealing with - like

Covid, like influenza, like measles - and it remains one that we do not consider to have pandemic potential," Dr Henry added. Of the six Canadians who were on the Dutch ship, two are self-isolating at their home in Ontario. Two more couples are isolating on Vancouver Island, one from British Columbia and the other from Yukon. The person who tested positive is from Yukon. None of the other five have tested positive so far. The cruise ship, which set sail from Argentina on 1 April, docked in Tenerife, in Spain's Canary Islands, less than a week ago, allowing its passengers to leave and go into isolation. The ship is due to arrive in Rotterdam in the Netherlands on Monday, and remaining staff on board will disembark, its owner Oceanwide Expeditions said, adding that there were currently no symptomatic individuals on board. The WHO has recommended 42 days of isolation for each person. The Canadians were initially required to isolate for 21 days but Dr Henry said that timeline could now be adjusted.



Large-scale Ukrainian drone attack kills three in Moscow region, says Russia

## Whale found dead near Danish island after German rescue operation



A humpback whale rescued after beaching itself in Germany has been found dead near a Danish island. The whale was first spotted stuck on a sandbank on 23 March, off the island of Poel on Germany's Baltic coast. It swam free in early May after a water-filled barge carried it into the North Sea. The operation was privately funded by two

German entrepreneurs and spurred intense public debate, with critics suggesting it would only cause the animal distress. A whale carcass was reportedly spotted on Thursday off the Danish island of Anholt, located between Denmark and Sweden. Authorities were not immediately able to confirm it was the same whale.

## IPL 2026: RCB BEATS PUNJAB KINGS BY 23 RUNS



## Emmanuel Acho Tells Stefon Diggs He's 'Messing With The Wrong Woman' After Public Spat With Cardi B

Cardi B addressed a viral video appearing to show her arguing publicly with Stefon Diggs after the clip went viral online. The rapper later reacted on social media with a blunt message that quickly pulled even more attention towards the couple's relationship. It all became a bigger talking point after former NFL linebacker Emmanuel Acho weighed in during an episode of *Speakeasy*, where he questioned whether public celebrity relationships can realistically stay private once both people become globally recognisable figures. The discussion began after Cardi reacted directly to the viral footage. The rapper joked about the situation while acknowledging how public the argument had



become. "Sometimes I forget I'm a celebrity, damn y'all ain't never cuss your baby dad out when you hungry?" Cardi B wrote on social media. Emmanuel Acho questions public celebrity relationships. Rather than focusing only on the viral clip itself, Acho used the moment to discuss the pres-

sure that comes with dating while constantly being watched online. "So, here's why I don't have grace with Stefon Diggs," Acho said. "If you are messing with women who have the ability to forget they're a celebrity, you're messing with the wrong woman." Acho explained that celebrities

often lose the ability to handle disagreements privately once they reach a certain level of fame. According to him, even ordinary arguments can instantly become public entertainment. "Because in my lower level of celebrity, I've had conversations with men and women alike to be like, 'Look, I don't have the luxury of arguing in public,'" he noted. "We don't have that luxury. So, if you've got beef with me, we're going to have to argue in private. We don't have the luxury of arguing at a restaurant. We don't have the luxury of arguing at an airport, we don't have that." Emmanuel Acho warns Stefon Diggs after recent controversies. As the conversation continued.

## Megan Thee Stallion Reveals How She's Spending Her Downtime With 'Sons' After Klay Thompson Breakup

For weeks, fans had been wondering why Megan Thee Stallion suddenly disappeared from social media following her abrupt exit from *Moulin Rouge!* on Broadway and the intense attention surrounding her breakup from NBA champion Klay Thompson. The rapper had stayed unusually quiet after accusing the NBA star of cheating, leaving fans speculating about how she was handling the breakup away from the spotlight. On Friday, Megan finally returned online with a far calmer and more personal update that immediately drew attention across music and entertainment circles. Instead of addressing the relationship drama, Megan shifted the focus towards



healing, nostalgia and the simple routines helping her reset emotionally. Speaking to her millions of Instagram followers from home, the Grammy winner revealed she had reunited with her pets and was embracing downtime after the emotional chaos surrounding Broadway, celebrity head-

lines and constant public scrutiny. Megan Thee Stallion turns to anime after Klay Thompson breakup. Longtime fans already know Megan's connection to anime runs deep, but this time the conversation carried a more emotional tone. While relaxing at home with her pets, the rapper

explained that revisiting familiar shows had become part of her recovery process after an exhausting few weeks. "What's up y'all? It's your girl Megan Thee Stallion AKA the Hot Girl coach," the rapper told followers before jokingly introducing her pets as her "sons." "So finally, after Broadway, I am home and I am ready to have some me time," she shared while discussing the one question fans kept asking her outside theatres during her Broadway run: what she is currently watching. Megan admitted she was craving comfort and familiarity. Her latest watchlist includes anime series she has loved for years, including *Black Clover* and *Inuyasha*.

## Luka Doncic's Injury Recovery Becomes Lakers' Top Priority After Playoff Collapse And Gruelling NBA Season

The sting of another unfinished postseason run has pushed the Los Angeles Lakers into early offseason mode far sooner than anyone inside the organisation expected. With pressure already building around roster upgrades, title ambitions and the long-term direction of the franchise, one of the biggest priorities has become making sure Luka Doncic enters next season fully fit. Before leaving the United States this weekend, the Slovenian star reportedly sat down with Lakers executives and performance staff to map out the months ahead. After those discussions in Los Angeles, Doncic is now set to return to Ljubljana on Sunday, according to Martin

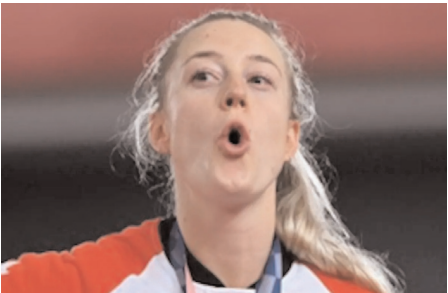


Pavcnik of SportKlub. The focus of the meetings reportedly centred on rehabilitation plans, offseason conditioning and the kind of roster support the Lakers hope to build around him after another campaign disrupted by injuries and playoff frustration. Luka Doncic injury recovery becomes central

Lakers offseason storyline. The Lakers are treating Doncic's health as one of the defining NBA storylines of their summer. The 27-year-old has not appeared since April 2 after suffering a Grade 2 hamstring strain that ended up sidelining him longer than initially anticipated.

## Kelsey Mitchell's Net Worth: Inside the WNBA star's salary, career, family life and growing success

Kelsey Mitchell has become one of the WNBA's most consistent scoring stars through years of hard work, elite performances, and growing popularity in the women's game. Mitchell's reputation and bank account have steadily grown since her record-setting college career at Ohio State and as a key player for the Indiana Fever. She earns from WNBA contracts, endorsement deals, and playing basketball overseas, and is considered one of the modern standouts of the league. However, Mitchell's story is also about family, perseverance, and personal growth, away from basketball. Raised in a sports household, she often gives credit to her family's support in helping her carve out her path on and off the court. Her success on the court has also helped her build a growing financial and commercial profile over the years. How Kelsey Mitchell turned her basketball success into growing financial power? Kelsey Mitchell has a nice financial portfolio built from her WNBA career, endorsement deals, and off-season basketball opportunities. She is believed to have a net worth in the multi-million dollar range. However, the exact figure varies across reports, with years of pro-



fessional success and rising WNBA salaries. Mitchell's income soared after she signed a historic one-year, \$1.4 million supermax deal with the Indiana Fever for the 2026 season, making her one of the highest-paid players in the league. She made roughly \$249,244 in the 2025 season on her old Fever deal before the new WNBA salary structure. In addition to her WNBA salary, Mitchell has also earned money playing basketball overseas and through sponsorships. She also did that by participating in alternative women's basketball ventures like Project B and Unrivaled. Her rising popularity and All-Star status only enhance her earning potential on and off the court.

## Jannik Sinner's Bid To Reach Italian Open Final Held Up By Roman Rain



Jannik Sinner will have to wait to complete his passage to the Italian Open final after his gripping last four clash with Daniil Medvedev was interrupted by rain on Friday. Hunting a 33rd straight win in the ATP's top-ranked tournaments, Sinner was leading 6-2, 5-7, 4-2 when organisers called a halt to play following the second downpour of the day. Not long after 11.00pm local time (2100GMT), over an hour after played was initially stopped, it was decided that the match would restart at 3.00pm on Saturday (1300GMT), two hours before the scheduled start of the women's final between Coco Gauff and Elina Svitolina. The rain came just as Sinner looked to have broken the back of battling Medvedev, who had given the Italian by far his toughest test of the tournament. Medvedev looked like being blown away when Sinner rattled off the first four games before taking the first set in just 33 minutes. But any idea that another massacre was on

the cards went away when Medvedev won the first three games of the second set and began to get his racket to nearly everything Sinner, who began to show serious signs of tiredness, threw at him. Sinner drew level in the set but repeatedly had to lean on his racket between points and after winning game six was visibly out of breath in his seat, looking out on his feet as he conceded the second set. But Medvedev started to make mistakes of his own, hitting two consecutive double faults in giving up his serve in game three of the third set, as Sinner took control before the rain stopped play. Sinner is still favourite to become the first Italian to win the Rome title in five decades, ahead of a potential career Grand Slam at the French Open. Ruud rolls into final. Should he get to the final he will have to get past Ruud, who reached his first title decider since winning in Stockholm in October last year by dismantling Luciano Darderi 6-1, 6-1, another match interrupted by heavy rain.

## Bruno Fernandes Ties Premier League Assist Record With 20th Of Season For Manchester United

Bruno Fernandes has tied the record for most assists in a single Premier League campaign. By setting up Bryan Mbeumo for United's third goal against Nottingham Forest on Sunday, Fernandes moved onto 20 assists — equal with the record held jointly by Thierry Henry (2002-03) and Kevin De Bruyne (2019-20). United has one game left in the league this season, at Brighton next weekend. Bruno Fernandes equalled the Premier League record for assists in a season as Manchester United won an entertaining five-goal encounter with Nottingham Forest. Fernandes' cross from the right was turned home by

Bryan Mbeumo to make it 3-1, taking the United skipper level with Thierry Henry and Kevin de Bruyne on 20 assists — with one game of the season remaining. On a day when Casemiro received a standing ovation on his Old Trafford farewell nine minutes from time, United got the result they needed to secure third place under Michael Carrick, who is still to be officially confirmed as permanent boss. Fernandes' achievement at least took some of the headlines away from yet another contentious VAR incident. Forest had only just cancelled out Luke Shaw's fifth-minute opener, through Morato's header, when Diogo

Dalot crossed for Mbeumo. The Cameroon forward appeared to control the ball between his upper arm and his side before having his shot deflected into the path of Matheus Cunha, who applied the first-time finish. Referee Michael Salisbury gave the goal but, rather than rule it out as expected after being sent to the screen by VAR Matthew Donohue, after numerous checks and to a cacophony of boos from both sets of fans over the time taken to reach a decision — he confirmed his initial decision, as the ball had deflected off Mbeumo's hip. Morgan Gibbs-White scored a second for Forest 12 minutes from

time but the visitors were unable to force an equaliser. With Carrick's status yet to be confirmed, it was a day to remember in other aspects. Cunha almost laughed at Shaw's impromptu reaction at scoring. It was hardly a surprise. The left-back's last Premier League goal came against Bournemouth in January 2023. It was only his fifth in all competitions for United. Fernandes had already had two games to get his 20th assist. When Mbeumo blazed over after being sent through by the Portugal midfielder, Fernandes buried his head in the turf, presumably fearing the momentous assist would



# Shraddha Das’ ‘Trikaala’ Set for Worldwide Release on May 29

The mythological fictional thriller Trikaala, inspired by the hidden spiritual secrets within Indian Sanatana Dharma, is all set for a worldwide theatrical release on May 29. Actress Shraddha Das plays the lead role in the film, alongside Master Mahendran, Ajay, and senior actress Amani in pivotal roles. The film is written and directed by Mani Tellagooti, while Radhika and Srinivas have produced the project. Impressed with the film's content, Chaganti Production LLP is presenting and releasing the movie worldwide. With mythological thrillers gaining strong audience appreciation in recent times, Trikaala has already generated considerable interest within the industry. According to the makers, the film's biggest strength lies in its high-quality VFX crafted using modern technology. The recently released trailer, promotional content, and songs have received an overwhelming response from audiences. In particular, Master Mahendran's action sequences, Ajay's powerful role, and Shraddha Das' new look have heightened curiosity around the film.

**Speaking on the occasion, director Mani Tellagooti said:** "Trikaala revolves around a divine force that emerges as a light during a time when darkness engulfs the world. We have blended thrilling elements with spiritual secrets hidden within Indian Sanatana Dharma. The response to the trailer and songs has been fantastic so far. We strongly believe Trikaala will offer audiences a completely new cinematic experience."

**The producers stated:** "Trikaala, made with a fresh con-



cept and mythological touch, will appeal to all sections of the audience. The film combines culture, spirituality, and suspense, creating

a unique experience for viewers." The film's music is composed by Harshavardhan Rameshwar, known for delivering music for blockbuster films like the Arjun Reddy, Animal, and Spirit. His music is expected to become one of the major highlights of Trikaala as well. The film has already secured impressive business deals in North India. The Hindi satellite rights and dubbing rights have reportedly been sold for a fancy price. Shraddha Das made her Tollywood debut with the film Siddu from Srikakulam and later earned recognition through Arya 2. She went on to entertain audiences with films like Guntur Talkies, Ek Mini Katha, Dictator, and Nagavalli. Now, she is set to appear in yet another distinctive role with Trikaala. Overall, with its mythological thriller backdrop, grand visuals, spiritual elements, and suspense-driven narrative, Trikaala has generated massive anticipation among movie lovers ahead of its May 29 release.

**Cast**  
Shraddha Das, Mahendran, Ajay, Amani, Sahithi Avancha, Prabhakar, Ambati Arjun, Rowdy Rohini and others.

**Technical Team**  
Presentation & Release: Chaganti Production LLP  
Producers: Radhika – Srinivas  
Co-Producers: Sri Saideep Chatla, Venkat Ramesh Dadi  
Story & Direction: Mani Tellagooti  
DOP: Pawan Chenna  
Music: Harshavardhan Rameshwar  
Background Score: Shajith Humayun  
PRO: Ashok Dayyala

## A Birthday Crowned by Compassion as ‘RawKing’ Manoj Manchu and Mounika Launch AIKYA DHAIRYA SENA SAMITHI, a Movement of Humanity

Ahead of his birthday, 'RawKing' Manchu Manoj, along with his wife Bhuma Mounika, hosted a blood donation drive and a special gathering in Hyderabad where they officially announced the launch of their new social service organization, AIKYA DHAIRYA SENA SAMITHI, carrying the motto: Unity, Courage, Service, Impact. The event was attended by several prominent personalities, supporters, volunteers, and fans, with Jubilee Hills MLA Naveen Yadav attending as one of the chief guests. Addressing the gathering, Manoj emotionally welcomed everyone and spoke about the values of service and compassion that he and Mounika inherited from their elders and family members. Explaining the intention behind the organization, he said the vision was always to create a larger platform for people who believe in collective welfare and social responsibility. "Hello all, I heartily welcome everyone here. You all know how we have always remained at the forefront when it comes to service. Standing by others and society is something that both my wife Mounika and I have strongly learned from our family and elders. We have done many service activities before, but we wanted to form an organization, a trust for people who share similar ideologies and provide a platform for such individuals. The name of the organization



will be announced by my brother and close aide, MLA Naveen Yadav, at the end. But before that, I want Mounika to speak a few words, because this idea truly came from her. She wanted to take this to the public and build a sense of unity. Along with the blood donation drive, from today onwards, we also want to adopt five children and support their education. And it will not stop with this. It shall spread across every town and every village in both Telugu states, beginning from today. If there is any true achievement in our life, it will only be when someone receives help through this organization," said Manoj. Speaking at the event, Mounika shared that the initiative became possible through the blessings and guidance of her parents and elders. She also revealed that the trust would focus not only on blood donation drives, but also on women empowerment and employment opportunities.

## Varun Sandesh’s ‘Black Mail’ Grandly Launched with Pooja Ceremony under Hanuman Film Factory Banner

Varun Sandesh starrer Black Mail, produced by Avinash Koonapareddy under the Hanuman Film Factory banner and written & directed by Srinivas Gundreddy, was officially launched today with a grand pooja ceremony in Hyderabad at Prasad Labs. The film features an ensemble cast including Gemini Suresh, Prithviraj, Sammeta Gandhi, and Nag Mahesh in key roles. The launch event was attended by several prominent guests from the film industry. Renowned writer-producer Kona Venkat gave the first clap for the muhurtham shot, while senior producer Bharadwaj switched on the camera. Gemini Suresh's mother M. Venkata Subba Lakshmi directed the first shot. Actors Rakshith Atluri and Sreelu were among the celebrities who attended the event and conveyed their best wishes to the team. Speaking at the event, director Srinivas Gundreddy expressed his gratitude to the media, guests, and producers for believing in his vision. He said the film has a strong and engaging story and hoped that media support would help take the project to audiences in a big way. Hero Varun Sandesh shared that he had known the director for a long time and was impressed by the content when the story was narrated to him. He thanked the producers and guests and



revealed that the regular shoot will begin soon. Actor Gemini Suresh said he was happy to be sharing screen space with Varun Sandesh and praised producer Avinash for supporting him in many ways. He added that Srinivas, who directed his debut as a hero, has given him a strong role in this film too. Music director S.V. Mallik Teja thanked the team for the opportunity and promised to give his best for the film's success. Veteran actor 30years Prithviraj said that the title Black Mail is catchy and the screenplay will be one of the major high-

## Like Kshemaanga Velli Labhanga Randi, Purushaha will appeal to all sections: Hero Pavan Kalyan



Pavan Kalyan Battula makes his debut as a hero with the upcoming wholesome family entertainer Purushaha, produced by Battula Koteswar Rao under the Kalyan Productions banner and presented by Battula Saraswathi. The film is directed by Veeru Vulavala. The cast includes Pavan Kalyan, Sapthagiri, Kasireddy Rajkumar, Rayancha Kokkura, Vishika, and Hasini

Sudheer in key roles. Purushaha is set to release on May 22nd. The posters, songs, glimpses, and teaser released so far have all received a very positive response. As part of the film's promotions, hero Pavan Kalyan shared a few insights with the media.

**Tell us about your background:**  
We are from Karampudi near Macherla in Palnadu. We have no connection with the film industry. My father works in the construction field. I never do anything he dislikes, and he never forces me to do anything I don't like.

**What's the story behind your name? Whose idea was it for you to enter the industry?**  
My father watched the film Gokulamlo Seetha even before I was born. I was born around the time Thammudu released.

## A Soulful, Breezy Romantic Melody Reengara From Vijay Antony-Sasi's Vanda Devullu Released



The makers of the upcoming film 'Vanda Devullu', starring Vijay Antony and directed by Sasi, have released a charming new melody "Reengara... Reengara." This marks a special reunion for the successful duo after delivering the evergreen blockbuster 'Bichagadu,' which continues to hold a memorable place in audience hearts. Now, years later, Vijay Antony and Sasi are all set to recreate that emotional magic through this new film. Produced by Ramanjaneyulu Javvaji under the Sarvanth Ram Creations banner, in association with Vijay Antony Film Corporation and presented by Fatima Vijay Antony, the film features a strong ensemble cast including Vijay Antony, Swasika, Ajay, Lijomol Jose, Kavya, Shakthi, Padini, Karnas, Balaji Sakthivel, Divakar, Arul Doss, Bucks, Vinodhini, Munishkanth, and Kodangi Vadivelu. Everything released so far - from posters, glimpses, the teaser, and earlier songs, has received impressive appreciation. Among them, the emotionally stirring Amma Ammegaa, a track rooted in mother sentiment, deeply touched listeners. Now, the team has unveiled a contrasting romantic melody, and it promises to be just as impactful. The newly released "Reengara... Reengara" stands out for its soothing musical composition, poetic lyricism, and heartfelt vocals. It is indeed a song that feels like a gentle breeze. Featuring the on-screen pair Lijomol Jose and Ajay Dhishan, the song radiates a soft romantic charm.

## “‘Peddhi’ Will Keep Audiences Glued to Their Seats from Start to Finish: Producer Venkata Satish Kilaru”

I am lucky to be making my first film as a producer with Ram Charan. From the title cards of 'Peddhi' to the ending, the audience will not be able to move from their seats. All the elements that the audience wants are fully packed in Peddhi: Producer Venkata Satish Kilaru

Mega Power Star Ram Charan's rural action drama 'Peddhi' is being produced by Venkata Satish Kilaru under the banner of Mythri Movie Makers, Sukumar Writings, and Vrididhi Cinemas under the direction of Buchi Babu Sana. With chart-buster songs and amazing glimpses, expectations on the film have already reached a huge level. The film is set to release in theaters worldwide on June 4. On this occasion, producer Venkata Satish Kilaru shared the features of the film at a press conference.

**How did it feel to do your first production with a big hero like Ram Charan?**  
-I am lucky that Ram Charan gave me the film. This was possible only if he agreed. I thank Ram Charan for this opportunity.

**Tell us about your background?**  
-We are a farming family. My father is a farmer. I studied in Vijayawada. After engineering, I went into the construction field. Naveen is my

close friend. He loves movies a lot. That's how we got into movies.

**What are the challenges you faced as a producer?**  
-Challenges become smooth depending on the way we deal with them. Our journey till this film has been very happy. The shooting was very cool from the first day to the last day. We did not face any major challenges.

**What did you like about Buchibabu's story when he told it?**  
-The entire story is amazing. The audience will be sitting in the theater from the beginning to the end of the movie. Commercial elements, emotions... everything is extraordinary. Buchibabu garu has provided everything that the audience wants in a movie as a complete package.

**What about Charan?**  
-Words cannot express how much Charan worked hard for this film. Only when he sees it on screen can the audience understand how amazing his transformation is. He worked for the film for two years with a special trainer. He tore his body apart from the injuries. He came to the shooting the next day after getting his eyes pierced. That is his dedication.

-This is a film with a very intense performance. Whatever the director said, Charan gave that performance without compromising anywhere. Even if his body did not cooperate in some cases, he would get physio and get ready for the shoot immediately. The audience is going to see the hardships he went through on the big screen.

