



**Manipur CM stresses peace as key to development, launches infrastructure projects**

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**UK vows to tackle anti-semitism 'emergency' as police probe double stabbing attack**

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**Cover Girl Switches From Gown To Power Suit Flawlessly**

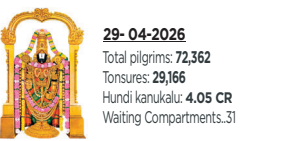
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SCAN FOR E-PAPER



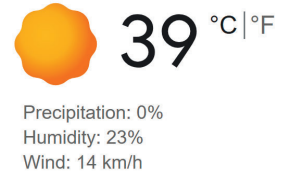
OM NAMO VENKATESAYA



29-04-2026  
Total pilgrims: 72,362  
Tonsures: 29,166  
Hundi kankaluz: 4.05 CR  
Waiting Compartments: 31

Approx. Darshan Time for Sarvadarshanam (with out SSD Tokens): 12 H

WEATHER



## Bihar highway crash kills CISF jawan, wife and auto driver

Patna (TSIT): A tragic road accident in Bihar's Khagaria district claimed three lives after a gravel-loaded truck lost control and overturned onto an auto-rickshaw on National Highway-31, police said on Thursday. The incident took place early in the morning near Gauchhari village under the Maheshkhunt police station area. According to officials, a heavy Hyva truck carrying gravel suddenly went out of control and toppled onto a three-wheeler, crushing it completely under its weight. The deceased include Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) personnel Bipin Chaurasia, his wife Deepmala Chaurasia, and the auto-rickshaw driver. All three died on the spot due to the severe impact of the collision. Locals rushed to the accident site after the crash and helped police teams in rescue operations. Officials said the wreckage was so badly damaged that extracting the victims required coordinated efforts by villagers and emergency personnel. Preliminary information suggests that Bipin Chaurasia, a resident of Maliya village under Gogri police limits, was on leave and had been travelling with his wife to the railway station early in the morning to return to duty when the accident occurred.

## SC reserves verdict on Pawan Khera's anticipatory bail plea in Assam case

New Delhi (TSIT) The Supreme Court on Thursday reserved its judgment on a plea filed by Congress leader Pawan Khera seeking anticipatory bail in a case registered by Assam Police on a complaint by Riniki Bhuyan Sarma, wife of Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma. A bench of Justice JK Maheshwari and Justice Atul Chandurkar heard the matter after the Gauhati High Court rejected Khera's anticipatory bail application, observing that custodial interrogation was necessary. The case stems from allegations made by Khera that Riniki Bhuyan Sarma held multiple foreign passports and had financial interests abroad. Appearing for Khera, Senior Advocate Abhishek Manu Singhvi argued that the case largely pertains to defamation and does not warrant custodial interrogation.

## Centralised procurement to curb irregularities in welfare institutions CM Revanth



Hyderabad (TSIT):

Chief Minister Revanth Reddy has directed officials to adopt a centralised procurement system to curb irregularities in the supply of materials to welfare hostels and schools across the State. Emphasising transparency and accountability, the CM instructed that essential items such as uniforms, textbooks, notebooks, and other supplies must be procured centrally and delivered efficiently to students.

Stating that welfare schemes are meant for beneficiaries, not suppliers, the Chief Minister made it clear that the focus should remain on ensuring quality and timely delivery of materials to students.

The CM directed officials to ensure that school uniforms reach institutions by June 15 without fail. To streamline the process and avoid disruptions, he suggested appointing a nodal officer at the mandal level, who will oversee the distribution of supplies to

schools and hostels at the grassroots level. Further, the Chief Minister called for the formation of a coordination committee involving officials from SC, ST, BC, Minority Welfare, and Education Departments to ensure seamless coordination and effective implementation.

Reiterating the government's commitment to student welfare, the CM stressed that no compromise should be made on the quality of items supplied to students.

## EC assessing repoll plea in 77 booths in West Bengal

KOLKATA (TSIT):

The Election Commission is actively looking into demands for repolling in 77 booths across four Assembly constituencies in South 24 Parganas district after the second phase of West Bengal elections held on April 29, an official said on Thursday. The poll panel received 32 complaints of repolling from Falta, followed by Diamond Harbour (29), Magrahat (13) and three from Budge Budge, he said. Demands for repolling are generally made by political parties, candidates, polling agents, or even observers, citing specific irregularities such as EVM malfunction, booth capturing, intimidation, or violation of the secrecy of voting. "The complaints, which surfaced soon after polling concluded on Wednesday, include allegations of EVM tampering, use of substances on machines, and attempts to obstruct surveillance cameras. In view of the volume and nature of complaints, the Commission is taking no chances," a senior official.

## Iran's new rules for Strait of Hormuz to bring peace, progress to region: Mojtaba Khamenei

Tehran (TSIT):

Asserting that a "new chapter" is being drawn in the Persian Gulf and the Strait of Hormuz, Iran's Supreme Leader Mojtaba Khamenei said on Thursday that a new "legal framework" and management of the Strait of Hormuz will bring progress and comfort to all nations in the region. In a message released on the occasion of the National Day of Persian Gulf, Mojtaba Khamenei said spotlighted the "sacrifices" made by Iran for the independence of the Persian Gulf and "confronting foreigners and aggressors" while terming the Islamic Revolution as a "turning point" of these resistances.

"This strategic asset has long provoked the greed of many evildoers over the centuries. The record of repeated invasions by European and American foreigners — the insecurities, damages, and multiple threats they have imposed on the region's countries — reflects only a fraction of the malicious schemes of global oppressors against the peoples of the



Persian Gulf," the message read, Iran's Mehr news agency reported.

"The new legal framework and management system for the Strait of Hormuz will advance comfort and development for all the region's nations, and its economic benefits will bring joy to the nation," Iran's new Supreme Leader was quoted as saying. The future of the Persian Gulf, he emphasised, will be bright and "free of America", devoted to progress, peace, and prosperity for its nations. "We, the peoples and neighbours of the Persian Gulf and the Sea of Oman, share a common destiny, and the foreigners who cov-

## India known for IT, Pakistan for 'international terrorism': Rajnath Singh

New Delhi (TSIT):

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Thursday launched a sharp attack on Pakistan, accusing it of consistently supporting terrorism and emerging as an epicentre of "international terrorism."

Speaking at the ANI National Security Summit 2.0 in New Delhi, Singh drew a comparison between India and Pakistan, noting that while India has earned global recognition in information technology, Pakistan has gained notoriety for backing terror activities. "While India is known worldwide for its Information Technology, Pakistan has come to be regarded as the epicentre of another 'IT' — International Terrorism," he said.

Referring to Operation Sindoor, launched in response to the Pahalgam terror attack last year, Singh asserted that India halted the operation voluntarily and on its own terms, despite being fully prepared for a prolonged conflict if required. "We didn't stop the operation because our capabilities had diminished. We



"While India is known worldwide for its Information Technology, Pakistan has come to be regarded as the epicentre of another 'IT' — International Terrorism," he said.

stopped it voluntarily, and if necessary, we were ready for a long war," he said.

The Defence Minister highlighted that the Army, Navy and Air Force operated in a coordinated and integrated manner during the operation, reflecting the country's enhanced military preparedness. He also claimed that India had faced threats of a

nuclear attack but did not succumb to what he described as a "bluff." Calling Operation Sindoor a symbol of a "new world order," Singh said it marked a shift in India's response to terrorism, moving beyond diplomatic measures to decisive action. Taking another swipe at Pakistan, he said terrorism operates on three levels — operational, ideological and political — and stressed the need to dismantle the political support structures that enable such activities.

He added that attempts to justify terrorism on religious or ideological grounds effectively provide cover to terrorists. Singh's remarks come as the country approaches the first anniversary of Operation Sindoor, launched on May 7, 2025, which targeted multiple terror launchpads linked to groups such as Lashkar-e-Taiba, Jaish-e-Mohammed and Hizbul Mujahideen. The operation had triggered a brief escalation between India and Pakistan, including drone attacks and cross-border shelling, before both sides agreed to a ceasefire on May 10.

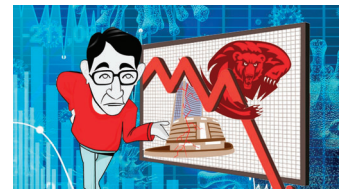
## Sensex, Nifty end lower amid rising crude oil prices

Mumbai (TSIT):

Indian equity benchmarks Nifty and Sensex ended lower on the day, weighed down by rising crude oil prices amid escalating tensions between the United States and Iran. The Nifty declined by 180.10 points, or 0.74 per cent, to close at 23,997.55, while the Sensex fell 582.86 points, or 0.75 per cent, to settle at 76,913.50.

Commenting on Nifty technical outlook, experts said that 24,100-24,150 remains an immediate resistance band, followed by the 24,300-24,400 zone, which continues to act as a crucial hurdle. "On the downside, the 23,800 level continues to act as a key support, where buying interest has emerged, preventing further decline," an analyst stated.

The weakness in the market came as global sentiment turned cautious following a sharp spike in oil prices. Brent crude prices surged after reports indicated that the US had rejected Iran's peace proposal and moved to intensify the blockade at the Strait of Hormuz, a key global oil transit route. The development raised



concerns over supply disruptions and inflationary pressures, impacting investor sentiment across equities. On the index, stocks such as Tata Motors Passenger Vehicles, Eternal, and Hindalco Industries emerged as the top losers on the Nifty. The broader market also mirrored the weakness in the benchmarks. The Nifty MidCap index ended 0.98 per cent lower, while the Nifty SmallCap index slipped 0.48 per cent.

Sectorally, there was a mixed trend. Defensive pockets such as the Nifty IT and Nifty Pharma indices managed to outperform the broader market, while cyclical sectors faced the brunt of the selling. The Nifty Metal and Nifty Construction Durable indices were among the worst hit, dragged down by concerns over rising input costs and global uncertainty.

## Asaduddin Owaisi criticises Haj airfare hike, seeks withdrawal of circular and refund for pilgrims

New Delhi (TSIT):

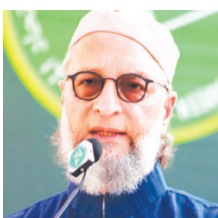
AIMIM chief Asaduddin Owaisi on Thursday criticised a fresh circular issued by the Haj Committee of India that asks pilgrims to pay an additional Rs 10,000 as differential airfare, citing the ongoing crisis in West Asia, and demanded that the directive be withdrawn with refunds issued to those affected.

He pointed out that the extra charge is being imposed after an amount of Rs 90,844 per pilgrim has already been collected from those departing from Mumbai, raising concerns about the financial burden on travellers undertaking the pilgrimage. The circular, dated April 28, mandates an additional payment of \$100 (around Rs 10,000) by May 15 for all

Haj pilgrims, irrespective of their embarkation points. The directive comes after airlines sought a revision in base fares due to rising Aviation Turbine Fuel (ATF) costs linked to the prevailing situation in West Asia. The Haj Committee functions under the Ministry of Minority Affairs.

"All pilgrims of Haj 2026 are hereby notified that, in view of extraordinary circumstances arising out of the ongoing crisis in the

Middle East, a one-time revision in airfare for Haj 2026 Air Charter Operations has been approved by the Ministry of Minority Affairs vide letter No. HAJ-17/19/2025-HAJ-MoMA(C-147720) dated 28.04.2026. The revised airfare entails an additional amount of USD 100 per pilgrim, irrespective of embarkation point.



## Exit polls were 'paid and pressured', claims Mamata

Kolkata (TSIT):

The different exit poll predictions showing Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP)'s victory in the Assembly polls in West Bengal this time were, according to Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee, actually broadcast by different media houses under pressure and in exchange for money allegedly paid by the "ruling party" in the country.

She made the claim in a video message that she posted on her social media handle on Thursday. According to the Chief Minister, the dual motive behind this alleged strategy was to prevent a crash in the stock market indices as well as to weaken the morale of Trinamool Congress work-

ers before the counting of votes scheduled for May 4.

"The BJP did this using the media. I have got specific information that the exit poll projections that were shown by media houses were actually circulated to the media houses at 1.08 p.m. on Wednesday. This they did because they understood that in reality Trinamool Congress's tally will reach 226 or even cross 230, thereby making all their oppressive tactics futile," the Chief Minister said.

In her video message, the West Bengal CM also thanked Trinamool Congress workers for being on the streets on Wednesday to ensure free and fair polls despite what she described as atrocities on them as well as on the com-



mon people, allegedly carried out jointly by the central forces as well as the state police forces. "We are grateful to the common people because of the manner in which they voted in large numbers, ignoring the scorching heat of summer and despite enduring so much oppression. I am also grateful to my party workers. They

fought hard. They endured so much oppression. Those who wanted to seize Bengal, their fate has been sealed in the ballot box," Mamata Banerjee said.

She also instructed Trinamool Congress workers, especially the counting agents, to keep their morale high and guard the strong rooms where the Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs) are kept till the counting begins.

"Even I will personally be on the streets to guard the strong rooms. If I can, you will surely be able to do the same," the Chief Minister said.

She also issued an appeal to her party's counting agents to remain at the counting tables on May 4 till the end of the counting process.

## Sabarimala reference: Cannot annihilate religion in name of reform, says Apex Court

**NEW DELHI:** Observing that religion cannot be "hollowed out", the Supreme Court on Wednesday said it cannot annihilate a religion in the name of reform and the matters of belief and conscience cannot be subjected to judicial debate.

A nine-judge constitution bench hearing issues pertaining to discrimination against women across religions in the country remarked that certain things have crystallised and become an essential part of the religion over the years.

The bench headed by Chief Justice Surya Kant, during its hearing on the tenth day, asked whether it can apply the test of equality in cases of religious freedom in complete negation of an "integral practice" of a religion.

The top court referred to constitutional aspiration on bringing about the Uniform Civil Code in the country keeping it in tune with the social reform and asked if the State fails to legislate, then can the judiciary do it.

Justice BV Nagarathna, also part of the bench, observed that different states have enacted Uniform



Civil Code to regulate marriage and succession rights of citizens and when the society is ready for it, Parliament will enact it.

The bench also comprising justices M M Sundresh, Ahsanuddin Amanullah, Aravind Kumar, Augustine George Masih, Prasanna B Varale, R Mahadevan and Joymalya Bagchi was told by senior advocate Indira Jaising, appearing for two women claiming right to enter Sabarimala temple in Kerala, that every state has made temple entry

laws and if one wants to claim his right, he has to go by the statute.

Justice Bagchi told Jaising that there is no such law in respect of non-Hindu religious institutions and can the court in its zeal for maintaining equality among citizens enforce similar directions for non-Hindu institutions, or should it defer to legislative decision.

He told the senior lawyer that the court would have consistently directed for a Uniform Civil Code. Jaising, who argued for the

whole day submitted that the question of a UCC has been placed in the Directive Principles of State Policy (DPSP) and it is a matter of policy.

"India does not have an all-India Uniform Civil Code. But we do have central statutes like the Hindu Marriage Act, the Hindu Adoption and Guardianship Act, and the Hindu Succession Act. That is a policy decision taken by the State. They are free to change it whenever they want. I am not disputing that. But if a Uniform Civil Code is enacted, then its constitutionality may have to be examined," she submitted. Justice Bagchi said, "Our question is not on what form UCC is brought. The constitutional aspiration of UCC is admitted and the social reforms understood in Article 25 (2) (b) have to be linked with constitutional aspirations of DPSP that it will bring UCC. The question is if the state fails to do it, can the court bring incremental equality clauses when it comes to religious freedoms and can we apply the test of equality to completely negate an integral practice of a religion."

## Rajasthan: Fire breaks out at City Mall in Kota; no injuries reported

**KOTA:** A fire broke out in a plastic items store on the second floor of the City Mall in Kota on Wednesday morning, which was brought under control after a two-hour operation by the firefighters, officials said.

No one was injured in the fire that broke out in the mall on Jhalawar Road within the Vigyan Nagar police station limits, triggering a brief period of panic, they said.

The fire broke out in the plastic items store that is yet to be formally inaugurated around 10:30 am, when business activities in the mall were yet to start, the officials said.

At least 15 fire tenders and 50-60 firefighters were pressed into service to douse the flames, which took about two hours to bring the situation under control, they said. Initial inquiry suggested that a short-circuit triggered the blaze in the store run by a Malaysia-based company,



fire officer Amzad Khan said.

The security guards present on the spot unsuccessfully tried to douse the flames, which soon filled the premises with smoke, Khan said.

The firemen had to break the glass panels of the mall to make way to the store, he said.

The mall and a coaching institute right behind had to be evacuated for safety measures, the officer added. Circle Officer at Vigyan Nagar police station, Mukesh Meena,

said a case has been registered against the management for the mall under the relevant sections of law, and the matter is being probed from all angles.

According to Chief Fire Officer Rakesh Vyas, the building was equipped with mandatory fire-fighting equipment, but as the flames spread rapidly, the staff present on the spot could not control them.

The authorities have shut all business activities in the mall for a week, Vyas said.

## Man dies in police custody, villagers attack police station in Nabarangpur

**KORAPUT:** The death of a man in police custody in Odisha's Nabarangpur district on Wednesday triggered protests by villagers who threw stones at the police station.

The deceased was identified as Purma Kalar, a resident of Anchala village under the Dabugaon police station limits. He was arrested in connection with the alleged abduction of a minor girl. He was found dead inside the toilet of the lock-up at Dabugaon Police Station in Nabarangpur district.

Police sources said that the man was nabbed on Monday and sent for medical examination on Tuesday. His body was found in the toilet of Dabugaon police station on Wednesday morning, before his scheduled production at the court.

While police said that the accused hanged himself in the toilet, the family members claimed that he was beaten to death by cops. Preliminary reports, however, suggest that he allegedly used a strip of cloth torn from a bedsheet and tied it to the ventilation structure for hanging.

The incident sparked protests by family members and villagers of the deceased, who gathered outside the police station and questioned how the death occurred in police custody. They also staged a road blockade demanding justice.

Angry over the incident, the villagers staged a protest outside the police station, blocked the Umerkote-Nabarangpur road and pelted stones at the police establishment. One home guard was injured in the stone pelting by the mob, police said.

Senior officers from Nabarangpur and Papadhandi police stations rushed to the spot to control the situation. The administration deployed two platoons (60 personnel) of police and additional officers around Dabugaon station to prevent escalation.

The body was shifted to the Nabarangpur District Headquarters Hospital for post-mortem examination, which will be conducted in the presence of a magistrate. Heavy police deployment has been made at the hospital, police said.

Superintendent of Police, Nabarangpur, Madkar Sandeep Sampat said the matter would be thoroughly investigated to ascertain the circumstances under which the alleged suicide took place inside the police station.

## NCC setting up drone training centres in Nagpur, Pune: Maj Gen Vivek Tyagi

**NAGPUR:** Major General Vivek Tyagi, Additional Director General of the Maharashtra National Cadet Corps Directorate, on Wednesday said the NCC was setting up drone training centres in Nagpur and Pune.



He also described the Agnipath scheme, a short-term military recruitment programme, as a gamechanger for the NCC cadets and for the youth from humble backgrounds.

Addressing a press conference in Nagpur Group NCC headquarters during his two-day visit to the city, Maj Gen Tyagi said the strength of NCC cadets in Maharashtra is about 1.5 lakh.

"The NCC is skilling its cadets and preparing them with technology and everything that is contemporary, to be ready for the future. Accordingly, the NCC Maharashtra is starting a drone training centre in that direction and Nagpur is becoming a major hub for training the NCC cadets," he said.

One more training centre will come up in Pune along with Nagpur, he added.

Tyagi also said that the NCC, along with Centre for Development of Advanced Computing (C-DAC) and others, is also planning to start cyber awareness training for its cadets soon.

"It will not just be a basic training programme, but will be a very forward-looking course to be launched by the NCC," he said.

Tyagi said he has written a letter to Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis, and will soon meet him to secure assets for starting a centre of excellence (NCC Academy) in Nagpur for the Vidarbha region.

When asked about the response of NCC cadets to the Agnipath scheme, Tyagi said the recruitment programme has taken off very well.

## BJP's Parvesh Wahi elected as MCD Mayor, Monika Pant as Deputy: Emphasis to be on sanitation & waste management

**NEW DELHI:** Bharatiya Janata Party candidates for MCD Mayor, Deputy Mayor, and the standing committee members were elected on Wednesday following the voting, with the corporation getting Parvesh Wahi as its new Mayor.

BJP's councilor Monika Pant from Anand Vihar was elected as the Deputy Mayor, as both candidates secured 156 votes.

On the other hand, the Congress party's mayoral candidate Haji Zarif, received nine votes.

However, the Aam Aadmi Party did not field any candidate this time for the mayoral polls.

After the victory, the newly elected Mayor Parvesh Wahi expressed confidence that the pending works will soon be taken up, with the immediate priorities being the work to upgrade and fix sanitation and



waste management issues.

Speaking on the victory of the party's candidates, Delhi BJP chief Virendra Sachdeva expressed confidence that the corporation, in coordination

with the BJP-led Delhi government, will further work to make Delhi's situation better and improve the overall development works.

Commenting on the AAP,

he said that they were already aware they were far from victory, while he also expressed joy that all the allies have won.

Sachdeva stated that whenever the party has been in power in the civic body, the work has been transparent and the corporation has gained strength.

He alleged that during the previous times, when the civic body was under the AAP rule, there were different irregularities, including a lack of funds.

The BJP leader stated that the goal is simple: to run the MCD with utmost honesty and transparency so that the people of the city get all the facilities.

Meanwhile, as per the configuration, the winner required 137 votes, with the electoral college consisting of 273 votes, which include 249 councillors, 14 nominated MLAs, seven Lok

Sabha MPs, and three RS MPs.

After the election, Sachdeva visited the Civic Centre and felicitated the newly elected Mayor, Deputy Mayor, Leader of the House, and Standing Committee members, and offered them sweets.

The Delhi BJP chief stated that this time the party has given equal opportunity to both experience and youthful energy within its municipal team.

He said that while experienced leaders like Wahi and Jai Bhagwan Yadav have been chosen, young leaders like Dr Monika Pant and Manish Chaddha, too, have been allowed to learn and serve.

Sachdeva expressed confidence that the experience of the newly elected Mayor will contribute to further improving the upkeep of Delhi.

## Delhi Health Minister inaugurates advanced 3D dental imaging facility

**NEW DELHI:** Delhi Health Minister Pankaj Kumar Singh on Wednesday inaugurated a state-of-the-art 3D dental imaging facility at the Maulana Azad Institute of Dental Sciences, saying the technology will significantly improve diagnostic precision and patient care in the national capital.

According to a statement, a Cone Beam Computed Tomography (CBCT) machine has been installed at the institute as part of efforts to strengthen advanced healthcare infrastructure in Delhi.

The minister said the CBCT technology offers significantly lower radiation exposure, up to 10 times less than conventional CT scans, along with highly precise diagnostic capabilities, particularly for surgeons and dental specialists.

He added that the system will enable clinicians to clearly assess critical an-

atomical structures, including nerves, and plan surgical procedures with greater accuracy. The CBCT system provides high-resolution 3D imaging with faster scan times, typically completed within seconds in a single rotation, while also improving patient comfort by allowing imaging in seated or standing positions.

Singh appreciated the efforts of the institute's medical superintendent and staff for introducing the advanced facility, noting that such initiatives will help improve clinical outcomes and overall patient care.

The facility is also expected to strengthen academic training and research at the institute, allowing students and practitioners to gain hands-on experience with advanced diagnostic tools across specialties such as oral surgery, orthodontics and implantology.

## Delhi to boost homoeopathy, integrate AYUSH with mainstream healthcare: Min

**NEW DELHI:** The Delhi government is working to strengthen homoeopathy services and integrate AYUSH systems with mainstream healthcare, Health Minister Pankaj Kumar Singh said on Wednesday.

According to a statement, the government marked World Homoeopathy Day 2026 with a scientific seminar at the NDMC Convention Centre on the 27th birth anniversary of Samuel Hahnemann.

The seminar, themed "Homoeopathy in the Era of Integrative Medicine: Bridging Traditions, Advancing Health", was jointly organised by the Delhi State AYUSH Society and the Directorate of AYUSH, marking the first such collaboration between the two.

"Homoeopathy has immense potential in addressing today's healthcare challenges, especially in stress management and chronic conditions. The Delhi Government is committed to strengthening AYUSH infrastructure and ensuring its effective integration with mainstream healthcare," Singh said, according to the state-



ment.

He said over 120 homoeopathic dispensaries across Delhi are providing free consultation and medicines, catering to nearly 19 lakh patients annually, reflecting growing public trust in the system.

The minister added that the government is working to open new polyclinics, address staff shortages and expand services, particularly in underserved areas.

Highlighting a key initiative, Singh spoke about the Integrated AYUSH Stress Management Public

Health Programme under the 'Manas Swasthya' vision, aimed at addressing psychosomatic disorders through a combined approach of Ayurveda, Yoga and Homoeopathy.

He also emphasised the need for integrating AYUSH systems with allopathic care through a co-location model, allowing patients to access multiple treatment systems under one roof. The event was attended by senior officials, policymakers and experts from organisations such as the Central Government Health Scheme, New Delhi Municipal Council, Municipal Corporation of Delhi and the Central Council for Research in Homoeopathy. The programme also saw the release of IEC material on the role of homoeopathy in musculoskeletal disorders and the felicitation of practitioners, including Padma Shri awardees V K Gupta, Anil Kumari Malhotra and Kalyan Banerjee.

The government will continue to focus on strengthening infrastructure, expanding access and promoting research in AYUSH systems, the statement said.

## EC to order repoll if EVM tampering allegations proved true in Bengal, says CEO

**KOLKATA:** West Bengal's Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) Manoj Agarwal on Wednesday said the Election Commission will order repoll in booths where allegations of EVM tampering using tapes or ink are found to be true, asserting that the poll panel has a "zero tolerance" policy against such offences.

The CEO said that a repoll will be ordered only after the authorities examine reports from the district election officer or election observers on allegations of tampering with EVMs using tapes or blot of ink.

Agarwal's statement came following allegations by the BJP that the party's symbols on EVMs were covered with tapes or ink in certain booths during the second and final phase of polling, which is under-

way.

BJP IT cell chief Amit Malviya shared a video on X, claiming that white tape had been placed on the party's symbol in booth numbers 144 and 189 in the Falta assembly seat, and demanded a re-poll.

"Wherever we got tapes (on EVMs) or any form of tampering with the EVMs, we will conduct a repoll. We will follow a zero-tolerance policy," Agarwal told reporters.

He said that preliminary checks have not indicated any tampering during the handling of machines by polling officials, including mock polls.

"If a large number of booths in any assembly constituency report such instances, we will conduct a repoll in the entire constituency. I do not have the exact number (where allegations were raised),"

he said.

According to standard operating procedures, the EVMs are the responsibility of the central paramilitary forces, the CEO said.

Agarwal said that the alleged acts might have occurred during voting. "It seems that when people are going to cast the votes, they are pasting these tapes on the machines. It is not that we will not be able to find it out. We will check how much time people spent while casting votes," he said.

Those found guilty will face the strictest possible punishment as per the law, the CEO said.

The Commission has not yet confirmed the authenticity of the video shared by Malviya, but said that ground reports are being examined.

Responding to the al-

legation by Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee about "excessive activism" by police and central forces in parts of her Bhabanipur constituency, Agarwal said security personnel acted as per their assessment.

"We cannot say what the police are doing. It is the police's job to assess the situation and decide where to go to prevent unrest. They must have had some input, which is why they moved. The responsibility of conducting a free and fair election also lies with the police," he said.

The Election Commission said it has received 2,196 complaints of various types so far from the 142 assembly constituencies where polls were held on Wednesday.

In the first phase, voting was held in 152 seats on April 23. Results will be announced on May 4.

## Gurugram police demolish illegal property of criminal



**GURUGRAM:** Gurugram police on Wednesday demolished the illegal property of criminal Ravindra alias Sarkar, who was involved in more than a dozen serious crimes.

The police carried out the operation in Taj Nagar village in the Farrukhnagar area in the presence of a large police force, police said.

According to police, the accused Ravindra has been involved in serious criminal activities, including murder,

attempted murder, robbery, extortion, and Arms Act violations, with 15 cases registered against him.

The investigation revealed that Ravindra, a property dealer, had illegally constructed a seven-room, two-storey house on 350 square yards worth crores of rupees and rented out the building, police said.

"This operation was carried out by the Crime Branch, Farrukhnagar in coordination with the district administration.

## Seven dead in Bengaluru rains; Kumaraswamy seeks permanent solutions

Udupi, Apr 30: Karnataka State Campaign Committee coordinator Kripa Alva raised concern over the alleged misuse of the "Nari Shakti" narrative for political purposes, she accused the central government of delaying genuine women empowerment measures while pushing controversial legislative changes.

Addressing the media during the press conference held at Udupi press club on April 30, Kripa Alva asserted that political manipulation in the name of women's empowerment must stop. While the government speaks about 'Nari Shakti', they alleged that attempts are being made to introduce two 'dangerous' legislations through the backdoor — the



Delimitation Bill, 2026 and the Union Territories Laws Amendment Bill, 2026. "This is not women empowerment. It is a political conspiracy to redraw constituencies for electoral advantage," she said, questioning the use of outdated 2011 Census data to determine the country's future.

Kripa Alva further criticized the lack of transparency and consultation, asking whether any discussions were held with state governments, chief ministers, or the public before moving forward with such decisions. Raising direct questions to Prime Minister Narendra Modi, she asked why the Women's

Reservation Bill passed in 2023 has not been implemented even after 30 months. "If there was genuine commitment, why delay it until 2026 after calling it historic?" they questioned. They also referred to Union Home Minister Amit Shah's earlier remarks describing the move as a "historic step," and asked what tangible benefits women have received so far. Highlighting ground realities, they pointed out multiple issues faced by women across the country, including violence against women in Manipur, rising cost of living, increasing LPG prices, protests by ASHA and Anganwadi workers, and deletion of women's names from voter lists.

## UDUPI: PEDESTRIAN HAS NARROW ESCAPE AS TREE FALLS NEAR JATKA STAND

Udupi, Apr 29: A woman walking near the city's Jatka Stand had a miraculous escape on Wednesday, April 29, after a tree suddenly uprooted and fell onto the road.

The incident occurred at a time when there is growing public demand for the removal of dangerously leaning or weak trees across the city. Despite the fall occurring in a high-traffic, crowded area,

no injuries to pedestrians or damage to vehicles were reported.

Following the incident, local residents and passersby worked together to clear the branches and the trunk from the road, ensuring that the flow of traffic was restored quickly. Citizens have urged the municipal authorities to conduct a survey of old and hazardous trees to prevent such close calls in the future.



## Udupi: Vehicle movement on Ambalpady overpass to begin by May 20 - MP Kota Srinivas Poojary



Udupi, Apr 29: Vehicle movement on the much-awaited Ambalpady overpass is expected to begin between May 15 and May 20, according to Udupi - Chikkamagaluru MP Kota Srinivas Poojary.

Speaking to Daijiworld, the MP said, "The project is progressing at a fast pace and will soon ease connectivity between Udupi and Mangaluru. The Ambalpady overpass was taken up due to the increasing number of accidents in the area. Once the DPR is ready and approved by the central government, the projects will be taken up. The plan also includes the widening of dividers and additional safety measures. If everything goes as planned, we will see a highway similar to the high-quality roads seen towards Kannur in Kerala," he added. The work is now nearing completion, and vehicle movement will likely be allowed between May 15 and 20.

He added that Udupi has recently witnessed significant progress in other key infrastructure projects. "The Kallianpur - Santhekatte stretch has been completed, and traffic is moving

smoothly. At Katapady, one side of the work was completed within six months, which has helped ease congestion. Work is also ongoing on the Hejama - Kundapura stretch of National Highway 66. This stretch covers about 64 km, and we are constructing service roads on both sides. A number of accidents had occurred here earlier; with these developments, we expect accidents to reduce by nearly 80 per cent. So far, around 24 km of work has been completed, and the remaining portion will be finished soon," he said.

He further informed that a Detailed Project Report (DPR) is being prepared for the NH-66 stretch from Talapady to Shiruru. "A six-month survey is required to identify locations where flyovers and other infrastructure are necessary. Once the DPR is ready and approved by the central government, the projects will be taken up. The plan also includes the widening of dividers and additional safety measures. If everything goes as planned, we will see a highway similar to the high-quality roads seen towards Kannur in Kerala," he added.

## Heatwave effect in coastal belt: Extra beds arranged in govt hospitals in Dakshina

Mangaluru, Apr 30: While intense summer heat continues to scorch the coastal region, rising humidity levels have also left people distressed and caused health-related issues. As a precautionary measure, the health department has begun emergency preparedness steps.



In Dakshina Kannada (DK) district, the weather department has issued orange and yellow alerts regarding the heat. In view of public health concerns, the health department has earmarked special beds in the district hospital, taluk hospitals, and community health centres. Five beds each have been reserved in taluk hospitals and two beds each in community health centres for heat-related cases.

Heat-related skin problems have started increasing in the district. The number of people visiting primary health centres due to excessive sweating and related discomfort has risen. Symptoms such as itching, rashes and scabies-like irritation caused by the heat are being increasingly reported. Health department officials said three to five patients with such symptoms are seeking treatment daily. District Health Officer Dr H R Thimmayya said, "Along with rising temperatures in Dakshina Kannada, humidity levels have also increased. Health issues may begin once temperatures cross

40 degrees Celsius in the district. The weather department has issued a red alert in some districts including Yadgir. At present, Dakshina Kannada is under orange and yellow alert. The department has made all necessary preparations."

The health department has directed that details of anyone treated for heat-related illnesses, including heat stroke, must be recorded immediately. Accordingly, if any patient approaches a private hospital for such treatment, the details must be uploaded to the health department web portal. Similar procedures have been made mandatory in government hospitals as well.

From primary health centres to the district hospital, ORS packet corners have been set up as these are widely used during summer. Usage of ORS packets has increased over the past week. Officials said the department has also permitted local procurement to ensure there is no shortage of medicines. As heat intensity increased in the coastal region, the health department held a special meeting two days ago.

## UDUPI: MAHE, TENVIC LAUNCH ACADEMIC PROGRAMMES TO TRANSFORM INDIA'S SPORTS ECOSYSTEM

Udupi, Apr 29: Manipal Academy of Higher Education (MAHE), an Institution of Eminence Deemed to be University, in collaboration with TENVIC Sports, has launched the first phase of its academic programmes. This marks a significant milestone in their partnership to strengthen India's sports ecosystem through integrated education and athlete development.

As part of this initiative, MAHE and TENVIC Sports have introduced specialised academic courses in business of sports, data acquisition and analytics, and artificial intelligence and machine learning in sports.

These programmes aim to equip students and working professionals with the knowledge and practical skills required for careers in the rapidly expanding sports industry. The institutions plan to introduce additional courses in sports coaching, sports sciences, and sports media in the near future.

These offerings are accessible through the MAHE Plus portal (https://maheplus.manipal.edu/), which delivers micro-credentials and certificate programmes in online, blended, and face-to-face formats.

To further strengthen the sports ecosystem, MAHE and TENVIC Sports will establish high-performance centres at the MAHE campuses in Manipal and Bengaluru. These centres will provide elite athletes with access to world-class coaching, sports science support, and residential training facilities while enabling them to pursue academic programmes through affiliated schools and colleges on campus.



The centres will initially focus on four sporting disciplines, with plans to expand to nearly a dozen sports over time. These disciplines have been selected based on their potential for international success and the availability of structured professional leagues.

The academic programmes will also include guest lectures from distinguished industry experts, including Siddharth Raman, Deepti Bopiah, and Sandeep Kannabadi, among others. Addressing the gathering, Dr H S Ballal, pro chancellor, MAHE, said, "MAHE's collaboration with TENVIC underscores our commitment to innovation and excellence in higher education. By preparing the next generation of professionals—on the field and across India's sports ecosystem—we are contributing to a fitter nation and a stronger sports culture."

Lt Gen (Dr) M D Venkatesh, VSM (retd), vice chancellor, MAHE, said, "For decades, athletes faced uncertainty beyond their competitive years. Through

the TENVIC-MAHE high-performance centres, we are ending that era by blending elite training with flexible and meaningful academic learning. This dual pathway secures their futures on and off the field."

Dr Sharath K Rao, pro vice chancellor (Health Sciences), MAHE, said, "The MAHE-TENVIC partnership brings together education, performance, and purpose. By embedding flexible academic learning within high-performance sport environments, we are expanding opportunities for athletes to prepare for life beyond competition."

Anil Kumble, co-founder, TENVIC Sports, said, "Today marks a red-letter day in Indian sports. India's sports ecosystem faces a severe shortage of competent, industry-ready professionals. The TENVIC-MAHE programmes bridge this skill gap. This long-term talent pipeline will systematically equip many to sustainably power India's sporting growth for decades." Vasanth Bharadwaj, CEO and co-founder, TENVIC Sports, added, "Through the TENVIC-MAHE high-performance centres, we are blending elite training with flexible academic learning to accommodate an athlete's demanding schedules. This dual pathway transforms talent development."

## Complaint filed by Ahinda Organization Forum seeking immediate action over alleged Hindu defamation in an educational institution



Bengaluru : A complaint has been filed with the Cyber Crime Division alleging that anti-Hindu teachings were conducted in violation of government orders at Jamia Muhammadiyah Mansoor Educational Institution in Thanisandra. The complainants have demanded strict action against those responsible for insulting the religion.

N. Revanna, Vice President of the Karnataka State Ahinda Organization Forum and father of a student studying at the institution, has submitted a complaint to the Mysuru Cyber Crime Division. He stated that anti-Hindu remarks are available on YouTube and urged authorities to verify the content and take immediate

action against those involved.

According to the complaint, during classroom teaching at the institution, certain religious leaders allegedly told students that "Hindus are migrants who came here from Afghanistan in search of food for their cattle. After arriving here, they became Brahmins, Shudras, and Kshatriyas. Hindus are not natives; they are intruders who came from foreign lands." It is alleged that such statements are instilling divisive ideas in students' minds.

The complaint further states that these individuals are hurting Hindu religious sentiments, showing disrespect toward Lord Shri Rama, and delivering provocative speeches calling for the destruction of "Ram Rajya."

Instead of teaching moral values, they are allegedly engaging in criticism of other religions. The complainant has urged authorities to take immediate action against those spreading such "poisonous ideas."

Earlier, a person named Abdul Raheem had also filed a complaint at Kothanur Police Station regarding religious defamation activities in the institution. Based on this, the Deputy Director of the School Education Department of Bengaluru South district had issued an official notice instructing that no such activities should be conducted on the school premises. The complainant has requested strict action against those who have defied government orders.

## Commissioner Inspects Works in Kacharakanahalli Area:

DIRECTS EARLY COMPLETION OF LAKE DESILTING AND FOOTPATH WORKS

Bengaluru: Commissioner of Bengaluru North City Corporation Pommala Sunil Kumar, inspected various ongoing works in the Kacharakanahalli area.

During the inspection, the Commissioner visited Kacharakanahalli Lake and directed the concerned officials to complete the desilting works by the end of May without delay.

He also reviewed the white-topping works being carried out by B-Smile along the road near the lake and instructed officials to expedite the completion of the footpath construction. The Commissioner further observed water stagnation in the rajakaluve (stormwater drain inlet) near the lake and directed officials to take necessary measures to ensure free flow of water and resolve the issue at the earliest. He emphasized that timely completion of infrastructure works is crucial and instructed all concerned officials to carry out their responsibilities diligently. The inspection was attended by Chief Engineers, Executive Engineers, and other concerned officials and staff.



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Muthoot Homefin (India) Ltd. 19/E, The Ruby, Senapati Bapat Marg, Tulse Pipe Road, Near Ruparel College, Dadar West, Mumbai - 400028.  
Branch Office: Muthoot Homefin (India) Ltd. Ground Floor, Muthoot Crown Plaza, Tourist Bungalow Rd, Kottayam, Kerala - 686001

APPENDIX-IV-A [See provision to Rule 8(6)]  
PUBLIC NOTICE FOR AUCTION CUM SALE

Pursuant to taking possession of the secured asset mentioned hereunder by the Authorized Officer of Muthoot Homefin (India) Ltd. under the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 for the recovery of amount due from borrower/s, offers are invited by the undersigned in sealed covers for purchase of immovable property, as described hereunder, which is in the possession, on 'As Is Where Is Basis', 'As Is What Is Basis' and 'Whatever Is There Is Basis', Particulars of which are given below:-

Sr. No.	Borrower(s)/ Co-Borrower(s)/ Guarantor(s) / Loan Account No. / Branch	Demand Notice Date and Amount	Description of the Immovable property	Reserve Price	Earnest Money Deposit (EMD) (10% of RP)
1.	Shihab E M/ Shahana K I/ Salman Maithteen/ KOM-HL-000262/ Kottayam	24-Jun-25/ Rs. 61,34,775/- Rupees Sixty One Lakh Thirty Four Thousand Seven Hundred Seventy Five Only.	04.55 Ares and Individual House No.12/176 A, Rsy 173/3B-3,173/3B-3-2, Near Pallapady Bridge, Varapatty Village, Koathamangalam Taluk Ernakulam Pincode-686691 North-Shashi, South-Pathmanabhan, East-Panchayath Road, West-Damodharan	Rs. 59,99,962/- Rupees Fifty Nine Lakh Ninety Nine Thousand Nine Hundred Sixty Two Only.	Rs. 5,99,996/- Rupees Five Lakh Ninety Nine Thousand Nine Hundred Ninety Six.

1. The Auction is being held on "AS IS WHERE IS" AND "AS IS WHAT IS" basis  
2. The detailed terms and conditions of the auction sale are incorporated in the prescribed tender form, available at the above mentioned regional office  
3. Last Date of Submission of Sealed Bid/Offer in the prescribed tender forms along with EMD payable by way of Demand Draft in Favor of "Muthoot Homefin (India) Ltd." along with KYC is on 03-Jun-2026 till 04:00 PM at Regional Office the address mentioned herein above. Tenders that are not filled up completely or tenders received beyond last date will be considered as invalid tender and shall accordingly be rejected. No interest shall be paid on the EMD.  
4. Date of Inspection of the Immovable Property is on 02-Jun-2026 between 01:00 P.M. to 03:00 P.M.  
5. Date of Opening of the Bid/Offer Auction Date for Property is 04-Jun-2026 at the above mentioned Branch Office address at 01:00 P.M. by the Authorized Officer.  
6. The MHL shall not be responsible for payment of any outstanding statutory notice & Encumbrances / taxes arrears etc. if any & their Responsible to pay the sum would be that of the Successful auction purchase. The Intending bidder should make their own independent inquiries regarding the Encumbrances Title of property & also inspect & satisfy themselves.  
7. The Highest bidder shall be subject to approval of MHL Ltd. Authorized Officer shall Reserve the right to accept all any of the offer/Bid so received without assign any reason whatsoever. His decision shall be final and binding.  
8. The Borrower(s)/Guarantor(s) are hereby given 30 DAYS SALE NOTICE UNDER THE SARFAESI ACT, 2002 to pay the sum mentioned as above before the date of Auction failing which the immovable property will be auctioned and balance, if any, will be recovered with interest and costs. If the Borrower pays the amount due to Muthoot Homefin (India) Ltd. in full, before the date of sale, auction is liable to be set aside.  
For further details, contact the Authorized Officer, at the above mentioned Office address Contact Person- Ananthkrishnan R - 7356922841  
Date : May 01, 2026  
Place: Ernakulam

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

EDITORIAL

*Pak Is Finally Back In Middle East's 'Good Books'. But Can It Stay There?*

US President Donald Trump's decision to extend the ceasefire with Iran indefinitely, as both sides search for a continuation of dialogue amidst a standoff over the Strait of Hormuz, has once again put Pakistan at the centre of a delicate diplomatic position as it plays the role of conduit between the Ayatollah and Trump.

The diplomatic position Rawalpindi, and by association Islamabad, today finds itself in is expected to be a boon for the embattled country's international standing - but also, perhaps more narrowly, help it return into the good graces of the Middle East. This is both an enviable and challenging space to be in for the only Islamic nation in the world that has nuclear weapons. Anchoring these political overtures, at least in part, is a defence deal that Pakistan in 2025 signed with its long-standing patron and partner in the Gulf, Saudi Arabia. The deal saw mobilisation of a few thousand Pakistani soldiers accompanied by a fleet of fighter jets to bolster its Arab partner's defences amidst a US-Iran war that has spilt over across the region. The Saudis have maintained a delicate balance in the war despite their energy installations being targeted, and have postured in a way that indicates a realisation that the crisis with Iran is one for the long term and not something the current conflict will necessarily resolve. Continuing to have a diplomatic presence, followed by a China-brokered normalisation of ties between Riyadh and Tehran in 2023, allows Saudi Arabia to keep a door ajar at a time when the probability of Iran gaining an upper hand in the Gulf security architecture remains high. While Iran's leadership maintains that it seeks good relations with its neighbours, for the Gulf states, Iran, with a Shia-majority population of over 93 million people and as the 17th largest country in the world, has always presented a bigger security challenge.

**The Flattery**  
Amidst the noise encapsulating the war, especially that coming from the White House, on April 9, Saudi Foreign Minister Faisal bin Farhan Al Saud and his Iranian counterpart, Abbas Araghchi, held a phone conversation. This, in fact, was a precursor and foundational exchange for allowing Pakistan's military leader, Field Marshal Asim Munir, to become a host and allow Islamabad to position itself as a self-styled mediator. From the perspective of the US - with Trump already bowled over by Munir's "flair" and Pakistan's role as a strategic toady - ingratiating the American leader with kind and an inherent lack of self-respect, by allowing him 'victories' in way of subscribing to his idea that the 2025 military exchange with arch-rival India was the eighth war he stopped, Pakistan offered a relatively low-risk entry into a renewed diplomatic track. To take the strategic flattery further, Pakistan is perhaps the only second country on record suggesting that Trump should indeed receive the Nobel Peace Prize - an award the US president has made no bones about wanting to be felicitated with. That the US, over the decades, has continued to fall prey to the same Pakistani game time and again is an indictment of the Pentagon's hubris of wanting to be the sole hegemonic power in the world. This is despite internal divisions, specifically amongst MAGA supporters, over whether the US should continue play the role of the world's policeman or not.

**Nothing To Lose**  
The cost of failure for Pakistan if Iran and the US return to a military conflict is also minimal. For, costs can be imposed only if there is anything at all available to impose them against. A Pakistani headline in its own press recently read: "Pakistan returned \$2 billion debt to the United Arab Emirates by taking a new debt from Saudi Arabia". Irrespective of the success of US-Iran talks, Rawalpindi, for its own narrow interests, has further strengthened the Pakistan Army's role as the main political actor in the state it runs. However, it now benefits from the fact that the Iran war has pushed concerns around long-term security for the Arab states into the limelight. Pakistan has a nuclear status, along with hardened and battle-tested armed forces, and economic destitution that can be leveraged by petrodollars. For the Saudis, for example, Pakistan has been a military backend for long - one that they have funded for decades. From helping clear out the 1979 Siege of Mecca by militants led by Juhayman al-Otaybi to sending troops to protect Mecca and Medina itself during the first Gulf War in 1990, Pakistan has fully utilised its curious combination of military strength and Islam to navigate the region's geopolitics in a bid to keep its economy afloat. Amidst all this, Iran has its own mistrusts with Pakistan. There are Iranian power ecosystems that quip about Pakistan not being an Islamic country altogether. Tehran and Rawalpindi had a short military exchange in early 2024, and even amidst the current kerfuffle, the Iranian press linked to the powerful Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) has reported busting a terror cell following infiltration from Pakistan's border. The differences run deep. But today, both nations, prisoners of geography as they are, are driven by mutually beneficial short-term gains. Over the past few years, Pakistan has seen itself slide out of favour in the Gulf. The US-Iran war has changed that. Munir and company have taken full advantage of it. But expecting this moment to change long-term fortunes for Pakistan is questioning history itself. This is where the second parallel narrative comes into play. It does not completely contradict the first narrative, but is more nuanced. In this narrative, there is acceptance that there is widespread resentment and anger against the lower-rung leadership of the Trinamool. At the same time, there is an assertion that Mamata Banerjee remains the tallest and the most popular leader in the state. More importantly, the series of welfare schemes and doles, particularly centred around women, will help the Trinamool cross the finishing line. Female voters will naturally play a critical role in this. Even independent observers and analysts who think that the TMC has governed very poorly seem to think that the Bengali female has once again come to the rescue of Mamata.

Promises vs Delivery There are two reasons for this nuanced analysis. The first is the recent history of assembly elections since the 2024 Lok Sabha elections, where all exit polls turned out to be inaccurate. Elections have been conducted since then in Haryana, Jharkhand, Maharashtra, Delhi and Bihar. In all these assembly elections, the incumbent has made promises in concrete terms about women-centric welfare schemes and doles.

THE RESERVATION DEBATE:  
**Equal opportunity, social justice, and the challenge of changing times**



PRIYANKA SAURABH

The debate over reservations in India is not new, but from time to time, the issue returns to the forefront due to new circumstances and events. Recent controversies surrounding the University Grants Commission (UGC) regarding higher education and institutional policies have further intensified this discussion. While there are those who believe that caste-based reservations have lost their relevance, a significant minority still considers them essential for social justice and equal opportunity. To understand this complex debate, it is essential to move beyond emotional reactions and seriously consider its historical, social, and economic dimensions. First, we must understand the underlying spirit of reservation. Indian society has grappled with deep social inequalities for centuries. Certain sections of society were systematically deprived of education, resources, and a dignified life. This was not just a question of economic deprivation, but also of social exclusion and inequality of opportunity. Against this backdrop, the framers of the Constitution enacted reservation as a temporary measure to bring the disadvantaged sections of society



into the mainstream and provide them with equal opportunities. However, today's India is vastly different from the India of 70-75 years ago. Education has expanded, urbanization has increased, and new doors of opportunity have opened up for the new generation. This is why some question whether the same policies enacted decades ago should remain in place. They argue that people from all castes are now employed in various fields, so caste should not be the sole basis for reservation. They also point out that even within the upper caste community, there are a significant number of economically disadvantaged people, for whom the lack of opportunities is just as real. This argument is not entirely unfounded. In fact, economic inequality has become a

major challenge in Indian society today. Many families do not fall into any reserved category, but due to financial constraints, they are unable to provide their children with adequate resources for higher education or preparation for competitive examinations. This raises the demand that economic status be the basis for reservation or assistance, so that assistance can reach those truly in need. In keeping with this philosophy, the government has also established reservations for the economically weaker sections (EWS). This can be considered an important step, as it acknowledges that poverty is not limited to a single social class. However, the question remains: will providing reservations based solely on economic conditions be sufficient? On the other hand, a

strong argument in support of reservation is that social discrimination and inequality have not yet been completely eliminated. Numerous studies and social experiences show that some sections of society still lag behind in terms of education, employment, and social acceptance. Even though some people have progressed economically, the experience of discrimination based on social identity has not completely ended. This is why reservation for Scheduled Castes (SCs) and Scheduled Tribes (STs) is seen not only as a form of economic support, but also as a form of social representation. Another important issue arises here—that of the "creamy layer." This system applies to the Other Backward Classes (OBCs), under which economically advantaged families are

denied reservation benefits. Many demand that this principle be applied to SC/ST categories as well, so that reservation benefits reach those truly in need. However, there is disagreement on this issue, as some experts believe that the impact of social discrimination among these classes is so profound that it cannot be ignored even if the economic situation improves. Concerns are often raised about reservations in medical and technical fields, claiming that they could impact quality. This is a sensitive issue, as these fields directly involve human life and safety. However, it should also be noted that ultimate competence and proficiency in any profession are determined by training, hard work, and experience. All students in medical colleges and other institutions undergo the same curriculum, examinations, and evaluation processes. Therefore, questioning quality based solely on reservations may be a biased approach. Nevertheless, it must be acknowledged that the education system needs reform. If all students receive equal quality education at the primary and secondary levels, inequality in higher education may automatically decrease. Even today, there is a significant quality gap between government and private schools, which further creates a competitive imbalance. Therefore, alongside the debate on reservations, it is important to pay equal attention to improving the education system. Another aspect is representation. In any democratic society, it is crucial that all sections of society receive fair representation in decision-making bodies. Reservations serve as a means to this end.

**Can Saudi Arabia, Now Alone At The Top, Manage To Keep Oil Stable?**

The decision of the United Arab Emirates (UAE) to withdraw from the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) and the broader OPEC+ alliance from May 1, 2026, is not just another policy adjustment to the Hormuz crisis. It reflects a deeper cleavage in the global energy governance architecture that for so long relied on geopolitical stability, shared incentives, and equitable risk-sharing among producer countries. These conditions no longer hold true. Evolving geopolitical and geoeconomics realities have exposed the vulnerability of a decades-old energy system. The move comes amid a volatile regional conflict and supply disruptions following the Israel-USA-Iran war and the closure of the Strait of Hormuz. Even as the precarious ceasefire holds, supply losses of roughly 10-12 million barrels per day continue to strain the global energy system.

**Why The UAE Walked Away**  
OPEC was established to coordinate oil production among the Middle Eastern energy producers and, by extension, stabilize global crude prices. The model is now under visible strain. While the group still controls a significant portion of global energy output, its share has declined to almost one-third over the years, while the OPEC+ accounts for a little over 40%. The UAE contributes almost 12% of total OPEC output, or 3% of global supply, amounting to approximately 3.4 million barrels per day (mbpd). It operates nearly 30% below its installed capacity of 4.85 mbpd - absorbing substantial opportunity costs in line with allotted production quotas. The frustration of underutilised capacity is not new and has been compounded by uneven compliance within the group, with countries like Russia, Iraq and Kazakhstan at times exceeding their allocated targets. The timing of the UAE's exit is therefore both opportune and noteworthy. It comes at a time when Abu Dhabi sees a clear economic incentive to boost production and lock in market share amid global supply shortages, and more importantly, step away from a system whose structural rigidities no longer serve its economic priorities.

**1. Energy Security Is No Longer Equal**  
Since the disruptions, OPEC production has collapsed 27% (to 20.8 mbpd) in March with almost 8 mbpd loss of Gulf output, while the UAE's output alone slumped 44% to approximately 1.9 million bpd. The Hormuz crisis has laid bare a harsh truth - that spare capacity is no longer a sufficient pre-condition for supply management. Export routes, redundancies, insurance, and infrastructure security are equally important considerations while determining a country's resilience during crises, and these factors are highly uneven across the producer nations. This alters the logic of coordination. The quota discipline no longer offers shared optimization but instead imposes asymmetric constraints. The UAE seeks to break loose from an alliance that was designed for stable market conditions, and distributes costs disproportionately under increasing geopolitical stress. The opportunity cost for production varies dramatically among member countries depending on the exposure to geopolitical risk and logistical bottlenecks. UAE withdrawal is, therefore, an acknowledgement that the OPEC framework no longer reflects these differences.

**If Mamata Banerjee Wins Again, It Might Be Only Because Of One Particular Group**

The lead author has been asserting for more than a decade that while credible polling agencies with transparent methodologies are more or less certain to get nearly accurate vote shares in an exit poll, it is a mug's game to expect even the best of them to get the right forecast for the number of seats. That point has been proven time and again, particularly with the series of elections beginning with the Lok Sabha elections of 2024. Keeping that in mind, CVoter has decided to stick to vote shares and leave seat projections to those brave enough to do it. Two Parallel Narratives Yet, when you have hundreds of field personnel on the ground for an extended period of time backed by daily tracker surveys, you do get a sense of what might possibly happen. In the case of West Bengal, one has seen two parallel narratives. The first narrative is that there is so much anti-incumbency and so much anger against the lower rung leadership of the TMC that a regime change is inevitable in this assembly election. What does it mean in terms of actual data? In the 2021 assembly elections, the TMC had a near 10% vote share advantage over the BJP. For the first narrative to come true, there has to be a 5% swing in vote share. This is where the second parallel narrative comes into play. It does not completely contradict the first narrative, but is more nuanced. In this narrative, there is acceptance that there is widespread resentment and anger against the lower-rung leadership of the Trinamool. At the same time, there is an assertion that Mamata Banerjee remains the tallest and the most popular leader in the state. More importantly, the series of welfare schemes and doles, particularly centred around women, will help the Trinamool cross the finish-



ing line. Female voters will naturally play a critical role in this. Even independent observers and analysts who think that the TMC has governed very poorly seem to think that the Bengali female has once again come to the rescue of Mamata. Promises vs Delivery There are two reasons for this nuanced analysis. The first is the recent history of assembly elections since the 2024 Lok Sabha elections, where all exit polls turned out to be inaccurate. Elections have been conducted since then in Haryana, Jharkhand, Maharashtra, Delhi and Bihar. In all these assembly elections, the incumbent has made promises in concrete terms about women-centric welfare schemes and doles. Opposition parties have made even more extravagant promises. But barring Delhi, female voters have found the comparatively more modest dole promises by incumbents to be more credible. Even in

Bengal witness a repeat of recent assembly elections where female voters have decided to stick with the known "devil" rather than go for a tectonic regime change? The Bengal Polling Percentage To understand this better, let's look at the polling percentages in West Bengal. In the first round, where 152 seats were up for contest, the poll percentage was 93.19%. There was no eye-catching gender difference, with the female polling percentage being just about 2% higher than males. In the second, more crucial round on April 29, where the 142 seats up for grabs have long been a TMC citadel, the poll percentage dropped a little to 91.66%. The female poll percentage was once again just about 2% higher than male. There is nothing much to conclude from this set of data. But this is where the authors rely on months-long pre-poll surveys conducted by CVoter on a weekly and daily basis to gauge voting intentions, right up to the first week of April 2026. Anyone familiar with the recent political and electoral history of West Bengal knows that while the BJP has done extremely well in north Bengal, it has so far failed to breach the Mamata citadel of south Bengal. This is particularly true for the five Presidency districts - Kolkata, Howrah, 24 North Parganas, 24 South Parganas and Nadia - that send 108 members to the assembly. In 2021, the TMC won 97 of these 108 seats. Any chance that the BJP has of dethroning Mamata will materialise only if it breaches this citadel. Right up to the first week of April, CVoter tracker surveys showed two clear trends. In north Bengal, neither party had a decisive edge when it came to the female voter. However, in south Bengal, our surveys indicated that the TMC enjoys a near 4% female vote share advantage over the BJP.

# Oil price hits highest since 2022 after report Trump to be briefed on new Iran options

Oil prices jumped to their highest since 2022 after a report that the US military is set to brief President Donald Trump on new plans for potential action in the Iran war. Brent crude rose by almost 7% to more than \$126 (£94) a barrel at one point, before falling back. US Central Command has prepared a plan for a wave of "short and powerful" strikes on Iran to try to break the deadlock in negotiations with Tehran, news site Axios reported. The BBC has contacted US Central Command and the White House for comment. Energy prices have been rising this week as peace talks appear to have stalled, with the key Strait of Hormuz waterway still effectively closed. About 20% of the world's oil and liquefied natural gas (LNG) usually passes through the strait and the conflict has sent global energy prices soaring. Crude oil is a key ingredient in petrol and diesel, and the jump in costs since the start of the Iran war has pushed up pump prices for motorists. In the UK, petrol currently costs an average of 157p a litre, according to motoring group RAC, which is 24p higher than before the start of the war. Diesel is at 188.5p a litre, up 46p compared with its pre-war price.



RAC head of policy Simon Williams said that while the price of petrol at the pumps has fallen, "our analysis of wholesale costs shows petrol is now more expensive for retailers to buy than at any time since the war began". "However diesel, which has come down by 3p a litre, is currently well below its highest wholesale price since the start of the conflict, so should fall further." But the potential impact is wider than just petrol and diesel prices. The UK government has warned people could face higher energy, food and flight ticket prices as a result of the war. Some airlines have already started to raise fares or reduce flights.

Fertiliser prices have also started to increase, which could have a knock-on effect on food prices. Brent crude touched \$126.31 a barrel earlier on Thursday, the highest since Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine. However, the price then fell back sharply later in the day to around \$114. The current Brent futures contract for June delivery is due to expire on Thursday. The more active July contract was trading at around \$109 a barrel. Futures contracts are agreements to buy or sell an asset at a set date. The Axios report cited anonymous sources, saying the proposed wave of strikes would be likely to include infrastruc-

ture targets. Another plan focused on taking over part of the Strait of Hormuz so that it can be reopened for commercial shipping, Axios reported, adding that doing so could involve troops on the ground. Meanwhile, a statement attributed to Iran's Supreme Leader Mojtaba Khamenei said that Tehran would secure the Strait of Hormuz and eliminate "the enemy's abuses of the waterway". Khamenei's statement on Thursday also said a "new chapter" for the region had been taking shape since the start of the US-Israeli war with Iran on 28 February. The US said it would blockade Iranian ports for as long as Tehran

continues to threaten vessels that try to use the Strait of Hormuz, severely disrupting global energy shipments. Iran retaliated against US-Israeli airstrikes by threatening to attack ships in the waterway, through which about a fifth of the world's energy usually passes. Oil prices had surged by 6% on Wednesday following reports that Washington was preparing for an "extended" blockade of Iran. "It does seem as though escalation in the war is back on the table, be it in the guise of the US continuing its blockade in Iran, but also reports and rumours that in order to get out of this bind, Iran may start to strike again," said Naveen Das, senior oil analyst at Kpler. He told the BBC's Today programme an oil price approaching \$125 is the point where businesses and politicians "start to get a bit more jittery". "We might start seeing maybe more headlines of trying to de-escalate again," he added, because the increase in prices "has a knock-on effect not only on oil, but oil-related products, inflation and basically every factor of our day-to-day lives". Susannah Streeter, chief investment strategist at Wealth Club, said costs could remain high into next year.

# Bandhan Innovation Fund Marks Two Years of Investing in India's Innovation-Led Growth



Hyderabad, 30th April, 2026: Bandhan Innovation Fund completes two years of investing in businesses where innovation is the primary driver of long-term growth and value creation. The strategy focuses on identifying and investing in businesses that are shaping India's future through innovation-led growth. Launched with a distinct mandate, Bandhan Innovation Fund invests in companies characterized by substantial R&D investments, high-skilled employee intensity, differentiated products or services, non-linear business models, and strong brand presence. The fund seeks to capture opportunities in businesses whose growth trajectories are driven by innovation cycles rather than traditional economic or commodity cycles. Prateek Poddar, Fund Manager - Bandhan Innovation Fund said, "Over time, innovation has emerged as a defining factor

for companies seeking durable competitive advantage. Businesses that innovate successfully are better positioned to compound independent of short-term economic cycles, improve productivity and operating efficiency, expand market share and create entirely new markets. Global and domestic market experience suggests that many of the most valuable companies were owned by long-term investors well before they became meaningful constituents of broad market indices. The fund's approach reflects this insight, seeking to invest ahead of widespread benchmark inclusion rather than after it." India's next generation of market leaders is being built today by engineers, chemists, software architects, and entrepreneurs developing fundamentally new products and services. The opportunity for investors lies in participating in this phase of value

creation early, before these businesses become widely owned and recognized. Bandhan Innovation Fund aims to provide investors with exposure to this growth engine of the economy, companies whose earnings are driven by their own technology cycle. The fund is best suited for investors with a long-term investment horizon and a higher risk appetite, looking to diversify their satellite portfolio and participate in India's evolving innovation landscape. The fund complements with a large cap fund. A blended allocation could give the investor stability along with compounding potential. As the fund enters its third year, its focus will remain unchanged - to stay invested in companies building enduring value through innovation, often ahead of broader recognition, and to remain aligned with the long-term structural shifts shaping India's economic future.

# Meta in row after workers who say they saw smart glasses users having sex lose jobs

Meta is under pressure to explain why it cancelled a major contract with a company it was using to train AI, shortly after some of its Kenya-based workers alleged they had to view graphic content captured by Meta smart glasses. In February, workers at the company, Sama, told two Swedish newspapers they had witnessed glasses users going to the toilet and having sex. Less than two months later, Meta ended its contract with Sama, which Sama said would result in 1,108 workers being made redundant. Meta says it's because Sama did not meet its standards, a criticism Sama rejects. A Kenyan workers' organisation alleges Meta's decision was caused by the staff speaking out. Meta has not addressed that allegation but told BBC News in a statement it had "decided to end our work with Sama because they do not meet our standards". Sama has defended its work. "Sama has consistently met the operational, security and quality standards required across our client



engagements, including with Meta," it said in a statement. "At no point were we notified of any failure to meet those standards, and we stand firmly behind the quality and integrity of our work." In late February, Swedish newspapers Svenska Dagbladet (SvD) and Goteborgs-Posten (GP) published an investigation which included the accounts of unnamed workers who had been asked to review videos filmed by Meta's glasses. "We see everything - from living rooms to naked bodies," one worker reportedly said. At the time of the publication, Meta admitted subcontracted workers might sometimes review

content filmed on its smart glasses when people shared it with Meta AI. It said this was for the purpose of improving the customer experience, and was a common practice among other companies. However, the revelations have prompted regulators to act. Shortly after the Swedish investigation, the UK data watchdog, the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) wrote to Meta about what it called a "concerning" report. The Office of the Data Protection Commissioner in Kenya also announced it was commencing an investigation into privacy concerns raised by the glasses. In a statement in response to

news of the redundancies a Meta spokesperson told the BBC, "last month, we paused our work with Sama while we looked into these claims. We take them seriously. Photos and videos are private to users. Humans review AI content to improve product performance, for which we get clear user consent." "Standards of secrecy' In September Meta unveiled a range of AI-powered glasses in partnership with brands Ray-Ban and Oakley. Features can include translating text, or responding to questions about what the user is looking at - particularly useful for those who are blind or partially sighted. However, as the devices have grown in popularity, so too have concerns about their misuse. The workers the Swedish newspapers spoke to were data annotators, teaching Meta's AI to interpret images by manually labelling content. The workers said they also reviewed transcripts of interactions with the AI to check it had answered questions adequately.

# Rupee falls to 95.20, its weakest ever, as crude and dollar pile on pressure

Mumbai: The rupee depreciated 32 paise to an all-time low of 95.20 against the US dollar in early trade on Thursday, April 30, weighed down by elevated Brent crude oil prices, hovering around USD 122 per barrel, and strong American currency. Forex traders said the USD/INR pair may see further downside, as rising crude oil prices are likely to sharply impact India's import costs, while concerns over potential wider conflict in West Asia are fuelling investor anxiety. Meanwhile, the US dollar added to gains after the US FED Reserve kept rates unchanged. Safe-haven demand was also boosted by another diplomatic setback between Washington and Tehran. At the interbank foreign exchange market, the rupee opened at 95.01 against the US dollar, then lost some ground and touched an all-time low of 95.20 against the US dollar in initial trade, register-



**Highlights**

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ing a fall of 32 paise over its previous close. On Wednesday, April 29, the rupee depreciated 20 paise to close at an all-time low of 94.88 against the US dollar. "The main effect on the rupee has been from the rising oil prices,

which touched USD 120 per barrel and looked headed for further upside as the US continues with its blockade of Iranian ports, while Iran does not allow any ship/tanker to pass through the Strait of Hormuz," said Anil

Kumar Bhansali, Head of Treasury and Executive Director Finrex Treasury Advisors LLP. Meanwhile, the dollar index, which gauges the greenback's strength against a basket of six currencies, was trading 0.01 per cent higher at 98.96. Brent crude, the global oil benchmark, was trading higher by 3.16 per cent at USD 121.76 per barrel in futures trade. On the domestic equity market front, Sensex tumbled 821.79 points to 76,674.57 in early trade, while the Nifty dived 287.3 points to 23,890.35. Foreign Institutional Investors offloaded equities worth Rs 2,468.42 crore on Wednesday, according to exchange data. "FPIs continue with their sale of Indian Equities and debt (the yield touched 7 per cent on Wednesday) and are also dollar buyers consistently," Bhansali added. Meanwhile, the US dollar added to gains after the US FED Reserve kept rates unchanged.

# Advert for £49 serum banned over 'five years younger' claim

An advert for a £49 face serum has been banned over misleading claims that it made users look up to five years younger. The billboard poster claimed the Eucerin Hyaluron-Filler Epigenetic Serum was "clinically proven" following a study of 160 people who used the product for four weeks before being asked how much younger they thought they looked. The advertising watchdog said it had concerns over the study's methodology and the self-reporting meant the results were subjective. Beiersdorf told the investigation it presented the claim as "up to" five years younger to reflect a genuine maximum rather than a typical result. It told the BBC its products were "supported by scientific research". The billboard poster attracted one complaint to the Advertising Standards Authority (ASA) in November 2025 after it appeared at London's Balham Tube station. The ASA report said: "We had concerns about the study's methodology,



including that there was no control group, nor was there information about how participants were recruited." Misleading beauty claims The ASA also said that the serum was tested in a different climate to the UK, and may not work similarly. It added that three other pieces of evidence Beiersdorf put forward to support its claim were all unpublished research, and said it had concerns about each one. The final piece of evidence Beiersdorf submitted, a peer-reviewed study in the active ingredient, did not include the serum. The advert was deemed misleading and

cannot appear in the same form again. Beiersdorf said the billboard was no longer live in the UK. It added: "All of the studies we cite are carried out in line with industry standards." The cosmetics advertising industry can be a culprit for misleading claims, says aesthetics marketing expert Lianne Sykes, who advises firms on ethical advertising. She said firms should do proper skin analysis over a period of time to substantiate any claims made by volunteer groups or in advertising. She said consumers should ask questions before believing "nice branding and big names".

# Maruti Suzuki's employee volunteering initiative 'eParivartan' touches over 8,700 lives

New Delhi, April 2026: Maruti Suzuki India Limited ("Maruti Suzuki") today shared that its employees volunteered over 2,600 hours under the company's flagship initiative, 'eParivartan,' in FY 2025-26, positively impacting the lives of more than 8,700 individuals. Over 1,100 company employees volunteered time and skills across 30+ community activities, ranging from health and community care to education and youth engagement.



**Health & Community Care** During FY 2025-26, Maruti Suzuki employees actively participated in four blood donation drives organised across the Company's offices and manufacturing locations. Volunteers applied their skills to assemble wheelchairs from kits provided by the company. The assembled units were donated to shelter homes and care centers. Company volunteers further contributed by providing food, medicines, dry ration and toiletries, helping address the everyday needs of residents at shelter homes. Additionally, employees engaged with the elderly and underprivileged through structured companionship programmes,

fostering care, dignity and meaningful human connection.

**Education & Youth Engagement** The volunteers also initiated education and engagement with young learners from underprivileged background\*. A key initiative was arranging a visit to the Manesar manufacturing facility. Witnessing large-scale manufacturing and interacting with company employees helped to spark curiosities, widen perspectives and encourage the chil-

dren to think more freely about learning and future possibilities. During the year, volunteers connected with specially-abled children through inclusive interactions and art sessions, fostering creativity and engagement. They also spent time with students with visual impairments, supporting their learning needs through meaningful interactions and the distribution of Braille kits. In addition, the 'Wish Tree' activity enabled employees to fulfil the wish-

es of over 300 underprivileged students, providing school bags, stationery, learning material and toys-creating moments of joy while encouraging continued learning. The initiatives were complemented by several other engaging activities, including school beautification drives, where employee volunteers painted over 1,400 sq. ft. of wall space in government schools in Manesar and Gurugram, helping to create more vibrant and welcoming learning environments. Speaking on the eParivartan efforts, Mr. Rahul Bharti, Senior Executive Officer, Corporate Affairs, Maruti Suzuki India Limited, said, "At Maruti Suzuki, we believe progress is meaningful only when it is shared with the communities around us. We are happy to share that in FY 2025-26, over 1,100 Maruti Suzuki employees volunteered more than 2,600 hours, supporting more than 8,700 people in education, health-care, or companionship. We don't know how much difference we have made to the lives of these people, but we do know that the Maruti Suzuki volunteers have found it an immensely fulfilling, soul-warming, and life-changing experience."

# Trump says US studying troop cuts in Germany, after Merz criticises war

The US is "studying" whether to reduce the thousands of troops it has stationed in Germany, President Donald Trump has announced via social media. His remarks came days after German Chancellor Friedrich Merz criticised his approach to the war in Iran, suggesting that US had been "humiliated" by Iranian negotiators. In his post, Trump said he was "studying and reviewing the possible reduction of Troops in Germany, with a determination to be made over the next short period of time." The US has a significant military presence in Germany, with more than 36,000 active duty troops assigned to bases across the country as of last December. The BBC has reached out to the White House for comment. Merz made no mention of Trump's comments during a visit to German soldiers in Northern Germany on Wednesday, although he went out of his way to stress the importance



of the Nato defensive alliance and "transatlantic solidarity". Earlier this week, however, he told university students that "the Americans clearly have no strategy" and he could not see "what strategic exit" they were going to choose. "The Iranians are obviously very skilled at negotiating, or rather, very skilful at not negotiating, let-

ting the Americans travel to Islamabad and then leave again without any result," he said. He added that the "entire nation" was being "humiliated" by the Iranian leadership. Trump responded the following day with a post to Truth Social, where he said Merz thought it was "OK for Iran to have a Nuclear Weapon" and "doesn't know

what he's talking about." "No wonder Germany is doing so poorly, both Economically, and otherwise!" the post read. When asked about the post in a press conference on Wednesday, Merz said the "personal relationship between the American president and myself remains just as good as before." He has not yet responded to Trump's sug-

gestion that he could reduce US troops in Germany. The US military deployment in Germany is by far its biggest in Europe, with about 12,000 troops in Italy and a further 10,000 in the UK. Many are stationed at the big Ramstein air base outside the south-western German city of Kaiserslautern. And while Trump has proposed US troop reductions in Germany before, they have so far not come into effect. In 2020, a proposal to move 12,000 US troops from Germany either to other Nato countries in Europe or back to the US, was blocked by Congress and then reversed by President Joe Biden. At the time, Trump had accused Germany of being "delinquent" because its military spending was well below Nato's target of 2% of economic output (GDP). But that has changed dramatically under the Merz government: Germany is projected to spend 105.8bn (£91bn) in 2027 - with total defence

expenditure next year set to reach 3.1% of GDP. Merz said after talks with Trump in Washington in March that Trump had assured him the US would maintain its military presence in Germany, adding that he had not expected anything else. However, while Merz has this week complained of the economic consequences for Europe of the closure of the Strait of Hormuz, Trump has been angered by the response of Nato allies in Europe to the war in Iran. Over the past two months, the US president has repeatedly threatened to withdraw from the 32-member Nato alliance, calling it a "paper tiger" and a "one-way street". Earlier in April, a leaked internal Pentagon email detailed potential measures for the US to punish allies it believed had failed to support its campaign in Iran, including a suggestion that the US could seek to suspend Spain from Nato over its stance.

## 'I did not expect it': Kenya's Sabastian Sawe welcomed home with jubilant celebrations



Kenya's Sabastian Sawe has returned home to joyous scenes after becoming the first man to run a marathon in under two hours in competitive race conditions. His incredible achievement at Sunday's London Marathon is being celebrated in Kenya, where officials welcomed him home amid a crush of cameras at the Jomo Kenyatta International Airport in the capital, Nairobi. His parents were also present to greet him, days after the 31-year-old achieved the holy grail of marathon running by smashing the two-hour barrier in a race with an official time of one hour 59 minutes and 30 seconds. "I am happy about this good day, that you came to celebrate with me, I did not expect it," Sawe told the crowd. Sawe's parents drove six hours from their home to be there with his supporters when he landed. His Kenyan Airways plane was given a water cannon salute when it landed, as dancers and musicians performed. The homecoming was a huge moment for Sawe and his family, and also for the country. Speaking from the family home before going to the airport, Sawe's father Simeon Sawe said: "He used to tell me that one day, he was going to break the record."

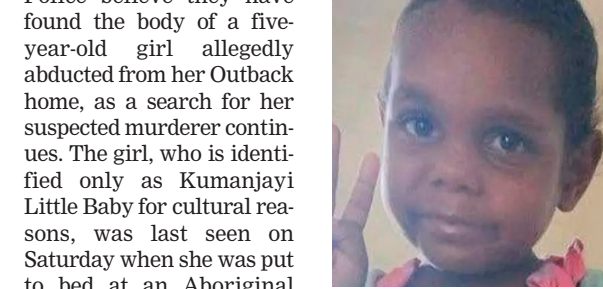
## Jewish agency warned of 'high' threat level ahead of Bondi shooting, report finds



A Jewish security agency warned that the security alert level was "high" ahead of the Bondi Beach shooting, a landmark royal commission has found. The commission - Australia's most powerful form of public inquiry - was announced in January, three weeks after two gunmen opened fire at an event marking Hanukkah at Bondi Beach, killing 15 people. The interim report by former High Court judge Virginia Bell also gave 14 recommendations including prioritisation of gun reforms and extending the policing arrangements for Jewish high holy days to other Jewish events as well. Prime Minister Anthony Albanese said a National Security Committee meeting had agreed to implement all of Bell's recommendations. On 14 December last year, a father-and-son duo - armed with rifles and shotguns - targeted a Sunday afternoon event at a Bondi Beach park. Sajid Akram, 50, was killed by police at the scene of the shootings and his son Naveed Akram - the other alleged attacker - was critically injured and later transferred from hospital to prison. The 24-year-old has been charged with 59

offences, including 15 counts of murder and one of committing a terrorist attack. Thursday's report noted an email sent to New South Wales (NSW) Police by Jewish security group CSG NSW on 8 December advising them of upcoming Jewish events and requesting policing measures. The email said that the current security alert level for the Jewish community was "HIGH. A terrorist attack against the NSW Jewish Community is likely and there is a high level of antisemitic vilification", according to the report. NSW Police acknowledged "a request for police presence at these events" but said it had "received no specific request for dedicated police resources" for the Hanukkah event, according to the report. Differences between the information provided by NSW Police and CSG NSW "cannot be resolved on the information presently available to the Commission," it continued. The report also recommended that state and federal governments should prioritise efforts to finalise and implement "nationally consistent" firearms reforms as well as a proposed gun buyback scheme.

## Police say they believe abducted child was murdered as body found in Outback

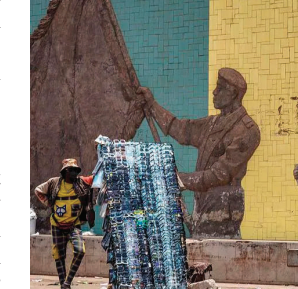


Police believe they have found the body of a five-year-old girl allegedly abducted from her Outback home, as a search for her suspected murderer continues. The girl, who is identified only as Kumanjari Little Baby for cultural reasons, was last seen on Saturday when she was put to bed at an Aboriginal town camp near Alice Springs just before midnight. Northern Territory Police said the body of a child was located on Thursday, and forensic testing to confirm the young girl's identity and cause of death is underway. They have been combing nearby bush and desert for Jefferson Lewis, who was released from prison six days before Kumanjari Little Baby disappeared and vanished around the same time. "We believed he has murdered this child," investigation lead Peter Malley told reporters. "I say to Jefferson Lewis: we're coming for you." A pair of children's underwear was located nearby the camp, and forensic testing has since confirmed they contained the DNA of both the little girl - who is non-verbal - and 47-year-old Lewis, he added.

## 'How are we going to get back home?' Islamist group tightens blockade on Mali capital



Mali's capital city Bamako - a major West African hub and home to more than three million people - is under a partial blockade by Islamist militants, days after the country's defence minister was assassinated there. "Our army isn't capable of protecting us, how are we going to get back home?" a mother-of-two told the BBC, unable to re-enter Bamako after visiting her parents out of town. She and many others have been stranded on the Bamako-Kénieba highway, a major road out of the capital for almost a day. It follows Wednesday's warning by fighters from the group Jama'at Nusrat al-Islam wal-Muslimin (JNIM) that "no one will be allowed in any more". Last year, the Islamist groups imposed a fuel blockade on the city, causing short-



ages and a sharp increase in prices but they have now ordered a total blockade, leaving residents worried. Eyewitnesses told the BBC that at least three of the six main routes into the city are now closed for hours at a time before the fighters move elsewhere. While they're gone, some vehicles manage to slowly get through. Last weekend saw nationwide, coordinated attacks by an

alliance of jihadists and separatist rebels in the north - the Azawad Liberation Front (FLA) - seeking to overthrow the military regime of Gen Assimi Goita, who seized power in a coup in 2020. Mali's army has been working with the Russian paramilitary group, the Africa Corps, which emerged from the Wagner Group, against the insurgents. In the face of the attacks, the Russians were forced to withdraw from the northern city of Kidal, which is now under FLA control. The FLA now say they will march on other cities in the north and have demanded the withdrawal of the Africa Corps from the entire country. A Kremlin spokesperson on Thursday vowed that Russian forces would remain in Mali "to combat extremism, terrorism and other harmful phenomena and will continue to provide assistance to the current government". One lorry driver trying to reach Bamako told the BBC: "I've never seen something like this before. I've been doing this job for so many years. I'm stuck here and it sounds dangerous. I would rather run away to save my life than fight for the goods I have to deliver."

## ISRAEL INTERCEPTS GAZA FLOTILLA NEAR CRETE AND DETAINS 175 ACTIVISTS



Pro-Palestinian activists say at least 22 boats from a flotilla carrying aid for Gaza have been intercepted by Israeli forces in international waters near the Greek island of Crete. The organisers of the Global Sumud Flotilla (GSF) denounced the action as "piracy", saying those on board had been seized unlawfully more than 965km (600 miles) from Gaza, which is under an Israeli naval blockade. The Israeli foreign ministry said about 175 activists from more than 20 boats had been detained and were being transported to Israel. It dismissed the flotilla as a "PR stunt". The GSF's tracking data showed most of the remaining 36 boats in the flotilla were close to Crete's south coast. The flotilla set sail two weeks ago, with a



total of 58 vessels joining from Spain, France and Italy, aiming to break Israel's blockade of Gaza. On Thursday, the GSF said Israeli naval forces had "intercepted, boarded, and systematically disabled and destroyed various boats" in the flotilla during a "violent raid in international waters" west of Crete overnight. "Over 180 civilians from

around the world have been directly attacked," it added. "After detaining participants, smashing an engine and jamming communications, the [Israeli forces] retreated, kidnapping participants or intentionally leaving civilians stranded on powerless, broken vessels directly in the path of a massive approaching storm." Israel insists its actions comply with interna-

tional law. The Israeli foreign ministry said that "due to the large numbers of vessels participating in the flotilla and the risk of escalation, and the need to prevent the breach of a lawful blockade, an early action was required". "The operation was carried out in international waters peacefully and without any casualties. An initial inspection of the vessels revealed materials that appear to be drugs and contraceptives," it added. The ministry also accused the flotilla's organisers of "joining hands" with the Palestinian armed group Hamas "with the aim of sabotaging President Trump's [Gaza] peace plan transition to its second phase and intended to divert attention from Hamas's refusal to disarm".

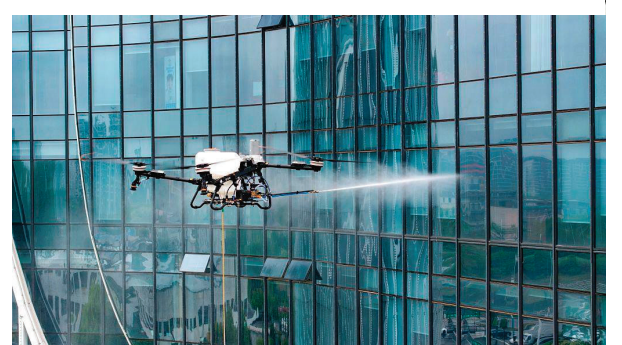
## US singer D4vd bought tools online to dispose of girl's body, prosecutors allege



US singer D4vd has been accused of purchasing tools online - including chainsaws - after prosecutors say he stabbed a teen girl to death. The allegations were released in an evidence filing, which details his alleged motive and steps prosecutors say he took to cover his tracks before 14-year-old Celeste Rivas Hernandez's dismembered

body was found in his car. Prosecutors say he met Rivas Hernandez when she was 11, and allege he started sexually abusing her when she was 13 and he was 18. They allege the teen sent text messages threatening to reveal their illicit relationship and "destroy his life" before she was killed. Attorneys for D4vd have maintained they "will vigorously defend David's innocence" and said they believe the "evidence will show that David did not kill Celeste". He appeared in court on Wednesday as attorneys and prosecutors argued over the public release of the filing. He wore an orange Los Angeles County jail jumpsuit and was shackled while being escorted into the courtroom.

## CHINA TO BAN DRONE SALES IN BEIJING CITING SECURITY CONCERNS



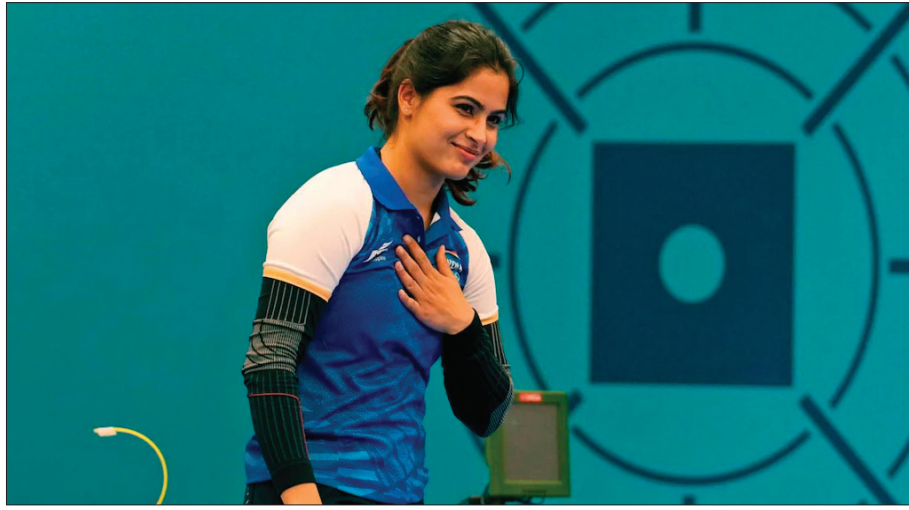
China will ban the sale of drones in Beijing and require permits to fly them under new rules that take effect on Friday. Drones and key components will be prohibited from being sold, rented or brought into the Chinese capital. Drone owners will also be required to register their devices with the police. China has gradually tightened regulations on drones in recent years, with authorities citing public safety concerns. Drones and flying taxis are part of the so-called low-altitude economy, a strategic priority for China that is expected to generate more than two trillion yuan (\$290bn; £217bn) by 2035. In some Chinese cities, drones are a common sight, used for food delivery, agriculture and cleaning buildings. Chinese companies may dominate the global drone market, but the country is becoming one of the most difficult places to fly one. Drones must be registered before they can be brought in and out of Beijing. And if users send their drones out of the city for repair, they need to pick up the device in person rather than have it delivered. All outdoor drone flights in Beijing will also

require prior approval, and drone users must complete an online training session and pass a test on drone regulations. There are exceptions: Drones may still be bought and stored for purposes like counter-terrorism and disaster relief, if approved by authorities. But in recent years China has repeatedly tightened rules governing the use of drones in the country. The drone restrictions in Beijing were approved in March. At that time, city authorities said management of drones must be strengthened to respond to "challenges" in low-altitude airspace safety. Xiong Jinghua, a senior official in the Beijing Municipal People's Congress, said the goal was to "strike the best balance" between safety and ensuring technological and economic progress. Last year, Beijing's entire airspace was designated a no-drone zone, with approval needed from air traffic authorities before people can fly their drones. The recent sweeping regulations are likely to shake up the massive drone market in China, where according to government data there are more than three million registered drones.



## Manu Bhaker's Confidence Surges As Olympic Qualification Cycle Nears

India's double Olympic medallist shooter Manu Bhaker is brimming with confidence ahead of the new season, determined to reignite her competitive spark after a quiet spell following her Paris Games glory. With the 2028 Los Angeles Olympics qualification cycle kicking off this year, Manu has her sights firmly set on the Asian Games and the World Championships - targets she believes will restore the competitive edge that powered her to two bronze medals at the 2024 Olympics. "We have the Asian Games (in Japan) and the World Championships coming up at the end of this year, so definitely we are looking forward to the two major competitions," said the 24-year-old pistol ace on the sidelines of an event, marking 75 years of the National Rifle Association of India (NRAI), on Monday. "So, the preparations which me and my coach



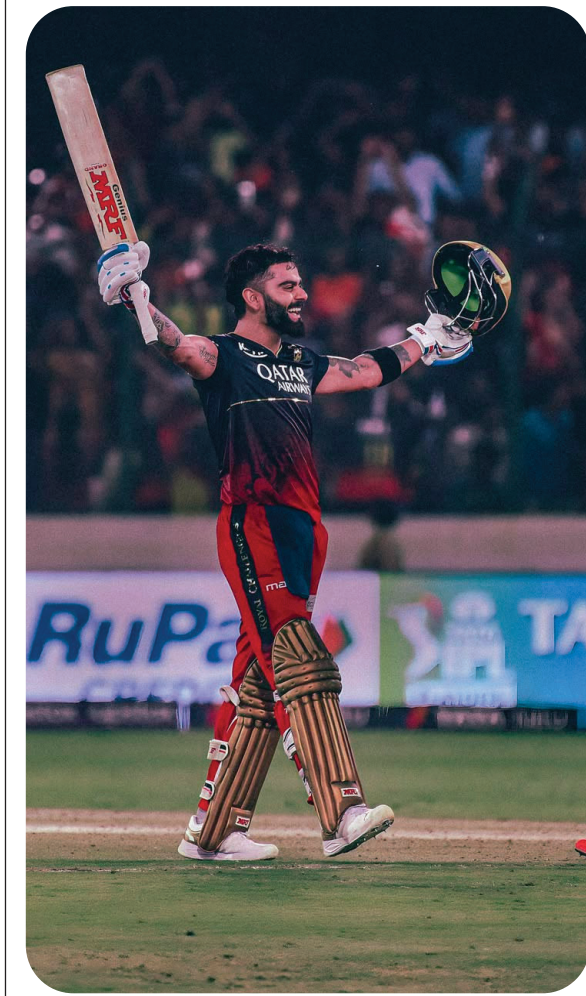
we have... we sat down some time back and we planned what are the (upcoming) competitions and what is the preparedness. I feel we have all the things sorted and hopefully we will do very well," added the Jhajjar shooter who has endured a relatively quiet spell since her 2024 Paris success, managing a 10m air pistol World Cup silver last year and a 25m pistol

silver at the Asian Championships in New Delhi this year. Manu welcomed the move with clear excitement, delighted that shooting will return to the programme at the 2030 Commonwealth Games in India after being left out of both the 2022 edition in Birmingham and the upcoming Games in Glasgow. "My first breakthrough was in the

Commonwealth Games that was in 2018 Australia (Gold Coast). It is sad (that it was not part of the CWG curriculum for two successive editions), but at the same time I am also looking forward to the 2030 Games. "We will be hosting the Commonwealth Games so I am looking forward... I am sure India will do great," she added. Manu Bhaker also

spoke about her personal growth, revealing a deeper spiritual side that took shape around the 2024 Paris Olympics. "Yes, I am a very spiritual person. That journey began around the time of the Olympics, and I'm really happy to be continuing on that path." With cricket prodigy Vaibhav Sooryavanshi emerging as one of the brightest young achievers and calls growing for his fast-tracked entry into the national team, Manu said that if the talent is ready and the mentorship is right, there should be no barriers to accelerating the process. "If the mentorship is right and the environment supports growth, age is just a number - talent has no timeline. It can be spotted at 6 or even 60. With the right guidance, I'm sure Vaibhav Sooryavanshi can be the next big star of Indian cricket," said Manu Bhaker, who will next be seen at the ISSF World Cup Munich next month.

## All Eyes On Kohli



Gujarat Titans (GT) captain Shubman Gill has won the toss and opted to bowl against Royal Challengers Bengaluru (RCB) in their crucial IPL 2026 clash in Ahmedabad on Thursday. All eyes will be on Virat Kohli, while Jacob Bethell will open as Rs 11.5 crore star Phil Salt continues to be unavailable for RCB. Rajat Patidar's side can go top of the table with a victory today. On the other hand, GT need a win to stay in touching distance of the playoff spots.

## JANNIK SINNER STOPS RAFAEL JODAR TO BOOK SPOT IN MADRID OPEN SEMIS

Jannik Sinner ended the inspired run of teen home favourite Rafael Jodar with a 6-2, 7-6 (7/0) victory at the Madrid Open on Wednesday to complete his set of semi-finals reached at all nine Masters 1000 tournaments. The 19-year-old Jodar has taken the tour by storm this clay season, winning a maiden ATP title in Marrakesh, and making the semi-finals in Barcelona and the quarter-finals in Madrid before he was stopped by the world number one at the Caja Magica. This time last year, Jodar was playing college tennis for the University of Virginia and was ranked 687 in the world. He will crack the top 35 when the new rankings are released on Monday. Sinner was seriously tested before he extended



his current winning streak to 21 consecutive matches. "He pushed me to the limit," said Sinner, who later warned about putting too much pressure on Jodar. "At the end of the day, the player has to make the step forward, and then we see. But what he's doing, it's incredible. I wish him only the best. "But in the same time, don't push

him too much. Because sometimes it's getting into your head and it's very tough to get out. "He's a very, very good kid, he has a great family behind him. The father seems very, very humble. He has a small bubble, which is great for him. I think he's going to make some incredible results in the future." The world number one will next

face recent Barcelona champion Arthur Fils in Friday's semi-final after the Frenchman skipped past Jiri Lehecka 6-3, 6-4 to improve to 9-0 on clay this season. The first-set scoreline may have read 6-2 but it was far from a routine affair for Sinner, who found himself facing a young opponent who could match his firepower, particularly on the forehand wing. The Italian was tested in multiple service games, including a marathon one at 2-2, and had to save a pair of break points before he took a one-set lead in 44 minutes. Leaning on the rowdy home support that included several Real Madrid stars, past and present, Jodar skirted danger at the start of the second set and put pressure on the Sinner serve.

## Marylebone Cricket Club's Final Verdict On Angkrish Raghuvanshi's 'Obstructing The Field' Dismissal In IPL 2026

The dismissal of Angkrish Raghuvanshi became a topic of discussion during Kolkata Knight Riders' Indian Premier League 2026 game against Lucknow Super Giants on Sunday. The KKR batter was given out for 'obstructing the field'. He tried to take a single and was sent back by his partner Cameron Green. As the youngster attempted to return to his crease, he changed the direction of his run and ended up stopping a throw directed at his end. LSG appealed for the wicket, and the ground umpire referred it upstairs. The third umpire gave it out, concluding that it was 'obstructing the field' by Raghuvanshi. The dismissal triggered a huge debate among the cricket



fraternity, with opinions divided. The Marylebone Cricket Club (MCC) has now issued a clarification on 'obstructing the field' law following the controversial dismissal of Raghuvanshi. Clarifying the rule, the MCC reiterated that a batter can only be given out if there is a deliberate attempt to obstruct or distract the

fielding side. Law 37.1.1 says that "either batter is out obstructing the field if they willfully attempt to obstruct or distract the fielding side by word or action." That means the obstruction must be deliberate, which can be hard to determine. The governing body further referred to a long-standing interpreta-

tion of the law, as outlined in its official guidelines, that addresses situations in which a batter changes direction while running between the wickets. According to the MCC, it states, "A batter who changes direction while running, particularly one who changes direction to run on the pitch, or takes any other route that would not be the quickest way to the other end, is making a wilful act." Applying this interpretation to the Raghuvanshi incident, the MCC explained that the batter's movement across the pitch played a decisive role in the decision. "Raghuvanshi clearly meets these criteria. When he sets off for his run, he is on the off side of the wicket.

## ZFA Clinches Back-To-Back Rajasthan League A Division Title

Zinc Football Academy (ZFA) has successfully defended its title, emerging as champions of the Rajasthan League Senior Men's A-division 2025-26 for the second consecutive year. This victory marks the academy's third championship, and the title was achieved with their youngest-ever winning squad, capping off a dominant season against seven of Rajasthan's top-tier teams. The Zavar-based Academy notched up 10 wins in 12 matches, scoring 39 goals and conceding only six throughout the season. The team registered a whopping 33-goal differ-

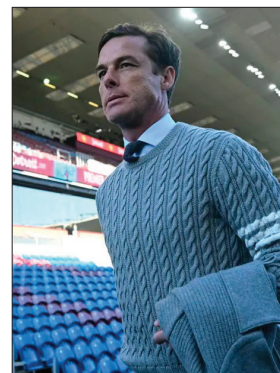


ence, showcasing tremendous dominating form in the tournament. In their last league game, the Zinc Football Academy beat Jaipur City FC 4-1 to secure their title. Abith, Yash and Biswajit scored goals for the winning team. With this victory, Zinc Football Academy has become the

first team to successfully defend the Rajasthan League title. Established in 2017, Zinc Football Academy has been a game-changer in nurturing grassroots football talent from rural India. Based in Zavar, the AIFF-accredited 3-star academy has trained over 5,000 young footballers since its inception.

## Scott Parker Quits As Burnley Manager After Premier League Relegation

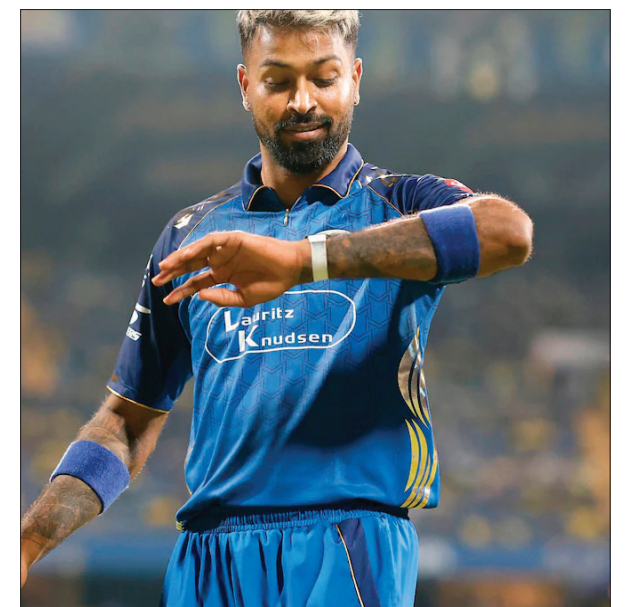
Scott Parker has left his position as head coach of Burnley by mutual consent following the club's relegation from the Premier League. It was announced on Thursday. Burnley said in a statement that Parker and the board had "mutually agreed that his time at Turf Moor would conclude" following one season back in the English top division. Parker led the Clarets to promotion last year but this season has been a struggle, with just four league wins in total. Burnley's fate was confirmed on April 22 after a 1-0 home defeat by Manchester City, two days after Wolves were relegated. Parker, who has previously managed Fulham, Bournemouth and Belgian side Club Brugge, signed a



three-year contract in July 2024, succeeding Vincent Kompany. < He oversaw a remarkable 2024/25 season in the Championship, which included a 31-match unbeaten run and 30 clean sheets, taking them back into the Premier League at the first time of asking. But Burnley have conceded 68 goals in 34

league matches in the current campaign, the most of any side, and were knocked out of the FA Cup and League Cup by third-tier teams. "The club would like to place on record its sincere thanks to Scott for his professionalism, dedication and contribution," Burnley said in a statement. "He leaves with the respect and gratitude of everyone connected with Burnley Football Club." Former England midfielder Parker, 45, said in a statement on the club's website that it had been an "immense privilege" to lead Burnley. "I have enjoyed every moment of our journey together, but feel that now is the right time for both parties to move in a different direction," he said.

## PANDYA HANDED GRIM FORECAST AFTER 6TH LOSS AS MI CAPTAIN IN IPL 2026



Hardik Pandya is an IPL-winning captain. Only a few in Indian cricket can claim to have that tag. Yet, Pandya's return to the Mumbai Indians fold has not been very successful. In his first year, Pandya was booted by MI fans for replacing Rohit Sharma as skipper. In IPL 2025, the five-time champions MI entered the playoffs but failed to reach the title clash. In IPL 2026, they have lost six out of eight matches. Their IPL 2026 playoff race now faces a must-win situation, and even that may not be enough for the Pandya-led side to progress. Mpumelo "Pommie" Mbangwa, in a discussion on Cricbuzz, said there needs to be a review of Hardik Pandya's captaincy. Former cricketer Simon Doull, part of the same discussion, went answering to a question regarding, "which current retained players

should MI release ahead of the next IPL mega auction." "My point would be: who is your captain next year? If they are going to change something, who is going to be the captain next year? If it is not going to be Hardik Pandya, release him. Only because I don't know how he will perform in an environment where he has underperformed, his team has underperformed for three years, and then his job goes," Doull said. When asked if Pandya can rediscover his form with the extra burden of captaincy, Doull said: "It might free him up, it might not. It might make him feel, 'I have failed.' It could go either way. When fully fit, Hardik has been one of the best all-rounders in the game. My only point is, if he is going to be the captain, he is willing to take the backseat, put in the hard yards.

## Iga Swiatek Retires From Madrid Open After Viral Illness; Aryna Sabalenka Enters Last 16



Iga Swiatek was forced to retire in the third round of the Madrid Open on Saturday due to a viral illness, while reigning champion Aryna Sabalenka extended her winning run to 14 matches. A champion in the Spanish capital in 2024, Swiatek rebounded from a one-set deficit against

American 31st seed Ann Li to level the contest but put an end to proceedings while down 0-3 in the decider. The Polish six-time Grand Slam champion asked for the doctor after getting broken early in the third set and got her vitals checked. She tried to break Li back but when her opponent held for a 3-0 advantage, the fourth seed realised she was unable to continue. She revealed after the match that she has been fighting a stomach virus for the last two days and was hoping she could still find a way to win despite feeling "terrible". "I heard there is something going on between players, that the virus is some-

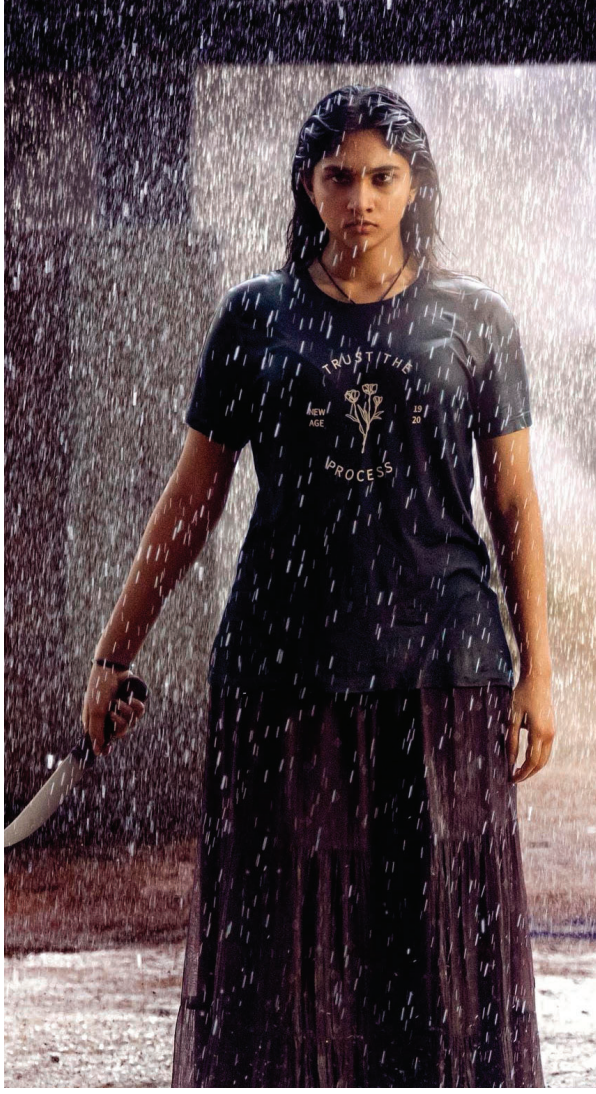
where on site. I'm sure I'll be fine in a couple of days, but I had zero energy and zero stability and just felt really bad physically, and yesterday even worse," said Swiatek. It is Swiatek's earliest ever exit in five appearances in Madrid. "On the court before the tournament I felt like I'm playing great, so actually it's sad for me that I can't play, because I was feeling really good with my game, and I was moving forward in the process, so this was positive," she said. "But for me the tournament has just started and I couldn't even compete today, so it's disappointing." Meanwhile, Sabalenka surged into the last 16 with a smooth 6-1, 6-4 victory against Romania's Jaqueline Cristian, who told her at the net she

was "too good" and that she hopes the world number one would go on and win the tournament. Sabalenka played a near-flawless opening set, winning 89 percent of her points on serve. Cristian put up a bigger fight in the second set but Sabalenka got the decisive break in the ninth game en route to a convincing win. The three-time Madrid champion, who next plays ex-world number one Naomi Osaka or Ukrainian qualifier Anhelina Kalinina, is known for her power game but she showcased some flair against Cristian, pulling off a running one-handed backhand passing shot in the first set and finishing the contest with a cunning drop shot winner. "Especially in the first set, that was incredible level from me.

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## Veteran Actress Manjula's granddaughter Jovika Vijay Kumar's poster From 'Agadha' Grabs Attention Everywhere

The makers of 'Agadha' have unveiled a striking new poster introducing young actress Jovika Vijay Kumar, who is making her acting debut with this mystical divine thriller. The poster has instantly caught attention across platforms for its intense visual appeal and mysterious tone. Set in a dimly lit ancient backdrop, Jovika is seen in a stunning look. Her expressive eyes carry a mix of innocence and hidden strength, hinting at a character that is deeply connected to the spiritual and mystical core of the story. The rain effect adds to the intensity as well. Interestingly, years ago M. S. Raju introduced Jovika's mother Vanitha Vijayakumar to cinema with 'Devi'. Now, he introduces the next generation, marking a rare and emotional cinematic connection across generations. Jovika is the granddaughter of veteran and versatile actress Manjula who was very active in Telugu and Tamil films. Earlier posters from the film revealed powerful characters that established the mystical tone of 'Agadha'. The poster of Mahadevi showcased a divine feminine presence surrounded by spiritual intensity. Another impactful poster introduced Shruvan Reddy as Simha, standing in darkness holding a blazing torch, symbolising his journey through fear, mystery, and unknown forces.



Another poster is that of Ulka Gupta who is seen as Mahima and this also grabs the attention with its intense appeal. Being made on a grand scale under the banner of Sri Adi Varaha Productions, the film is produced by Kasi Visalakshi Balusu and written and directed

by M. S. Raju. With 85 days of shoot, extensive set work, and nearly 45 minutes of VFX, Agadha promises a unique cinematic experience. The film is being made simultaneously in Telugu, Tamil, Kannada, Malayalam, and Hindi and is currently in post production.

## TELANGANA HC SEEKS DETAILS ON ACTRESS ASHU REDDY'S PLEA TO QUASH CHEATING CASE



The Telangana High Court on Wednesday, April 29, sought full details from the government on a petition filed by Telugu television actress Ashu Reddy, who has approached the court seeking to quash a first information report (FIR) registered against her by the Hyderabad Central Crime Station in an alleged cheating case involving Rs 9.35 crore.

## Sreenivasakavyanam- Bellamkonda Sai Sreenivas Weds Kavya In A Traditional, Yet Spectacular Ceremony In Tirumala

In a setting steeped in devotion and timeless tradition, Hero Bellamkonda Sai Sreenivas and Kavya #Sreenivasakavyanam stepped into married life through a serene and elegant ceremony held at Karnataka Bhavan in Tirumala. Surrounded by the spiritual energy of the sacred hills, the occasion unfolded as a close-knit celebration of love, culture, and family bonding. The wedding rituals of #BellamkondaSreenivas and #Kavya progressed in accordance with Sanatana Dharma, with both families participating wholeheartedly in each sacred rite. The entire celebration carried a calm yet celebratory tone, where age-old customs were followed with sincerity, blending seamlessly with a refined modern sensibility. The venue was transformed into a traditional visual spectacle, featuring temple-inspired decorations, lush floral arrangements, and shimmering golden accents that enhanced the devotional atmosphere. Every detail reflected a deep respect for heritage while maintaining understated elegance. Adding a distinctive artistic touch, designer Shruvan Kumar created specially curated outfits for the bride and groom. These images capture Bellamkonda Sreenivas and Kavya immersed in a cultural ceremony filled



with tradition and elegance. Kavya dazzles in a heavily embellished saree with exquisite jewelry, while Sreenivas keeps it classic in traditional wear. Their expressions of joy and connection stand out against the intricately decorated, temple-like backdrop, making the moment both intimate and celebratory. With only close family members and a select group of friends in attendance, the ceremony remained intimate yet deeply meaningful. As the couple begins a new chapter together, their union was marked by blessings,

tradition, and quiet grandeur. The celebrations are far from over, as a grand reception is scheduled to take place in Hyderabad tomorrow. The event is expected to be a star-studded affair, bringing together prominent members of the film fraternity, close friends, and well-wishers. With a larger guest list and an even more festive atmosphere, the reception promises to be a memorable gathering filled with warmth, elegance, and celebratory spirit, marking the next chapter of the joyous occasion in style.

## Cover Girl Switches From Gown To Power Suit Flawlessly



Nidhi Agerwal has come a long way since winning the Zee Cine Award for Best Female Debut in Bollywood with Munna Michael in 2017. She went on to win hearts in the Telugu blockbuster iSmart Shankar in 2019, which ran for over 50 days at the box office, and further proved her range with the critically praised action thriller Kalaga Thalaivan in 2022. A trained ballet dancer, she brings both grace and energy to every role. Gracing the TMM April

2026 cover, Nidhi stuns in four distinct looks, a dreamy floral ball gown, a sharp grey power suit with a loose tie, a breezy yellow floral mini dress, and a sleek silver floral co-ord set. Together, they show her effortless ability to move from princess to powerhouse. Her most recent film was Hari Hara Veera Mallu opposite Pawan Kalyan, where she played the role of Panchami. No upcoming films are confirmed yet, but with her screen presence, the wait surely won't be long.

## Doctor Keerthi", MBBS MS Movie Teaser Launch, Grand Theatrical Release by Swarna Creations PVR Cinemas on May 8

Presented by Gopalakrishna Dondapati, the Malayalam film Hunt starring Malayalam star heroine Bhavana in the lead role is being dubbed in Telugu as "Doctor Keerthi, MBBS MS under Swarna Creations banner. Directed by Malayalam director Shaji Kailas, this movie is set against the backdrop of the sensational Dr. Rape Murder in Calcutta. Swarna Creations is preparing to release this super hit movie in Malayalam with PVR Cinemas in two Telugu states on May 8. Producers Swarna Kumari Dondapati and M Vishwanath Reddy. Today the teaser release event of this film was held in Hyderabad. In this program Producers of the film Swarnakumari Dondapati



and M. Vishwanath Reddy said - We are releasing the movie in Telugu which is brilliantly directed by famous Malayalam director Shaji Kailas based on the Dr. Repu murder case which created a sensation in Kolkata. The whole world was

shocked by that incident. Actress Bhavana plays the role of doctor and her performance is amazing. The emotion of this film will hook the audience. Kailash Menon's music is the highlight of the movie. We are bringing our film to a grand theatrical release on May 8 through PVR. It is believed that this film, which has been a sensational success in Malayalam, will also be a super hit in Telugu. Said Actress Kavitha said - Gopalakrishna and his team are bringing this movie which is a super duper hit in Malayalam to Telugu. Director Shaji Kailas has made this movie interestingly based on real events. In this society where women are not protected, the tragic incident that happened to a duty doctor in West Bengal has shocked us all. In this movie, the director has shown what it would be like if the soul of the doctor tells her pain. Shaji Kailas is a very talented director. Technically every element is good while watching this movie.

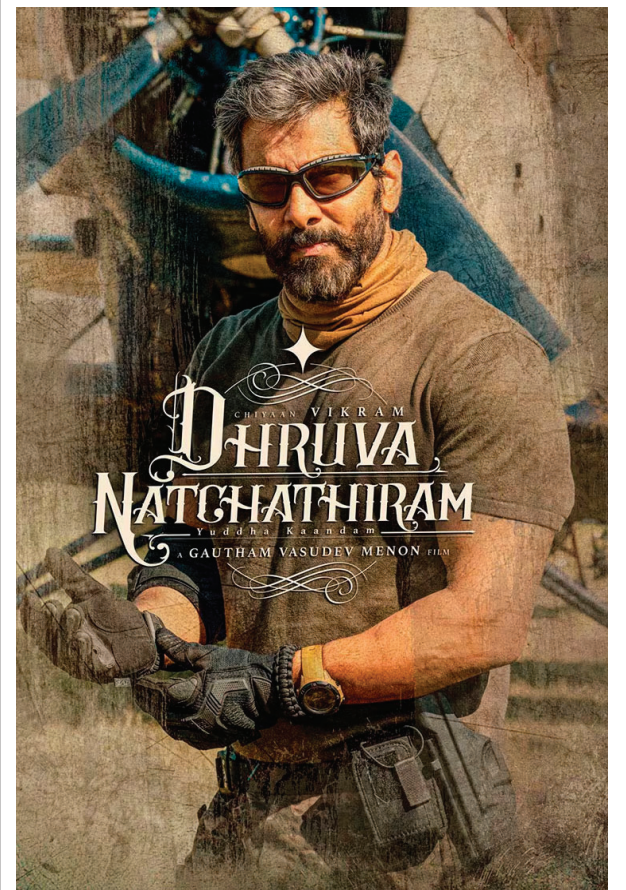
## A Vibrant Jathara song "Ammoru Diginadhi" from Anakapalli Released, Theatrical Release On June 5th

Mounted with raw, rustic, and refreshingly distinctive content, Anakapalli is being produced by Kandregula Naidu and Thrinadha Rao Nakkina under the banners Bhavya Sri Movie Makers and Nakkina Narratives. Directed by Khagesh Tammineni, the film also has Kandregula Kumar Raja onboard as co-producer. Vikram Sahidev and Sandhya Vasishtha lead the cast, while Thrinadha Rao Nakkina not only pens the story and screenplay but also appears in a crucial role. The teaser released earlier successfully sparked solid curiosity among viewers. The makers have announced to release the movie on June 5th. The team has now unveiled the electrifying Jathara song "Ammoru Diginadhi," a track that bursts forth with festival fervour. Davzand's composition lands like an explosion of colour, rhythm, and unfiltered celebration—perfectly bottling the coastal

Jathara spirit. Ganesh Saladhi's lyrics speak of divine energy and festive devotion, while Sekhar Master's choreography injects the visual canvas with vibrance and movement. Adding to the intensity, Mangli's commanding vocals lift the song to a whole new high. The visuals pack an authentic jathara atmosphere, pulling the audience right into the heart of the festivities. The song instantly garnered a tremendous response. Anakapalli promises a cocktail of mass action, youthful romance, and emotional depth tailored to engage family audiences. With momentum steadily building, the team is preparing to bring this world to the big screens soon. The film also boasts strong technical support, with cinematography by Maya V, editing by Srikanth Attaluri, and dialogues crafted by Uday Bhagavathula.



## FINALLY, ROUTE CLEARED FOR STAR HERO'S FILM AFTER 10 YEARS



In a latest development, Justice Senthil Kumar Ramamoorthy issued detailed directions to streamline the financial and legal issues surrounding the long dialyzed project Dhruva Natchathiram. The court ordered the opening of a dedicated bank account in the name of Kondaduvom Entertainment to handle all monetary transactions related to the film. An advocate has also been appointed as an observer to monitor debits and remittances, ensuring transparency throughout the process. Importantly, the court clarified that no payments should be made to any partners of Kondaduvom Entertainment as remuneration or profit share without prior permission from the court. This move is aimed at protecting the interests of all stakeholders involved. Directed and co-produced by Gautham Vasudev Menon, the film stars Vikram in the lead, with Ritu Varma playing a key role. Menon now has to secure funds from identified investors to clear pending dues owed to creditors before the release can happen. The filmmaker is also expected to begin discussions with exhibitors and distributors soon to finalize the release plan. The court further stated that if the film cannot release before June 15 despite genuine efforts, the parties may seek an extension.