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BJP's Falta victory;
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Rubio says 'significant
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talks as details of potential
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'PEDDI' WILL STAY NO.1 IN MY
CAREER: RAM CHARAN AT
GRAND 'PEDDI KI AAWAJ'
EVENT IN BHOPAL

CINEMA | PAGE



OM NAMO
VENKATESAYA

23-05-2026
Total pilgrims: 97561
Tonnes: 57780
Hundi kandelis: 176 CR
Walking Compartments: Outside line
at Bata Gangamma Temple
Approx. Darsan Time for Saravardashnam
(with out SSD Tokens): 24-30 H

ANTI-TERRORIST OPERATION ENTERS SECOND DAY IN J&K'S RAJOURI

Jammu, May 24 : The anti-terrorist operation in Jammu and Kashmir's Rajouri district entered its second day on Sunday as heavy security deployment continued to trace the hiding terrorists. An encounter had started on Saturday in the forest area of Ghambir Mughlan when hiding terrorists opened fire at the security forces. The terrorist fire was returned, after which an encounter started there. The security forces, including the Army, J&K Police and the CRPF, jointly started the anti-terrorist operation in the area following intelligence inputs about the presence of 2-3 terrorists in the Ghambir Mughlan forests of Rajouri district.

No UCC restrictions to be imposed on Vanvasi world and Vanvasi society: Shah

NEW DELHI (TSIT):

Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Sunday assured tribals no restrictions of the Uniform Civil Code (UCC) will be imposed on the Vanvasi world and the Vanvasi society, and rights of Vanvasis will not be encroached upon.

Shah, who was addressing the Janjati Sanskriti Samagam organised by Janjati Suraksha Manch at the Red Fort grounds to mark celebrations of Birs Munda's 150th birth year, said preserving culture is very important, and the government will keep efforts on to preserve and protect the tribal culture. He said the tribal people worship nature, and it is this nature worship that connects everyone to the Sanatan dharma.

Giving reference of Lord Ram and Shabari, Shah said by eating the half-eaten berries of Shabari, Lord Ram made it abundantly clear that all are equal and one, and by washing the feet of Nishadraj, Lord Ram honored the forest dwellers. HM said everyone must resolve to connect with religion from here, which is going to keep everyone connected to culture.



Shah, who was addressing the Janjati Sanskriti Samagam organised by Janjati Suraksha Manch at the Red Fort grounds to mark celebrations of Birs Munda's 150th birth year, said preserving culture is very important, and the government will keep efforts on to preserve and protect the tribal culture

Remembering Bhagwan Brisa Munda, Shah stated that despite there being no communication facilities available in his times, he conveyed this message to the tribes across the whole of India, "this is our country, our religion is the true religion, and no one can occupy our forests," Shah added.

Hitting out at the Congress regime, Shah alleged that during the Congress era, the total budget for tribal welfare was just Rs 28 thousand crores, whereas the Modi government has increased it to Rs 1 lakh 50 thousand crores.

Meanwhile, the conclave

was held under the chairmanship of National Convenor of Janjati Suraksha Manch Ganesh Ram Bhagat, in the presence of Chhattisgarh Chief Minister Vishnu Deo Sai, Odisha Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi, and Delhi Chief Minister Rekha Gupta. Shah reiterated Prime Minister Narendra Modi's resolve to connect tribal society with the mainstream of the country's development.

Besides the HM, the three Chief Ministers and several senior tribal leaders on the dais also addressed the gathering. Meanwhile, people from tribal communities across the country, dressed in traditional attire, gathered at Ajmeri Gate Chowk, Ramliila Maidan, Rajghat, Shri Shyam Giri Mandir, and Kuddesia Park Kashmere Gate. From there, they reached the Red Fort grounds in a procession, singing and dancing. Before the senior leaders addressed the gathering, cultural programmes of tribal communities from various states were held on two cultural heritage stages set up at the Red Fort grounds, with children's dance performances being a special attraction.

Rahul targets Modi govt over NEET row, says students' future being "destroyed"

NEW DELHI (TSIT):

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on Sunday sharpened his criticism of the Centre over the alleged NEET paper leak controversy, accusing the Narendra Modi government of betraying the country's youth and allowing a "paper leak mafia" to operate unchecked while remaining indifferent to the concerns of lakhs of students.

In a strongly worded post on social media platform X, Gandhi alleged that the government was prioritising political damage control over addressing the anxiety and anger of students and parents amid mounting allegations of irregularities in the National Eligibility-cum-Entrance Test (NEET).

"When lakhs of young people are on the streets, when the future of 22 lakh children is at stake, and the Prime Minister remains silent — the government is focused not on answering questions, but on saving itself," Gandhi wrote.

The Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha said the Congress would continue its protests until union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan steps down and safeguards are intro-



duced to ensure such examination leaks do not recur. "Until Dharmendra Pradhan resigns and a foolproof system is put in place to prevent paper leaks like NEET, we will not stop," he said.

In a separate post on X, Gandhi claimed that the alleged leak had "pushed the future of millions of students into darkness" and accused the Modi government of failing to act against organised cheating syndicates.

"Under the Modi government, the paper leak mafia is thriving while those responsible sit back and watch the spectacle," he said. Referring to protests led by the Congress' student wing, the National Students' union of India (NSUI), Gandhi said activists under the leadership of NSUI president Vinod Jakhar organised a padyatra in Hyderabad to protest against the government's handling of the issue.

Responsible government must create awareness on SIR: Shivakumar

BENGALURU (TSIT):

D. K. Shivakumar said it is the responsibility of a responsible government to create awareness among the public about the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls and ensure that no eligible voter loses their voting rights.

Speaking to reporters at his residence in Sadashivanagar, he said a meeting of party leaders had been convened to protect the rights of people across Karnataka. He explained that only those who fill out the forms issued by the Election Commission and submit them with the required documents would retain their voting rights, while those who fail to do so risk losing them.

He said Booth Level Agents (BLAs) must ensure that people are informed about the process. According to him, similar issues related to SIR are occurring in several states,



where lakhs of names are allegedly being removed from electoral rolls. Shivakumar stressed that poor and rural people must be educated about SIR, as many may not understand the implications of failing to complete the process. He said migrant workers who travel to places like Goa and other states for livelihoods may face difficulties if they are absent during verification. He warned that losing

voting rights could also affect access to government welfare schemes, including Gruha Lakshmi benefits, pensions, housing schemes, and land-related benefits. He stated that governments must help citizens obtain the necessary documents and awareness to safeguard their rights.

"If there is a problem tomorrow, people will question us," he said, adding that while political parties may differ in elections, everyone must work to ensure citizens do not lose their right to vote.

Referring to the process, he claimed that even prominent individuals could lose voting rights if forms are not properly submitted, citing examples of people who allegedly faced such situations in the past. On Cabinet expansion speculation, Shivakumar dismissed reports of confusion and remarked that positions and status matter only when the party remains strong.

'India one of our key strategic partners,' says Marco Rubio after talks

NEW DELHI (TSIT):

US Secretary of State Marco Rubio said on Sunday that India and the US are strategically aligned on several key global issues, including critical minerals, supply chains and terrorism. He called India "one of the most important strategic partners" for the US in the world. While



addressing a joint press briefing with External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar on Thursday, Rubio said that India and the US have suffered due to global terrorism networks. He noted that India and the US as democracies understand the importance of public scrutiny, accountability. Rubio said, "I have to go back and justify to the American people every decision we make and the president has to do the same on why it's good for our country and our counterparts here in India have to do the exact same thing."

Vijay speaks to parents of murdered ten-year-old, assures strict action

COIMBATORE (TSIT):

Tamil Nadu Chief Minister C. Joseph Vijay on Sunday spoke to the parents of the 10-year-old girl who was found murdered near Sullur in Coimbatore district, offering condolences and assuring them that the government would ensure the strictest punishment for those responsible.

The tragic incident has sent shockwaves across the state and triggered widespread condemnation from political parties and the public. During the phone conversation, Vijay comforted the grieving parents and assured them that the state government would pursue the case with seriousness and ensure that justice is delivered.

The Chief Minister had earlier described the crime as an inhuman and unforgivable act that has no place in society. The victim, a resident of a village near Sullur, had reportedly gone out for shopping before she went missing. When she did not return home, her family approached the



police, prompting an intensive search operation.

Police teams launched a large-scale investigation, while local residents also joined efforts to trace the missing child. The search ended in tragedy when the girl was found dead in a bushy area in the locality. The horrifying nature of the crime sparked fear and anger among residents and quickly drew attention from across Tamil Nadu.

Following an extensive investigation, police identified the girl's neighbour as the prime suspect in the case. Authorities arrested Karthik, 33, in connection with the crime. Police have also taken Mohan Raj, who is suspected to be an accomplice, into custody and are questioning him as part of the ongoing investigation. The incident has reignited concerns over crimes against children and public safety, with many demanding stronger measures to prevent such incidents and tougher enforcement of laws against offenders.

KTR accuses Telangana govt of conspiring to scrap free power scheme for farmers



HYDERABAD (TSIT):

BRS working president K. T. Rama Rao on Sunday alleged that the decision of the Congress government in Telangana to install meters on agricultural motors was taken with the sole intent of abolishing the free electricity scheme for farmers.

He also claimed that the government is trying to completely hand over the power sector to private entities under the guise of prepaid meters. Addressing a meeting at Bharat Rashtira Samithi (BRS) office, he said that Congress is conspiring to completely eliminate free electricity for farmers by installing meters on their agricultural motors. He claimed that the Congress government is plotting to remove the existing meters in every household and replace them with prepaid meters.

He said the State Cabinet reportedly took a decision on Saturday. He alleged that prepaid meters would also be introduced for all agricultural connections. KTR urged people to oust Congress from power before meters are installed on agricultural motors and before prepaid meters are introduced in every household. He urged the public to rise up against the "power conspiracies" being orchestrated by the Congress party within the electricity sector. He recalled that before the Assembly elections, BRS had warned the public that the free electricity scheme would be abolished if the Congress party came to power.

India sends medical supplies, protective kits to Africa amid Ebola outbreak

NEW DELHI (TSIT):

Amid the Ebola outbreak in Africa, India on Thursday dispatched the first tranche of urgent medical supplies and protective kits to Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). In a post on X, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar expressed India's commitment to supporting Africa in responding to the emerging Ebola public health emergency.

"India dispatched the first tranche of urgent medical supplies and protective kits to Africa CDC today. Committed to support Africa in responding to the emerging Ebola public health emergency," EAM Jaishankar

posted on X. Ebola disease (EBOD) is a rare but severe illness in humans and is often fatal.

Meanwhile, the Indian government on Sunday advised Indian citizens, currently residing in or travelling to Congo, Uganda and South Sudan, to strictly follow public health guidance issued by local authorities and maintain heightened precautions, in light of the reported outbreak of Ebola disease in these countries. The World Health Organization (WHO) has declared the situation to be a Public Health Emergency of International Concern (PHEIC).

"In view of the evolving situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and



other affected countries, and in line with WHO's recommendations, Government of India advises all Indian citizens to avoid non-essential travel to the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Uganda and South Sudan until further notice," Health Ministry said in an advisory.

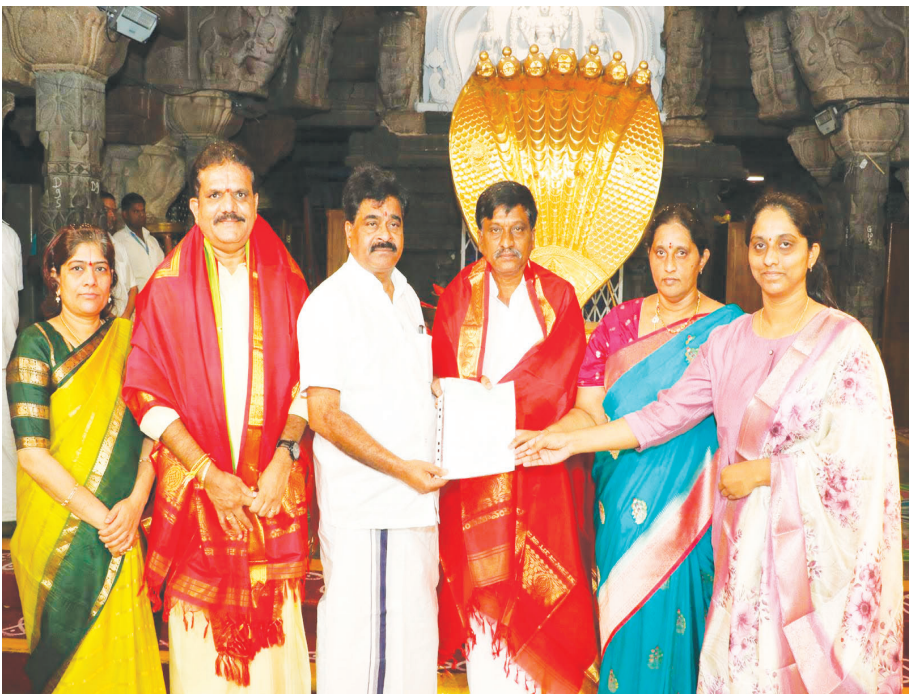
India has not reported any case of Ebola Disease caused by the Bundibugyo virus strain, the ministry added.

The Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (Africa CDC) has officially declared the ongoing outbreak of Bundibugyo strain Ebola Virus Disease affecting the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Uganda as a Public Health Emergency of

Continental Security.

Further, the WHO IHR Emergency Committee on May 22 issued temporary recommendations to strengthen disease surveillance at Points of Entry to "detect, assess, report and manage travellers with unexplained febrile illness arriving from areas with documented Bundibugyo virus detection" while also "discouraging travel to areas with documented Bundibugyo virus detection". Countries bordering the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Uganda, including South Sudan, are assessed to be at high risk of disease transmission, according to the statement.

DONATIONS OF RS.20 LAKHS TO TTD



Tirumala, 24 May 2026: A devotee from Guntur Sri Madala Seshagiri Rao, donated Rs.10,01,116 to the TTD Sri Venkateswara Anna Prasadam Trust on Sunday.

Similarly, another devotee from Guntur, Sri Vadlamudi Mithresh, donated Rs.10,01,111 to the Sri Venkateswara Pranadana Trust.

The donors handed over the donation DDs to Temple Dy EO Sri Lokanatham at Ranganayakula Mandapam inside the Srivari Temple. TTD Board Member Sri Nannapaneni Sadashiva Rao also participated in the programme.

UPSC Civil Services prelims examinations conducted in Tirupati district

Tirupati, May 24: The UPSC Civil Services (Prelims) Examinations-2026 were conducted smoothly across Tirupati district on Sunday under the supervision of district authorities.

District Observer Seshagiri Babu inspected the examination process and reviewed arrangements at various centres.

Dr. S. Venkateswar and L. Subbarayudu visited examination centres including Sri Padmavathi

Balikonnata Pathashala, Sri Padmavathi Mahila Degree and PG College, and SVU College of Engineering in Tirupati.

During the inspections, the Collector reviewed security arrangements and facilities being provided to candidates and directed officials to ensure the examinations were conducted without any inconvenience. DRO Narasimhulu also monitored the arrangements at the centres.



Bandaru Dattatreya's Autobiography Released in Visakhapatnam



Visakhapatnam (TSIT) The autobiography of Bandaru Dattatreya, titled 'Prajala Kathe Na Atmakatha' (People's Story is My Autobiography), was formally released at a grand function held at Kakatiya Convention Centre near Maddilapalem in Visakhapatnam on Sunday.

The event was attended by several constitutional dignitaries, senior BJP leaders, literary personalities, and prominent citizens from different walks of life. The book highlights over five decades of Dattatreya's political and public life, tracing his journey from a grassroots worker to a

Union Minister and Governor. Speakers described the autobiography as a reflection of contemporary political history and dedicated public service. Speaking on the occasion, Haryana Governor Bandaru Dattatreya said his life journey was closely connected with the aspirations and struggles of common people. Explaining the title of the book, he stated that every milestone in his career was shaped by the blessings and support of the public. He also urged the younger generation to follow value-based politics and uphold integrity in public service.

Chief Guest Kambhampati Hari Babu praised Dattatreya's contribution to public life and said the autobiography would inspire future generations. He noted that Dattatreya's rise from a humble background to occupying high constitutional positions while remaining accessible to the people was remarkable. Several leaders and longtime associates of Dattatreya, fondly known as "Dattanna," shared their experiences during the programme and appreciated his commitment to public welfare and community service.

4th Executive MBA Batch Inaugurated at Indian Institute of Management Visakhapatnam



Visakhapatnam : The 4th batch of the Executive Master of Business Administration (EMBA) programme for the 2026-28 Summer Intake was inaugurated grandly at Indian Institute of Management Visakhapatnam. A total of 88 experienced professionals from various sectors across the country joined the programme. The inaugural ceremony was attended by Khurshed Dordi, Shareholder Director of State Bank of India, business consultant, and leadership expert, as the chief guest. He stated that leadership in the modern world requires deep understanding, sound decision-making ability, and integration across diverse fields. He advised students to ask questions, embrace diverse

ideas, and emerge as future leaders. Speaking on the occasion, IIM Visakhapatnam Director Professor M. Chandrasekhar said that logical thinking and analytical perspective are essential in leadership and decision-making. He advised participants to learn not only through academic discipline but also from the experiences of their peers. Admission Chair Professor Prashant Premkumar Nair shared details of the new batch. He said that professionals from IT, banking, manufacturing, consulting, and service sectors from 14 states across the country are part of the batch. The average age of the batch is 34 years, while the average work experience is over nine years. He noted that

women constitute nearly 30 per cent of the batch.

Programme Chairperson Professor Abhishek Srivastava stated that agility, continuous learning, and teamwork are crucial in today's business world. He said the EMBA programme would serve as a platform for managerial skill development, long-lasting friendships, peer learning, and professional growth.

Dean (Academics) Professor Vijaya Bhaskar Marisetty said that the Executive MBA programme enhances strategic thinking, effective leadership, and quick decision-making abilities among professionals.

TimesPro Business Head Sridhar Nagarajachar said that the two-year programme would help participants enhance their intellectual capital, networking capabilities, and personal brand value. During the programme, merit certificates and Director's Merit List awards were presented to outstanding students of the EMBA 2025-27 batch. The programme concluded with a vote of thanks by Professor Prashant Premkumar Nair.

Modi Government Breaking the Backs of People by Increasing Petroleum Prices

►HIKED PRICES SHOULD BE WITHDRAWN IMMEDIATELY · ►CPM DISTRICT SECRETARY JAGGUNAYUDU

The South India Times, Visakhapatnam : The Modi government is breaking the backs of common and middle-class people by continuously increasing petrol, diesel and gas prices. In the last eight days alone, prices were increased three times. Petrol and diesel prices were increased by around Rs.5 per litre, while CNG gas price was increased by Rs.4 per kg. The price of a commercial cooking gas cylinder was increased by Rs.114. Along with these hikes, the prices of essential commodities are also soaring due to the impact of fuel price increases. People are suffering under the burden of rising prices. Demanding that the BJP-led Central Government immediately withdraw these burdens imposed on the people, the CPM Visakhapatnam District Committee organized a unique protest rally on Sunday from the district office, Yechury Bhavan, to Maddilapalem Junction. Speaking on the occasion, District Secretary M. Jaggunayudu said



that if prices were increased heavily at one time, people would revolt, and therefore the Modi government was increasing prices in phases and sucking the lifeblood of the people. He expressed concern that the government's actions were like giving slow poison instead of killing a person at once. He said the Modi government had assured the people that the impact of the US-Israel aggressive war against Iran would not fall on the people

of India, that there was no shortage of oil and gas, and that no burden would be placed on the public. However, immediately after the elections in five states, the government started increasing prices repeatedly and cheating the people. To cover up this deception, the government was staging dramas of austerity, he alleged. He criticized the Chandrababu and Pawan Kalyan governments in the state for sharing responsibility in the Modi

government's deception and displaying their loyalty to the Centre. He demanded that the Central and State Governments reduce the taxes being collected on oil prices and immediately take steps to withdraw the increased prices. He further stated that the US Secretary of State and Indian Prime Minister Modi keep repeating that Trump and Modi are close friends. He demanded that this strong relationship be used to stop the US-Israel aggressive war against Iran and the blockade of the Hormuz Strait. Through this, he demanded relief from rising prices for the Indian people who are suffering burdens for a crime they did not commit. CPM district secretariat members R.K.S.V. Kumar and V. Krishnarao, district committee members P. Paidiraju and M. Rambabu, Praja Natya Mandali State General Secretary S. Anil Kumar, CITU Maddilapalem Zone Secretary P. Venkata Rao and others participated in the programme.

Summer Sports Coaching Camps Launched Grandly at Swarna Bharati Indoor Stadium

● VISAKHAPATNAM SHOULD BECOME A VENUE FOR WORLD-CLASS SPORTS. ● VISAKHA SPORTSPERSONS SHOULD PREPARE FOR OLYMPIC-LEVEL COMPETITIONS. ● -- STATE GOVERNMENT WHIP AND VISAKHAPATNAM WEST MLA P.G.V.R. NAIDU (GANABABU) ● GVMC COMMISSIONER KETAN GARG, WHO PRESIDED OVER THE EVENT, JOINTLY INAUGURATED THE CAMPS ALONG WITH THE WEST MLA.

The South India Times, Visakhapatnam: State Government Whip and Visakhapatnam West MLA P.G.V.R. Naidu (Ganababu) stated that the prestigious free summer sports coaching camps being organized by the Greater Visakhapatnam Municipal Corporation (GVMC) to enhance sporting skills among students in the city are commendable. He said that students participating in these camps should improve their sporting abilities and prepare themselves for Olympic-level sports, and that Visakhapatnam should emerge as a venue for world-class sports.

On Sunday, the summer sports coaching camps organized by GVMC were grandly inaugurated at Swarna Bharati Indoor Stadium. The West MLA attended the event as the chief guest and, along with GVMC Commissioner Ketan Garg, who presided over the function, and GVMC Additional Commissioner P. Nallanayya, lit the ceremonial lamp and formally inaugurated the camps.

Speaking on the occasion, State Government Whip and West MLA P.G.V.R. Naidu (Ganababu) called upon students to adopt sports as a means for physical fitness and mental well-being along with academics. He said that due to various reasons, summer



sports coaching camps could not be conducted over the last two years, and appreciated GVMC Commissioner Ketan Garg for responsibly organizing the camps this year. He expressed confidence that by effectively utilizing sports grounds located in different parts of the city and providing free coaching under expert trainers, many talented international-level sportspersons would emerge. He also urged parents not to limit children only to studies, but to encourage them in sports according to their interests, stating that summer camps would greatly help in this regard. He further said that the State Government would extend full support to transform Visakhapatnam into a sports hub and that the city should become a model as a centre for sports and a sports culture city.

Later, GVMC Commissioner Ketan Garg said that the camps were organized extensively with the objective of identifying and encouraging the hidden sports talent among students from a young age. He stated that GVMC had undertaken continuous planning for the last 15 days to conduct these camps. The camps, which commenced on May 25, would continue till June 6 from 6 a.m. to 8 a.m. for ten days, excluding May 29 and 31 due to government holidays.

He said that under the supervision of 486 sports trainers, 12,036 students would receive training in 41 sports disciplines. Participating students would be provided with one egg, a biscuit packet, dal chikki, and drinking water every day, while buttermilk would also be arranged specially on May

25. In addition, every participant would receive a T-shirt and a participation certificate.

The Commissioner explained that free training in various sports disciplines would be imparted across all GVMC zones under experienced trainers. He clarified that necessary sports equipment and basic medical facilities had been made available at every training centre to ensure that sportspersons faced no inconvenience. He encouraged students to make good use of this opportunity, develop discipline and sportsmanship, and bring laurels to Visakhapatnam and the nation at national and international levels in future.

Later, the Commissioner instructed officials to conduct the summer coaching camps carefully without any shortcomings, ensure

timely supply of diet to students, provide drinking water, toilet and health facilities, and make registration mandatory for newcomers joining the camps. He also directed all Zonal Commissioners to regularly monitor the camps responsibly at the zonal level till the conclusion of the programme.

Afterwards, all the dignitaries watched the cultural programmes and boxing and karate demonstrations presented by students. They felicitated and congratulated C.H. Sudarshan Rao, P. Rohith, and Ravindra for winning medals in 52 kg, 46 kg, and 32 kg weightlifting categories respectively. A pledge promoting sportsmanship was also administered to everyone present. Subsequently, the MLA, Commissioner, Additional Commissioner, and other officials played shuttle badminton to inspire the sportspersons.

Zonal Commissioners, In-charge Sports Director E. Appala Raju, Olympic Association President Venkateswara Rao, senior Olympian and weightlifter Manikyala Rao, Dronacharya Awardee Suryanarayana, Dhyan Chand Awardee Usha, GVMC officials, sports department officials, prominent sportspersons, coaches, a large number of students, and their parents participated in the programme.

UPSC Civil Services Preliminary Examination Conducted Peacefully

DISTRICT COLLECTOR, JOINT COLLECTOR INSPECT EXAMINATION CENTRES

THE SOUTH INDIA TIMES, VISAKHAPATNAM: The UPSC Civil Services Preliminary Examination-2026 conducted across the district on Sunday concluded peacefully and successfully without any untoward incidents. The examination was held in two sessions at a total of 17 centres in the district. Out of 7,763 registered candidates, 4,755 candidates (61.25 per cent) attended the morning session, while 3,008 remained absent. In the afternoon session, 4,686 candidates (60.49 per cent) appeared for the examination and 3,067 were absent, officials said. The examinations were conducted smoothly with fool-proof arrangements made in advance by the district administration, adequate security measures at the centres, and necessary basic facilities provided to the candidates.



Officials maintained continuous monitoring at all centres. Meanwhile, District Collector M. Abhishek Kishore and Joint Collector Gobbilla Vidyadhari inspected the conduct of the examinations. On Sunday morning, they visited

the examination centres at V.S. College in Maddilapalem and Gayatri Vidya College in the MVP area and inspected the arrangements. They interacted with officials and instructed them to ensure that candidates did not face any inconvenience.

Visakhapatnam Port Sets Up Water Fogging/Mist Cannon on Beach Road to Provide Relief from Heat

The South India Times, Visakhapatnam : Authority has arranged a water fogging/mist cannon vehicle on RK Beach Road and Railway Station Road to provide some relief to the public from the scorching summer temperatures. Through this mist cannon vehicle, water is being continuously sprayed in the form of fine mist in the identified areas, helping to reduce the impact of the intense heat to some extent. The fogging programme will be carried out every



day from 11 am to 3 pm from RK Beach to the Appughar area, Railway Station Road, and other locations witnessing heavy public movement. Officials said the initiative is expected to provide some relief to people from the prevailing summer heat conditions. Tourists

and visitors coming to Beach Road from various places appreciated the initiative taken by the Port Authority and expressed the opinion that it would offer some comfort to the public amid the ongoing heatwave conditions. The Port management stated that the mist cannon has been arranged as a temporary measure to provide relief from the high temperatures and to ensure that people do not face inconvenience until weather conditions improve.

EDITORIAL

How Marco Rubio Can Add Ambition To US-India Relationship

Some claim the US-India relationship is adrift, with New Delhi becoming an afterthought in Washington's world-view. However, Marco Rubio's first visit to India as Secretary of State has the potential to breathe more ambition into the partnership between the world's two largest democracies. US Ambassador Sergio Gor deserves great credit for his efforts to shore up a relationship buffeted by tariffs and sanctions, as well as Washington's approach to Islamabad. Secretary Rubio's visit can help advance key initiatives such as the Quad, which has been on pause for a year, by attending a foreign ministers' gathering of that key group.

There is much more that each side can do to infuse ambition and momentum. In a world of rising great power tension, Delhi and DC can signal a recommitment to a strategic convergence 25 years in the making. These can include a range of matters, detailed below.

Focus on critical minerals: Which minerals, in which countries, with which incentives to drive US and Indian private sector involvement? Copper from Zambia for data centres? Rhenium from Chile for jet turbines? Businesses will benefit from clear signals from both governments. Data centres and nuclear power: Building on recent changes to laws in India that previously blocked American companies from nuclear power projects, both sides should encourage their private sectors to be at the vanguard of using civilian nuclear power to fuel the enormous investment in data centres in both countries.

Boost TRUST: In the bilateral spirit of "Transforming Relationship Utilising Strategic Technology", India could accelerate its leadership in digital public infrastructure by integrating American AI technology, a "win-win". Quad shipbuilding: Japan, Australia, India and the US could usefully coordinate their comparative strengths to claw back China's lead in naval shipbuilding.

Pharmaceutical precursors: Two thirds of the material necessary for production of generic medicines comes from China, creating a vulnerability in healthcare supply chains. Delhi and Washington can usefully incentivise companies to source production in each other's countries for the general well-being of their citizens and greater security of supply chains.

Defence production: Delhi lacks trust in Washington, and Washington is frustrated by India's rejection of fighter plane proposals dating back to the 1980s. Both sides should focus on intensified, joint production of key deterrent items needed in quantities. For example, drones, where India has a burgeoning private sector innovation.

Trade deal: Glaringly absent in almost eight decades of bilateral relations is any framework for trade. Completing negotiations on trade talks and giving reassurance to investors on both sides is essential.

If Washington and Delhi can advance their relations in a few key areas during Rubio's visit, it will expand mutual confidence and send a useful signal globally that official relations remain firmly on an ambitious track.

Happily, bilateral relationships extend far beyond government corridors to encompass people, business and academia. But even those areas face risks. As India rises as a global power, it needs to boost national spending on research and development.

WHY RUBIO'S VISIT SIGNALS BENGAL'S NEW ERA

Kolkata has once again entered an important diplomatic moment. For the first time in fourteen years, the city is hosting a serving United States Secretary of State. The visit carries symbolic and political significance, arriving at a time when Bengal has just witnessed a historic political transition and when India-US relations are moving through an important strategic phase.

US Secretary of State Marco Rubio, one of President Donald Trump's closest foreign policy advisers and also serving as Acting National Security Adviser, arrived in Kolkata as part of his four-day India visit from May 23 to May 26. His India itinerary includes Kolkata, Agra, Jaipur and New Delhi. Discussions during his broader India tour are expected to focus on energy cooperation, trade, defence and regional security issues. Rubio's flight landed at Kolkata airport at around 7:30 am. He visited the Missionaries of Charity and the Victoria Memorial before continuing with the next phase of his India tour. The timing of this visit is drawing attention for several reasons. It comes only weeks after Bengal experienced a major political change that ended a 15-year-old regime. It also arrives amid increasing strategic engagement between India and the United States. Before leaving for India, Rubio publicly described India as a "great partner" and indicated that Washington was prepared to expand energy exports substantially. That statement itself reflected a broader direction in US foreign policy toward India. Diplomatic visits are never random events. The itinerary of a visiting foreign dignitary is usually shaped through consultations between both countries. Yet the host government's priorities also influence these visits. Bengal now has a "double-engine" government, and there is a view within political circles that Delhi encouraged greater engagement with Kolkata at this stage. The state government is trying to project itself as investment-friendly, and officials believe this visit can help strengthen that narrative. There are indications that Chief Minister Suwendu Adhikari may also use the opportunity to brief foreign stakeholders about Bengal's economic possibilities, including infrastructure and



industrial projects such as the Falta Export Zone. For the present government, attracting investment is becoming central to its political and economic messaging. However, Kolkata and American diplomacy have a long and complicated history. The relationship has often moved through ideological disagreements, political resistance, and changing realities. There was a period when American diplomats visiting Kolkata faced a rough political climate. During the Left era, anti-American sentiment remained a visible political force. Opposition to American foreign policy, the Vietnam War, and what the Left described as American imperialism often shaped public discourse. One of the earliest examples came during the visit of former US Defence Secretary and later World Bank President Robert McNamara. McNamara, who served as US Defence Secretary from 1961 to 1968 and later became President of the World Bank from 1968 to 1981, visited West Bengal at a time when his role in the Vietnam War had made him a deeply controversial figure. As soon as McNamara arrived at the airport, CPM workers launched protests against him. Demonstrations were organised, reflecting the intensity of anti-American sentiment at the time.

Yet despite those protests, McNamara met state officials at the Writers' Building and continued with his scheduled engagements. That contradiction often defined Bengal politics. Ideology and practical governance frequently moved in parallel directions. Political observers have long argued that this anti-American approach shaped Bengal's political culture in many ways. Some believe it affected Bengal's work culture and industrial outlook as well. Whether one agrees or disagrees, that debate has existed for decades. Over time, however, things gradually changed. Under Jyoti Basu, a new form of political pragmatism emerged. Although the CPM maintained its ideological opposition to American policies, Basu also recognised the need for economic engagement. From 1977 to 2000, as one of India's longest-serving Chief Ministers, Jyoti Basu actively pitched West Bengal as an investment destination. He met American officials and business delegations and encouraged foreign investment. Political opponents often mocked this shift. Congress leaders coined phrases such as "from revolution to reception" and even joked about "Uncle Sam at Alimuddin Street." Critics argued that a party built on

anti-American rhetoric was now welcoming US officials. But Basu defended this approach. In 1994, Jyoti Basu himself visited the United States and met corporate leaders to encourage investment in Bengal. Later, during 1995 and 1996, efforts were made to facilitate technology partnerships connected with projects like Haldia Petrochemicals. Basu often argued that supporting socialism and engaging with the United States were not mutually contradictory positions. He could praise Cuba and at the same time, hold conversations with American diplomats. For him, governance required flexibility. Still, ideological tensions never completely disappeared. Controversies continued in later years as well. In 2011, then chief minister Mamata Banerjee made a statement on television claiming that US officials regularly visited Alimuddin Street. She remarked, "I am part of the government, and I know many things." The Left challenged her to reveal names. That statement triggered political debate at the time. The issue showed that relations between Kolkata and American diplomacy had remained active beneath the surface, regardless of changing governments. Then came another important visit. In 2012, then US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton

visited Kolkata and met Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee at Writers' Building. Many political observers believed that Kolkata formed only one part of a larger regional diplomatic strategy. After Kolkata, Clinton travelled to Bangladesh. Some analysts argued that Bangladesh itself was central to that diplomatic effort. Hillary Clinton had once remarked that despite travelling widely across the world, she had always wanted to visit Bangladesh. That added another layer of significance to her Kolkata stop. Now another chapter appears to be unfolding. Unlike earlier periods marked by ideological hesitation, the current political environment is different. With Suwendu Adhikari leading the government and receiving support from Delhi, there is a belief within sections of the administration that a larger flow of American investment could become possible, particularly under the present political climate. Rubio himself underlined the broader strategic value of India-US ties. His diplomatic engagement will culminate in New Delhi on May 26, when India hosts the Quad Foreign Ministers' meeting involving the United States, Japan and Australia. Yet beyond trade and diplomacy, a larger geopolitical context also exists.

Beyond Bakri Eid Debate, Decoding Suwendu Adhikari's Emerging Bengal Model

A series of developments around Bakri Eid in West Bengal have triggered political debate and opened a larger discussion about governance, administration, religious accommodation, and the evolving political approach of the new BJP government under Chief Minister Suwendu Adhikari. The developments are being viewed not as isolated administrative decisions but as signals of a broader political framework the BJP government appears to be building in Bengal. The first development concerns the traditional Eid prayers at Kolkata's Red Road. This year, the customary Eid congregation will not be held on Red Road. Instead, prayers are scheduled to take place at the nearby Brigade Parade Ground on May 28. For many years, the Khilafat Committee has organised Eid prayers in Kolkata. The Joint Commissioner of Kolkata Police, Suvdeep Sarkar, said Eid prayers will not be allowed on the roadway and that arrangements have been made at Brigade Parade Ground. There is also uncertainty regarding another long-standing Eid congregation at Park Circus and Syed Amir Ali Avenue. The second development relates to government holidays around Eid-ul-Adha. The West Bengal government revised the holiday schedule. According to earlier notifications, May 26 and May 27 had been designated as public holidays. Subsequently, changes were introduced, and the two-day holiday structure was modified. This move has



drawn political attention because such decisions are often viewed not only from an administrative perspective but also through the lens of symbolism and messaging. The third and perhaps most debated issue concerns animal sacrifice during Eid and the legal framework surrounding it. The matter has become linked with interpretations of the West Bengal Animal Slaughter Control Act. When the law came into force in the early 1950s, it included certain geographical provisions. There were questions whether it would be applicable only in municipal areas and how it would function in rural or panchayat regions. Debates subsequently intensified over whether enforcement could differ between urban and non-urban areas. The issue eventually reached courts. The state government had earlier issued a notification on the matter. Subsequently, a contempt notice was served

after allegations emerged that directions from the court had not been adequately followed. The Division Bench headed by Chief Justice Sujoy Paul had instructed the government to examine whether any procedural relaxations or clarifications regarding slaughter regulations were necessary under provisions of the West Bengal Animal Slaughter Control Act. The court reportedly observed that the state had neither submitted a satisfactory response nor taken visible steps following earlier directions. Consequently, notices were sent to senior officials, including the Chief Secretary, Secretaries of Animal Resources Development, Home, Health, and related departments. The legal challenge had been brought before the court by Citizen Forum for Social Justice, along with multiple petitions questioning the government on the matter. Supporters of the petition argued that uncer-

tainty had emerged regarding the conduct of Qurbani rituals. They also pointed out that cattle-rearers and livestock owners often prepare economically for this period, and uncertainty can create financial strain. Advocate Bikash Ranjan Bhattacharya argued before the court that the West Bengal Animal Slaughter Control Act was originally designed with broader agricultural and livestock protection objectives. As a result, the issue has now become part legal debate and part political conversation. Yet one thing appears clear: there is no visible shift in the broader political position of the BJP government under Suwendu Adhikari or the central BJP leadership. The BJP's position appears to be that every community should receive equal rights under a common framework and that no particular community should be perceived as receiving exceptional concessions beyond what others receive.

The Voice That Is Going Silent: What India Loses When Radio Dies

We have all experienced this in the early morning commute. A voice cuts through traffic noise with a local reference, something specific, a forthcoming event, traffic update, a joke about the weather, and then a song you had forgotten you loved. For two decades, that voice was FM radio. It knew your city. It talked to you as if it lived there too. Now, that voice is going quiet. Several major private FM operators in India have begun surrendering broadcast licences. Expansion plans have halted. Local programming is shrinking. The industry that once placed itself at the heart of urban India's daily rhythm is retreating. Sun TV Network, Music Broadcast Limited and other listed radio entities have reported sustained revenue pressure. India's radio advertising market, once growing at double digits, has been contracting in real terms against digital's explosive rise. At first glance, this makes no sense. India's appetite for audio content is growing unabated. Music consumption is at an all-time high. Podcasts are growing rapidly. Earphones are ubiquitous. Commutes still happen, and people spend hours in transit. Audio, as a medium, has never been more central to Indian daily life. So why is FM radio weakening to near collapse even as audio consumption grows? Radio is struggling because the world it was built for no longer exists. When, at first, private FM radio expanded aggressively in India from the early



2000s, the logic was airtight. Spectrum was scarce and controlled by the government. Music discovery depended on intermediaries, and you needed someone to play the songs for you. Cities had few entertainment options during commuting hours. The radio jockey was not merely a presenter but more the listener's primary guide to popular culture. Then the smartphone arrived and invalidated every one of those assumptions. Today, a listener can instantly access Spotify playlists, YouTube music streams, JioSaavn radio stations, algorithmically curated mood feeds, regional podcasts, devotional content and short-form audio entertainment, all free, all personalised, all available without a fixed schedule. Radio's historic advantage, that it was simply the easiest audio option available, was vaporised almost overnight. Still, technology alone does not explain the depth of the cri-

sis. The deeper failure is one of regulatory design. Private FM radio in India was, for years, effectively barred from broadcasting news, restricted from political commentary, constrained in content choices and trapped in a city-by-city licensing structure that made achieving programming economics at a national scale difficult. The result was a medium locked into a single format with Bollywood songs, RJ banter and local advertising. That format worked in the pre-streaming era. In the streaming era, it became indefensible. Spotify can do music better. Algorithms can do personalisation better. What radio could have built was a genuine spoken-word ecosystem, civic broadcasting, personality-driven commentary, and regional cultural programming; it was largely prevented from building. Compare this to the United States. American radio evolved beyond music

decades ago into talk radio, sports commentary, financial advice, political broadcasting and deeply loyal personality-driven formats. Radio personalities became intellectual and cultural brands in their own right. iHeartMedia, the largest US radio group, operates over 860 stations but derives substantial revenue from podcasts, live events, and digital content. India never developed that architecture. Indian private radio remained commercially narrow, and when digital platforms arrived with infinite supply at near-zero distribution cost, radio had almost no defensive moat left. Think of who loses most when local audio voices disappear. Streaming platforms are global. Audio intimacy is local. That connection, once lost, does not easily return. India has hundreds of millions of citizens who are comfortable passive listeners but who are not habitual readers or active screen users.

STRAIT OF HORMUZ TO RE-OPEN?

Trump Says Agreement With Iran 'Largely Negotiated'

US President Donald Trump claimed that a truce deal with Iran had been "largely negotiated", as part of which the Strait of Hormuz will be reopened. Finer details of the deal are yet surface. "An Agreement has been largely negotiated, subject to finalisation between the United States of America, the Islamic Republic of Iran, and the various other Countries, as listed," he announced via a post on TruthSocial on Saturday. He highlighted that apart from the other aspects of the deal, the Strait of Hormuz will be opened.

However, Fars News, a semi-government Iranian media agency, has since then denied the claim that the key maritime shipping lane will be re-opened. Disputing Trump's social media post Fars outlined that the Strait of Hormuz will remain under Iranian control according to the latest version of the proposal exchanged between the US and Iran. America's version of finalising a truce deal would include points that aim to end hostilities with



Iran, while gradually opening the Strait of Hormuz and ending the US Blockade. Further, the agreement would unfreeze some Iranian assets that are held in banks outside Iran, as per reports. A clock of at least 30 days for continued negotiations will begin post a broad agreement is in place, meant to help break the remaining bones of contention between the two parties, such as Iran's nuclear programme and its stockpile of near-weapons-grade ura-

nium. Trump said final details were still being sorted, and it remained possible that some aspects of the memo could change. Fars News, on the other hand, emphasised that Trump's claims about the Strait reopening are "not true" and "inconsistent with reality." "Although Iran has agreed to allow the number of passing vessels to return to pre-war levels, this in no way means 'free passage' as it existed before the war," the outlet reported.

Trump stated he had a "very good call" on Saturday from the Oval Office with a group of Gulf and regional leaders, including officials from Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Qatar, Pakistan, Turkey, Egypt, Jordan and Bahrain, to discuss negotiations surrounding Iran and what he described as a memorandum of understanding tied to "PEACE." A senior Iranian source told Reuters on Sunday that Tehran has not agreed to hand over its stock-

pile of highly enriched uranium, pushing back against earlier reports suggesting such a commitment was part of ongoing negotiations with the United States. The source said Iran's nuclear programme was not included in the preliminary understanding currently under discussion between Washington and Tehran. "The nuclear issue will be addressed in negotiations for a final agreement and is therefore not part of the current deal. There has been no agreement over Iran's highly enriched uranium stockpile to be shipped out of the country," the source told Reuters. The remarks come after two US officials told The New York Times that Iran had, in principle, agreed to relinquish its stockpile of highly enriched uranium as part of a broader diplomatic framework aimed at reducing tensions in West Asia. According to the report, the mechanism for transferring or neutralising the uranium would be worked out during subsequent negotiations after a formal agreement is reached.

MCAP OF 6 OF TOP-10 MOST VALUED FIRMS SURGES BY RS 74,111 CR

New Delhi: The combined market valuation of 6 of the top-10 most valued firms surged by Rs 74,111.57 crore last week, with Reliance Industries emerging as the biggest gainer. Last week, the BSE benchmark climbed 177.36 points, or 0.23 per cent. "Markets ended the week with marginal gains amid a highly volatile and range-bound trading environment. Benchmark indices witnessed sharp intraday swings throughout the week, driven by persistent rupee weakness, mixed global cues, sectoral rotation, and continued uncertainty around inflation and interest rates," Ajit Mishra – SVP, Research, Religare Broking Ltd, said. From the top-10 pack, Reliance Industries, ICICI Bank, Tata Consultancy Services (TCS), Bajaj Finance, Larsen & Toubro, and Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC) were the gainers, while HDFC Bank, Bharti Airtel, State Bank of India and Hindustan Unilever faced erosion from their valuation. Reliance Industries added Rs 24,696.89 crore,



taking its market valuation to Rs 18,33,117.70 crore. The valuation of TCS jumped Rs 19,338.68 crore to Rs 8,38,401.33 crore, and that of ICICI Bank surged Rs 14,515.93 crore to Rs 9,06,901.32 crore. LIC's valuation climbed Rs 9,076.37 crore to Rs 5,14,443.69 crore. The market capitalisation (mcap) of Bajaj Finance edged higher by Rs 3,797.83 crore to Rs 5,70,515.57 crore, and that of Larsen & Toubro went up by Rs 2,685.87 crore to Rs 5,40,228.21 crore. However, the market valuation of Bharti Airtel

dropped by Rs 20,229.67 crore to Rs 11,40,295.49 crore. The mcap of Hindustan Unilever eroded by Rs 16,212.18 crore to Rs 5,17,380 crore, and that of State Bank of India declined by Rs 12,784.4 crore to Rs 8,76,077.92 crore. HDFC Bank's mcap dipped by Rs 2,094.35 crore to Rs 11,79,974.90 crore. Reliance Industries retained the title of the most valued firm, followed by HDFC Bank, Bharti Airtel, ICICI Bank, State Bank of India, TCS, Bajaj Finance, Larsen & Toubro, Hindustan Unilever and LIC.

IDFC FIRST Bank launches Business Multiplier credit card for Founders & Entrepreneurs

Mumbai, May 2026: IDFC FIRST Bank unveiled the FD-backed Business Multiplier Metal Credit Card for founders, entrepreneurs and business owners. Designed to support everyday operational needs, the premium metal card displays both the business name and the cardholder's name, reinforcing its business use. With a dedicated credit limit for business expenses, the Business Multiplier Credit Card can help keep business and personal spend separate. It can be used across a wide range of expenses including office supplies, digital marketing spends, SaaS subscriptions, business travel, equipment purchases, inventory procurement, international vendor payments, and employee reimbursements. Backed by assured credit limits linked to Fixed Deposits, along with rewards on key business categories, real-time visibility into spending, and zero forex markup on international transactions, the card helps businesses manage cash flow more efficiently, improve expense tracking, and build a



stronger credit profile over time.

Key benefits designed to support business growth

1. Flexible credit for business cash flow - Up to 45 days interest-free credit, followed by a market-leading 1% monthly interest rate for balances carried forward.
2. Huge savings on forex with 0% Forex Markup and Interest-Free Global ATM cash access. There is no longer a need to carry foreign currency notes and travel cards.
3. Accelerated rewards on business expenses - up to 10 reward points for every ₹200 spent on key business categories.
4. Hyper-accelerated rewards on travel- Exclusive access to highly rewarding

IDFC FIRST travel ecosystem offering bonus rewards value-back of 7.5% on hotels and 4.4% on flights.

5. Pay by Rewards for all online purchase.
6. 8 Complimentary Lounge access every year for domestic and international travel on minimum spends of ₹20,000 in the previous calendar month
7. Travel Protection: A dedicated ₹25,000 Trip Cancellation Cover twice a year
8. Pay vendors seamlessly using UPI with built-in UPI feature
9. Premium Metal card for businesses reflecting the stature of founders and owners.
10. Complete visibility and control on team spending Issue employee cards with

spending controls and track all expenses through a single consolidated statement.

11. Full credit limit equal to Fixed Deposit value with 100% credit limit against Fixed Deposit.
12. Instantly increase your credit limit anytime by creating and linking a Fixed Deposit through the IDFC FIRST Bank app

Available against a Fixed Deposit starting ₹50,000, this premium metal card carries a joining fee of ₹1,000 and an annual fee of ₹1,000. The annual fee is waived upon annual spends of ₹5 lakhs. Speaking on the launch, Mr. Shirish Bhandari, Head- Cards, Payments and Loyalty at IDFC FIRST Bank said, "Many growth-stage businesses still rely on debit or retail cards for operational spending. The FD-backed Business Multiplier Metal Credit Card gives them a purpose-built alternative - flexible access to working capital, zero forex markup for global payments, rewards on everyday business spends, and the confidence of a premium metal form factor as they scale."

Jaishankar Raises Visa Concerns With Rubio, Says Legal Mobility Must Not Be Hit By US Immigration Curbs

External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar raised concerns on Sunday over the Trump administration's changes to visa and immigration policies during talks with US Secretary of State Marco Rubio, saying legal mobility should not be adversely impacted by the new approach. Speaking at a joint media briefing after wide-ranging discussions with Rubio, Jaishankar said people-to-people ties remain central to the India-US relationship and flagged challenges faced by legitimate Indian travellers in obtaining visas. "People-to-people ties are at the heart of the relationship. I apprised Secretary Rubio of challenges that legitimate travellers face in respect to visa issuance," Jaishankar said. "While we cooperate to deal with illegal and irregular mobility, our expectation is that legal mobility would not be adversely impacted as a consequence. After all, this is very relevant to our business, technology and research cooperation," he added. The remarks come amid concerns in India over changes to US immigration



rules, including higher HIB visa fees and revised green-card procedures that reportedly require applicants to file from their home countries. Responding to a question on alleged incidents of racism against Indians in the United States, Rubio dismissed suggestions of sys-

temic targeting while acknowledging isolated remarks by individuals. "I will take that very seriously about the comments. I'm sure that there are people who have made comments online and in other places because every country in the world has stupid people,"

Rubio said. "I am sure there are stupid people here; there are stupid people in the United States who make dumb comments all the time," he added. Rubio said immigrants had played a key role in shaping the United States. "Our nation has been enriched by people who have come to our country from all over the world, become Americans, assimilated into our way of life, and contributed greatly," he said. On the changes to Green Card norms, Rubio said the reforms were part of a broader overhaul of the immigration system and were not specifically directed at India. "We've had a migration crisis in the United States. This is not because of India, but broadly, we have had over 20 million people illegally enter the United States over the last few years, and we have had to address that challenge," he said. "The US is the most welcoming country in the world on immigration," Rubio added. Responding to a separate question, Jaishankar said both New Delhi and Washington were pursuing policies driven by national interests.

GOLD, SILVER PRICE REMAINED UNCHANGED ?

Gold and silver prices remained largely unchanged on Sunday in the backdrop of progressing Iran-US negotiations. 24-karat gold remained steady at Rs 1,59,340.00 per 10 grams, while silver traded at Rs 2,72,270 per kg levels. However, exchange rates in the international commodities market slipped, with spot gold down 0.79% to \$4,509.38 an ounce, the white metal down 1.57% to \$75.51 an ounce. Gold Price Today In Mumbai, the financial heart of the country, 24-carat gold is retailing at approximately Rs 1,59,050 per 10 grams. Kolkata follows a similar trend, with its gold rate reported at Rs 1,58,840. Both cities are ahead of the national capital, Delhi, where the 24-carat rate currently stands at Rs 1,58,770, according to Bullions website. The southern markets continue to record the highest figures in the country. Chennai leads the metros with a peak rate of Rs 1,59,510 while Hyderabad and Bengaluru follow closely at Rs 1,59,300



and Rs 1,59,170 respectively. Silver Price Today The current silver rate in Mumbai is Rs 2,71,780 per kg. In the national capital, Delhi, silver is keeping pace with Mumbai, currently priced at Rs 2,71,310 per kg. Silver rates in Kolkata are currently trading at roughly Rs 2,71,420, according to Bullions website. Southern peers were ahead of the north markets with Chennai and Hyderabad seeing silver trade at approximately Rs 2,72,570 and Rs 2,72,210 per kg, respectively. Bengaluru follows closely, with rates hovering around Rs 2,71,990 per

kg. The following rates are as per 10 grams of gold: Mumbai – Rs 1,59,050 per 10 grams (24-carat) Kolkata – Rs 1,58,840 per 10 grams (24-carat) Delhi – Rs 1,58,770 per 10 grams (24-carat) Chennai – Rs 1,59,510 per 10 grams (24-carat) Hyderabad – Rs 1,59,300 per 10 grams (24-carat) Bengaluru – Rs 1,59,170 per 10 grams (24-carat) Silver Rates City-Wise The following rates are as per 1 kg: Mumbai – Rs 2,71,780 per kg Delhi – Rs 2,71,310 per kg Kolkata – Rs 2,71,420 per kg Chennai – Rs 2,72,570 per kg Hyderabad – Rs 2,72,210 per kg Bengaluru – Rs 2,71,990 per kg.

Key Trends Driving Increased Credit Cards Usage in India

New Delhi, May 2026: India's consumption landscape is evolving rapidly, with spending patterns increasingly reflecting aspirational lifestyle, digital-first transactions, and greater adoption of flexible payment options. Over the past decade, rising incomes, expanding urbanisation, and an increasingly aspirational middle class, have reshaped how and where people spend. With around 118.6 million credit cards in circulation and over ₹3.62 trillion credit card spends during FY'26, the ecosystem is witnessing a clear shift from expansion to utilisation. Insights from SBI Card, India's largest pure-play credit card player, indicates that credit card customers are spending more on experiences and lifestyle categories alongside necessities, while also increasingly leveraging digital platforms.

Evolving Customer Behaviour Supported by rising incomes and exposure, spending behaviour of Indian customers is becoming increasingly aspirational, and experi-



ence-driven, highlighting a shift towards customer's capacity for discretionary expenditure. SBI Card's FY'26 data indicates that retail spends reached the highest ever level of over ₹3.54 trillion, with a 15% growth YoY. Online spends contributed nearly 62.5% in retail spends, reflecting the growing inclination for digital-first consumption across both non-discretionary and discretionary categories. Hyper-personalised, seamless experiences, and self-serviced digital platforms are becoming integral to driving deeper customer engagement and convenience. As per SBI Card, millions of customers are frequently leveraging SBI Card's digital platforms such as SBI Card mobile app, Live Chat integrated Ask ILA chatbot, WhatsApp Service, for their varied needs, from apply-

ing for a new card to query resolution. Today, SBI Card mobile app enjoys a strong 4.6 and 4.5 rating on Google Play and App Store, respectively, owing to its focus on enhanced customer experience. Commenting on the evolving credit card ecosystem in India, Salila Pande, MD & CEO, SBI Card, said, "Rising income and aspirations, progressive policies, digitisation, and growing payments infrastructure, is reshaping credit card transactions. Customers are increasingly gravitating towards experiences, lifestyle-driven purchases, and seamless everyday transactions, reflecting a more confident and evolving mindset. At SBI Card, we remain focussed on further strengthening our product portfolio through meaningful partnerships and innovation, to address these evolving

needs, while contributing to India's thriving digital payments landscape."

UPI on Credit Cards Accelerates Everyday Usage India's digital payment ecosystem has evolved rapidly with UPI emerging as the backbone of everyday transactions. A notable evolution within this ecosystem is the growing adoption of UPI-linked credit cards, which is expanding its role within everyday transactions. As per SBI Card's Q4 FY'26 data, UPI-linked credit cards spend grew by over 10% QoQ, led by segments such as departmental stores & groceries, utilities, fuel, apparel, and restaurants – indicating growing customer comfort and confidence.

Credit Card Adoption Expands To Tier 2+ Cities Credit card adoption is gradu-

ally expanding beyond metropolitan markets with rising incomes, improving digital awareness, and expanding payments infrastructure. The integration of RuPay credit cards with UPI is further accelerating this trend by enabling customers in smaller cities to use credit seamlessly, even for their everyday spends, including small-ticket purchases. SBI Card's data indicates that around 77% of UPI-active credit card customers, and nearly 81% UPI-credit spends originate from Tier 2 and Tier 3 cities, highlighting strong adoption of digital credit in emerging markets, and reinforcing the role of credit card in supporting financial inclusion.

Growing Affinity towards Multi-Card Usage Customers are increasingly adopting a preference for using multiple credit cards to cater to various spending requirements, for instance, SBI Card MILES for travel, SBI Card PULSE for wellness, BPCL SBI Card for fuel, Flipkart SBI Card for lifestyle spends, PhonePe for digital transactions, etc.

BLAST TARGETING TRAIN KILLS AT LEAST 20 IN PAKISTAN

At least 20 people have been killed and 70 others injured in an explosion targeting a train transporting military personnel in Pakistan. The blast occurred while the train was travelling through Chaman Phatak station in Quetta, the capital of the western Balochistan region, on Sunday morning. Railway officials told BBC Urdu that three coaches and the engine were derailed while two were overturned. The shuttle service had primarily been transporting service personnel and their families who had been returning home for Eid. The Balochistan Liberation Army (BLA) separatist group claimed responsibility for the attack, saying it was a suicide bombing. Pakistani officials have not yet confirmed this. Images from the scene show burnt-out and mangled carriages and nearby cars, as well as bomb damage to a nearby building. "The train was moving and there were passengers



on board when the explosion occurred," Naseer Ahmed, a local resident, told the BBC. He said that, as it had been a Sunday morning, his family had been asleep when the blast happened, shattering all

his windows. Eyewitnesses said a vehicle laden with explosives drove into the train, causing the explosion. A police officer and civil administration official in Balochistan confirmed to BBC

Urdu that 20 people had been killed, with fears the death toll could rise. Officials said three soldiers were among the dead. Pakistan's Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif strongly condemned the attack, saying

"such cowardly acts of terrorism cannot weaken the resolve of the people of Pakistan". "The entire nation stands in solidarity with the people of Balochistan in this hour of grief," he added. An

emergency has been declared in hospitals treating victims. Those aboard the train had been on their way to Quetta's main railway station from a nearby military encampment, officials said. From there, they were due to travel to Peshawar and then on to their home towns for the holiday. It is not the first time the BLA has targeted trains in Balochistan. In the past two years, the Jaffar Express has come under attack from the armed group many times. Militants hijacked a train and took a number of passengers hostage while en route to Peshawar in March 2025. The BLA accuses Pakistan's federal government of exploiting the rich mineral resources of its largest province without the local population benefitting. Balochistan covers nearly 44% of the country's land, sharing volatile borders with Iran and Afghanistan, and covering part of the Arabian Sea coastline.

CALIFORNIA DECLARES EMERGENCY AS FIRE CREWS RACE TO CONTAIN TOXIC LEAK



California Governor Gavin Newsom has declared a state of emergency as crews race to contain a toxic chemical leak at a manufacturing facility in Orange County. A tank containing about 7,000 gallons of methyl methacrylate, a highly volatile and flammable substance used to make plastic, was at risk of failure, officials warned. Thousands of Garden Grove residents are under evacuation orders as a precaution. Officials said on Saturday that the temperature in the tank was higher than previously thought and it was continuing to rise. Orange

County Fire Authority division chief Craig Covey said they were planning for two scenarios: "Does it rupture and spill, or does it blow up?" The aerospace facility is about 5 miles (8km) from the Disneyland theme park, which is outside the evacuation zone and is open as normal. The facility is about 35 miles south-east of Los Angeles. The cause of the failing tank is under investigation and emergency crews have been spraying it with water to try to stabilise the temperature. Officials said an "inoperable valve" had created "additional operational challenges".

Bolivian minister's convoy ambushed while overseeing roadblock clearance



The convoy of Bolivia's public works minister was ambushed by protesters and briefly disappeared while overseeing the clearing of roadblocks on Saturday. Mauricio Zamora's vehicle was intercepted in the town of Copata on Saturday afternoon and became separated from the group, local media reported. He was later located and is now safe. He had been in command of an operation to clear barriers set up by anti-government protesters aimed at slowing the flow of goods into the administrative capital, La Paz, and nearby El Alto. The mission to create so-called "humanitarian corridors" was met by renewed violence from demonstrators, with some convoys reportedly attacked with stones and dynamite. Marches, protests and roadblocks by trade unions and supporters of left-wing former President Evo Morales have intensified this week, with clashes with security forces in La Paz. The demonstrators are hoping to put pressure on Bolivia's centre-right President Rodrigo Paz to resign just six months after taking

office over his government's austerity measures, with his alignment with the US another divisive issue. Bolivia's police and military were dispatched from major cities in the early hours of Saturday morning to clear the roadblocks, deploying bulldozers to clear rocks and concrete pillars, aiming to ease the flow of food and medicine into the capital. But in several places, clashes with protesters broke out and roadblocks were re-established. Zamora's convoy had been travelling through Copata, south of La Paz, when residents began pelting it with stones and dynamite, local media reported. His vehicle became separated from the others as they retreated but was able to take a dirt road, according to Agencia Noticias Fides (ANF). Here, though, it suffered a second ambush before eventually being able to reunite with the convoy. Elsewhere, protesters looted and burnt down a customs post in Achicha Arriba, on the highway into El Alto, after police used tear gas to attempt to disperse protesters there. Near Caracollo, north of Oruro, a convoy was attacked with explosives.

MAN KILLED IN SHARK ATTACK OFF AUSTRALIA'S NORTH-EAST COAST



A man has died after being attacked by a shark off the coast of the north-eastern Australian state of Queensland, police have confirmed. Emergency services were called to a boat ramp on the Cassowary Coast, between the cities of Cairns and Townsville, just before noon local time on Sunday, following reports of a 39-year-old being attacked

while swimming out at a nearby shoal. Queensland Police said in a statement that the man was retrieved from the water but died from his injuries. It is the second fatal shark attack in Australian coastal waters in as many weeks, after a 38-year-old was killed while spearfishing near Perth, in Western Australia, last Saturday.

Rubio says 'significant progress' made in Iran talks as details of potential deal emerge

Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian says his country is "ready to assure the world" that it is not seeking nuclear weapons, according to state media. The Islamic Republic News Agency (IRNA) quotes the president in a post on Telegram as saying: "Prior to the martyrdom of Ayatollah Khamenei, Iran's late Leader, we declared - and we reiterate now - that we are ready to assure the world we do not seek nuclear weapons." According to the agency, the president adds that Iran "does not desire regional instability" and that it is "the Israeli regime... that seeks to destabilise the region". But he says Iranian negotiators will not "compromise on the dignity and honour of the country". It comes as US Secretary of State Marco Rubio has hinted that



President Donald Trump may make an announcement later today on negotiations. On Saturday, Iranian foreign ministry spokesman Esmail Baghaei told state television that US and Iranian positions had been converging in the last week, but also accused the US of "contradictory statements". Baghaei said Iran was in the process of finalising a "memorandum of understanding"

which would allow additional talks so that "ultimately a final agreement can be reached". Late on Saturday, US President Donald Trump said a deal with Iran had been "largely negotiated" and said details would soon be announced. Ishaq Dar, deputy prime minister of Pakistan, who has been mediating talks, has said that recent negotiations are "grounds for optimism" that

a positive outcome is "within reach". US Secretary of State Marco Rubio, speaking to reporters in New Delhi earlier, said "significant progress" had been made on a potential deal, but not "final progress". He hinted at news on the Strait of Hormuz, said Iran can "never possess a nuclear weapon" and added that there is still "work to do". Meanwhile, UK Prime Minister Keir Starmer and EU Commission President Ursula von der Leyen have both released statements welcoming reports of progress, with both stating Iran must not be allowed to possess a nuclear weapon. The effective closure of the Strait of Hormuz since the beginning of the conflict has impacted shipping across the globe.

SUSPECT KILLED AFTER OPENING FIRE ON SECRET SERVICE NEAR WHITE HOUSE

A suspect who shot at a White House checkpoint was killed in an exchange of fire with Secret Service agents on Saturday evening, officials have confirmed. The BBC's US media partner CBS has named the suspect as Nasire Best, a 21-year-old man who was known to the protection agency and had a documented history of mental health conditions. US President Donald Trump thanked the officers for their "swift and professional action" in apprehending the gunman, who he said in a Truth social post had a "violent history and possible obsession with our Country's most cherished structure".



The shooting comes only a month after a gunman opened fire at the White House Correspondents' Dinner. The incident on Saturday remains under investigation and road closures around the White House will likely stay in place overnight. Shortly

before 18:00 local time (23:00 GMT), a man pulled a gun from his bag and "began firing" outside the White House at the intersection of 17th Street and Pennsylvania Avenue NW in Washington DC, near the Eisenhower Executive Office Building. Secret

Service officers posted on the corner returned fire, striking the gunman. He was then taken to hospital, where he was pronounced dead. A bystander was also wounded in the shooting, but the Secret Service did not give further details on their condition. No officers were injured in the attack. Trump was at the White House at the time, but "no protectees or operations were impacted", the agency said. The suspect was later identified in US media as Best, who had been known to both the Secret Service and the Metropolitan Police Department and had used a revolver, law enforcement sources told CBS.

People trapped under collapsed building in Philippines



Around 20 people are feared to still be trapped under the rubble of a building that collapsed early on Sunday morning in a city near the Philippine capital, Manila. A search operation has so far rescued 24 people from the site in Angeles and two from a nearby hotel that was struck by falling debris, with no deaths reported. The nine-storey building had still been under construction when it suddenly gave way around 03:00 local time on Sunday (19:00 GMT on Saturday). Officials are now investigating the cause of the collapse. Many of those trapped are thought to be construction workers who were unable to escape in time. Images from the scene show a mangled heap of scaffolding and concrete spilling out onto the street, covered by green safety netting. City information officer Jay Pelayo told news agency AFP that the building's walls and scaffolding surrounding it had buckled, likely trapping people in a

pile of debris. "There are big chunks of concrete, and we need equipment to lift them up," he said. "That is what's challenging for the rescue right now." Five people have been confirmed as trapped, two of whom have been able to make contact with rescue workers, according to Reuters, with more feared to be under the rubble. An eyewitness told the Daily Tribune newspaper that she heard a loud rumbling moments before the collapse. She said she briefly lost consciousness, waking up to see debris covering two streets. Angeles sits around 90km (50 miles) to the north-west of Manila, on Luzon, the largest and most populous island in the Philippines. Construction work in the far east Asian nation is frequently beset by poor planning and project management, as well as design errors, research suggests. A landfill collapse in Cebu in January killed 11 waste workers, with others pulled from under the rubbish.



Large-scale Russian attack on Ukraine leaves four dead and dozens injured

RED CROSS VOLUNTEERS DIE FROM SUSPECTED EBOLA IN DR CONGO



Three Red Cross volunteers died in the Democratic Republic of Congo from suspected Ebola likely caught while managing dead bodies, the organisation has said. They are believed to have contracted Ebola on 27 March while working in the eastern region of Ituri on a project unrelated to the virus, before the outbreak was identified. The

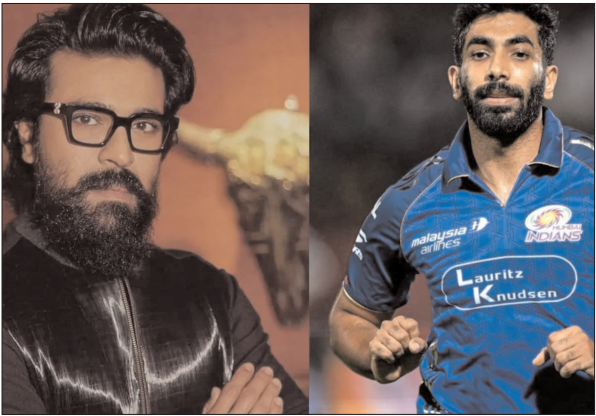
volunteers are among the first known victims of DR Congo's Ebola outbreak, which has resulted in more than 200 suspected deaths and more than 850 suspected cases. The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) said they had died after serving their communities "with courage and humanity".

IPL 2026: RAJASTHAN ROYALS DEFEATS MUMBAI INDIANS BY 30 RUNS



ACTOR RAM CHARAN APOLOGISES TO JASPRIT BUMRAH AFTER ON-STAGE MISTAKE: "HUMAN ERROR"

Star actor Ram Charan issued an apology to Indian cricket team pacer Jasprit Bumrah after mistakenly calling him a 'footballer'. Ram Charan was present at the grand music launch of "Peddi" in Bhopal along with Janhvi Kapoor, AR Rahman and rest of the film's team. During a media interaction, he was asked to describe several India cricketers in a few words. He called Sachin Tendulkar's career a "Long legendary run", Dhoni "calm and cool", Virat Kohli "fire" and described Rohit Sharma as "He's everybody's man". However, when asked about Bumrah, he mixed up cricket with football. The video of his mistake quickly went viral on social media with fans commenting on his mistake and even creating memes. "Uff... I'm genuinely so forgetful with names sometimes. Apologies to @Jaspritbumrah93 Ji for the mix-up - it was a genuine human error in the



middle of all the excitement and the crowd," he posted on X (formerly Twitter). He added that he respected the India fast bowler and was a big fan on his game. Meanwhile, managing a niggles that Bumrah carried from this year's T20 World Cup into the ongoing IPL season resulted in the pace spearhead losing his "sharpness" despite Mumbai Indians giving him enough recuperation time, revealed head coach Mahela Jayawardene. Bumrah's reduced effective-

ness meant that he has just four wickets to show from 13 games for MI, and Jayawardene said the 32-year-old was fighting that unspecified injury in the earlier part of IPL 2026. "(It is due to) a combination of a few things. Coming back from the (T20) World Cup, he had a slight niggles which he played with through the World Cup, so we gave him adequate rest to come back," Jayawardene told reporters on the eve of their last game in this IPL against Rajasthan Royals.

Jalen Brunson Powers Knicks Within 1 Win Of NBA Finals After Dominating Cavaliers In Game 3

For years, the New York Knicks were the franchise other contenders laughed at during playoff conversations. Seasons collapsed early, stars came and went and Madison Square Garden's championship dreams kept drifting further away. Now, everything feels different. With Jalen Brunson controlling the postseason like a seasoned veteran and the roster finally clicking at the perfect moment, the Knicks are suddenly one win away from reaching the NBA Finals for the first time in nearly three decades after dismantling the Cleveland Cavaliers 121-108 in Game 3 of the Eastern Conference Finals on Saturday night. The Cavaliers came into the game hoping to protect home court and get back into the series, but the Knicks stayed in control throughout the night. Every time Cleveland tried to build momentum, New York reacted quickly with big shots, strong defence or another big play from Jalen Brunson. Brunson once again looked completely

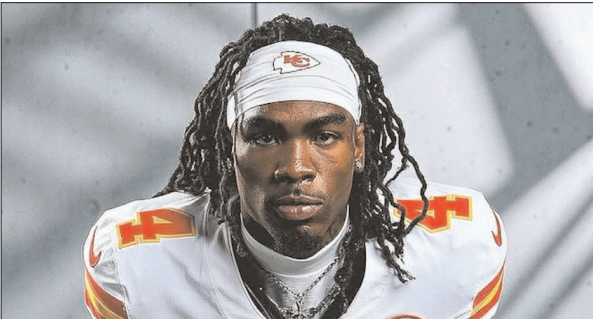


in control despite the pressure of the Eastern Conference Finals. The Knicks star finished with 30 points and controlled the game from start to finish, continuing his incredible playoff run. This time, though, New York did not have to rely only on Brunson. The Knicks got contributions all across the floor and completely outplayed

Cleveland as a team. Mikal Bridges scored 22 points while also making things difficult for the Cavaliers defensively. Karl-Anthony Towns came close to a triple-double with 13 points, eight rebounds and seven assists, while Landry Shamet added 14 important points off the bench. Cleveland never really found its rhythm. Donovan Mitchell scored 23 points and Evan Mobley added 24, but the Cavaliers kept hurting themselves with turnovers and poor execution. The team gave the ball away 17 times, with Mitchell, Mobley and James Harden all committing at least five turnovers. Their struggles at the free-throw line also continued, as Cleveland made just 12 of 19 attempts. Knicks' NBA Finals Dream Suddenly Looks Very Real The bigger picture is that the Knicks have won 10 straight playoff games and are suddenly on the verge of another series sweep during what has become their best postseason run in decades.

Kansas City Chiefs WR Rashee Rice's Jail Sentence Could Lead To Fresh NFL Punishment After Failed Drug Test

The Kansas City Chiefs entered the offseason hoping Rashee Rice could finally move on from the legal issues that interrupted one of the NFL's brightest young careers. Instead, the situation has become even more serious. Rice is now serving a 30-day jail sentence after violating probation connected to last year's street-racing case, raising fresh questions about his availability for the upcoming season. With training camp getting closer and the NFL reviewing the matter again, the Chiefs are dealing with another major offseason distraction involving one of Patrick Mahomes' key targets. The latest issue reportedly began after Rice failed a drug test linked to THC use, which triggered an



immediate response tied to his felony case. Rice had earlier been given flexibility over when he would serve the sentence, but the probation violation sped up the process. He has now been booked into Dallas County Jail and is expected to remain there until mid-June. NFL Could Revisit Rashee Rice Discipline After Probation Violation What makes the situation

more complicated is the uncertainty surrounding possible league punishment. Rice already served an NFL suspension linked to the original incident, leaving questions around whether the league would now issue additional discipline tied specifically to the probation violation. As debate around the situation intensified online, OutKick's Bobby Burack

pointed to the unusual nature of the case. "The general consensus is that there is 'no precedent' for this. On one hand, he's technically serving time for a crime for which the NFL already suspended him. The 30-day jail sentence was already agreed upon; it was just expedited after his violation. On the other hand, the probation violation is 'new.'" Bobby Burack noted on X. "Under the PCP, anything that makes the NFL look bad can technically trigger a suspension. Back to the first hand, the NFL no longer suspends players for THC, which is the reason Rice was found in violation. Back to the other, he could still be suspended for violating probation, regardless of what caused it."

VINGEGAARD TAKES PINK JERSEY WITH THIRD GIRO STAGE WIN



Sachin Tendulkar's Heartfelt Post For Son Arjun Tendulkar After IPL 2026 Debut Is Viral: "Cricket Tests Patience"

Sachin Tendulkar made a heartfelt post on social media as his son, Arjun Tendulkar, made his debut for Lucknow Super Giants (LSG) in IPL 2026 on Saturday. Arjun impressed despite LSG losing the game, picking up the wicket of Punjab Kings (PBKS) opener Prabhsimran Singh. The 26-year-old finished with figures of 1/36 in four overs. In his viral social media post, Sachin expressed pride at the way Arjun had carried himself during IPL 2026, and congratulated him for remaining patient and positive despite not getting many chances. Sachin Tendulkar's heartwarming X post for son Arjun Tendulkar: "Well done, Arjun. Proud of the way you've carried yourself through this season,



always believing in your ability, staying patient, working hard quietly, and remaining positive despite having to wait for your opportunity till the very last match. Cricket tests patience as much as skill, and you handled both beautifully today. Keep your feet on the ground, and continue being in love with the game like you always have. With LSG out

of the running for the IPL 2026 playoffs, Arjun was handed a debut in their final league game of the season. He got a chance to bat five balls, making 5 runs. However, the bowling all-rounder made his impression with the ball. The left-arm pacer finished with an economy-rate of just 9, lower than all of his teammates. He would've dismissed Prabhsimran in

his very first over, were Rishabh Pant not to drop a sitter. Eventually, Arjun struck in his third over, picking up Prabhsimran's wicket by getting him out LBW with a toe-crushing yorker. IPL 2026 marks a pivotal season for Arjun, as it's the first time he is in a franchise other than Mumbai Indians (MI). He was traded from MI to LSG ahead of the IPL 2026 auction.



Novak Djokovic Faces Tough Start In Quest For 25 As French Open Begins

Novak Djokovic will headline the opening day of Roland Garros on Sunday as the 24-time Grand Slam champion begins his latest tilt at history. Lifting the Coupe des Mousquetaires for a fourth time would send the 39-year-old clear as the player with the most major titles. Djokovic's last Grand Slam title came at the US Open in 2023, and every subsequent major has been claimed by tennis' two new dominant forces - Jannik Sinner and Carlos Alcaraz. With double-defending champion Alcaraz missing through injury, Djokovic will enter his first-round match in the night session on Stade Philippe Chatrier against France's Giovanni Mpetshi

Perricard knowing this may well be his best chance of claiming a record-breaking 25th crown. "It's been a lot of hours spent on the court and trying to perfect the game and the body and enable myself physically and game-wise to be ready for best of five (sets)," Djokovic told reporters Friday of his preparations as he returns from a shoulder issue. "Let's see. I don't know whether that's going to be the case for the entire tournament, however long that tournament will be for me. "But Grand Slams have been, and I have said this many times, always the priority list, particularly in the last couple of years... So I can't wait to get on a court and start compet-

ing." The third-seeded Serb enters the tournament with little match practice on clay after only competing in the Italian Open, where he was eliminated in his opening match earlier this month. Djokovic is a different beast when it comes to Grand Slams. Despite his reduced participation in ATP tournaments in recent years, he has nonetheless reached at least the semi-finals at each of the past five majors. He has, however, been handed a tough draw in the French capital. First on the menu is former world number 29 Mpetshi Perricard, who, in addition to having one of the biggest serves on the tour, will also enjoy raucous home backing on

Roland Garros' centre court. Second seed Alexander Zverev will also be in action on the opening day as the German faces home hope Benjamin Bonzi. Rising stars Joao Fonseca of Brazil and Czech Jakub Mensik will both open their bids on Court Simonne Mathieu. "Never tricky" Russia's Mirra Andreeva will be the highest-ranked woman playing on Sunday. The eighth seed meets French wildcard Fiona Ferro on Philippe Chatrier.

Russell edges Antonelli to claim Canada pole 'out of nowhere'



George Russell beat Mercedes team-mate Kimi Antonelli to pole position for the Canadian Grand Prix with the very last lap of the qualifying session. Russell, who won the sprint race earlier on Saturday, was on the back foot after aborting his first lap. But a final run on which he did two flying laps enabled him to pip Antonelli by 0.068 seconds and Russell whooped with delight on the radio after realising he had secured pole. "It is the most exhilarating feeling in the world when it comes at the last minute out of nowhere," he said over the radio. Antonelli had looked set to beat his team-mate when he eclipsed the time set by McLaren's Lando Norris on the Briton's first run, with Russell's first lap on his final run good enough only for third. But Russell had planned for two laps and he did the business on his second one. He said: "There are times when you expect to be on pole and every lap is the

quickest, but the times when it comes together at the end are the sweetest. "The car was out of sync, out of balance [for much of the session]. I knew I needed a big lap and on my preparation lap I saw Kimi on the TV screen going purple [fastest] and I was like, right, I need to bring something big here." Antonelli said: "It was very difficult to get the tyres in the right window. It was a pity to miss out by such a small amount but George did a great lap." Norris was also in the fight for pole, and set what before Russell's final run was the fastest middle sector as he tried to grasp top spot back from Antonelli. But the world champion fell 0.083secs short of the Italian's mark, before Russell raised the bar again. "It was such a challenging session but to do it on the very last lap was epic," said Russell, explaining that the team had made some changes to the car for qualifying with a view to predicting wet weather on Sunday.

‘Peddi’ Will Stay No.1 in My Career: Ram Charan at Grand ‘Peddi Ki Aawaj’ Event in Bhopal



Peddi touches everyone's heart. This is a movie that makes you want to watch it again and again. 'Peddi' remains the number one movie in my film library: Mega Power Star Ram Charan at the biggest musical event 'Peddi Ki Aawaj' in Bhopal Ram Charan took the big songs to another level with his performance and dance. His every moment went viral: Music director AR Rahman Mega Power Star Ram Charan's most awaited action drama 'Peddi' is creating huge buzz across the country. The film is already mesmerizing the audience with its amazing glimpses, two chartbuster songs and a powerful theatrical trailer. Directed by Buchi Babu Sana, the film is being produced by Venkata Satish

Kilaru under the banner of Mythri Movie Makers, Sukumar Writings and Vriddhi Cinemas. Peddi is set to release worldwide on June 4. Special premieres will be held on June 3. AR Rahman has composed the music for the film, and today the film team launched the third single 'Hallalla Llo' at the 'Peddi Ki Aawaj' biggest musical event held in Bhopal. AR Rahman and his team performed live at the event. The event, which was attended by a huge audience, was grand in an unprecedented manner. Mega Power Star Ram Charan said at the 'Peddhi Ki Aawaz' event.. Namaskar Bhopal... My heartfelt greetings to all the people of Madhya Pradesh. You all have a special place in my heart. It feels very emotion-

al for me to start the 'Peddhi' promotions from Bhopal. My thanks to all of you. We have made the movie 'Peddi' with a lot of heart. We have dedicated every emotion, every difficulty, every moment for this movie. As beautiful as this city is, the hearts of the people here are even more beautiful. I want our movie to make a place in your hearts on June 4. Make sure to watch it in theaters and support it. Ravikishan garu spoke very highly about this movie. My thanks to him. 'Peddi' is not just a sports film. It is the story of a person who fights for his identity. That fight touches your hearts. It makes you think, it inspires you. After watching the movie, it makes you want to watch it again and again. This is a movie that inspires everyone.

From a Small Town Dream to the Cannes Red Carpet: Filmmaker Venkat Sai Gunda Represents Independent Storytelling on a Global Stage



Venkat has steadily built a name for himself in independent cinema through emotionally driven storytelling and unconventional narratives. The film received recognition across multiple international film festivals, earning numerous awards and helping establish him as a filmmaker to watch in the indie space. At Cannes, Venkat attended official festival screenings and premiere events as a filmmaker and founder of The Storyteller Universe, a New York-based film festival platform created to encourage and spotlight emerging and underrepresented filmmakers from around the world. Speaking about the experience, Venkat shared that Cannes represented more than just a red carpet moment. “For me, this journey is not about glamour. It is about reminding filmmakers from small towns and ordinary backgrounds that their stories matter too. Cinema has the power to cross borders, languages, and limitations.” Founded with the vision of supporting bold and independent voices, The Storyteller Universe has been growing as a platform focused on creating opportunities for new storytellers who often struggle to find visibility in mainstream spaces.

Independent filmmaker, actor, and film festival founder Venkat Sai Gunda attended the prestigious Cannes Film Festival this year, marking a significant milestone in his journey from a small-town upbringing in Karimnagar,Telangana - India to one of the world's most celebrated cinematic stages. Known for his psychological horror feature The Deserving,

“With everyone’s coordination, we completed the shoot of ‘Memu Cop’lam’ in just 17 days” – Cinematographer Kishore Boyidapu

A cinematographer is the creative force who beautifully translates a director's vision onto the screen. Not only that, but they are also the magician who multiplies the value of a producer's budget through visual storytelling. If the producer is the father of a film and the director is the mother, then the cinematographer is undoubtedly the elder son who stands by the film from beginning to end. One such talented cinematographer making his mark in this crucial department is Kishore Boyidapu. Starting his journey from the grassroots level in the camera department, he proved his talent not only in Telugu cinema but also by working in Bollywood and Hollywood films. Recently, he earned appreciation for the series “‘Memu Cop’lam”, directed by Pradeep Maddali with Naga Babu in the lead role. The series is currently streaming on Zee5. Kishore Boyidapu, who played a key role in completing the series shoot in just 17 days, shared several insights about his cinematic journey, the challenges he faced, and experiences from the series.

BACKGROUND

My full name is Durga Kishore Kumar. Since my entire family was associated with the film industry, I naturally developed an interest in it. My father used to take our photographs and narrate stories



through those photos. That's where my interest in this field began. From childhood itself, I was fascinated by cameras.

CINEMA JOURNEY..

I started my career in 2002 as a camera assistant in Ravi Prasad's unit. After about four years, I moved to Mumbai. My first project there was working in the camera department for Slumdog Millionaire. Later, I also worked on English films and gained experience working on nearly 15 Hollywood films, including Mission: Impossible 4. In 2012, I worked as the Director of Photography (DOP) for a film titled Boy Meets Girl. During that phase, my journey with Anil Mehta began in 2015. That journey started with

Ae Dil Hai Mushkil and continued until Jersey. In between, I also got the opportunity to work on nearly ten more films. Working with sir as one of the main assistants gave me immense happiness and valuable experience in my career. Everything I learned from him has been extremely useful in my cinematography journey. Every lesson from that phase remains very valuable to me. Thanks to Anil Mehta sir. After COVID, when I received opportunities for films like My Name Is Shruthi and 105 Minutes, I spoke with him. At that time, he encouraged me by saying, “Go ahead and start your own work independently.” That's how I restarted my journey as a cinematographer with a fresh beginning.

Dulquer Salmaan, Pooja Hegde, Ravi Nelakuditi, Sudhakar Cherukuri, SLV Cinemas Pan India Film #DQ41, #SLV10 Wraps A Schedule, Captivating Working Stills Released

Versatile Star Dulquer Salmaan is busy with his ongoing film #DQ41, directed by debutant Ravi Nelakuditi. The film comes from the trusted house of SLV Cinemas, led by successful producer Sudhakar Cherukuri. Marking the banner's 10th production, #SLV10, the film is shaping up to be one of their most anticipated ventures. The ever charming Pooja Hegde plays the female lead opposite Dulquer Salmaan in this breezy love entertainer, laced with human emotions. The team wrapped an important leg of shooting in frost-laden landscapes, and the photos arriving from the spot present an endearing picture. Dulquer, layered in winter outfits, carries that effortless charm he's known for, while Pooja Hegde, snug in cozy gear, matches his



warmth with an easy, glowing presence. The candid frames aren't typical posed stills. One

moment captures the actors breaking into spontaneous laughter as crew members hustle around

them, umbrellas shielding them from the biting drizzle. Another image radiates a travel-movie vibes-rucksacks, a rope bridge in the distance, and a flutter of mountain prayer flags turning the frame into a postcard. Another image shows the entire cast and crew posing in front of a temple in wild forest. Though this is Dulquer and Pooja's first outing together, the comfort they share already reflects the tone of their film. Cinematographer Anay Om Goswamy's eye for natural light, GV Prakash Kumar's music, and Avinash Kolla's production design together shape a world that feels intimate, scenic, and emotionally rich. Slated for a grand Pan-India release, the film will grace the cinemas in Telugu, Hindi, Tamil, Kannada, and Malayalam.

The second single “Vadhalane” from “Chennai Love Story” will be released on May 25th



Starring Kiran Abbavaram and Sri Gouri Priya as the lead pair, “Chennai Love Story” is being produced by the successful maker duo SKN and Sai Rajesh, who previously delivered cult classics like “Colour Photo” and “Baby.” The film is being produced under the Amrutha Productions and Mass Movie Makers banners by SKN and Sai

Rajesh. Ravi Namburi is directing the film based on a story by Sai Rajesh, while Melody Brahma Mani Sharma is composing the music. The movie began its musical blockbuster journey with the song “Guruthundha”. Now, the makers have officially announced the second single. Titled “Vadhalane” the song will be released on May 25th at 6 PM.

Grand AP FDC Swearing-In Ceremony Held in Vijayawada in Presence of Balakrishna & Kandula Durgesh



A grand ceremony was held in Vijayawada marking the swearing-in and assumption of office of the newly appointed members of the Andhra Pradesh Film Development Corporation (AP FDC). The event witnessed the presence of several film personalities, political leaders, and dignitaries from the entertainment industry. Actor and MLA Nandamuri Balakrishna attended the ceremony as the chief guest along with Andhra Pradesh Cinema g r a p h y, Tourism and Culture Minister Kandula Durgesh. Newly appointed AP FDC Chairman Bharath Bhushan and other members officially took oath and assumed their responsibilities during the event. Speaking on the occasion, AP FDC Chairman Bharath

Bhushan expressed his gratitude to Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu, Deputy Chief Minister Pawan Kalyan, and Minister Kandula Durgesh for entrusting him with the responsibility. He stated that he would work sincerely in line with the vision of the state government for the development of the film industry in Andhra Pradesh. Recalling the contribution of legendary actor and former Chief Minister N. T. Rama Rao in strengthening the Telugu film industry in 1984, Bharath Bhushan said the current government, under the leadership of Chandrababu Naidu and with the support of Balakrishna, is once again taking significant steps toward rebuilding the industry ecosystem in the state.

EVERYONE WHO WATCHED PURUSHAHA IS APPRECIATING IT: HERO PAVAN KALYAN BATTULA AT THE THANK-YOU MEET

Purushaha stars Pavan Kalyan Battula in the lead, produced by Battula Koteswara Rao under the Kalyan Productions banner, presented by Battula Saraswathi. The film is directed by Veeru Vulavala. The cast includes Pavan Kalyan, Sapthagiri, Kasireddy Rajkumar, Rayancha Kokkura, Vishika, and Hasini Sudhir in key roles. Released on May 22, the movie has been receiving strong word-of-mouth. To thank the audience for their support, the team organised a 'Thank-You Meet on Saturday. While speaking at the event, hero Pavan Kalyan Battula said : “Thanks to



the media for supporting Purushaha. I trained under Satyanand Master, but I didn't reveal this at the pre-release event. I felt that if my acting didn't turn out well, it might reflect on his reputation. Today, with people appre-

ciating my performance, I can proudly say I am his student. This was all possible because of Veeru sir.

From the premiere shows itself, we received positive talk. Everyone who watched the film has been

congratulating us. Sapthagiri anna and Kasireddy anna stood by me throughout this journey. Rayancha, Vishika, Hasini- everyone supported me. Satish sir presented me in a completely different way. Shravan sir

gave us beautiful songs and BGM. My thanks to every artist who worked in this film. Please share your feedback after watching the movie- both my strengths and weaknesses. If you point out my shortcomings, I will work harder to improve. My heartfelt thanks to the audience for supporting us. I hope those who haven't watched it yet will come to the theatres and encourage our hard work.” Producer Battula Koteswara Rao said : “Thanks to the media for taking Purushaha to this level. All three heroines acted wonderfully. Veeru directed this film brilliantly. Cameraman

Satish garu is a great person. Sapthagiri garu and Kasireddy garu performed exceptionally well. Many wealthy people called and said we did the right thing by casting Pavan Kalyan Battula as the hero. I told them I will make two more films with him. At no point did he look like a newcomer. I truly liked my boy's performance.” Director Veeru Vulavala said: “My thanks to the media for supporting Purushaha so strongly. This project started and reached this stage only because of Battula Koteswara Rao garu. He made the film without compromising anywhere. I will never forget the support of Saraswathi garu.