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## Case Registered Against Youths for Conducting Bike Racing in Bhagayat; Bikes Seized

UPPAL, APRIL 26 (INDIAN CHRONICLE): Uppal police on Sunday took into custody two minors and two youths who had conducted bike racing near D-Mart in Uppal Bhagayat two days ago. After an inquiry, cases were registered against them and four bikes were seized. On this occasion, Uppal CI Ramalinga Reddy warned that strict legal action would be taken against anyone conducting bike races within the police station limits. He stated that special patrolling has been arranged in the Uppal Bhagayat area and that necessary measures are being taken to prevent anyone from organizing bike races. He further said that patrolling has been increased at the request of the colony association.



## Pratima Singh, Collector of Medak District organized a Google Meet for child welfare.

Medak District Collector Pratima Singh held a review meeting with the officials of all departments through Google Meet for child welfare. Child Safety & Protection and Anti-Drug Welfare Week from 27th to 2nd May. Collector Pratima Singh ordered the officials through Google Meet to conduct it strictly. On Sunday, a google meet was held with the officers of the District Welfare Department, RDOs, MPDOs, Police and various welfare departments from the Collector's camp office. 27th to 2nd May - Child Safety & Protection and Anti-Drug Welfare Week. Many instructions were given to the authorities for management. Speaking on the occasion, the Collector said that as part of the 99-day Public Governance Development Plan, 27th to 2nd May - Child Safety & Protection and Anti-Drug Welfare Week. To maintain strong. The Collector said that all the arrangements have been completed and the RDOs, MPDOs, Police and Mandal Special Officers will coordinate to make this a success.

## PM Modi slams TMC, promises 33% job quota for women in West Bengal

New Delhi, April 26

With Phase II of the West Bengal Assembly elections approaching, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday combined a welfare pitch centred on women with sharp criticism of the Trinamool Congress government, while

lakh annually, with collateral-free bank loans of up to Rs 20 lakh.

Modi also announced welfare measures including free healthcare cover of up to Rs 5 lakh, free tests and vaccines for breast and cervical cancer, Rs 21,000 assistance during pregnancy and Rs 50,000 support for daughters' education.

Questioning the state government's functioning, the Prime Minister referred to the alleged coal scam and said the Supreme Court had taken the matter seriously, observing that interference in an investigation was a threat to democracy.

Referring to the RG Kar hospital rape and murder case and the teacher recruitment scam, he said courts had to intervene because people had lost faith in the state administration.

"This government does not function from Nabanna. It either runs at the behest of goons or acts only after orders from the High Court and Supreme Court," he said.

Modi also raised concerns over law and order, alleging repeated incidents of rape, murder and violence involving those linked to the ruling party.

He cited Sandeshkhali and other high-profile cases, saying women had suffered most under what he termed "Jungle Raj".

At a rally in Nadia's Ranaghat, Shah warned those trying to intimidate voters to stay indoors on polling day.

He said that if the BJP came to power in Bengal, it would form a special squad to stop cattle smuggling, identify illegal infiltrators and ensure stronger law enforcement.

Polling for the second phase will be held on April 29, while counting is scheduled for May 4.

## Congress Party Loses a Dedicated Soldier; Deputy CM Bhatti Vikramarka Pays Tribute to Mohammed Javed Khammam

Khammam April 26 Indian Chronicle: The Congress party has lost a committed and courageous leader with the demise of Mohammed Javed, said Bhatti Vikramarka while addressing a condolence meeting held in Khammam. The memorial meeting was organized at the District Congress Party office following the death of former Khammam City Congress President Mohammed Javed. Deputy Chief Minister Bhatti Vikramarka attended the event along with Tummala Nageswara Rao and paid floral tributes to Javed's portrait. Several senior leaders, including District Congress President Noothi Satyanarayana, City Congress President Nagandla Deepak Chowdary, former District President Puvvalla Durgaprasad, Handicrafts Corporation Chairman Nayudu Satyanarayana, State Warehousing Corporation Chairman Rayala Nageswara Rao, and CPM senior leader Nunna Nageswara Rao, participated in the program. Speaking on the occasion, Bhatti Vikramarka expressed deep sorrow over Javed's untimely demise, calling it an irreparable loss to both the Congress party and Khammam district. He said the news of Javed's death had deeply shaken him and described him as a leader with great potential to serve society. He recalled that whenever he visited Khammam, Javed would stay with him throughout the tour. Unfortunately, during my recent visit to Sathupalli and Aswaraopeta, he was not with us, he said emotionally. Highlighting Javed's journey, the Deputy CM said he rose through the ranks as a student leader in NSUI and later as a Youth Congress leader, imbibing the party's ideology. He described Javed as an excellent orator who could clearly articulate the Congress party's values and principles. Bhatti Vikramarka said he had full confidence in Javed's abilities when appointing him as District President of Seva Dal, and noted that he discharged his responsibilities efficiently. He also recalled Javed's disciplined service during AICC plenary sessions, where he drew the attention of national leaders. Javed was not confined to politics alone but actively participated in intellectual discussions and training programs such as Rajiv Gandhi Panchayati Raj Sangathan and Sevagram, implementing those learnings at the grassroots level, he added. After the state bi-



furcation, when many leaders left the Congress during difficult times, Javed remained loyal and committed to the party. Recognizing his dedication, he was appointed as Khammam City Congress President, the Deputy CM said. Despite challenging circumstances over the past decade, including the absence of MLAs in the district, Javed continued to fight for party principles without fear. Even during arrests and police lathi charges, he stood firm and never bowed down, Vikramarka noted. He also praised Javed's organizational skills, stating that he strengthened the party structure by forming committees in every division of Khammam city and issuing ID cards with photographs to members. His model of organization impressed even senior leaders like Manickam Tagore and other district presidents. Concluding his speech, Bhatti Vikramarka assured that the Congress party would stand by Javed's family. He emphasized that it is everyone's responsibility to support them and announced that the party would take care of Javed's two children.

## Vasavi Matha Jayanti Declared State Festival; Grand Celebrations Held in Khammam

Khammam, April 26 Indian Chronicle: Grand celebrations of Sri Vasavi Kanyaka Parameswari Jayanti were held with great devotion and enthusiasm in Khammam town on Sunday. The festivities took place at the Sri Vasavi Kanyaka Parameswari Temple located on Trunk Road, under the supervision of Khammam Assembly constituency A-Block Congress Party President Yerram Balagangadhar Tilak. Marking the auspicious occasion of Sri Parabhava Nama Samvatsara Vaishakha Shuddha Dashami, the celebrations commenced with Ganapati Puja. Special rituals including Panchamruta Abhishekam were performed in accordance with Vedic traditions. The deity was beautifully decorated with flowers, and Kumkuma Puja was conducted with devotion. Later, Neerajanam and Mantrapushpam were offered, followed by the distribution of prasadam to devotees. A large number of Devotees thronged the temple to seek the blessings of the goddess and received theertha prasadam. On this occasion, Tilak expressed happiness over the government's decision to declare Vasavi Matha Jayanti as a state festival. On behalf of the devotees, he extended his gratitude to the Telangana government, including Chief Minister Revanth Reddy, Deputy Chief Minister Bhatti Vikramarka, and ministers Tummala Nageswara Rao and Ponguleti Srinivas Reddy. The rituals were conducted by Vedic scholars Nanda Nageswara Rao and Pavan. Several local leaders and devotees, including Corporator Kannem Vaishnavi Prasanna Krishna, Venkateswara Rao, Bojjada Satyanarayana, Nallapu Srinivas, Vemula Bulli, Sriram, Guru, Venkateswarlu, and members of the Seetharama Bhakta Mandali Committee, participated in the celebrations.



## Recognition Sought for Telangana Agitation Activists

### TJS leaders submit a representation to MLC M. Kodandaram

activists who risked their lives during the second phase of the Telangana movement. On Sunday, party leaders met the TJS state president and MLC, Prof. Kodandaram, and discussed several key issues. They appealed for special attention to the welfare of movement activists. The leaders stressed the need to support the families of those who laid down their lives during the agitation and to provide appropriate opportunities to those who actively participated in the struggle. They particularly requested free education for the children of activists and improved free medical facilities for their family members. The leaders also urged Prof. Kodandaram to take up the matter with the government to ensure adequate priority for them in employment opportunities. Apart from issues concerning activists, it was also decided during the meeting to comprehensively document various public grievances at the grassroots level and bring them to the government's attention. Party state vice-president Ambati Srinivas, Warangal district president Sheikh Javed, state committee member Bhonagani Ravinder, leader Siraj, and others were present at the meeting.



Narsampet/Warangal, April 26 (Indian Chronicle) : Leaders of the Telangana Jana Samithi (TJS) urged the government to extend due recognition and respect to

## Uppal MLA's efforts bear fruit

long-pending wish of poor people in Uppal constituency fulfilled; Bhoomi Pooja performed for 100-bed hospital at Mallapur by Uppal MLA Bandari Lakshma Reddy



Hyderabad, April 26 (Indian Chronicle): The Bhoomi Pooja ceremony for the construction of a 100-bed Government Area Hospital in Mallapur was held grandly near Mallapur Elephant Circle. The chief guest of the event, Uppal MLA Bandari Lakshma Reddy, performed the Bhoomi Pooja and formally inaugurated the construction works. Speaking on the occasion, the MLA stated that there is a need to provide better medical facilities in line with the growing population. He said that the construction of the 100-bed government area hospital has been initiated with the objective of ensur-

ing that the people of Mallapur Division and surrounding areas receive quality medical services close to their homes. He further stated that once the hospital construction is completed, modern medical services with advanced facilities will be made available to the public. He added that the hospital will be highly beneficial to the people, with facilities such as emergency care, maternity services, general medical services, and diagnostic centers. Among those who participated in the programme were SE Sunitha, former corporators, officials, BRS party leaders, and party workers.

# Indian Chronicle

## English Daily

### India needs a supply chain strategy amid Hormuz, Red Sea crises

Abroad, the Trump administration's aggressive and hyper-militaristic policies cannot hide the fact that the world is no longer Pax Americana. At home, there's little appetite for large-scale wars like Iraq. Without a large-scale troop deployment in West Asia, Iran cannot be restrained. Iran is not Venezuela. Air campaigns and targeted assassinations of the Iranian leadership have failed to deliver the desired strategic end.

These changes highlight India's strategic vulnerability. Two events in West Asia — the disruption of sea lanes through Bab-el-Mandeb in 2023 and the Strait of Hormuz in 2026 — clearly reveal our supply chain vulnerabilities. The Houthis and Iran successfully disrupted these straits for weeks, with the Americans struggling to keep these lanes open. Rising middle powers like India, located at the centre of the Indian Ocean, require a long-term supply chain strategy — not just for West Asia but for the entire Indian Ocean. By adopting such a strategy, India can protect itself against vulnerabilities while also leveraging its locational advantages in the Indian Ocean Region.

According to data from the government of India, maritime trade accounts for almost 95% of India's trade by volume and 70% by value. India depends heavily on oil and natural gas that passes through the Straits of Hormuz and Bab-el-Mandeb. The country imported 4.5 million barrels per day of crude oil and condensate in 2023, with 45% of its crude imports still coming from West Asia even after Russia's rise as a supplier. India was among the main Asian destinations for Hormuz crude flows in 2024. Roughly 90% of Indian LPG passed through Hormuz before the war. Qatar alone accounted for nearly 50% of LNG imports.

Apart from energy security, India's overall trade is heavily dependent on these strategic chokepoints. India-Europe trade is deeply reliant on the Red Sea, with almost 80% of Indian exports to Europe passing through this route. India must combine reshoring, decoupling, and strategic partnerships to secure supply chains, which are vital for sustaining trade and supporting its ambitions as a major Indian Ocean power. The Iran-US war and the Red Sea crisis instigated by the Houthis have highlighted the vulnerability of India's oceanic trade. In response to these crises, India sought to diversify its sources. However, such ad hoc responses are insufficient and often too late. The question now is: how can India prepare for such future shocks, and what should a long-term supply chain strategy entail?

Strategic autonomy lies at the core of India's strategic orientation and major power ambitions in the 21st century. This entails avoiding military alliances with any great power, pursuing multi-alignment with like-minded states on specific issues, and maintaining overall strategic independence. In this context, the vulnerability of India's global maritime supply chains is a key impediment. This requires prudent, long-term thinking about global supply chains. India's major power ambitions require sustained economic growth and domestic political stability. These vulnerabilities create challenges on both fronts. A nation's grand strategy, according to scholars like Barry Posen, is "theory about how to produce security for itself." This involves the prudent use of economic, political, military, and diplomatic means to achieve the desired end. For almost two decades, strategic thinkers have called for a grand strategy for India. Any long-term strategic document must take maritime security into account. In this context, the security of the supply chain is fundamental for an aspiring major power that depends on the Indian Ocean for the majority of its trade.

### Self-Enumeration to Accelerate Census 2027: Addl Collector David

Indian Chronicle, Kagaznagar, K.B. Asifabad, April 26: District Additional Collector (Revenue) David stressed the need for officials to focus on the effective implementation of the self-enumeration process as part of Census 2027. "He was speaking at a meeting held on Sunday at the conference hall of the Integrated District Collectorate complex. "The Additional Collector informed that the census will be conducted in two phases. The first phase (house listing) will be carried out from May 11 to June 9, followed by the second phase (population enumeration). "He stated that digital technology will be used to prepare an accurate and reliable database, and that enumerators and supervisors are being provided with necessary training. "To ensure the success of the self-enumeration initiative, awareness campaigns will be conducted through public representatives, government employees, prominent citizens, enumeration staff, youth, and self-help groups. "The self-enumeration portal will be available from April 26 to May 10, and district-level census officials have been



instructed to update the data daily. "Officials were directed to create widespread awareness about self-enumeration across all mandals, village panchayats, and municipalities in the district. "He further stated that government welfare schemes and development programs are implemented based on population data, and appealed to citizens to cooperate in preparing an accurate database. "Citizens can complete self-enumeration online through the official website: <https://sc.census.gov.in> and provide their self-enumeration ID when officials visit their homes. "People were urged to provide accurate and truthful information during the census process. "Officials from the Chief Planning Office, master trainers, field trainers, and technical assistants participated in the meeting.

# Kavitha Lacks the Standing to Criticize the Congress Party

## Telangana State Mahila Congress President Errabelli Swarna



Hanamkonda, April 26 (Indian Chronicle): Telangana State Mahila Congress President Errabelli Swarna stated that had the irregularities that occurred during the ten-year BRS rule been questioned at the time, people would have had greater trust in the criticisms now being made by Kalvakuntla Kavitha. "She said that anyone in the rural areas of Telangana could clearly explain which regime was "tyrannical" when comparing the ten years of BRS governance with the two-and-a-half years of people's rule. Those criticizing the present government, she noted, must also comprehensively examine past developments. "Swarna remarked that speaking now in contradiction to earlier statements is inappropriate and that the public is observing these changes. She opined that legal matters should not be linked with political emotions. "Stating that clarity is needed on social justice and equal opportunities in a state formed through the sacrifices of the Telangana movement, she said that the Kalvakuntla family, which she alleged used sentiment for positions and opportunities, does not have the standing to criticize the Congress party or the Chief Minister.

She alleged that the public is noticing attempts to invoke Telangana sentiment after failing to gain a share in allegedly misappropriated funds. "She commented that Kavitha herself had earlier said that the present Chief Minister was governing better than her father, but is now calling the same governance "tyrannical," leaving it to her discretion to explain the contradiction. "Questioning Kavitha's right to speak about Telangana's self-respect, Swarna asked whether someone allegedly involved in liquor businesses in other states could claim such moral ground. She questioned what kind of social justice it was when all key positions went to a single family in a state formed through the sacrifices of activists, and why social justice was not remembered then. "She criticized Kavitha for not responding to injustices faced by women during her government's tenure while now speaking about women's rights at the national level. "Swarna advised that those speaking on women's rights and social justice must also respond responsibly to past issues, adding that corruption allegations are personal matters and should not be linked to society at large.

### MLA Kumbham Anil Kumar Reddy inaugurated the mega job fair



(Yadadri Bhuvanagiri District Bureau..Indian Chronicle...April 26):- Bhuvanagiri MLA Kumbham Anil Kumar Reddy said that the mega job fair is being organized with the aim of reducing the unemployment problem in the Bhuvanagiri constituency and providing wide employment opportunities to the youth. Speaking at a press meet organized on this occasion, the MLA revealed that this huge job fair is being organized under

the auspices of Kumbham Foundation keeping in mind the future of the youth as a social responsibility. This job fair will be organized on May 8, 9 and 10 at the premises of New Dimension High School in Bhuvanagiri town. He called on the youth of Bhuvanagiri constituency as well as surrounding areas to utilize this opportunity. "In this mega job fair, leading companies across the country will provide job opportunities in various fields. More than 20 organizations will participate and fill more than 3500 vacancies. "Qualifications: 10th class, intermediate, degree, diploma, ITI engineering and other technical qualifications "Salary: ₹12,000 to ₹40,000 (based on qualifications and skills) "The MLA said that it is necessary to take advantage of such opportunities for the youth to become self-reliant. He said that thousands of youth have the opportunity to get jobs directly through this job fair. Candidates are advised to attend with their resume, Aadhaar card, passport size photos and educational certificates. He said that priority will be given to those who register in advance. "The MLA clarified that the aim of this program is to develop Bhuvanagiri constituency as a center of employment opportunities and provide sustainable livelihood to unemployed youth. He said that such programs will be continued in the future as well. "The District Library Chairman, District Market Committee Chairperson, Municipal Chairman, senior leaders, mandal and village public representatives, councilors and activists participated in this program. "Finally, MLA Kumbham Anil Kumar Reddy called for the youth to participate in large numbers and make this mega job fair a success.

### Center's conspiracy against South in the name of delimitation, cheating women:- CPI(M) District Secretary MD Jangir

(Yadadri Bhuvanagiri District Bureau..Indian Chronicle...April 26):- CPM District Secretary MD Jangir has strongly accused the BJP government at the Center of trying to silence the voices of South Indian states in the name of delimitation (redivision of constituencies). Speaking as the chief guest at a seminar organized by the Bhuvanagiri CPM Committee on Sunday at the local Puchalpalalli Sundarayya CPM office under the chairman-

ship of Town Secretary Maya Krishna, CPI M District Secretary Jangir BSP leader Battu Ramachandriah said, "Delimitation is going to become a curse for states like Telangana, Andhra Pradesh, Kerala, and Tamil Nadu, which are following population control and are progressing on the path of development. Increasing the seats for the northern states that have increased their population indiscriminately and reducing the seats of the southern states that have followed the rules means disrespecting development. This is yet another attack by the Center on the political existence of the southern states," criticized CPM District Secretary MD Jangir. He questioned the Center's sincerity on the Women's Reservation Bill. "Since the Women's Bill was passed by Parliament in 2023, it has been cheating women by tying it to issues like census and delimitation," he said. The BJP, which sees women power as a vote bank, is playing dramas by stalling for time without implementing this quota immediately," he said. "He warned that the CPM will not tolerate the 'monopoly' trend of keeping all powers with the Centre while trampling on the rights of the states. He expressed concern that if the voice of the South is weakened in Parliament due to delimitation, there will be serious injustice in the allocation of funds in the future. "He called on all people to unite and fight against the undemocratic decisions of the Central Government. He made it clear that the CPM will always be at the forefront of protecting the Constitution and democratic values. Senior CPM leaders Gadde Narasimha, members of the urban executive committee of Vanam Raju Voltas, Anjaiah Barla Venkatesh, Chinthala Shiva, Maturi Kavitha, Kotha Lalitha, SFI District Secretary, Lavudiyra Raju, SFI Urban Secretary, Eerla Rahul, DYFI Urban Secretary, MD Salim, Rajaka Sangam District Secretary, Vaddabhoina Venkatesh, and others participated.



ship of Town Secretary Maya Krishna, CPI M District Secretary Jangir BSP leader Battu Ramachandriah said, "Delimitation is going to become a curse for states like Telangana, Andhra Pradesh, Kerala, and Tamil Nadu, which are following population control and are progressing on the path of development. Increasing the seats for

### Census 2027 should be conducted transparently and comprehensively:- Additional Collector of Local Bodies Bhaskara Rao

(Yadadri Bhuvanagiri District Bureau..Indian Chronicle...April 26):- Additional Collector of Local Bodies Bhaskara Rao said that Census 2027 should be conducted transparently and comprehensively. "On Sunday, the Additional Collector participated in the Census-2027 Phase-2 training program for supervisors and enumerators at the MPDO office in Bibinagar. Speaking on the occasion, the Additional Collector said that the Census



training classes should be conducted with complete understanding and without any room for mistakes in the enumeration of houses. He said that the process of recording every detail accurately should be carried out comprehensively. He suggested that every officer should discharge their responsibilities with commitment. He also instructed the concerned officers to provide comprehensive and quality training to enumerators and supervisors. "The Tahsildar, Mandal Education Officer, concerned officials, supervisors, enumerators and others participated in this program.

### Agitate in the Spirit of May Day -- Repeal the Four Labour Codes

BRTU District President Gone Yuvraj

(Narsampet/Warangal, April 26 (Indian Chronicle): Calling upon workers to make the May 1 May Day observance a success, BRTU District President Gone Yuvraj urged the working class to launch a movement, inspired by the spirit of May Day, for the repeal of the four Labour Codes. "He was speaking as the chief guest at a meeting of hamali (head-load) workers held on Sunday at the Narsampet Agricultural Grade Market Yard, presided over by Hamali Union State Secretary Kolluri Lakshminarayana. Addressing the gathering, Yuvraj criticised the amendments to labour laws, alleging they were made in favour of corporate and multinational com-



panies. He said that labour protection laws were enacted as a result of the sacrifices made by countless workers for the eight-hour workday, and argued that repealing such safeguards was unjustified. "He recalled that the State Governments of Tamil Nadu, Kerala, and West Bengal had passed Assembly resolutions stating they would not implement the four Labour Codes introduced by the Central Government and had forwarded these to the Centre. He demanded that the Telangana Government similarly pass a resolution in the Assembly and send it to the Centre. "Among those present were Building Construction Workers' Union State Secretary Paladugula Ramesh, Hamali Division President Bollam Prasad, and leaders Gandla Ramulu, Bikshapathi, Anil Kumar, Swamy, Mogli, Devender, Ramesh, and Raju.

## Jawed Habib Hair & Beauty Unisex Salon Grand Opening at Mallapur, Secunderabad



Hyderabad: Jawad Habibs Hair & Beauty Salon Launched At New Narsimha Nagar, Mallapur, opposite VNR Garden, in Mallapur Division, Secunderabad The inauguration was done by Jawad Habib, Teja Devisetti Master Franchisee South India at Jawed Habib and Beera Ilaiah, MLA Alair and Government Whip. Jawed Habib's Hair and Beauty- an advanced professional family Salon launched today at Mallapur, Secunderabad. The inauguration was done by Jawad Habib's Hair & Beauty salon is poised to transform the face of hair care and service in this cosmopolitan metropolis. The family salon is spread into facial rooms, Pantry, Styling chairs, Shampoo station, Pedicure station, with steam shower facility, massage rooms, hair spa, bridal, Vip Room etc. To provide privacy to women, the unisex salon has exclusive women zone. Speaking on this occasion Salon Director Ch.Baghyavathi & Ch. Mallesham Jawed Habib's Hair & Beauty salon said "We started this salon to change not just the way people looked but to add ample positivity in their attitude to life! We want our customers to look and



feel beautiful from inside out. Jawed Habib's Hair and Beauty Salon is all set to offer alluring grooming services to celebrities and tinsel stars, will extend chic and trendy hair care, skin and body care services, including hair forms and hair coloring, grooming services like hair styling, manicure, bridal makeup, hair grooming."

## Participated in the wedding celebrations of the Pogula family

### Former MLA Beeram Harshavardhan Reddy

Joint Mandals In-charge Govindu Sridhar Village Sarpanch Madduri Shankar Wanaparthi correspondent Indian Chronicle Former MLA Beeram Harshavardhan Reddy, Joint Mandal In-charge Govindu Sridhar Reddy, K.C. Reddy Chinna Reddy, who attended the wedding of their son Anand Kumar Anusha at the invitation of the Pogula people in Chinnamaru village under Chinnambavi mandal, blessed the newlyweds by blessing them with Akshintha and wishing them a long and healthy life. Former MLA Beeram Harshavardhan Reddy, TRS Party Public Representatives Joint Mandal In-charge Govindu Sridhar Reddy, Kesireddy Chinna Reddy, Maheshwar Reddy, Gudepu Shiva Reddy, Gunda Venkataswamy, Deputy Sarpanch Pinihari Bhasha, former Deputy Sarpanch Golla Balapiru, Ketha Paga Sudhakar, former Sarpanch of Chinnambavi Ranjith Kumar, former Deputy Sarpanch Thagaram Kurumaiah, Sarpanch Madduri Shankar, Charakonda Babu, chellepad Sarpanch Narasimha, Ugra Narasimha, Sampangi Maddileti, S Maddileti, Dega Shekhar Yadav, Nagaraju,



Narasimha, and leaders Pogula Kurumaiah, Pogula Lal Kumar, Pogula Mahesh, Pogula Erranna, Pogula Govindu, Badikali Babu, and activists participated.

## Attack on Environmentalist Dusharla Satyanarayana Condemned: Minister Surekha Visits Injured Activist

Hyderabad correspondent, April 26 (Indian Chronicle): Telangana Forest, Environment and Endowments Minister Konda Surekha on Saturday strongly condemned the attack on noted environmentalist and water rights activist Dusharla Satyanarayana, describing it as "an attack on humanity itself." The minister visited Satyanarayana at NIMS Hospital, where he is undergoing treatment for serious injuries. She spoke to doctors to assess his condition and enquired about the circumstances leading to the attack. Expressing deep anguish, Surekha said the injuries sustained by Satyanarayana resembled a "devastated forest," reflecting the gravity of the assault. She noted that targeting a person who has dedicated his life to environmental protection and water rights amounts to an attack on society's very existence. Highlighting his contributions, the minister said Satyanarayana played a pivotal role in raising awareness about the fluorosis crisis in Nalgonda district as the founder of Jala Sadhana Samithi. Through sustained campaigns, including long marches and protests, he brought national attention to the issue. She also recalled how he once demonstrated the severity of fluorosis before former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee by presenting affected victims, drawing the country's focus to the crisis. Surekha directed the Nalgonda Superintendent of Police to take stringent legal action against those responsible for the attack. Assuring full government support, she said the 70-acre forest de-



veloped by Satyanarayana, known for its rich biodiversity, would be protected with funds under the Van Mahotsav programme. Praying for his speedy recovery, the minister urged people to take inspiration from his work and contribute to environmental conservation by planting saplings on special occasions.



## RTC Workers Celebrate in Paidipally

### MLA K.R.Nagaraju and KUDA Chairman Inagala Venkatram Reddy Perform Milk Abhishekam to CM Revanth Reddy's Portrait

Hasanparthy/Warangal, April 26 (Indian Chronicle) : Jubilant scenes were witnessed across Telangana as the state government took key decisions aimed at fulfilling the long-standing demands of RTC employees. In particular, following the announcement of an 11% fitment (PRC) and a positive decision on the RTC merger process, RTC workers celebrated grandly on Sunday in Paidipally village of Hasanparthy mandal. Vardhannapet MLA K.R. Nagaraju, Hanumakonda DCC President and KUDA Chairman Inagala Venkatram Reddy participated as chief guests in the event. Along with RTC employees, they performed milk abhishekam (palabhishekam) to the portraits of Chief Minister Revanth Reddy, Deputy Chief Minister Bhatti Vikramarka, and Transport Minister Ponnampalanki. Speaking on the occasion, MLA K.R. Nagaraju criticized the previous government for allegedly neglecting the RTC organization and ignoring the problems of its employees. He appreciated the Congress-led government for sincerely addressing workers' issues by directly listening to their grievances and working towards resolving their legitimate demands. He stated that the announcement of 11% PRC and permission for union elections reflect the commitment of the people's government, adding that these decisions have instilled confidence and assurance among RTC employees and their families. He also highlighted that the "Mahalakshmi" scheme, which provides



free bus travel for women, has received an overwhelming response from the public. After the celebrations, MLA K.R. Nagaraju and KUDA Chairman Inagala Venkatram Reddy traveled in an RTC bus and interacted with passengers. They enquired about public opinion on free bus travel and RTC services, assuring that the government is committed to strengthening the corporation further. The event was attended by local Congress leaders, public representatives, a large number of RTC workers, villagers, and women, who expressed their support for the government's decisions.

## Medical care missing in Jagtial. Hospital staff negligent towards person who arrived with bleeding



Jagtial Correspondent, April 26 (Indian Chronicle) : Humanity has gone up in flames at the Jagtial Government Critical Care Hospital. Allegations are pouring in that when a person named Padala Devender went to the hospital on Sunday for treatment with injuries and bleeding, the staff did not pay attention. When Padala Devender, who came to the hospital suffering from injuries, was bleeding, his family



members asked the staff to at least apply cotton. However, the victim expressed anguish that the staff shouted loudly and behaved rudely, saying, "There is nothing here, take him away." Hustle-bustle only after threatening to call the DMHO. Padala Devender's daughter expressed anguish that even after she stated she works as an ANM in the Medical and Health Department, the staff did not care. Finally, with no other option, when she warned that she would call the District Medical and Health Officer, there was movement among the staff. The patient said that immediately, one staff member came, applied cotton, gave an injection, and told them to "leave" the hospital. Locals outraged: "Locals are furious that despite having a "Critical Care" board, the hospital failed to provide even basic medical care during an emergency. They are questioning who would be responsible if the patient's condition worsened. Officials should respond: "People are demanding that the District Medical and Health Department officials immediately investigate this incident and take action against the responsible staff. They are urging that such negligence in government hospitals should not be repeated.

## International Neurosurgery Summit at Yashoda "Hospitals Concludes Successfully

Indian chronicle, Secunderabad, April 26: An international conference titled "International Skull Base Endoscopy Summit 2.0" was successfully organized at Yashoda Hospitals Secunderabad over three days from April 24 to 26. The summit brought together 500 national and international experts, including neurosurgeons, ENT specialists, academicians, and postgraduate medical students. The conference served as a global platform to discuss the latest innovations, techniques, and experiences in minimally invasive neurosurgery and skull base surgery. Advanced neuro-endoscopic procedures for the safe removal of brain tumors were a key highlight. The three-day event featured live brain surgeries, expert lectures, panel discussions, and case-based learning sessions. A major attraction was the hands-on cadaveric training, which provided participants with practical experience in advanced surgical techniques. Speaking at the closing session, Dr. Pawan Gorukanti, Director of Yashoda Hospitals, said, "Our focus is not limited to healthcare services alone; we aim to shape the future of medicine through education, innovation, and research." He added that the Yashoda Center for Neuroendoscopy (YCNE) continues to play a key role in clinical excellence, training, and research. Senior Neurosurgeon Dr. Ayyadurai stated, "Skull base surgery demands extreme precision and continuous learning. This summit covered a wide range of topics including endoscopic endonasal skull base surgery, transcranial approaches for complex lesions, pituitary tumors, and CSF leak repair techniques." He further noted that discussions also focused on neuro-navigation, intraoperative imaging, robotic surgery advancements, and complication management through case-based studies. The cadaver workshop was led by internationally renowned experts including Dr. Theodore H. Schwartz (USA), Dr. Calvin Mak (Hong Kong), and Dr. Ayyadurai, who served as course directors. The summit was conducted under the supervision of Dr. Pawan Gorukanti and coordinated by Dr. Vijay Kumar, Unit Head of Yashoda Hospitals, Secunderabad.



## Mazdoor Union Anger Over Post Surrender in South Central Railway

Indian chronicle, Secunderabad, April 26: The South Central Railway Mazdoor Union (SCRMU) has strongly condemned the Railway Board's decision to surrender (abolish) a large number of posts instead of filling existing vacancies in the Railways. According to the union, the Railway Board has issued orders as part of "manpower rationalization" for the financial year 2026-27, aiming to cut thousands of posts across the country. The Board has set a target to surrender or redistribute 2% of the sanctioned strength as of April 1, 2026, which amounts to 29,608 posts nationwide. Impact on South Central Railway: In South Central Railway (SCR) alone, around 1,908 posts are proposed to be abolished. Union's Objection: SCRMU General Secretary Comrade Shankar Rao expressed serious concern, stating that railway staff are already under heavy workload and mental stress due to new railway lines, tripling works, and high-speed train operations. The union warned that reducing staff strength at a time when railway assets and services are expanding could seriously affect safe running of trains. The Mazdoor Union criticized the Railway Board for promoting development works like increased train speeds and station modernization in the media, while simultaneously cutting posts at the ground level. They also pointed out that the All India Railwaymen's Federation (AIRF) had earlier opposed these proposals, but the Board is proceeding with them regardless. SCRMU has demanded that the Railway Board immediately withdraw the post surrender policy and instead create and fill new posts in line with the increased workload. SCRMU Zonal General Secretary Shankar Rao has also written a letter to AIRF General Secretary Shiv Gopal Mishra urging intervention on the issue.



# Making the Farmer a King is the Core Aim of the Congress People's Government

## Farmers must sell paddy only at government procurement centres - MLA K.R. Nagaraju

Hasanparthy/Hanumakonda, April 26 (Indian Chronicle) : "Stating that the primary objective of the Telangana people's government is to elevate farmers to a position of dignity and prosperity, K. R. Nagaraju, MLA of Vardhannapet and a retired IPS officer, said that A. Revanth Reddy is working with dedication for the welfare of farmers." On Sunday, he inaugurated the paddy procurement centre set up under the aegis of PACS at Pegadapalli village in Hasanparthy mandal of Hanumakonda district by cutting the ribbon. "Addressing the gathering, the MLA advised farmers to mandatorily sell their produce only at government procurement centres to avail themselves of the Minimum Support Price (MSP). He recalled the assurance given by Rahul Gandhi at the Warangal Rythu Declaration meeting and stated that the government is providing a bonus of 7500 per quintal accordingly." He said the Congress government has taken historic decisions for farmers' welfare. Recalling that the Congress government had earlier waived farm loans up to 71 lakh, he stated that the present government has once again proved its pro-farmer commitment by implementing a 72 lakh farm loan waiver in a single phase. "He further said that Telangana is emerging as the rice bowl of the nation and assured that the government will procure every grain produced by farmers. He cautioned farmers against middlemen and urged them to bring their produce directly to procurement centres." The MLA instructed officials to ensure immediate procurement of the paddy brought to the centres and advised them to expedite the process in view of the prevailing weather conditions. He warned that any irregularities or malpractice at procurement centres would not be tolerated. "Public representatives, Congress leaders, party workers, and villagers participated in the programme in large numbers.



# Warm Welcome to Khammam's New Collector Divakar by Telangana Working Journalists Federation

Khammam, April 26 Indian Chronicle: "The Telangana Working Journalists Federation (TWJF, H-2843), Khammam District Committee, extended a warm welcome to the newly appointed District Collector, Divakar, on the occasion of his assuming office." District President Nanabala Ramakrishna and General Secretary Arvapalli Nagesh conveyed their Congratulations (greetings), stating that since taking up service in 2017, Divakar has served in various districts with an unblemished record. They expressed confidence that, just as he contributed to the all-round development of the districts he previously served, he would lead Khammam towards rapid progress and good governance, making it comparable to Hyderabad. "They emphasized that journalists act as the fourth pillar of democracy, serving as a bridge between the government and the people. In this regard, they requested the Collector to take initiative in allocating the already sanctioned 23.02 acres of land for house sites to journalists. They also appealed for the provision of health cards and fee concessions for journalists' children studying in private schools. "The leaders further expressed hope that Collector Divakar would continue to support the poor and underprivileged sections of society." On this occasion, TWJF Treasurer Vemulakonda Ramesh, TBJA District President Vandanapu Samrat Gupta, Secretary



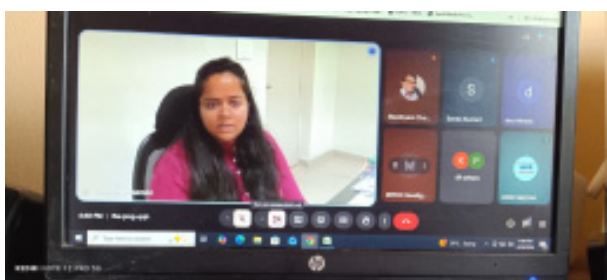
Kasoju Sridhar, Videographers' Association District President Amaraboyina Upender, Secretary Cherukumalli Satish, TBJA City President Elugoti Venkat, Secretary Nalla Rakesh Reddy, TWJF City President Gantela Kumar, Secretary Kappala Madhu, Press Club President Anuthi Srinivas, Secretary Mallela Shilpa, along with union members and others, also extended their greetings.

# Work with Dedication to Strengthen the Congress Party: Deepak John



DCC Executive Committee Meeting Held in Secunderabad" Indian Chronicle, Secunderabad, April 26: "District Congress Committee (DCC) President Deepak John urged party members to work with dedication to restore the Congress Party's past glory in the Secunderabad constituency." A large number of party leaders and workers attended the first DCC meeting held in Secunderabad, where key local issues were discussed. DCC Treasurer Naguluri Sai Baba spoke in detail about the problems in the constituency and ongoing party activities. "Deepak John stated that several initiatives are being undertaken to ensure effective delivery of government schemes to the public. He emphasized the need for strong coordination between party leaders and workers to rebuild the party's strength in the constituency." On the occasion, Deepak John and Naguluri Sai Baba reiterated their call for committed efforts to revive the party's former prominence in Secunderabad. They assured that leaders contributing to party strengthening would receive due recognition. "They also urged every party worker and leader to work towards ensuring that government welfare schemes reach the people. A large number of leaders and party workers from the constituency participated in the meeting.

# Pratima Singh, Collector of Medak District organized a Google Meet for child welfare



Medak District Collector Pratima Singh held a review meeting with the officials of all departments through Google Meet for child welfare. "Child Safety & Protection and Anti-Drug Welfare Week from 27th to 2nd

May" Collector Pratima Singh ordered the officials through Google Meet to conduct it strictly. "On Sunday, a google meet was held with the officers of the District Welfare Department, RDOs, MPDOs, Police and various welfare departments from the Collector's camp office. "27th to 2nd May - Child Safety & Protection and Anti-Drug Welfare Week" Many instructions were given to the authorities for management. "Speaking on the occasion, the Collector said that as part of the 99-day Public Governance Development Plan, 27th to 2nd May - Child Safety & Protection and Anti-Drug Welfare Week "To maintain strong. "The Collector said that all the arrangements have been completed and the RDOs, MPDOs, Police and Mandal Special Officers will coordinate to make this a success.

# Prateek Jain, IAS assumed charge as the new collector of Sangareddy district



Sangareddy, April 26: "Prateek Jain, IAS took charge as the new collector of Sangareddy district on Sunday. "On this occasion, he said that he will work for the development of the district and provide transparent services to the people. "On this occasion, Additional Collector Madhuri and the staff of the Collectorate congratulated the new Collector.

# Padma Shri Global Excellence Award Conferred on Rampelli Lingamurthy

Warangal, April 26 (Indian Chronicle) : Prominent journalist Rampelli Lingamurthy from Warangal, known for his distinguished contributions to digital media and journalism, has been honoured at the national level with the Padma Shri Global Excellence Award-2026. The award was presented at a ceremony organised under the aegis of the Jivran Foundation, headquartered in Prayagraj, where achievers from various fields across the country were felicitated. "The organisers stated that Lingamurthy was selected for the award in recognition of his impactful work in the media sector, his consistent efforts to raise public awareness on civic issues, and his commitment to presenting news with fairness and clarity. They noted that by bringing societal concerns to light and delivering useful, credible information to the public, he has earned a reputation as a trusted journalist. "Holding qualifications including an MBA, MCJ (Mass Communication and Journalism), and an MSc in Psychology, Lingamurthy has also developed expertise in communication and public relations. Throughout his professional career, he has stood as a role model for many through his dedication and discipline. His reporting not only creates public awareness but also plays a key role in informing people about government policies and welfare schemes. "Speaking on the occasion of receiving the award, Lingamurthy said, "Receiving a national-level honour like this is a significant milestone in my life. This recognition is not only for my work so far but also a motivation to carry greater responsibility in the future. My goal is to serve society through honest and unbiased journalism. "Friends, fellow journalists, social activists, and admirers extended their congratulations to him. Many remarked that a person from Warangal receiving such a national-level recognition is a matter of pride for the district.



# J. Jitender Elected as State BMS Joint Secretary



Serilingampalli April 26: A general body meeting of the Telangana State Contract Labour Federation was convened at the BMS office located at RTC X Roads. "During this event, elections for the new executive committee were held. "J. Jitender, the BMS Working President at the Central University of Hyderabad, was elected as the State Joint Secretary of the Telangana State Contract Labour Federation. "The executive committee unanimously resolved that, should the issues faced by outsourcing workers at the University of Hyderabad remain unresolved in the future, a large-scale protest and siege would be organized. "We urge the University of Hyderabad management to address and resolve our demands at least now.

# Tandur Lorry Owners Welfare Association elects new executive committee

Association President Abdul Gani requested the MLA to set up lorry parking in Tandur

Indian Chronicle Vikarabad (April 26) "The Tandur Lorry Owners Welfare Association in Vikarabad district elected a new executive body. On Sunday, the newly elected executive committee was felicitated grandly with flower garlands at the Lorry Owners Welfare Association office under the chairmanship of Abdul Gani. "Speaking on the occasion, Lorry Owners Welfare Association President Abdul Ghani and the new executive members stated that our livelihoods will improve only if we fight unitedly. They said that lorry owners are struggling with problems and urged the government to resolve them immediately. "Abdul Gani said that MLA Manohar Reddy had promised to set up a new lorry parking space near Antaram village for the past five years, and requested the MLA to quickly establish lorry parking at Antaram and solve their problems. Later, the new executive committee members were welcomed with sweets. The new executive members participated in this program. " Newly elected body " 1. Mohammed jaafar. ( vice president) "2. Mohammed sayeed( vice president) " 3. Md Faisal khan ( Joint secretary) "4. Mainuddin ( Joint secretary) "5. Md salauddin (Joint treasurer.) " Newly elected executive members "1. Syed imran "2. Md javeed "3. Shaik imran "4. Habeeb anwar khan "5. Mahendar reddy "6. Anji goud "7. Abdul jabbar Patel. " Lorry owners association president Abdul Gani, General Secretary Shiva Kumar, executive body members Mohammad Khaja, Mohammad Naseer, Vice President Agganoor Narsimulu participated in this program.



# Ours Ramesh was a lifelong activist; his death is an irreparable loss to the party — Dandi Suresh at condolence meeting



Khammam, Thallada, April 26 Indian Chronicle: "A condolence meeting for Ours Ramesh, CPI Thallada Mandal Secretary, was held at the Thallada mandal headquarters under the Chairmanship of district committee member Maddoju Shruvan Kumar. "CPI District Secretary Dandi Suresh attended as the chief guest and paid rich tributes to the departed leader. He described Ours Ramesh as a committed lifelong activist and said his death is an irreparable loss to the party. At a time when the need for communists is being recognized worldwide, losing a dedicated leader like Ramesh is a great setback to the Communist Party of India, he said. "Suresh noted that

Ramesh had worked tirelessly for strengthening the party in Thallada mandal and assured that his ideals would be carried forward. He also promised full support from the Communist Party to Ramesh's family. "CPI district executive members Yerra Babu, Jagarlamudi Ranjith Kumar, Thati Venkateswarlu, Ravi Shivarama Krishna, and Potu Kalavathi; district committee members Nimmatari Ramakrishna and Tammiseti Venkateswarlu; farmers' union district leader Nallamothe Narasimha Rao; CPI(ML) Mass Line leader Dharavath Srinu; and leaders Nagamani, Tammarapu Venkateswarlu, Mankena Krishna, and others participated in the meeting.

Gandhi bhavan - (reporter)- Suchandra "Hyderabad, 26 April: After bifurcation of United AP, it was the first time meeting of Telangana Pradesh Congress Committee (TPCC) Doctors cell, was held here today on Sunday at Gandhi Bhavan. The main objective is to create awareness of the present Revanth Reddy govt's relevant schemes and as well as how to equip the Medical & Health wing, to combat if any pandemic situation like Covid would attack. " Briefing to media persons - Telangana Pradesh - Doctor cell - Chairman Dr. Rajeev & Vice Chairman Dr. Abhishek informed that Training classes to Medical & Health wing will be organised in 1st week of May probably in Jubilee hills. " At least 100 of Doctors including Dr. Sri Kishan Iyengar of Domalguda, Dr. KV Sindhuja, DCC chairman, Secunderabad, Dr. Uday of Gautham Neuro Care, Kukatapally, senior Dr. Nagesh, general physician, specialist Dr. Anil Reddy became members in Telangana congress Doctor cell so far.



# The Bhadrakali Temple is a jewel in the crown of Warangal City

-----Telangana State Mahila Congress President Eerrabelli Swarna -----Warangal, April 26 (Indian Chronicle) : Stating that the Sri Bhadrakali Temple stands as a focal point of faith for the people of the Warangal region, Telangana State Mahila Congress President Eerrabelli Swarna said that grand events like the Brahmotsavams and Kalyana Mahotsavams reflect local traditions, temple culture, and the unity of the people. "On Sunday, Eerrabelli Swarna and her spouse participated in the Sri Bhadrakali Bhadreshwara Kalyana Mahotsavam-2026 Brahmotsavams being held at the historic temple and performed special prayers. "The temple's chief priests, Executive Officer, and Vedic scholars accorded the couple a ceremonial welcome with Purna Kumbham. They later had darshan of the presiding deity in the sanctum and performed special rituals and abhishekam. The priests offered Vedic blessings and presented them with tirtha prasadam and sacred cloth (shesha vastram).



# Vasavi Matha Jayanti Celebrations



“Khammam April 26 Indian Chronicle:”On the occasion of Vasavi Matha Jayanti being officially recognized as a state festival by the Telangana Government, grand celebrations were held at the Khammam District Collectorate office. "District DRDA Project Director Kondapalli Sriram, Collectorate Administration Officer K. Srinivasa Rao, along with other officials, paid floral tributes to the portrait of Vasavi Matha and conducted special ritual ceremonies. "For this event, members of the Khammam District Arya Vysya Association, the City Arya Vysya Association, and the management committee of the Vasavi Kanyaka Parameswari Temple were invited. Speaking on the occasion, District Arya Vysya Mahasabha President Pasumarthi Sita Chandra Rao and City Arya Vysya Mahasabha President Gummadavalli

Srinivas expressed their gratitude to the Telangana State Government for recognizing Vasavi Matha Jayanti as an official festival. They also thanked the district officials for organizing the celebrations in a grand manner. "Among those present were District General Secretary Golla Radhakrishna Murthy, Organizing Secretary Paluvayi Venkateswara Rao, DPC Rao, Vennamuri Venkata Subba Rao, Kalvakuntla Gopala Rao, and several other prominent members including Mashetty Varaprasad, Rayapudi Ravikumar, Rayapudi Jayaram, Uteri Lakshmi Narasimha Rao, Edamkanti Rama Rao, Koora Srinivas, Burle Pulla Rao, Arya Vysya Corporation Khammam District In-charge Gandhi Praveen Kumar, Kalvakuntla Hanumantha Rao, Kaja Venkateswara Rao, Vamsi Krishna, Avapa Krishnamurthy, and Kodumuri Koteswara Rao, along with other Arya Vysya community leaders.



# Nelakondapalli MLS Point sets an example in timely transport of three months' rice stocks; officials felicitated

“Khammam, Nelakondapalli, April 26 Indian Chronicle:”The Mandal Level Stock (MLS) Point at Nelakondapalli has emerged as a model in the district for the timely supply of government rice to fair price shops. By ensuring early distribution of three months' allotted rice, the MLS point has set a benchmark in efficient public distribution. "The Nelakondapalli MLS point caters to the mandals of Kusumanchi, Nelakondapalli, and Mudigonda. A total of 3,300 metric tonnes of rice was supplied to 119 government fair price shops under its jurisdiction. "Officials ensured that the three months' quota

of rice was delivered to all shops ahead of schedule, earning appreciation from district Civil Supplies authorities. The officials and hamalis (load workers) of the MLS point were specially commended for their coordinated efforts. "On this occasion, a felicitation program was organized at the MLS point. Civil Supplies godown in-charge Guguloth Laxman stated that the timely transportation of rice was made possible due to the strong coordination between staff and hamalis. "Godown staff and hamalis participated in the felicitation ceremony.



Gandhi Bhavan - reporter - suchandra "Hyderabad, 26 April : Telangana Pradesh Congress Seva Dal (TPCSD) will organise "samarth " 6 - days training programme to atleast 350 "karyakartas " from 27 April to 2 May. As a chief guest -TPCC president Mr. Mahesh Kumar Goud will attend for camp inauguration at Nampally exhibition grounds on 28 May. " Briefing to media TPCC PAC member - Middela Jitender informed that alongwith chief minister Revanth Reddy, National Congress leaders & ministers may visit on any of these 6 - days during camp. " " RG Naik, sevadal brigade, gen secy, said the congress karyakartas will be taught mainly about patriotism towards nation as well as values, commitment & dedication. " Senior most members of Seva Dal - Renu Kumar, CV Govinda Rao, Vinod kolapkar, Madhu, treasurer, Tella Shraavan Kumar, young brigade, TG president & others addressed the press meet at Gandhi. " It is reported on 27 April, the karkarthas would be registered & given accommodation & on final day of camp i.e on 2 May, the certificates will be awarded to the karyakartas in presence of congress ministers. Among 350 karyakartas state committee members, district presidents, constituency presidents, block presidents, mandal presidents will participate in this 6 - day training camp, TPCC PAC - president, M. Surender, added.



# Pammi Anita Appointed as BJP Telangana Mahila Morcha Vice President

“Khammam April 26 Indian Chronicle:”Pammi Anita from Khammam district has been appointed as the Vice President of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) Telangana State Mahila Morcha. "Expressing her happiness over the appointment, Anita thanked Ramchander Rao and Shilpa Reddy for giving her this opportunity. "She stated that she would focus on addressing women's issues and work diligently to strengthen initiatives related to women, as well as contribute actively in upcoming local activities and programs.

# Tractor Overturns; Driver Dies in Accident



“Khammam, April 26 Indian Chronicle:”A tractor driver died after the vehicle overturned in an accident in Nelakondapalli mandal of Khammam district on Sunday. "According to locals, the deceased has been identified as Yadavalli Nageswara Rao (51), a resident of Cheruvumadharam village. He was driving a tractor along the Buddaram-Cheruvumadharam road when the vehicle reportedly went out of control and overturned near a temple. "Nageswara Rao sustained severe injuries in the accident. Locals rushed him to the Government Hospital in Nelakondapalli, where doctors, after examination, declared him dead on arrival. "Based on a complaint filed by family members, the police registered a case and have begun an investigation. A postmortem was conducted at the government hospital. "Family members, relatives, and friends gathered at the hospital and mourned his death.

# Ramadasu Sahiti Organization Felicitates Kattekola Prominent literary figures congratulate Narasayya



“KHAMMAM, 26 APRIL (INDIAN CHRONICLE):”Senior poet and journalist Kattekola Chinna Narasayya was grandly honored by the Ramadasu Sahiti Kala Seva Organization and other renowned literary and social service organizations. "The third anniversary of the Ramadasu Sahiti Kala Seva Organization was celebrated on Saturday in a grand manner at the premises of Bharat Vikas Charitable Trust in Kukatpally, Hyderabad. "On this occasion, a poets' meet was organized with the participation of poets and poetesses from Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, and other states. During the event, Kattekola recited his poem titled Destruction of Wars. "Later, Narasayya was felicitated with a shawl, a citation, and a memento by Ramaduta (Founder President of Ramadasu Sahiti Kala Seva Organization), Bhima (President of the renowned literary social service organization), chief guest Ganta Manohar Reddy, Dr. Radhakusum (Founder President of Kusuma Dharmanna Kalapeetham), Acharya E.Gouri Shankar (former Registrar of Potti Sriramulu Telugu University and Director at Kalanidhi School of Music), noted poet and spiritual scholar Acharya Masana Chennappa, Moturi Narayana Rao, and others. "On this occasion, they all extended their congratulations to Kattekola.

# Grand Felicitation for Ghazal Poet Kattekola "Vishwaputruka Ghazal Foundation Extends Congratulations



“KHAMMAM ,26 APRIL (INDIAN CHRONICLE):”Renowned ghazal poet and senior journalist Kattekola Chinna Narasayya from the city was grandly honored by the Vishwaputruka Ghazal Foundation. "The 5th anniversary of the Vishwaputruka Ghazal Foundation was celebrated on Sunday at Sundarayya Vignana Kendram in Hyderabad.

The event was organized under the leadership of Foundation President and Secretary Dr. P. Vijayalakshmi Pandit and Bikki Krishna. "During the several books authored by prominent ghazal writers were released. The foundation also honored

distinguished ghazal singers, as well as poets and poetesses who have excelled in ghazal writing, with national awards. "As part of the, ghazal poet Kattekola Chinna Narasayya was felicitated with a shawl, a citation, and mementos by NTR Sahitya Committee Chairman T.D. Janardhan, Foundation President and Secretary Dr. P. Vijayalakshmi Pandit and Bikki Krishna, and noted poetess and President of Kusuma Dharmanna Kalapeetham, Dr. Radhakusum. "On this occasion, several prominent personalities congratulated Kattekola.

## How foundation started as weekend activity brings music education to 8,000 govt school students



Whichever way they looked, musicians Dakshayani Athalye and Mandar Karanjkar would find themselves facing the same void—an absence of deep appreciation for music among people. When it came to schools, the problem looked likely to stay. Fewer than 3 per cent of children in India's government schools have systematic opportunities to learn and appreciate any form of music. Athalye and Karanjkar founded the Baithak Foundation as a weekend activity in 2015 to take music directly into schools. Soon, they had 137 government schools. At present, they have memorandums of understanding with 150 schools, for a minimum of three years, and the schools don't have to pay anything. This means that more than 8,000 children regularly sit and listen to concerts, participate in immersive workshops, and more than 100 of them receive weekly training in a chosen art form. Promising artists under the age of 35 are the primary participants of this work. What sets the Baithak Foundation apart is that it has created a financial model for sustainability.

"We set up the Baithak Foundation with some core principles. One was our APT Project, which stands for anubhav, parichay and taleem, a three-year intervention that systematically introduces traditional art forms, from vocal and instrumental to dance, to children from marginalised communities. Our second value is that no artist who works with us

is ever going to perform without a fee. The arts are, in public perception, delinked from money so that artists are exploited most of the time in the show business. They don't get paid well, and they are asked to perform for free and for exposure on stage. We forget that the arts survive with patronage," says Athalye, the CEO.

The Baithak Foundation has secured institutional and individual supporters, philanthropic organisations, CSR projects, patrons, and well-wishers to finance the work. "Fundraising is always tough, even after we have completed 10 years," says Athalye. She adds that they present information about their projects to different people and ask for support. "Consistency is key. Only if donors find the work meaningful will they end up supporting an arts organisation," says Athalye. Baithak will be conducting a series of events to mark its 10th anniversary. The first of the series, featuring Shweta Prachande, a Bharatanatyam dancer, will be held on April 25 at the Pune International Centre. The concerts that the Baithak Foundation holds in schools have an average cost of Rs 10,000. But by delivering programmes across multiple schools with multiple artists and offering recurring opportunities, they can provide sizeable income to young artists. The foundation's large-scale events, such as the annual Pune Kabir Festival, can cost up to Rs 3 lakh, even for a single evening show. "Most of the time, the artist honorarium is still manageable, but allied elements, such as sound, lights, venue and tech, cost a lot," says Athalye. In the Union budget this year, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman spoke of the immense potential of the orange economy, which relates to creativity and culture. Athalye says that while the rise of big shows is usually seen as a marker of a healthy and growing economy, the popularity of smaller endeavours, home concerts, and society-level performances is what truly matters. "And that is where actually artists get paid well," she says. The Baithak Foundation is looking to grow organically. "All our donors expect is that we deliver our programmes at the quality we promise and with an understanding of the ecosystem so that we keep improving," says Athalye.

## Defence Minister Rajnath Singh accorded military honours upon arrival in Berlin, flown in a special German Air Force Aircraft from Munich

Berlin [Germany], April 26: Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Tuesday was accorded military honours upon his arrival in Berlin from Munich as part of his three-day official visit to Germany aimed at further strengthening the strategic defence partnership between the two countries. According to a post on X by the Office of the Defence Minister, Singh was flown in a special German Air Force aircraft during his journey from Munich to Berlin. The aircraft was escorted by fighter jets, underscoring the significance of the visit and the high-level reception extended to the Defence Minister. "Raksha Mantri Shri Rajnath Singh reached Berlin today on a three-day visit to Germany. He was flown in a Special German Airforce Aircraft, escorted by Fighter jets during his flight from Munich to Berlin and accorded military honours on his arrival in Berlin," Office of Defence Minister stated in the post.

In a post on X, the spokesperson for the Ministry of Defence confirmed the arrival, stating, "Raksha Mantri Shri Rajnath Singh arrived in Munich, Germany today on an official visit from April 21-23. During the visit, he will hold bilateral talks with German Defence Minister Mr Boris Pistorius and other senior leaders to further strengthen India-Germany defence cooperation." According to an official release from the Ministry of Defence, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh will undertake an official visit to Germany from April 21 to 23, 2026, aimed at further strengthening the strategic defence partnership between the two countries. During the visit, Singh is scheduled to hold bilateral talks with his German counterpart, Boris Pistorius and other senior leaders of the German government. The discussions are expected to focus on enhancing defence industrial collaboration, strengthening military-to-military engagements, and exploring cooperation in emerging domains such as cybersecurity, artificial intelligence, and drone technologies. According to the release, key agreements are likely to be signed during the visit, including a Defence Industrial Cooperation Roadmap and an implementing arrangement for cooperation in UN peacekeeping operations training. These initiatives are expected to pro-



vide a structured framework for expanding bilateral defence ties. The visit will also serve as an opportunity to review ongoing defence cooperation projects and identify new avenues for collaboration between the defence industries of both nations. Singh is expected to engage with leading representatives of the German defence sector to promote joint development and co-production under India's "Make in India" initiative. This marks the first visit by an Indian Defence Minister to Germany in seven years. Meanwhile, Pistorius had visited India in June 2023, where he held extensive discussions with Singh on strengthening bilateral defence cooperation. India and Germany share a strong and multifaceted strategic partnership, rooted in democratic values, the rule of law, and a shared commitment to a rules-based international order. Defence and security cooperation has emerged as a key pillar of this relationship in recent years. The visit is expected to further deepen bilateral ties and contribute to regional and global peace, stability, and prosperity.

## South Korean President Lee departs for Vietnam after concluding State Visit to India

New Delhi: South Korean President Lee Jae Myung on Tuesday concluded his three-day State Visit to India and departed for Vietnam. Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal noted that President Lee's visit to India delivered tangible outcomes in key areas and placed the bilateral partnership on a stronger footing, with a forward-looking agenda. "A productive visit concludes as President Lee Jae Myung of Republic of Korea departs from India. He was seen off by Minister of State for Road, Transport and Highways and Corporate Affairs Harsh Malhotra. The visit delivered tangible outcomes in key areas and placed the India-South Korea partnership on a stronger footing, with a forward-looking agenda," Jaiswal posted on X. President Lee is set to hold talks with Vietnamese counterpart To Lam in Hanoi on Wednesday. The two leaders previously met in August when To Lam was on a State Visit to South Korea, Yonhap News Agency reported. On Thursday, Lee is set to meet Vietnamese Prime Minister Le Minh Hung and National Assembly Chairman Tran Thanh Man and attend a business forum to explore ways to bolster economic cooperation between the two countries. He will return to South Korea on Friday. Earlier in the day, President Lee Jae Myung stated that India and South Korea will move forward as "steadfast partners" in building each other's future together. President Lee stated that he is "deeply moved" by the life of President Droupadi Murmu, who has overcome social constraints and personal difficulties and has remained dedicated to the community and marginalised. "Yesterday evening, I attended a dinner hosted by Indian President Droupadi Murmu. I was deeply moved by the life of the President, who has overcome social constraints and personal difficulties and has been dedicated to the community and



the marginalized. I could also feel that the confidence India demonstrates today stems from the President's courage and vision," the South Korean President shared in a post on X. "The possibilities between the Republic of Korea and India are endless. Now, we will move forward as steadfast partners in building each other's future together, beyond politics and economics. I once again express my deep gratitude for the warm hospitality of President Murmu and the people of India. Thank you!" he added. President Murmu hosted a banquet in honour of President Lee at Rashtrapati Bhavan on Monday evening which was also attended by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Vice President C P Radhakrishnan, External Affairs Minister (EAM) S Jaishankar and other dignitaries. Earlier on the same day, Prime Minister Narendra Modi held a meeting with President Lee Jae Myung at the Hyderabad House in New Delhi, discussing ways to further expand cooperation in trade, financial services, shipbuilding,

## India, UK deepen defence ties with CDS Gen Anil Chauhan calling on UK MoS on UK visit



London (ANI): India and the United Kingdom (UK) on Monday (local time) reinforced their defence ties with a focus on "evolving nature of conflict and deepening military-to-military cooperation", as Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) General Anil Chauhan held a series of meetings during his official visit to the UK. In a post on X, the Headquarters Integrated Defence Staff, India, said that General Chauhan met UK Minister of State for Defence Readiness & Industry Luke Pollard along with senior officials, to discuss "evolving nature of conflict and deepening military-to-military cooperation". General Anil Chauhan, #CDS called on Mr Luke Pollard, Minister of State for Defence Readiness & Industry, with senior officials in attendance during his UK visit. Discussions centered on evolving nature of conflict and deepening military-to-military cooperation. #CDS also held...

General Anil Chauhan, CDS called on Luke Pollard, Minister of State for Defence Readiness & Industry, with senior officials in attendance during his UK visit. Discussions centered on evolving nature of conflict and deepening military-to-military cooperation," the post said. In a parallel engagement, the CDS also held talks with Seema Malhotra, MoS for Indo-Pacific, aimed at advancing the broader India-UK strategic framework. #CDS also held high-impact bilateral talks with Seema Malhotra, MoS for Indo-Pacific to take forward India - UK Partnership, Defence Industrial Roadmap

and Tech & Security initiatives to counter emerging challenges in the Indo-Pacific," the statement added. The discussions highlighted a shared priority on strengthening collaboration in critical domains such as cyber, intelligence, and space, reflecting the changing character of global security threats. Both sides emphasised enhancing cooperation in Cyber, Intelligence and Space domains, including information resilience and specialised exchanges," the post added. The engagements "reaffirmed" mutual commitment to building resilient and technologically advanced armed forces, while further solidifying the India-UK strategic partnership. "The exchange reaffirmed a shared commitment to resilient, Future Ready forces and a strengthened India-UK strategic partnership," it said. The United Kingdom is hosting Chief of Defence Staff General Anil Chauhan for a three-day visit starting April 19 (local time), marking the first official visit by an Indian Chief of Defence Staff to the UK, according to an official statement. The visit underscores growing defence ties between India and the United Kingdom, and follows a series of high-level military engagements this year, including the UK Chief of the Air Staff Air Chief Marshal Harv Smyth's visit to India in March. British High Commissioner to India Lindy Cameron said, "General Chauhan's landmark visit shows the trust and ambition driving the UK-India defence partnership. We are stepping up cooperation to strengthen interoperability, spur innovation and support a free, open and secure Indo-Pacific." "From joint training and defence industry cooperation to strategic dialogue, we are moving faster and closer, because India is a key defence partner for the UK. We will continue to build on this momentum in the months ahead," she added. Commodore Chris Saunders, Defence Adviser at the British High Commission, said the visit reflects significant progress in bilateral defence ties. "It is an honour to accompany General Chauhan, Chief of Defence Staff, India, to the United Kingdom. The visit signals the significant progress we have achieved together across all areas of defence and highlights how much common ground we can share going forward," he said. The visit will enable an opportunity to further discuss deepening our strong military-to-military engagement, expanding our cooperative training ambitions and exploring how we can develop greater defence industrial collaboration where both the UK and India seek to use defence as an 'Engine for Growth' and to support India's route to self-reliance. Exciting times for UK-India defence cooperation!" he added.

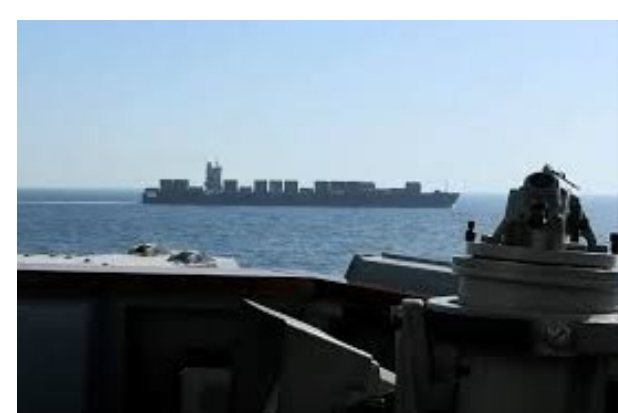
## US seizes tanker in international waters as Iran truce deadline nears

WASHINGTON/CAIRO/ISLAMABAD, The U.S. military said on Tuesday it had seized a tanker linked to Iran in international waters, its latest apparent action to enforce a blockade, with time running out on a ceasefire and the prospect of last-ditch further peace talks still up in the air. Washington has expressed confidence that talks with Iran will go ahead in Pakistan, and a senior Iranian official said Tehran was considering joining. But with the final hours of a two-week truce ticking by, there was little time left for the talks. The Reuters Iran Briefing newsletter keeps you informed with the latest developments and analysis of the Iran war. Sign up here. The U.S. military said it had boarded the tanker Tifani "without incident". The ship, capable of carrying 2 million barrels of crude, last reported its position on Tuesday morning as near Sri Lanka in the Indian Ocean, according to MarineTraffic tracking data. It was close to fully loaded and had signalled Singapore as its destination.

"As we have made clear, we will pursue global maritime enforcement efforts to disrupt illicit networks and interdict sanctioned vessels providing material support to Iran — anywhere they operate," U.S. Central Command said. In a short statement on social media, Trump said Iran had carried out numerous violations of the ceasefire, without giving further details. There was no immediate comment from Iran on the boarding, but the move could complicate efforts to arrange peace talks: Iran has said the blockade of its ports amounts to a U.S. violation of the truce, and that it will not negotiate while the blockade is being enforced. Iranian sources told Reuters Tehran still had not made a firm decision on whether to attend another round of peace talks in Islamabad, aimed at ending the war that the U.S. and Israel unleashed on Iran on February 28. Pakistani officials said that if the delegations do attend, they will not arrive until Wednesday, leaving just hours to reach a deal before the two-week truce expires.

Trump has threatened to restart the war and attack Iran's civilian infrastructure unless it accepts his terms. A first session of talks 10 days ago produced no agreement and Tehran had been ruling out a second round this week after the U.S. refused to end its blockade and seized an Iranian cargo ship. Still, a Pakistani source involved in the discussions told Reuters there was momentum for talks to resume on Wednesday and U.S. Vice President JD Vance was expected in Islamabad. An Iranian official told Reuters on Monday that Tehran was "positively reviewing" its participation but stressed that it was waiting to see if its conditions would be met, including recognition of its right to enrich uranium. Oil prices eased around \$0.20 and stocks bounced back in Asia on expectations that peace talks will resume this week, although European stocks were flat. Oil had jumped around 6% on Monday on doubts about the talks.

Item 1 of 6 A woman walks next to an anti-Israeli mural on a street, amid a ceasefire between U.S. and Iran, in Tehran, Iran, April 20, 2026. Majid Asgaripour/WANA via REUTERS[1/6] A woman walks next to an anti-Israeli mural on a street, amid a ceasefire between U.S. and Iran, in Tehran, Iran, April 20, 2026. Majid Asgaripour/WANA via REUTERS Purchase Licensing Rights, opens new tab A senior Iranian military commander said Iran was ready to deliver an "immediate and decisive response" to any renewed hostility, the semi-official Tasnim news agency said. Top negotiator Mohammad Baqer Qalibaf late on Monday accused Trump of increasing pressure through the blockade, saying Trump was deluded in seeking to "turn the negotiating table into a table of submission" or justify renewed warmongering. Iran's army said an Iranian tanker had entered its territorial waters from the Arabian Sea on Monday with help from the Iranian Navy, despite what it described as repeated warnings and threats from the U.S. naval task force. Iran has largely blocked off the Strait of Hormuz that controls access to the Gulf to all ships but its own. It had announced last week that it would reopen the strait, but reversed that decision on Saturday after Trump refused to lift his blockade of Iranian ports. That has left the strait closed and the world deprived of the 20 million barrels of oil that typically crossed it each day.



Trump wants an agreement that would prevent further oil price rises and stock market shocks, but has insisted Iran cannot have the means to develop a nuclear weapon. He wants Iran to give up its stockpile of highly enriched uranium, which can, if further enriched, be used for a nuclear warhead. Tehran hopes to exploit its control of the strait to strike a deal that averts a restart of the war and lifts sanctions, while retaining more of its nuclear programme, which it says is for peaceful purposes. Trump initially announced the ceasefire would last two weeks from the evening of April 7 in Washington, though he has lately suggested it runs until the evening of Wednesday, April 22, effectively an extra 24 hours. A Pakistani source involved in the talks also said it would expire at 8 p.m. Eastern Time on Wednesday, which is 3:30 a.m. Thursday in Iran. Thousands of people have been killed by U.S.-Israeli strikes on Iran and a parallel Israeli bombing campaign and invasion of Lebanon. The war has caused a historic shock to global energy supplies, and fears that the global economy could be pushed to the brink of recession. Jet fuel prices have surged since the start of the Iran conflict. Trump said on Monday that Iran was "going to negotiate, and hopefully they'll make a fair deal". Pakistan has been preparing to host the talks despite the uncertainty. Nearly 20,000 security personnel have been deployed across Islamabad, officials said.

## India to launch expanded Semiconductor Mission 2.0 with Rs 1.2 lakh crore push

New Delhi: The government is preparing to roll out an expanded version of the India Semiconductor Mission 'ISM 2.0' likely by May, with a proposed outlay ranging between Rs 1 lakh crore and Rs 1.2 lakh crore. According to the NDTV Profit report, inter-ministerial consultations are currently underway, while the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) is awaiting final approval from the Finance Ministry.

The proposed allocation is significantly higher than the Rs 76,000 crore earmarked for the first phase of the semiconductor mission, said the report, citing sources. Under ISM 2.0, the government aims to widen the scope of the programme beyond chip fabrication and design to include support for semiconductor equipment, raw materials and other critical inputs, while also focusing on building full-stack intellectual property and strengthening supply chain resilience, it said. The move comes amid disruptions in global supply chains and increasing geopolitical uncertainties. Ancillary players such as gas suppliers, specialty chemical manufacturers, MSMEs and other ecosystem participants are expected to play a key role in the revamped framework. A major feature of the second phase is a revamped design-linked incentive (DLI 2.0) scheme, which is likely to allow foreign firms to partner with Indian companies for semiconductor research and development within the country.

# The Thalapaty who turned legacy into political authority



At the DMK rally at Sirkazhi in Mayiladuthurai district, the crowd does not receive M K Stalin as Chief Minister or party president, but as a figure entering a private space — his wife's native town. Stalin seems to understand that. He does not rush onto the stage; instead, arrives with a certain studied calm. Stalin's stagecraft lies in the small things: the slight pause before he waves, the way he scans the crowd before he starts his speech, the half-smile that acknowledges affection without surrendering to it. Around him, the stage is all noise and motion — party men leaning in, hands rising, slogans swelling — but Stalin is almost restrained. In a Dravidian rally, where charisma is often performed through excess, his theatrics come from withholding.

"If I stand here and ask for your vote by telling you what we have done for you, and what we will do for you, that is the Dravidian model. But if one seeks votes through lies, slander and defamation, that is the model of 'slave' Palaniswami. So the choice before you is simple: do you want a Stalin government that works for you, or a 'slave' Palaniswami doing servitude for Delhi?" As the crowd roars back — "Stalin government" — he widens the frame beyond the constituency. "We are fighting here," he said, "for the victory of all Tamil Nadu, against the Delhi brigade." As Tamil Nadu heads to the polls on April 23, has more than one reason to believe it can return to power — a fragmented Opposition, the advantages of incumbency, a welfare record it is eager to showcase, and a leader who has slowly, steadily turned inheritance into authority.

While doing so, he has found a voice that extends beyond the state, one that has placed him at the centre of the federalism debate. He has repeatedly framed Delhi's moves — from the language policy to GST dues, education and delimitation — not as isolated disagreements, but as part of a larger centralising pattern. Close aides say Stalin's method, before he articulates the federal position, is rarely impulsive. He is known to summon a compact circle of political advisers, legal hands and senior bureaucrats to his office in Fort St. George, often on short notice, to brainstorm. "What does the Constitution permit? How will Delhi frame the issue? And where does Tamil Nadu's public mood already stand? Only then comes politics," says one of them. On the National Education Policy, on the role of governors, on NEET, on the sharing of tax revenues, Stalin has tried to convert what might appear as state-level grievances into a larger argument about the balance of the Union. His associates say he seeks a documented brief, comparative data from other states, legal pathways and a clear slogan that can travel beyond Tamil Nadu. MK Stalin (2nd R) with his father M Karunanidhi, mother D Karunanidhi and other family members before filing the nomination papers from Kollathur assembly seat, in Chennai in 2011 MK Stalin (2nd R) with his father M Karunanidhi, mother D Karunanidhi and other family members before filing the nomination papers from Kollathur assembly seat, in Chennai in 2011 The heir, not so apparent

Stalin inherited not only a name, but a movement — with memory, rivalries, rituals and wounds. He was M Karunanidhi's son, born into a household into which public life entered with the force of fate. In her memoir, Stalin's wife Durga captures that world in intimate terms. She writes of entering Gopalapuram, the family home, in 1975 as a young bride, not yet realising how completely politics governed its rhythms. In that household, Karunanidhi was not simply father or patriarch, but the central presence around whom both family and party moved. That shadow would define Stalin for decades. A senior party figure recalls that Stalin would not even sit before Karunanidhi during conversations. Karunanidhi gave his younger son his legacy, preferring him over the older, mercurial Alagiri. For Stalin, the harder task was turning this inheritance into authority.

Long before he was seen as chief ministerial material, he was travelling across Tamil Nadu as a cadre-builder for the party. Tiruchi Siva MP, one of Stalin's closest colleagues, recalls Stalin's relentless routine in the DMK youth wing in the early 1980s. The team would be constantly on the move across districts — mornings with party workers, afternoons hoisting flags, nights reserved for public meetings that often ran well past midnight. "We did not rest even after that," Siva tells. Stalin often drove the car himself — an Ambassador on those tours, Siva says, and a Fiat in Chennai. "He never took a break to sleep while driving," says Siva. The party meetings that Stalin attended in those early years were not grand political stages but orientation camps organised in coconut groves near riverbanks, sessions held under thatched roofs, with meals and sleep shared at the venue. It was at one such youth wing meeting in Vellore in 1982 that Siva first called him "Thalapaty" or Commander. "I told party workers that every notice for future meetings should display his name as Thalapaty Mu Ka Stalin," he says. An old colleague of Stalin, who is no longer in his good books, says that even in those years, Stalin had an unusual memory for faces, recalling district-level workers and local grievances years later. It was a trait that helped Stalin build a quieter but durable network within the party. "A minister told me that even now, highways can stir old party memories in him — a house where an old party worker lived, where he had a meal," he says. For decades, Stalin's position in the party was a question that remained unresolved. If step sister Kanimozhi got a Rajya Sabha MP post in her early years in the party, and elder brother Alagiri became a Union minister, under him, Stalin gave son Udhayanidhi a quick elevation to Deputy CM post. But his own ascent was not dramatic. It was gradual, disciplined, and often shadowed by doubt. M Karunanidhi along with his son MK Stalin at the party's executive meeting held at Anna Arivalayam in Chennai on Friday in 2021 (PTI) M Karunanidhi along with his son MK Stalin at the party's executive meeting held at Anna Arivalayam in Chennai on Friday in 2021 But by the mid-2010s, Stalin was already the "obvious heir apparent," with a more modern campaign machinery, professional outreach and increasing public presence. Yet, he did not move against the old order, or rush to claim what seemed politically inevitable. A senior Congress leader says that Stalin remained an "heir in waiting" for many years "even as his role within the party expanded". That patience was read in different ways — as discipline by loyalists, as caution by critics. Either way, it became the grammar of his rise. After Jayalalithaa died After J Jayalalithaa's death in 2016, Tamil Nadu entered an unsettled phase. The AIADMK

fractured but did not disappear. The BJP, sensing an opening in a state where it had long struggled for depth, began pushing more aggressively. Actor-politicians Rajinikanth and Kamal Haasan hovered at the edge of the stage. And Stalin, though no longer merely a son-in-waiting, was still being tested. The defeat in the R K Nagar bypoll, when the DMK was pushed to third place behind AIADMK and eventual winner TTV Dhinakaran, was a personal embarrassment for Stalin. Yet, by 2017, Stalin became more combative against the BJP-led Centre, sharper in his warnings on Hindi and Sanskrit imposition, and more willing to speak in the language of Dravidian grievance and state pride. The terrain around him was fluid. Central agencies were intensifying their scrutiny of DMK figures. The AIADMK's internal disarray did not automatically translate into DMK dominance. A BJP leader who witnessed the AIADMK crisis from close circles says Stalin refused to grab his chance to topple the AIADMK government. "There were days when we thought Stalin would topple the government by evening, all the stars were in his favour. But he chose to wait till the 2021 polls to capture power just like he waited for the baton from his father," he says. Before Fort St George Long before he entered Fort St George as Chief Minister, Stalin had already spent years learning governance at close range — first as Mayor of Chennai from 1996 to 2001, then as Local Administration Minister, and later as Deputy Chief Minister, a post to which he was elevated in 2009, at age 56. Those who worked with him during that period describe a politician who believed in systems — roads, drains, civic routines, municipal order. "I saw him learning how the state works — through files, engineering notes, budget constraints and bureaucratic delay," says a retired officer who headed the Chennai Corporation administration when Stalin was the mayor. "He was cautious, process-driven, and more inclined to review. He did not arrive as a natural administrator. But he learned," he says. During his tenure as Mayor, Chennai's road infrastructure expanded and corporation schools were upgraded — initiatives often cited by officials as early examples of his focus on civic delivery.

After he took over as Deputy Chief Minister in 2009, he was involved in overseeing urban development and local administration projects, reinforcing his administrative exposure to large-scale governance. Residents in parts of Chennai recall that the late-1990s focus on roads and sanitation, while uneven, marked a shift towards more organised and consistent civic services in certain neighbourhoods. In retrospect, these offices were rehearsals for his bigger role. DMK founder Karunanidhi's son Azhagiri (left) with other family members at Tamil Nadu House DMK founder Karunanidhi's son Azhagiri (left) with other family members at Tamil Nadu House Since taking office as Chief Minister, Stalin has sought to give the DMK's "Dravidian Model" a sharper administrative shape, pairing welfare expansion with industrial growth and social justice. Tamil Nadu's nominal GSDP rose 16% in 2024-25 to Rs 31.19 lakh crore, with real growth of 11.19%, the state's highest in 14 years. By 2023, the government said it had attracted over Rs 9.74 lakh crore in investments, including major electric-vehicle commitments such as VinFast's Rs 16,000-crore project and Tata-JLR's Rs 9,000-crore plan. State data says 46 new factories since 2021 have generated 1,39,725 jobs.

The welfare side of that model has been equally ambitious. Free bus travel for women has recorded 68 crore rides, with the government estimating average monthly savings of Rs 888 per beneficiary. The Kalaingar Magalir Urimai Thittam provides Rs 1,000 a month to 1.15 crore women, while school breakfast now reaches about 20 lakh children. Schemes such as Pudhumai Penn and Tamil Pudhalvan extend Rs 1,000 monthly support for higher education to lakhs of students from government schools. Alongside this, programmes such as Naan Mudhalvan and Illam Thedi Kalvi have aimed to address skills and post-pandemic learning loss. Yet Stalin's tenure has also carried harder questions. Opposition parties point to law-and-order lapses, custodial deaths, drug proliferation and administrative slack.

The hooch tragedies in Villupuram (2023) and Kallakurichi (2024), which together killed around 70 people, exposed not just local corruption but a deeper failure on the state's part to disrupt the illicit trade. The murder of BSP leader Armstrong in July 2024 raised questions about police efficiency. In the Anna University sexual assault case later that year, the language of the FIR and its leak turned a crime into a larger crisis of policing, sensitivity and credibility. More than any other institution, the police have brought the greatest embarrassment to Stalin's government. Critics and even some insiders say that reflected his inability to impose a clear command over a force tugged by multiple power centres — from pressures emanating from Delhi to those in his own close circle. Talking about the CM's limitations in controlling the force, a senior DMK leader told The Indian Express, "It works like caste. The police force is like a clan. A CM, in any state for that matter, is bound to protect the force. If he does not keep the police force in good humour, they will not cooperate with you when you or your party men make mistakes. It is a give and take policy. That is why a CM who stands for social justice can go easy on officers accused of the Thoothukudi firing."

Privately, Stalin Those who work closely with Stalin say he rarely loses his temper. But punctuality is non-negotiable. When reports reached him that Udhayanidhi, in his early months in the Cabinet, was arriving late for events, Stalin is said to have summoned him and told him that he can't make people wait. "Hundred people waiting for you is not just a crowd. It is 100 hours of human time," an insider recalls him telling Udhayanidhi. Associates describe him as a family man, with his grandchildren his weakness. He watches films regularly, keeps up with television, and, officials say, also watches reels. A senior officer said Stalin recently noticed a reel featuring two boys from Panruti in Cuddalore district speaking about the importance of education and asked that they be traced and brought to the Secretariat. Within the family and party, associates say, he has increasingly played the role of stabiliser, maintaining periodic contact with his elder brother Alagiri to resolve all conflicts he faced at one point. Those close to him say his ambitions remain rooted in Tamil Nadu, not Delhi. At the centre of his operational world stands his son-in-law, V Sabareesan, widely seen as a key strategist managing the logistics and networks of the party's modern political apparatus. There is quiet speculation within DMK circles that Sabareesan could be considered for the Rajya Sabha sooner rather than later. More delicate, party insiders say, is the question of Kanimozhi's place in Tamil Nadu politics. According to senior party sources, she recently explored the possibility of a return to state politics and was keen on contesting the Assembly elections, an idea Stalin is said to have politely turned down. Even those who describe her as privately dissatisfied do not see her as a serious counterweight to either Stalin or Udhayanidhi. "It may be a challenge, but not a threat," a senior DMK leader says, arguing that unlike Udhayanidhi, she lacks an independent organisational base in the state. Stalin continues to keep her accommodated and respected,

# 'Hard reset': A year since Pahalgam, J&K's security landscape looks vastly different



In the year since the Pahalgam terror attack, the security apparatus in Kashmir and Jammu has witnessed what many call a "hard reset" — from the Army scouring the dense forests more aggressively to the J&K police setting up 'Snow Leopards' and 'Markhor', two elite counterinsurgency units trained in high altitude and jungle warfare, officials in the security establishment The Indian Express spoke to say. The strategy, which has changed from defence to preemption and offence, has meant that while many gunfights continue to take place in the dense forests, Pahalgam was the last big militant attack in Jammu and Kashmir.

"For almost three decades, we were largely used to urban warfare. It was relatively easy — target a house where terrorists are trapped, and the game is over," explained a senior police officer. "But the jungle warfare was new to us. It took us some time to adapt, but we are there now." After the Pahalgam attack, J&K Police established two new elite units within its Special Operations Group (SOG) to strengthen operations in challenging terrain. The twin units have drawn their names from high-altitude wild animals found in the Valley known for their strength, resilience, precision and speed. While the Snow Leopards unit is trained for high-altitude warfare in rough terrain, Markhors are trained for gunfights in dense forests. The twin units have undergone specialised training with different elite forces in the country. While these units are always in a ready-to-deploy position, the Army, too, has strengthened its security apparatus, especially in mountainous areas, with its elite para-trooper units deployed at high altitudes. It was one such unit that killed Pahalgam attackers Suleiman alias Faisal Jatt, Afghan and Jibran on July 28 last year, in the Dachigam forest area on the outskirts of Srinagar.

Then, in December last year, the Army launched a major anti-militancy operation on both sides of the Pir Panjal mountains that connect the Kashmir valley to Poonch and Rajouri on one side and Kishtwar and Doda on the other. The Army managed to eliminate the Saifulah group of Jaish-

e-Mohammad after a year-long pursuit, and also disrupted the larger terror network emanating from Pakistan, destroying their hideouts and forcing them to shift their bases. "There was a total shift of strategy. Earlier, they (terrorists) were hunting for us, and now we were hunting for them," said a senior officer. "The results are obvious. They have been on the run and have not been able to plan an attack since Pahalgam." The security agencies in Jammu and Kashmir have also adopted better coordination between different forces operating on the ground and the intelligence agencies. The security grid, under the banner of the Joint Control Centre, meets every week to get "instant operation and intelligence feedback" and for better coordination between the security apparatus deployed in the Kashmir and Jammu regions. "Over the last few years, the contour of insurgency has changed. Insurgents shifted their bases from urban areas of the valley to the mountains bordering the Kashmir and Jammu regions. These border regions have jurisdictional overlap and are often overlooked. It is these areas that they (the terrorists) used as their sanctuary," said another police officer. "To effectively deal with this new threat, coordination between the regions on both sides of the Pir Panjal mountains was essential. It is now showing results."

According to the National Investigation Agency, two months ago, a Letter Rogatory was sent to the competent judicial authority in China seeking exact details of the supply chain and end-user details of an electronic device linked to the attack. According to officials, the NIA has yet to hear back and is likely to send a fresh reminder in the coming days.

Last month, the NIA Deputy Inspector General Sandeep Choudhary, in an application before a Special NIA Court in Jammu, said that various material and electronic devices connected with the conspiracy and execution of the terrorist attack had been seized. "One such crucial electronic device was a GoPro camera, which was relevant for establishing pre-attack reconnaissance, movement and operational preparation of the terrorist module involved in the Pahalgam attack," it said. The NIA has also found that three terrorists were using two phones of Chinese origin. "The NIA has got confirmation from the Chinese company that the phones concerned were sold in Pakistan," an official said. The NIA has found in its probe that the attack was planned by Sajid Jatt and the terrorist outfit Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT)/The Resistance Front (TRF). "All movements of the attackers, drone drops of arms and targeting tourists were coordinated by Pak-based handler Sajid. During the investigation, the NIA examined 1,113 persons, including 543 dhok inhabitants, 117 ponywallahs, 67 animal owners, 52 local food vendors, 19 shopkeepers, 42 photographers, 36 persons working in ticket counters and ziplines, 31 shawl hawkers, 25 taxi drivers and 23 other suspects."

# Gradual depreciation preferable to burning reserves to defend a level, says former RBI Governor Duvvuri Subbarao

Former Reserve Bank of India (RBI) Governor Duvvuri Subbarao says that while the RBI has adequate reserves to address excessive volatility, there is a strong case for minimal intervention in the forex market. "A 5% depreciation in the rupee could add roughly 40 basis points (bps) to inflation and shave off 25 bps from growth. With uncertainty around both input costs and demand, firms are likely to defer investment decisions, even if they do not cancel them outright," he told The Indian Express in an interview. "Going forward, RBI is likely to remain on hold over the next few policy cycles," he says.

What's the impact of West Asia conflict on various sectors, investment and margins?

The shock is largely cost-driven and uneven across sectors. Input-intensive industries — fertilisers, textiles, chemicals and MSMEs — are facing margin compression due to higher freight and raw material costs. This comes at a time when private capex was beginning to gain traction. With uncertainty around both input costs and demand, firms are likely to defer investment decisions, even if they do not cancel them outright. Stronger corporates may be able to absorb the shock and even consolidate market share, but smaller firms are more exposed to working-capital stress. Overall, the investment cycle remains intact, but momentum could soften in the near term due to profitability pressures.

Given the current uncertainties, what policy options does the government have?

The government has already reduced excise duties on petrol and diesel to cushion the impact on consumers. Going forward, it faces a difficult trade-off. One option is to continue absorbing higher oil prices, thereby protecting consumers. However, this would worsen the fiscal position, tighten financial conditions, and eventually weigh on consumption and investment thereby hurting growth. The alternative is to allow prices to pass through to consumers. This would raise inflation but impose a relatively smaller drag on growth. Neither option is benign. However, from a balance-of-payments perspective, there is a stronger case for allowing greater pass-through. Higher prices would dampen demand and help contain pressures on the current account deficit. Some price pass-through may actually be the more sustainable option.

Do you foresee interest rate action by the RBI to tackle an expected rise in inflation?

At its April meeting, the Monetary Policy Committee kept the repo rate unchanged at 5.25% and maintained a neutral stance. The policy signals suggest that the RBI is balancing growth risks against emerging inflation pressures. India entered this episode with relatively strong macro fundamentals — robust growth, moderate inflation, a manageable external account, and healthy bank and corporate balance sheets. This provides some policy space. Going forward, the RBI is likely to remain on hold over the next few policy cycles. The case for rate cuts is limited due to upside risks to inflation from oil prices and potential weather-related food shocks. At the same time, the case for rate hikes is also weak, as inflation remains within the target band. Additionally, premature easing could widen interest rate differentials with the US and add pressure on the rupee. Overall, policy is likely to remain data-dependent with a cautious bias towards checking inflation. The bar for both rate cuts and hikes is high: expect an extended pause.

Will external sector, rupee stay under pressure as capital outflows continue, and markets remain battered?

The rupee briefly crossed 95 to the dollar before recovering, aided in part by RBI measures to curb arbitrage opportunities in the offshore NDF market. Beyond oil prices, several other factors are exerting pressure on the currency — tightened fiscal conditions, RBI's liquidity operations, and relatively low domestic interest rates. Importantly, the rupee had been weakening even before the Iran conflict, driven

by capital outflows. Going forward, additional pressure may come from a widening current account deficit due to higher crude prices, lower remittances and weaker exports. The current account deficit, which was around 1% of GDP in FY26, could plausibly widen to around 2% this year. While the RBI has adequate reserves to address excessive volatility, there is a strong case for minimalist intervention. Allowing a gradual real depreciation would improve export competitiveness and apportion the burden of adjustment across sectors, giving greater flexibility to both fiscal and monetary policy. A gradual, managed depreciation is preferable to burning reserves to defend a level. There has been some discussion around issuing NRI bonds to bolster reserves. This appears premature. Such a move could send adverse signals about external stability. Besides, it may not be effective given low interest differentials, unless offered at a significant cost.

What's your overall assessment on the economy and growth outlook?

The impact of the Iran conflict on India will transmit through slower growth, higher inflation and a weaker rupee. India imports about 80-85% of its crude requirement, making it highly vulnerable to oil shocks. RBI estimates suggest that every 10% increase in oil prices could raise inflation by about 50 basis points and reduce growth by 25 bps. Similarly, a 5% depreciation in the rupee could add roughly 40 bps to inflation and shave off 25 bps from growth. This is essentially a supply shock that simultaneously affects growth and inflation. As higher oil prices percolate through supply chains, stress will spread across a wide range of sectors. On baseline assumptions of crude at \$85 per barrel and an exchange rate of 794 per dollar, RBI projects GDP growth for this fiscal year at 6.9%. Outcomes could worsen if the conflict is prolonged or intensifies. Importantly, if disruptions force business closures, restarting activity could entail disproportionate costs, amplifying the growth impact.

With the conflict in West Asia continuing, what do you think is the outlook for energy prices and crude oil?

Crude oil is likely to remain elevated and volatile, even with a temporary ceasefire. The geopolitical risk premium — particularly around the Strait of Hormuz — is unlikely to dissipate quickly. For India, this is a critical vulnerability. Sustained high crude prices would widen the current account deficit and feed directly into inflation. Even without an actual supply disruption, uncertainty alone can keep prices elevated. The more realistic scenario is one of moderately high and volatile oil prices, rather than a return to earlier benign levels.

What are the risks to the banking system as several sectors are facing headwinds?

The banking system is in a stronger position than in previous cycles, with improved asset quality and capital buffers. The risks now are more sector-specific than systemic.

Stress could emerge in MSMEs due to cost pressures, while rising yields may lead to mark-to-market losses on bond portfolios. If growth slows, asset quality risks could re-emerge at the margin. The appropriate response is continued vigilance through stress testing, close supervision and ensuring adequate liquidity, rather than broad-based intervention. What macroeconomic strategies and policy measures are necessary for India to effectively manage external shocks while sustaining investor confidence and long-term economic stability? Managing shocks of this nature requires strong macro buffers — stable growth, contained inflation and adequate foreign exchange reserves. India's current position reflects some of this preparedness. Going forward, reducing dependence on imported energy, diversifying supply chains and maintaining policy flexibility will be critical. A coordinated fiscal and monetary response, along with clear communication, will be essential to anchor expectations and sustain investor confidence.

## Two main perpetrators arrested aboard train in Haryana' Rewari: Punjab DGP



The Counter Intelligence Wing of the Punjab Police has arrested two main perpetrators aboard a train near Rewari in Haryana in connection with the blast outside the BJP headquarters in Chandigarh, taking the total number of arrests in the case to seven, Punjab Director General of Police (DGP) Gaurav Yadav said.

Divulging details about the latest arrests at a press conference here, DGP Yadav said the latest arrests were made on Saturday night in a joint operation with the Haryana Police's Special Task Force (STF). The DGP identified the two arrested accused persons as Gurtej Singh and Amanpreet Singh. "Both are residents of Ratangarh village in Punjab's Rupnagar district. They were working as bike operators for ride-hailing service provider Rapido," the DGP said.

Accompanied by ADGP (Counter Intelligence) Amit Prasad, ADGP (Internal Security) SK Verma, IGP (Intelligence) Dr Sukhchain Singh Gill, AIG (SSOC) SAS Nagar Deepak Pareek, Yadav said, "With the latest arrests, all seven accused involved in the case are now in the police custody." The duo was arrested a day after five persons — identified as Balwinder Lal, alias Shami, Jasvir Singh, alias Jassi, Charanjit Singh, alias Channi, Rubal Chauhan and Mandeep, alias Abhijot Sharma — were arrested in this connection, police said, adding one hand grenade and one .30 bore Zigan pistol were seized from their possession. Both the accused had been on the run since the blast, and Punjab Police teams were tracking their movement. They were traced aboard a train near Rewari in Haryana and arrested, the DGP said. Accused Amanpreet Singh has a prior criminal record, with FIRs for theft and snatching registered

against him in SAS Nagar and Bilaspur in Himachal Pradesh, respectively, the DGP said. The DGP said, "The arrested accused were motivated and directed by ISI-backed foreign-based handlers Baljot Singh, alias Jot, in Portugal and Harjeet Singh Laadi in Germany, and were promised a monetary reward of Rs 2 lakh for carrying out the attack."

"Acting on their foreign handlers' directions, the accused persons coordinated the delivery and execution of the attack," the DGP said, adding the accused used multiple cutouts and sub-modules to execute the attack. Yadav said during the preliminary questioning that Gurtej revealed he had been in contact with a foreign-based handler approximately six months ago via social media platforms. "Acting on the handler's instructions, Gurtej and his co-accused Rubal Chauhan and Mandeep, alias Abhijot Sharma, collected the consignment of arms and grenades from Jasvir, alias Jassi, at Bharapur village in SBS Nagar on March 28. Subsequently, Gurtej took Amanpreet along to carry out the attack," the DGP added.

"On April 1, after conducting a recce, Amanpreet hurled the grenade, while Gurtej recorded the act on his mobile phone for his handlers, and both fled the scene," he said. "Pakistan's Inter Service Intelligence (ISI) is behind this incident. ISI intelligence officers were coordinating all activities of the accused persons through their agents in India," the DGP said. Yadav thanked the Director Generals of the Chandigarh and Haryana Police, recognising the vital role played by the Chandigarh Police and the Haryana Police STF in unravelling the entire conspiracy and apprehending the accused. Police are also probing how the attack was allegedly planned from Germany and Portugal, and who else may be involved in the network. "More crucial revelations are expected in the coming days," they said. On Sunday, six accused persons were produced before Civil Judge (Junior Division)-cum-Judicial Magistrate First Class Kirandeep Singh by the State Special Operations Cell (SSOC) team of the Punjab Police. The seventh accused was already produced before the court on Saturday. After a hearing, the court remanded all six accused to three days of police custody. During this period, the police will conduct intensive interrogation to uncover further details related to the attack and any larger conspiracy behind it.

## ED also probing Nashik godman case, harshest punishment to Kharat: CM

The decision has been taken following the guidance of Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis. CM Devendra Fadnavis on Sunday confirmed that the ED is now investigating self-styled godman Ashok Kharat for financial fraud alongside SIT probes into sexual exploitation. While promising strictest action against self-styled godman Ashok Kharat, chief minister Devendra Fadnavis on Sunday said, "The Enforcement Directorate is also investigating the case."

The state government had already set up a Special Investigation Team to investigate the case. At least eight cases of women exploitation have been registered against Kharat. Apart from that all aspects related to financial fraud, illegal land acquisition and others are being thoroughly probed. New details are emerging every day. As people are now confident and coming forward to provide information related to Kharat, Fadnavis said. The chief minister was interacting with media at Nashik. He held a meeting with spiritual leaders and religious organisations to discuss the Kumbha Mela.

"Anybody, who in the name of faith does wrong, will be punished. There was no question of tolerating such abuse by individuals. Kharat will get harshest punishment. There can be no two opinions on this, he asserted. "The case will be taken to its logical end. Through investigation we will get to the roots of the case and all those involved will be subjected to punishment. Kharat will get harshest punishment," Fadnavis revealed. Responding to the role of ED, he said, "We had set up SIT which is pursuing the case very seriously. It has done a good job. The ED is also looking into certain aspects related to land etc. They are already working on the case." All those responsible for facilitating or involved in the crime committed by Kharat in name of faith will be probed and punished, he assured. Earlier, last week CM had made a detailed statement in the state legislative



assembly based on the preliminary findings in the Kharat case that has sent shock waves across Maharashtra and country.

Maharashtra police had tracked and established the identity of six women who fell prey to the fake godman. Of these five women victims and a husband of one woman victim filed a complaint in the police station. Based on these complaints Kharat was arrested by Nashik crime branch. Acknowledging the seriousness and sensitivity of the case, the government has constituted the SIT headed by deputy police commissioner Tejasvi Satpute. Kharat had claimed to possess supernatural powers, and used his influence and the faith of his believers to coerce them into engaging in sexual acts, under pressure. Earlier, police had raided Kharat's office, residence, farmhouse and trust. They have seized Rs 6 lakh cash, lap top, DVR, revolver, live cartridges, fired cartridges and shells. Almost 33 acres of land, farm house, gold, plots in various parts of state, a Pune flat in the name of his daughter have been seized. Till now Rs 40 crore property have been registered. The probe is underway to find out property and assets in the case.

## Consumers can buy 5-kg LPG cylinders from agencies with valid ID, no address verification needed; ban on sale from godowns



The Delhi government on Sunday said that consumers can now purchase 5-kg LPG cylinders from gas agencies by producing a valid ID without any need for address verification, also announcing a complete ban on the sale of cylinders directly from godowns. The move is said to be aimed at improving access to cooking fuel, particularly for migrant workers and temporary residents. Chief Minister Rekha Gupta said a dedicated control room has been operationalised to curb illegal activities such as hoarding and black marketing. To further assist migrant workers, 11 dedicated help desks have been set up at select HPCL outlets that will provide information about nearby distributors, the government said. Oil marketing companies (OMCs) have also issued instructions to distributors stating that sales from godowns are illegal and will invite strict action.

The government also maintained that LPG supply in the city is stable and being closely monitored, adding that people have been advised not to throng gas agencies or storage points as cylinders booked by consumers are being delivered directly to their homes within the stipulated time. "LPG supply in Delhi remains fully stable and under

control. Citizens have been urged to stay calm, avoid rumours, and cooperate with the administration while relying on the established delivery system," CM Gupta said.

Citing data from April 4, the government said that 1,14,679 LPG bookings were recorded in Delhi, and 1,31,335 cylinders were delivered. It said deliveries exceeding bookings indicate that pending demand is also being cleared and the supply system is functioning smoothly. The average delivery time for domestic LPG cylinders currently stands at 4.24 days, it added. The government said that enforcement has been stepped up, with Delhi Police conducting raids at 17 locations. Officials from the Food Supplies department have also inspected 76 gas agencies and storage sites.

## Electrician murdered over financial dispute

Hyderabad: An electrician was murdered at Wadi e Saleheen, in city outskirts over some financial issues. The victim Mohd Nazeer, alias Nabu, (22), resident of Wadi e Saleheen under Balapur police station area went out of the house to discuss some issues with a group of persons who include Fahad and three others.

During the discussion the four people stabbed Nazeer with knives and hit on his head with bricks resulting in his death on the spot. Soon after on information the Balapur police reached the spot and after preliminary investigation shifted the body to mortuary. DV Prabhakar Reddy, ACP Adibatla said that four persons Fahad, Dastagir,

## West Asia conflict: Morbi tile makers want to switch to PNG, but higher prices remain a hurdle



cubic metre plus 6% GST — nearly twice what they were paying for propane-LPG. "When we shut down the units, we were paying Rs 52 per cubic metre for propane-LPG. Now, they are asking us to pay Rs 93 for PNG, including GST, which is disproportionate to what regular users pay. We cannot operate at these rates," said a tile unit owner.

Morbi accounts for 90% of India's Rs 75,000-crore ceramic industry. Of the roughly 800 units in the cluster — 650 major and 150 minor — around 500 are tile makers running on propane-LPG, consuming about 55 lakh cubic metres per day. For regular PNG users, the April 2026 prices are tiered based on consumption over the six months from September 2025. Morbi accounts for 90% of India's Rs 75,000-crore ceramic industry. Of the roughly 800 units in the cluster — 650 major and 150 minor — around 500 are tile makers running on propane-LPG, consuming about 55 lakh cubic metres per day. The remaining 150-odd sanitaryware units use PNG, consuming about 25 lakh cubic metres per day. The new pricing stems from a central government notification of March 9, which set a unit's Daily Contract Quantity (DCQ) at 80% of its average consumption over the previous six months. Since tile makers had little or no PNG usage in that period — having switched to propane-LPG, which was cheaper — they are now classified as non-regular users and charged the higher rate.

Ceramics manufacturers in Gujarat's Morbi have extended their industry shutdown till May 1 — two weeks beyond the earlier deadline of April 15 — after Gujarat Gas Limited announced new piped natural gas prices that tile makers say make restarting production financially unviable. The shutdown, which began on March 17, was triggered by a fuel supply crisis amid the war in Iran. Most of Morbi's tile-making units run on propane-LPG, all of which is imported from the Persian Gulf. The blockade of the Strait of Hormuz has disrupted this supply, pushing tile makers to seek piped natural gas (PNG) as an alternative. It is the new PNG prices quoted to these "returning" users that have now deepened the crisis.

To be sure, the industry is bearing the brunt of the global energy shock — when The Indian Express visited Morbi on March 19, most tile units had shut down because their propane-LPG stocks were depleted. Skelton crews were carrying out maintenance work; the rest of the workers had been told there was no work for them, at least till April 15. These workers — mostly migrants from Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Jharkhand and Odisha — were heading home, catching long-distance trains from Morbi, from Rajkot 66 km to the south, or from Ahmedabad 200 km to the east. More than four lakh workers are employed in the ceramics cluster, with another couple of lakh in allied industries. Paid roughly Rs 15,000-18,000 a month through job contractors who brought them to Gujarat, several said they were still owed months of back pay. Sanitaryware workers were spared this disruption. Their units, which run on PNG rather than propane-LPG, remained fully operational. But sanitaryware which runs more by manual labourers than the tile units which are largely mechanised, accounts for only 17% of factories in the Morbi cluster, while the other 83% make wall, floor and vitrified tiles.

In a letter to industrial customers in Gujarat and the Union Territory of Dadra & Nagar Haveli on April 1, Gujarat Gas Limited quoted a price of Rs 23 per cubic metre higher for propane users switching to PNG than for its regular PNG customers. For returning users, this works out to Rs 88 per

## Cast your votes, it's time to avenge voter deletions: Mamata in Murshidabad

Continuing her attack on the Election Commission (EC) and the BJP over the controversial Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls, Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Sunday urged people to cast votes, saying it was time to avenge the deletion of voters' names in West Bengal. "Banglar manusher proti je osomman kora hoyeche, taar rajnoitik protishodh neoyar somoy esheche. SIR-er karone je oshonkhyo manusher mrityu hoyeche, tar badla neoyar somoy ekhon (The way the people of Bengal have been insulted, it's time to take its political revenge. For those countless people who died due to SIR, it's the time now to avenge it)," said the TMC supremo as she held a padyatra in support of her party's candidate in Berhampore.

"Tara punoray nirbanch korar cheshta korbe. Ami tader porikolponar kotha shunechi. Protiti kormokortake bechhe bechhe niyog kora hoyeche. Kintu Banglar manusher amader satthe aache. Eta nishchit korun jeno prokrito votera chara onyo keu vote dite na paare. Tara jodi amader kormider ED ebong CBI diye bhoy dekhonor cheshta kore, tobe bhoy paoyar kono proyogon nei. Amra jani tader kibhabe mokabila korte hoy (We know they will try to hold a repoll.) I have heard about their plans. They have carefully selected every official. But the people of Bengal are with us. Everyone should ensure that, apart from genuine voters, no one else can cast votes... If they try to scare you with ED and CBI, there is no need to get afraid. We know how to tackle them," the chief minister added.

The TMC chief alleged that the ongoing SIR exercise — which she dubbed a tool for deletion rather than addition — has led to the removal of lakhs of names from the electoral rolls, predominantly targeting Bengali-speaking citizens, Hindus, Muslims, and Rajbanshis. She claimed that in her own constituency of Bhabanipur alone, 40,000 voters were deleted. "Even BJP supporters will not vote for them this time. People of Bengal hate the BJP, which is why they are bringing in outsiders in trains and buses," she added. The chief minister compared the BJP's central leaders to "migratory birds" and "cuckoos of spring" who appear only during the elections. "The babus of Delhi come once in a while. They don't even visit every place. They give Rs 500 to people to bring them to their programmes with hired goons and outsiders," Mamata alleged.

Revisiting her "washing machine" metaphor, she accused the BJP of using central agencies like the ED and CBI to harass TMC workers while shielding their own. She



further criticised the EC for the mass transfer of nearly 500 West Bengal officials, claiming it was a move to facilitate the entry of "drugs, cash, and arms" by weakening state oversight. In a bid to appeal to Bengali asmita (pride), Banerjee slammed the BJP-ruled states for harassment of migrant workers from districts like Murshidabad. She mentioned the case of Sunali Khatun, a pregnant woman allegedly "pushed back" to Bangladesh. She also took a swipe at the BJP's perceived interference with food habits: "In BJP-ruled states, people are not allowed to eat fish, eggs, and meat. Fish and meat are offered to Goddess Kali as prasad. Will Bengalis now be told what to eat?" She urged voters to guard Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs) until the final counting day. "We are the Pandavas; they are the Kauravas," she declared, asserting that the BJP government in Delhi would "fall in 2026" while Bengal would rise to "capture Delhi."

Speaking at a rally in support of Mohammed Nur Alam in Samsanganj and Mohammed Amirul Islam in Farakka, the chief minister accused the BJP of spreading canards against her that she did not do much for the interest of the Muslims, maintaining that she has fought hard against the implementation of the Waqf (Amendment) Act. Claiming that she and her party will never allow the establishment of detention camps in the name of the National Register of Citizens (NRC), Mamata said, "That is why you (BJP) are being vengeful against me." She sought to remind that the Election Commission's authority over the state's administration is till completion of the election process. Claiming that names of Hindus were also deleted in the SIR exercise, Mamata said, "I am from a Hindu family; names of my family members have also been deleted." She also alleged that the BJP was "spreading venom" in the name of religion, which stands for humanity.

## Stock markets drop in early trade on surging oil prices, war escalation fears

Mumbai: Benchmark indices Sensex and Nifty declined in early trade on Monday as crude oil prices climbed amid fears of further escalation in the West Asia the war. Relentless foreign fund outflows also dented markets' sentiment. The 30-share BSE Sensex declined 270.13 points to 73,049.42 in early trade. The 50-share NSE Nifty dropped 93.60 points to 22,619.50. Later, the BSE benchmark traded 509.77 points lower at 72,822.60, and the Nifty quoted 141.20 points down at 22,571.90. From the 30-Sensex firms, Reliance Industries, Kotak Mahindra Bank, Sun Pharma, InterGlobe Aviation, Adani Ports and ICICI Bank were among the major laggards. Trent, Titan, Tech Mahindra and Bharat Electronics were among the gainers. Brent crude, the global oil benchmark, climbed 0.74 per cent to USD 109.8 per barrel. Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) offloaded equities worth Rs 9,931.13 crore on Thursday, according to exchange data. Domestic Institutional Investors (DIIs), however, bought stocks worth Rs 7,208.41 crore. "With uncer-

tainty over the West Asia conflict looming large the market will continue to be volatile responding to potential good and bad news. The potential for further escalation of the war is high in the next few days. The market will be keenly watching the response of crude prices to war-related events," VK Vijayakumar, Chief Investment Strategist, Geojit Investments Limited, said. In Asian markets, South Korea's benchmark Kospi and Japan's Nikkei 225 index were quoting higher. US markets were closed on Friday for Good Friday. "Comments from US President Donald Trump indicating potential escalation if key supply routes are not restored have kept risk appetite in check. This continues to keep crude oil and global uncertainty as dominant drivers for markets," Hariprasad K, Research Analyst and Founder, Livelong Wealth, said. Equity markets were closed on Friday due to Good Friday. On Thursday, the 30-share BSE Sensex settled higher by 185.23 points or 0.25 per cent at 73,319.55. The Nifty closed at 22,713.10 up by 33.70 points or 0.15 per cent.

## Menus shrink & footfall down, LPG crisis shakes Ahmedabad eateries



The central canteen of the Gujarat University in Ahmedabad caters to around 400-500 students daily. For the canteen, situated within the university campus near NRS Computer Hall, the strain of the LPG shortage is quite visible. Operated by Upadhyay Caterers for the past two years, the canteen almost ran out of LPG in the weekend when its supplier provided them with two cylinders with a promise that they will get more in the next three-four days. The canteen is being headed by Devrambhai Trivedi and operated by Suresh Chandra. Talking about the shortage and the manner in which they are dealing with it, Chandra said that they have removed several items such as aloo paratha, dabeli, sandwiches, bread pakoda and noodles from the menu. "Our clientele is down by nearly 40-50%," Chandra said while adding that unlike other commercial eating joints they are not converting to coal-based alternatives of LPG in the kitchen. "We cannot compromise on students' health," he reasoned, citing concerns over smoke and pollution. According to Chandra, as they have received two cylinders by the weekend, they hope to get a few more in the next three-four days as promised by their supplier. The Central University of Gujarat (CUG) almost saw a crisis coming when on April 1, the mess committee chairperson put out a notice to its students stating that the mess menu was being curtailed to "tide over the disruption".

Citing the geopolitical situation that had led to the short supply of gas all over, the office bearer said in the notice that the university had made alternative arrangements to ensure the mess ran uninterrupted. Gujarat coal use At Sindhu Bhavan Road in the Western part of the city, Dakshini 24 — a restaurant serving south Indian cuisine — has almost completely shifted kitchen operations to coal-fired chulha for the past over 15 days. (Express Photo)

The university is located in Kundhela village of Vadodara and has a student strength of over 1,225 with a hostel accommodation provision for 692 students. The Indian Express found that the crisis did not really affect the university.

H B Patel, the Registrar of CUG, Vadodara, told The Indian Express, "On April 1 afternoon a circular was issued for curtailing the mess menu anticipating shortage owing to the prevailing conditions. However, within hours, we received the supply of LPG. The supplier received the mess requirement of an average of 5-6 LPG cylinders daily in the evening. So the circular was withdrawn the same evening." Earlier, as reported by The Indian Express, the operator of the canteen at B J Medical College of Ahmedabad too has been facing the shortage of LPG supply. The operator had stated that they were facing a problem, but could not cut down on the menu since the college's guidelines mandate to serve at least two subsidis on the plate. With the shortage of LPG supply, the operator said that they might shift to a wood-fired stove to continue their operations at the canteen.

The Indian Express reached out to many other canteens of educational institutions in Ahmedabad over the issue. However, none of them were inclined to speak. Like the campus kitchens, the popular commercial eating joints too have been facing the short supply of LPG. And their response to the same has been more varied. Manek Chowk in the old city of Ahmedabad is one of the most famous street food places for the locals. And here too operators are resorting to various means to deal with the LPG shortage. Arvind Modi, convener of Manek Chowk Food Association, who runs Khodiyar Sandwich at Manek Chowk for the past 16 years, said that he has LPG that can last only till Monday. And after that, if he does not get refill of the LPG, Modi will have to shift to an electric grill that was bought recently as a temporary solution following the crisis. Modi said that the shift will bring its own challenges for him.

"On weekends, when the crowd increases, speed becomes very important," he said, noting that electric grills take longer than LPG. With a regular footfall of 80 to 90 customers, doubling on weekends, he estimates business has dropped by nearly 50 per cent due to the LPG shortage.

honour law garden area outlet Happy Street at Law Garden area in the city is another popular eating hub in west Ahmedabad. Happy Street at Law Garden area in the city is another popular eating hub in west Ahmedabad. Satish Patel, owner of Honour Restaurant and president of the Happy Street Food Association, said a single cylinder lasts barely two days. Patel says they are dealing with the crisis on a daily basis. On Sunday, he had an LPG cylinder that can last for one or two days. Patel expressed concerns that he might have to shut down his restaurant if they do not get regular LPG supply. He adds, "Everyone faces the problem." To deal with the rising costs, Patel is mulling an option of increasing the prices of food items on his menu.

According to Patel, he has already shut down his Naranpura branch in Ahmedabad city owing to LPG shortage and manpower issues. Another landmark eating joint in old Ahmedabad is Chandravilas Restaurant in Ratan Pole. The restaurant is 125 years old and following the LPG crisis, it has shifted its kitchen completely to coal-based chulha and electric coils, and dropped tea from its menu. Its owner Malav Joshi said that there was no clarity from suppliers on LPG availability and normalisation of the situation.

The restaurant, which typically serves 60 to 70 customers a day and up to 200 on weekends, has seen business fall by around 50 per cent. Joshi also pointed out that cutting items such as tea has affected footfall, as it was a regular draw for customers. Hotel ZK on the Relief Road in Ahmedabad city has taken a more definitive route by fully transitioning to coal-based cooking. Owner Bilal Shaikh, whose restaurant dates back to 1994, said they have avoided cutting menu items due to a loyal customer base and the increased demand during Eid (March 21). However, this has significantly increased costs. "Earlier we used 50 kg coal with gas, now we are using 100 kg (coal)," he said, adding that expenses have doubled from around Rs 1,500-1,600 earlier to nearly Rs 3,800 owing to shift to coal-based cooking.

Meanwhile, the eating joint Raipur Bhajiya House near Kankaria Lake in the city is in a phase of gradual transition. Owner Mehul Thakkar said they are operating on their last cylinders while shifting to electric induction, a move already implemented at their Shyamal and Vastrapur branches. The outlet, established in 1989, has seen a 25 per cent drop in footfall from its usual 200 to 300 customers a day. Highlighting a key challenge, Thakkar said induction

cooking affects the 'live' experience, food now needs to be prepared in advance as it takes longer to cook compared to LPG, altering both service speed and customer interaction.

The LPG shortage has forced Mehta Chavana, another eatery in Maninagar area of East Ahmedabad, to stop serving rotis and parathas, affecting both regular service and bulk orders. Owner Ankit Mehta said the outlet is facing LPG cylinder shortage, forcing them to say no to large orders. "Sometimes we have to refuse big orders because we don't have enough gas," he said. To continue operations, the eatery has shifted partially to coal and induction cooking. Items like fadfa and puri sabzi are still being prepared, but the absence of roti-based items from the menu has impacted demand. Mehta said the business has seen an overall decline of nearly 50%, attributing it to the LPG shortage along with seasonal factors such as exams and reduced discretionary spending. He added that around 10% of customers have been diverted specifically due to the unavailability of rotis.

The outlet is now in the process of securing a Piped Natural Gas (PNG) connection, though delays persist. Mehta said the full menu, including rotis and parathas, will only resume once LPG gas supply stabilises or the PNG connection becomes operational. Similar adaptations have been witnessed at other parts of the city. Gujarat restaurant footfall The restaurant, which typically serves 60 to 70 customers a day and up to 200 on weekends, has seen business fall by around 50 per cent. At Sindhu Bhavan Road in the Western part of the city, Dakshini 24 — a restaurant serving south Indian cuisine — has almost completely shifted kitchen operations to coal-fired chulha for the past over 15 days. Owner Sachin Patel said, "It's difficult to run a business without LPG... working without gas is nearly impossible, but we are managing everything on chulha." The crisis has also led to specific menu cuts.

"We aren't serving rasam and Kerala appam with Kerala curry right now," Patel said, noting that most other items are being continued despite the constraints. He pointed to severe supply issues, saying, "Even if we offer Rs 5,000, it's hard to get a gas cylinder." The restaurant has applied for a PNG connection, but with a three-month process timeline, Patel said reliance on coal remains the only immediate option.

Gidima, another restaurant serving south Indian food on Sindhu Bhavan Road, has a similar story. As the LPG shortage has led the owners to a shift in cooking methods and a reduction in menu offerings. Founders Kamesh and Paril Patel said the kitchen has moved significantly towards induction-based cooking. "We have switched to induction-based cooking," Kamesh said, adding that these adjustments have been necessary to keep the kitchen functional. The restaurant has cut nearly 20% of its menu, specifically removing items that require longer cooking time on gas. "Anything that takes a lot of time on gas, those menu items have been cut down," Kamesh said.

gujarat eating joints The eating joint Raipur Bhajiya House near Kankaria Lake in the city is in a phase of gradual transition. (Express Photo) To cope with the constraints, the kitchen has also increased batch cooking. "We kept items that were giving us 80% of our revenue," said Paril. However, he acknowledged that the current setup is not sustainable, adding that a shift to PNG will be necessary in the long term. At Simran Restaurant in the old city, the LPG shortage has led to intermittent shutdowns of kitchen operations, directly affecting service, particularly for online orders. Owner Shahul Khan said that when gas supply runs out, the kitchen is forced to shut entirely until new cylinders arrive.

"Many times we have to close the kitchen. Just two days ago, we had to shut and wait until supply came," he said. To manage the situation, the restaurant has introduced a coal stove as a backup, which was brought in recently to maintain continuity during supply gaps. Despite the disruptions, Khan said the impact on revenue is limited as shortages have so far not consistently coincided with peak evening hours. He added that the issue is affecting all three of his outlets in the city, and the restaurant is considering a shift to a PNG though costs remain a concern.

## Weapon of mass distraction: Congress slams Govt.'s delimitation proposal

The Congress launched a scathing attack on the Modi government on Sunday over its delimitation proposal related to the implementation of the women's reservation law, saying it will benefit larger and populous states more and is nothing but a "weapon of mass distraction". The Opposition party also alleged that Prime Minister Narendra Modi is "hoodwinking" people by claiming that the strength of the southern States in the Lok Sabha will not go down under the proposed changes as the gap in the number of seats between the more populous States and others will increase.

In a post on X, Congress general secretary in-charge of communications Jairam Ramesh said, "The PM is up to his usual tricks of making misleading statements that are meant to deceive. He says South Indian states will not be hurt in any way if the strength of the Lok Sabha is increased by 50% and the number of seats of each state in the Lok Sabha is also increased by 50%."

"This is hoodwinking the people of the country in which the PM has unique expertise," he said. For example, the difference between Uttar Pradesh's and Kerala's seats in the Lok Sabha is now 60 and Mr. Modi's proposal will increase it to 90, he said.

Similarly, the difference between Uttar Pradesh and Tamil Nadu will increase from 41 to at least 61, Mr. Ramesh said, adding that such examples can be multiplied. "Mr. Modi is bulldozing a proposal that will work more to the benefit of larger and populous states since their already large numbers will get further magnified," the Congress leader said.

It is not just south India but States like Punjab and Haryana and those in the northeast that will also see their relative influence decline, he argued. "The nation is facing a serious economic and foreign policy crisis. All that the PM is bothered about is pushing through an increase in the strength of the Lok Sabha and Vidhan Sabhas without meaningful consultations and widespread public debate. This is nothing but a Weapon of Mass Distraction (WMD)," Mr. Ramesh said. Tagging Mr. Ramesh's post, Congress MP Manish Tewari said Jairam Ramesh is absolutely prescient and the framing by PM Modi is absolutely erroneous. "The framing must be how much will Southern India,

## Gurgaon's waste standoff: RWAs push back on waste rules



Around 6 km from the bustling DLF Cyberhub in Gurgaon's Sector 23A. Here, residents wake up daily to an unpleasant sight — and smell. The area around their homes, which have come up in Carterpuri village, is littered with garbage. The residents of plots that cost Rs 3 crore or more cannot escape the stench — especially when the wind blows.

The area where the housing colony is located is among the 186 "garbage vulnerable points" identified by the Municipal Corporation of Gurugram (MCG) — locations where waste is consistently dumped but is rarely collected. Last month, as part of the enforcement of the Solid Waste Management Rules, 2026 — which came into effect on April 1 — the MCG had asked Sector 23A to register as a bulk waste generator (BWG).

Under these Rules, BWGs are required to process wet waste on the premises and ensure the collection, segregation, and transportation of solid waste — either independently or through empanelled agencies — to secondary collection points. But residents have resisted the move, arguing that the MCG needs to set its house in order first.

"Their (MCG's) own bins are often overfilled or turned upside down... and are unusable. No one wants to live with a constant stench, so there will be resistance if waste-processing units come up near their homes," said Bhawani Shankar Tripathy, general secretary of the sector's Residents' Welfare Association (RWA). According to Tripathy, RWAs, especially of the sectors under the Haryana Shahari Vikas Pradhikaran (HSVP), lack the capacity to function as BWGs without the necessary support. "Land, electricity, personnel and infrastructure will be needed. The policy says urban local bodies will not provide finances but other support. So why not manage waste processing at the ward level under

a councillor instead of burdening the RWAs?" he asked. Tripathy maintained that there is ambiguity over the definition of "premises" — whether it includes non-gated communities, along with village and HSVP plots. Also, there is lack of clarity on user fees once BWGs are implemented, Tripathy said. "We (RWAs) are a voluntary body, not an authority to direct residents to segregate waste. Even placing bins risks turning a site into a dumping spot. Residents don't want even leaf composting near their homes, forget wet waste processing," he said.

Gurgaon's waste Suncity township off Golf Course Road has been a bulk waste generator (BWG) under the solid Waste Management Rules for more than two years now. (Express Photo by Abhinav Saha) However, some societies have demonstrated that decentralised waste management is possible — although at a cost. Suncity township off Golf Course Road, which has registered as a BWG, operates a biogas plant to treat wet waste and composting pits for horticulture waste.

"We have a biogas plant to treat wet waste, and we spend Rs 45,000 per month to operate it. For horticultural waste, we have pits for composting... We use the produce to maintain our 16 parks and two central verges, along with nurseries. We spend Rs 67,000 per month on it, including diesel expenses and pruning. Also, Rs 93,000 is spent on door-to-door collection of waste every month. In the last three years, we have processed 4 lakh kg of wet waste," RWA chairperson Kusum Sharma said. Acknowledging that community bins often become dumpyards, Sharma said residents of Suncity keep their waste at home until it is collected. Compliance with BWG norms remains uneven across Gurgaon. A highrise society in East Gurgaon recently received a show-cause notice from the Haryana State Pollution Control Board for alleged non-compliance with BWG norms. It was asked to take corrective measures to segregate and recycle waste, while processing the waste onsite.

Residents of the society, however, complained of the lack of coordination among agencies within the MCG. "On the one hand, we have no idea what the MCG does with hazardous waste, where they are incinerated and how recycling of dry waste is done. On the other, pressure is being put on us despite us having complied with norms, while MCG conducts annual inspections... The pollution control board could have easily accessed the details they have sought from the MCG portal," said a resident, requesting anonymity. The push for compliance has come following scrutiny by the MCG. In February, citing orders of the National Green Tribunal (NGT) on the illegal dumping of waste in Haryana, the MCG had directed that BWGs, institutions or agencies causing environmental damage, would be fined Rs 25,000 for the first offence and Rs 50,000 for the second violation. General (non-bulk) littering would attract a fine of Rs 5,000 for the first offence and Rs 10,000 for the second. These fines would be imposed on the spot by authorised officers. If the guilty person or institution failed to deposit the fine, the amount would be recovered as land revenue arrears, officials said. The fines collected would be

## Bhatti attacks LDF record in Kerala, promises good governance

Deputy Chief Minister Bhatti Vikramarka Mallu on Saturday appealed to voters in Kerala to elect candidates backed by the United Democratic Front (UDF) in the forthcoming Assembly elections, saying it was necessary to restore welfare delivery, good governance and secular administration in the State. Campaigning in the Pathanamthitta constituency and other parts of Kerala, Mr. Vikramarka alleged that the Left Democratic Front (LDF) government led by Pinarai Vijayan had failed to honour the assurances made during the previous elections and that governance standards had declined sharply.

"The CPI-M has no fear of god or the people. They disrespected Lord Ayyappa, the deity of Sabarimala; and they humiliate and threaten the people of Kerala. God and people are going to punish them in the election," he said in the district where the shrine is located.

He cited allegations of irregularities related to the Sabarimala temple, rising unemployment and large-scale migration of young people abroad in search of jobs. Senior citizens, he said, were being ignored and denied adequate social security support. Kerala, once known for its secular

utilised by the MCG to improve solid waste management and processing in the city.

Between January 1 and February 3 this year, 36 cases of burning garbage in the open have led to fines totalling Rs 1.8 lakh. For dumping construction and demolition (C&D) waste in public places, 57 challans have been issued, leading to the recovery of Rs 13.05 lakh. Another 32 cases of littering in public places have attracted Rs 1.6 lakh in penalties. Chaitali Mandhotra, co-convener of United Gurugram RWAs, an umbrella body of more than 60 residents' associations, said they have been encouraging their members to apply as BWGs. "Nothing can be better for the environment than registering as BWGs, but societies, especially older ones, need handholding and support from the government. Even if a sector arranges its own finances, some sort of maintenance should be provided by the government/civic body. Else, there will be registrations on paper — and perhaps only around 30% of waste will be actually processed," Mandhotra said.

MCG Additional Commissioner Ravinder Yadav told The Indian Express that compliance would be strictly enforced when it comes to sectors/ societies registering as BWGs. "Rules are rules. We are running awareness campaigns and will support RWAs, but they will have to comply — either on their own or through empanelled agencies," he said. "In the first phase for BWG registration, we are focusing on gated societies. In the next phase, plotted colonies will be brought in. At present, around 2,500 institutional BWGs are registered," he added. Maintaining that field audits of agencies which will handle BWGs are already underway, Yadav said, "Our joint commissioner (Swachh Bharat Mission) is conducting field visits to audit preparedness and readiness of such agencies. Any sector not complying with the rules will face strict action." As per current norms, the agencies selected to handle BWGs will initially be empanelled for three years, officials said.

"Subject to satisfactory performance and fulfilment of conditions, it can be extended for another two years. No extension will be granted after the total period of five years, though the agency will be eligible to apply afresh. The empanelment can be terminated at any time due to unsatisfactory performance or administrative reasons," an official said. The agencies must ensure 100% door-to-door collection of only segregated waste, officials said. In cases where an agency is unable to process the waste on its own, it will have to enter into an agreement with an authorised recycler. The waste has to be transported in GPS-equipped covered vehicles with separate, colour-coded compartments for different types of waste.

Officials said agencies may set up waste processing units on BWG premises, or build their own composting centres or solid waste processing units, which must have weighbridges and fire safety systems, and be compliant with environmental norms. The city's waste management system has been in a limbo since June 2024, when the contract of the agency responsible for door-to-door collection, transportation and processing of municipal solid waste was terminated due to inefficiency. Since then, MCG officials acknowledged, the city has been relying upon a range of stopgap arrangements — often involving informal migrant labour hired by contractors.

The RWAs, meanwhile, have been making their own arrangements for door-to-door collection of garbage, which is sent to secondary collection points by such labourers. Last June, the MCG had planned to issue four zone-wise tenders for doorstep waste collection by agencies/ contractors, against an earlier practice where a single agency was responsible. Prior to that, the civic body had thought of hiring two or three agencies, officials said.

According to officials, on April 2, the MCG received administrative approval for a door-to-door (D2D) waste collection proposal, and a tender will be floated soon. The plan proposes two agencies to manage Gurgaon's four municipal zones for five years, with 800 vehicles, including e-rickshaws for narrow lanes. At present, the MCG collects waste free of charge from households, using 330 vehicles.

"Garbage vulnerable points will be eliminated with the help of the D2D tender. In tandem, with legacy waste processing underway, the size of the Bandhwari landfill will start reducing. Vehicles will ensure door-to-door collection and transportation to secondary points," Yadav said. This would address the frequent complaints of garbage accumulation in the streets and public spaces, he added.

In line with the proposed tender, the MCG has launched a month-long 'Intensive Sanitation Drive' from April 1 to strengthen cleanliness systems and ensure higher sanitation standards across the city, civic officials said. According to an order issued by MCG Commissioner Pradeep Dahiya, the campaign focuses on "elimination of garbage vulnerable points, effective mechanised and manual road sweeping, regular cleaning of internal roads, markets and public places, as well as proper disposal of garden waste". Dahiya had earlier said that Gurgaon generates around 1,200 tonnes of waste daily, around 40% of which comes from BWGs. Officials said that as per MCG's action plan, the target is to clear 16 lakh metric tonnes of fresh and legacy waste at the Bandhwari landfill by March 2027. "Two agencies have been appointed, and they have started work recently on processing legacy waste," Yadav said. The agencies have been tasked with processing 400 tonnes per day in the current quarter, with the capacity set to increase to 1,600 tonnes per day by the end of the year, officials said.



ethos, high literacy and humanistic traditions, was no longer reflecting those values, he said. Accusing the ruling Left of abandoning communist and Marxist principles, Mr. Vikramarka claimed that political violence and 'goondaism' had taken their place. In contrast, he said, Congress ideology stood for peace, secularism and accountable governance.

## Relief to wind, solar generators: Electricity regulator delays stricter grid stability rules



Wind and solar generators in India have been given more time to adjust to tighter grid rules as the country's top electricity regulator has delayed the rollout of stricter deviation norms by a year. These norms — meant to penalize firms when they produce more or less electricity than promised — will now start in April 2027 instead of April 2026. Power generators have to declare in advance how much electricity they will supply to the grid. If they generate too much or too little, it can disturb the balance of the power system, forcing grid operators to adjust supply from other sources. The stricter norms aim to reduce these mismatches over time.

Grid operators levy deviation charges — essentially financial penalties — when differences between actual generation and scheduled supply force them to curtail output from other plants to maintain system stability.

For now, renewable energy companies are getting a breather as wind and solar power depend on the weather, making the output harder to predict. While deviation charges still apply to them, they enjoy relaxed norms due to their intermittent nature. However, in its March 31 order, CERC laid out a phased plan to tighten these norms using a more complex calculation methodology. The order aims at aligning deviation rules for renewable energy (RE) generators with those applicable to conventional generators from 2031 onwards. As per CERC, these measures are necessary as India rapidly adds more renewable energy to the grid, where even small forecasting errors can have a larger impact on overall grid stability. Relief to wind, solar generators: electricity regulator delays stricter grid stability rules. However,

the implementation of the order remains subject to writ petitions pending before the Delhi High Court. Meanwhile, industry players have cautioned that the tighter norms could dent revenues and further strain the financial viability of projects.

The new rule seeks to reduce the gap between what the electricity generators commit to supply versus what they deliver. Currently, renewable energy accounts for over 50% of India's installed power capacity, although its share in actual electricity generation remains below 30%. In its order, the CERC underscored that grid stability concerns have intensified with the rapid scale-up of renewable energy. When wind and solar capacity were relatively small, deviations from schedule did not materially threaten system balance. However, as the scale of renewable injection grows, even moderate forecasting errors can translate into large absolute deviations, which, in turn, affect frequency, reserve deployment and ancillary service requirements, the order read. "Large unscheduled overinjections or under-injections require balancing through reserves or ancillary services, impose costs on the system and potentially affect frequency stability. If such costs are not internalised by the entities causing deviations, they are ultimately borne by consumers," it noted.

Under new regulation, deviations for wind and solar generators will no longer be assessed solely against available capacity. Instead, the calculation will shift to a blended denominator that factors in both available capacity and scheduled generation. A key element of this framework is the weighting parameter "X", which will be reduced in a phased manner over time, gradually moving the basis of deviation assessment closer to scheduled generation. To enable the transition, the CERC has outlined a phased roadmap, with separate trajectories for solar and wind, reflecting differences in forecasting accuracy. "Over time, it has been established that Solar-based Projects have greater generation predictability than wind-based projects," the order read, adding that the allowed margin for error before deviation charges kick in will get smaller from April 1. For solar and hybrid projects, the permissible deviation band will be narrowed from +/- 10% to +/- 5%. For wind projects, it will be reduced to +/- 10% from +/- 15%.

## Venu Srinivasan obliges request to quit Bai Hirabai Trust, Vijay Singh declines

Venu Srinivasan, the chairman emeritus of TVS Motor, stepped down from the Bai Hirabai Jamsetji Tata Navsari Charitable Institution (BHJTNCI) on Saturday, citing commitments to other businesses. He is a member of several key Tata Trusts boards. It is learnt that he quit following a request from the Tata Trusts management. The resignation came shortly after a dispute over trustee appointments. According to top sources in the Tata Group, Tata Trusts had asked both Srinivasan and the former Defence Secretary Vijay Singh to quit from the Bai Hirabai Trust. While Srinivasan obliged, Singh declined. Former Sir Ratan Tata trustee Mehli Mistry formally challenged the appointment and continuation of two trustees — Srinivasan and Singh — before the Maharashtra Charity Commissioner.

Tata Trusts Chief Executive Siddharth Sharma did not respond to a mail from The Indian Express on the development. Srinivasan said he had no comments, and Singh did not respond to calls and messages seeking clarification. Mistry has contended that the trust mandates trustees to be permanent residents of Mumbai, and belong to the Parsi Zoroastrian faith. He claimed that the two of them do not satisfy these criteria and sought regulatory intervention, including a formal inquiry and sworn declarations from all trustees confirming their eligibility.

Bai Hirabai Jamsetji Tata Navsari Charitable Institution was established by a deed of trust dated December 7, 1923, and has had the same Board of Trustees as that of Sir Ratan Tata Trust. Tata sources said former Chief Justice of India HJ Kania had taken the view that there was no legal or doctrinal bar preventing non-Zoroastrians from being inducted as the trust's members. In his opinion, its governing framework did not impose any explicit restriction barring such appointments, allowing for a broader and more inclusive interpretation of eligibility for trusteeship. In line with this, RK Krishnakumar, who was a Director of Tata Sons and several Tata companies, was subsequently appointed as a trustee in the year 2000, during the tenure of Ratan Tata as the head of the Tata Trusts. This was seen as a practical affirmation of the earlier view, demonstrating that the trust was willing to adopt a more expansive approach in its governance practices. While the circumstances surrounding Srinivasan's exit from the Bai Hirabai Trust suggest that not all is well among trustees of the Tata Trusts, a Tata source said the trust is a small entity without any stake or voting rights in Tata firms. There was no need for the trust's management to ask them to quit after Mistry filed the com-



plaint with the Charity Commissioner, a source said. Following Srinivasan's exit, all members of the Bai Hirabai Jamsetji Tata Navsari Trust board — except Vijay Singh — are of the Zoroastrian faith. It's part of the Sir Ratan Tata Trust, which is currently headed by Noel Tata.

Meanwhile, the board of Tata Sons, expected to meet in June, is likely to decide on an extension for Chairman Natarajan Chandrasekaran. Tata Trusts board is expected to meet before the Tata Sons board meeting, sources said. There is currently no proposal from either Noel Tata or any other trustee to introduce a truncated tenure for the chairman, nor to appoint a MD or CEO alongside the chairman at Tata Sons, they added.

"As far as I know, the Tata Sons board will continue to back Chandrasekaran for a third term," said a top-level source in the group. "No director can veto that. I believe the issues raised by Noel Tata are best replied to and discussed in detail at a board meeting as these issues were raised at the board and not through any communication outside the board," the source said. "The dignity of the Chairman of Tata Sons must be maintained and he can never be considered a subordinate, whose explanation is being demanded," he said on the condition of anonymity. On February 24, a decision on the third extension for Chandrasekaran was deferred after he requested the board of the Tata Group holding company to postpone the matter as due to disagreements in the board meeting. While his second tenure will end only in February 2027, Tata Sons directors had earlier cleared the third extension. However, differences came to the fore in the board meeting as Tata Trusts Chairman Noel Tata raised concerns over the losses in some of the group's companies, according to the sources.

## Tata Steel faces Rs 1,755 crore demand over alleged excess coal extraction

Tata Steel, on its part, has strongly disputed the claims, saying that the demand lacks both justification and substantive basis. Tata Steel, on its part, has strongly disputed the claims, saying that the demand lacks both justification and substantive basis. Tata Steel Ltd has been served a demand notice amounting to Rs 1,755 crore by the District Mining Office (DMO) in Ramgarh, Jharkhand, over alleged excess coal extraction spanning several financial years. According to the notice dated March 30, 2026, the company is accused of extracting approximately 16.24 million tonnes of mineral coal beyond permissible limits from its West Bokaro Colliery between FY 2000-01 and FY 2006-07, the company said in an exchange filing. The claim pertains to what authorities describe as production exceeding approved mining capacities during the specified period. The demand has been issued on grounds similar to those cited in judicial observations in a landmark Supreme Court case involving illegal mining practices. The authorities have relied on principles established in that case to calculate and justify the penalty imposed on the company. The excess extraction is allegedly a violation of statutory mining limits and warrants financial recovery under applicable laws. The cumulative demand of Rs 1,755 crore reflects both the scale of the alleged overproduction and the penalties associated with it. Tata Steel, on its part, has strongly disputed the claims, saying that the demand lacks both justification and substantive basis. Tata Steel further indicated that it will chal-



lenge the notice through appropriate legal channels. The company plans to seek relief before competent judicial or quasi-judicial forums, signalling the likelihood of a legal dispute. The disclosure of the demand notice has been made in accordance with regulatory requirements under the Securities and Exchange Board of India's Listing Obligations and Disclosure Requirements Regulations, 2015. Such disclosures are mandatory for listed companies in cases involving material financial implications. Industry observers note that disputes of this nature, particularly those tied to historical mining operations, often hinge on technical interpretations of production limits and regulatory compliance. The outcome of the case could have broader implications for the mining sector, especially in matters related to retrospective assessments.

## Brain empty, phone full: Why Gen Z is outsourcing their memory to the cloud



"What exactly is the digital world doing to us?" asks 24-year-old Nitika Jain. It's a question that feels increasingly urgent, and oddly familiar. Across conversations with young adults, a pattern emerges: not panic, but a quiet, creeping awareness that something about how we think, remember, and pay attention is shifting. The term often used to describe this shift is 'digital dementia.' But is that what's really happening? For many in Gen Z, memory has become external. Nitika points to something simple: phone numbers. "There was a time I could recall my best friend's number easily," she says. "Now I just tap a name. I only remember a few important numbers, like my parents'."

This isn't an isolated experience. Passwords, reminders, and even birthdays are now stored in devices. The brain no longer needs to hold them. Anjali Yadav, 23, notices a subtler shift. "Sometimes I don't remember people by their names anymore," she admits. "I recognise them through their Instagram profiles. If you say their name, I pause. But if I see their handle, I know instantly." In both cases, memory hasn't disappeared; it has been outsourced. This phenomenon has a name: cognitive offloading. According to Dr Naeem Sadiq, Medical Director at Plexus Neuro Centre, this is not necessarily harmful in itself. "The brain is adapting," he explains. "Instead of storing information internally, it increasingly focuses on remembering where to find it." In other words, we are not remembering less; we are remembering differently. The phrase "digital dementia" can sound alarming, evoking images of irreversible cognitive decline. But medically, it doesn't hold up. Dr Sadiq clarifies that the term is not an established neurological diagnosis. It was popularised in 2012 to describe concerns that heavy use of technology might weaken memory and thinking skills. However, current scientific evidence does not support the claim that digital usage directly causes dementia. What we are seeing instead are functional and behavioural changes, not structural brain damage in the traditional sense.

In some studies, very high screen exposure, more than four hours daily, has been associated with differences in brain regions linked to attention and memory. However, these findings are still being explored and do not indicate disease. The distinction is important: unlike neurodegenerative conditions, these changes are often reversible, explains Dr Sadiq. If there is one thread connecting all the voices, it is the fragmentation of attention. Anjali describes it simply. "We don't think deeply anymore. We just Google things and move on." Dr Sadiq explains why. "The brain does not truly multitask," he says. "It switches rapidly between tasks. Frequent switching can overload executive functions, affecting attention, planning, and decision-making." This explains why even small tasks, such as doing mental math or recalling directions, feel harder. Not because the brain is weaker, but because it is rarely given uninterrupted time to work. For some, the digital world is not

just a tool, it is the environment itself. Vamsi Vishwanath, 24, an AI engineer, spends most of his day on screens. "Sometimes it feels like 24 hours," he says. After the pandemic, he noticed subtle cognitive shifts. "If someone asks me what day it is, I might not immediately know," he admits. "Even birthdays slip sometimes." He attributes this not just to screen time, but to a lack of variation. "The brain needs different stimuli," he explains. "But if you're always in the same digital environment, it affects you." Vamsi shares how a friend hasn't visited a grocery store in two months, relying entirely on delivery apps. "They don't even know the prices of things anymore," he says. These shifts extend beyond memory into behaviour. Social interactions, too, are changing. "People don't gather like they used to," he adds. "Even in societies full of young people, everyone stays indoors, on Discord, on their phones." Not everyone agrees. Despite these changes, most young people don't describe extreme distress. Instead, there is a sense of mild imbalance. Mayank Rathore, 19, reflects this middle ground. "I don't think I'm forgetting things because of technology," he says. "But I do feel like I use my phone too much." His screen time fluctuates, ranging from under an hour on busy days to up to ten hours when he is idle. "It depends," he shrugs. "But yes, screens are always around." This normalisation is key. Many don't notice the impact until it's pointed out. "When you asked this," Anjali says, "I realised maybe this is happening to me too."

If digital life is so integrated, why do we feel the need to escape it? Nitika describes the cycle vividly. After a digital detox, "you slowly return. First WhatsApp, then Instagram. Eventually, you're back where you started." The question then becomes: why detox at all? The answer may lie in attention fatigue. Constant connectivity leaves little room for mental rest. Notifications, messages, and endless content create a state of low-level cognitive overload. Small interventions, however, can help. Nitika's decision to turn off social media notifications changed her relationship with her phone. "I open Instagram when I choose to," she says. "Not when it pulls me in." Dr Sadiq highlights that children and adolescents are particularly vulnerable. Their brains are still developing, making them more sensitive to excessive digital exposure. In younger children, high screen time has been linked to speech delays, sometimes referred to as "virtual autism." Again, these are associations, not definitive diagnoses, but they underline the importance of balance during early development. If the problem is not technology itself, but how we use it, then the solution lies in recalibration, not rejection. Dr Sadiq suggests practical steps: Interestingly, many young people are already moving in this direction, intuitively. Vamsi steps away when his brain demands it. Nitika controls notifications. Mayank limits his screen time when he can. These are not dramatic lifestyle overhauls. They are small, conscious boundaries.

## Nita Ambani gives daughter Isha Ambani's Sabyasachi sari a Chanel 'pearl' twist at Chetak Screen Awards 2026



The rose gold strap, seamlessly integrated with a diamond-set Nautilus fold-over clasp, completes this exquisite ensemble. The luxury timepiece is also water resistant at 30 metres per 100 feet. Don't miss out on Nita Ambani's arm candy as well. Nita flaunted the Pearl Ring Minguiniere from the Chanel Fall-Winter 2025/26 collection last night while posing on the red carpet. The minaudiere featured an oversized ring with a luminous white sphere, blurring the line between jewellery and accessory. In the current market, the bag is priced above Rs 15 lakh, and is available upon request.

## Scientists find evidence of rare form of exploding star with missing black holes

Sydney: An Australian-led study has uncovered evidence of a rare form of exploding star, shedding light on one of the most cataclysmic events in the universe. The study, published in Nature, uses gravitational wave observations to probe how the most massive stars end their lives, strengthening the case for a long-predicted "forbidden gap" in black-hole masses, according to a statement from Australia's Monash University.

At the end of their lives, most massive stars collapse into black holes — objects with gravity so strong that not even light can escape, it said. However, extremely massive stars are thought to become so hot that they are blown apart in a "pair-instability supernova," an explosion so violent that the star is completely destroyed and leaves no black hole behind.

Researchers identified a "forbidden range" of black-hole masses more than 45 times the Sun's mass, where stellar-origin black holes are rare. The gap aligns with models in which such stars explode via pair-instability and leave no remnant.

Project lead Tong Hui, a PhD candidate from Monash University, said the study found a forbidden mass range where stars seemingly don't make black holes. "The only black holes in this mass range are made from merging smaller black holes, rather than directly from stars," Tong Hui said.

Confirming the existence of this gap would help settle a major question about how the most massive stars live and die, and the origin of black holes, the researchers said.

Last evening, Nita Ambani graced the Chetak Screen Awards 2026 in a champagne gold 'Akashtara' sari from designer Sabyasachi Mukherjee's atelier — a glittery piece borrowed from her daughter Isha Ambani's wardrobe. Isha had worn the creation for Armaan Jain and Anissa Malhotra's wedding in 2020, pairing it with a choker. Nita kept it simple with a sleeveless golden blouse, letting her accessories do the talking.

For the star-studded event, Nita accessorized with heavy diamond and yellow sapphire earrings, a matching bracelet, and a statement ring. However, the true showstopper was the Patek Philippe Nautilus Haute Joaillerie on her left wrist — a masterpiece retailing for a staggering \$428,450 (approximately ₹3.72 crore). According to the brand's official website, the Nautilus Haute Joaillerie by Patek Philippe is presented in a rose gold model, entirely paved with diamonds in a sophisticated 'snow-setting' across the case, bezel, and bracelet. The dial features rows of stones meticulously arranged to mirror the signature wave relief of the Nautilus women's collection. At its heart, the Caliber 26-330 S self-winding movement beats at a frequency of 4 Hz, ensuring unwavering accuracy. With a 45-hour power reserve, it remains a steadfast and reliable companion for the discerning wearer.

The case, a luxurious 35.2 mm of rose gold, is a masterpiece of craftsmanship. Its slim profile, just 8.65 mm thick, sits gracefully on the wrist, exuding sophistication. The sapphire crystal caseback offers a glimpse into the intricate dance of its 181 parts, a mesmerising view for those who appreciate the inner workings of fine timepieces. But it's the diamonds that truly steal the show. A breathtaking 456 diamonds, totaling 2.25 carats, adorn the case, while the dial is a sparkling sea of 283 diamonds, adding another 1.07 carats of brilliance. This diamond-paved dial, crafted from 18K gold, is a canvas of opulence, with gold-applied hour markers standing proudly amidst the glittering backdrop.

## Virat Kohli and Novak Djokovic: From DMs to discipline



For two men and athletes who have never met in person, Novak Djokovic and Virat Kohli share an unusually personal connection. The bond began with a message over Instagram, and what followed was not just a polite exchange between two global sporting icons, but the start of something more meaningful, rooted in mutual respect. They come from different sporting worlds, separated by geography, culture and the nature of their sports. Yet, their journeys feel strikingly similar. Kohli, 37, and Djokovic, 38, both arrived at a point in their careers where they realised something had to change, not just in their games, but how they lived.

For Kohli, that moment came in 2012. "I was 11 or 12 kgs heavier than what I am now," he said in an interview with The Telegraph in 2016. "I had a horrible mindset about training, eating the wrong things, drinking, staying up late. Everything was wrong. I changed everything from the next morning," he said. That decision didn't just reshape Kohli the cricketer — it transformed the entire culture. Fitness stopped being an add-on to cricketing skills and became a baseline requirement, especially when he was captain. Djokovic's fitness journey is based on being curious, open-minded, and willing to try new things. His fitness routine doesn't just include working out at the gym. He also pays close attention to his diet, recovery, and mental focus, all of which help him play better. From switching to a strict gluten-free diet that he feels helped him "feel younger again" to building routines centred around recovery and mindfulness, the 38-year-old has approached his body like a long-term project. What

makes their connection more compelling is how naturally it happened. "I got in touch with Novak very organically. When I saw his profile on Instagram, I pressed the message button. I thought I would just message him. Then I saw his message already on my DM," Kohli told bcci.tv in 2024. I had never opened it. It was the first time I had opened my own messages. And he's messaged me himself. So first, I thought, let me just check, maybe it's a fake account. Then I checked again, it was legitimate. Then we got talking. When I got my 50th ODI century recently, Novak Djokovic put out a story, and sent me a nice message as well, so there is mutual admiration and respect — really nice to connect with global athletes who are excelling at a high level. I have a lot of respect for him and his journey... His passion for fitness is something I dearly follow myself. So there was a lot to connect on," he added.

"Virat Kohli and I have been texting a little bit for a few years. We never got the chance to meet in person, but it was an honour and privilege to listen to him speak nicely about me. I admire his career and his achievements. I started to play cricket. I'm not very good at it. I have a task to perfect my cricket skills before I get to India so that I don't embarrass myself when I am there," Djokovic told Sony Sports in 2024.

For more than a decade now, fitness has been as big a factor in both careers as their ability to excel in the sport. Kohli's consistency in all three formats was powered by his ability to maintain peak physical conditions for years together. Djokovic, meanwhile, has made a career out of enduring — outlasting the hardest of opponents, both mentally and physically, in matches that have stretched him to the limit. Different sports demand different skills, but the common ground is the same: control what you can and keep improving on it. It is perhaps fitting, then, that their bond goes beyond admiration and into something more shared. "Yes, Virat is a friend and someone I, of course, respect and admire. He's actually, to be honest, the reason why I started following cricket. I haven't followed it. So through him, I started following it more. And, you know, we keep in touch. And hopefully when I come, I don't want to say if, when I come to India, hopefully he can join, and then we could do a little bit of tennis, a little bit of cricket, and have fun and just spread, you know, positive, good vibes with people and celebrate sport," Djokovic told Times Now on Monday. For now, the two remain connected from a distance — one dominating cricket grounds, the other continuing to push the boundaries of longevity in tennis. And perhaps that is why they seem to understand each other so well.

## 'There's a common thread to six hitting of Vaibhav Sooryavanshi, Rinku Singh and even Ajit Agarkar' – golfer Aditya Kanitkar



Aditya Kanitkar is a former golfer and currently a golf-coach in Pune. He is also the brother of former India cricketer Hrishikesh Kanitkar, and dabbles at Masters tennis besides golf and cricket, playing at Poona Club. Plenty of conversations within the family are about bat swings — at the intersection of golf and power-hitting cricket. It is not just India captain Harmanpreet Kaur that shadow-practices with a golf club before nets. Most bat swing coaching leans on golf to get the elevation and distance akin to driving on the greens.

Vaibhav Sooryavanshi and Heinrich Klaasen are a very good comparison, though both use golf stances in six-hitting. The biggest difference is Klaasen is tall and uses his long levers to create more speed in his bat flow. Vaibhav is shorter, but when he hits down to up, he creates a lot of rotations, that is, his body turns at a faster speed than most. What makes him a freak is, he has unreal, hand-eye coordination to match or sync his rotating body to that bat swing. The headstart he has in starting that rotation is freakish and natural, though I'm sure his coaches have tuned him for it. Typically others, would create that body rotation to hit one six and get out immediately. He will keep hitting. Put him on a golf course, he will send the ball miles!

The commonality between golf and cricket is in the

## R Ashwin reacts to Hardik Pandya's poor batting form for MI: 'If he gets a good hit in one innings....'

Former India off-spinner R Ashwin has backed Hardik Pandya to come good with the bat sooner rather than later after leading Mumbai Indians to a thumping 99-run win over Gujarat Titans in Ahmedabad on Monday. The 39-year-old felt that Pandya was in search of a win as captain after MI had lost four matches in a row and the win over GT would help him regain confidence with the bat as well.

"Remember that Hardik Pandya is yet to open up with the bat. He will also start opening up with the bat. It is just a matter of one innings. If he gets a good hit in one innings, it will be very difficult to stop this team. If this team starts firing, it will become very difficult to stop them." "Hardik Pandya was not getting the win as captain, and there was pressure on him, and that pressure comes into your batting as well. With this win, chances are high that Hardik Pandya will find his mojo with the bat," Ashwin said on his YouTube channel. Pandya has scored 96 runs in five matches so far and also missed his team's IPL 2026 match against Delhi Capitals earlier in the month. He made 15 runs and took 1/18 with the ball against GT on Monday. The 106-Test veteran also felt that MI should consider opening the batting with Rohit Sharma and Quinton de Kock in the forthcoming



games once the former is fully fit. This win was important for MI, and also important for the IPL. See, they have a good team, and the way MI were losing with this team, they would have been really upset about it. When you have Quinton de Kock, you have to continue with him even after Rohit Sharma comes in. I agree Rickelton is a very good player, but de Kock is de Kock. That is the absolute bottom line. Rohit Sharma and Quinton de Kock will form a very strong opening combination," he added. MI are in seventh place on the points table after the win on and next take on eighth-place Chennai Super Kings at home

## The morning Brian Lara played golf before breaking batting's greatest record



The common denominator between cricket and golf is probably the coordination of movement. And hence, I think cricketers might find it a little easier to pick up golf than most. But the dynamics of the two sports are fundamentally different, and that needs to be said upfront. In golf, you are hitting a stationary ball. In cricket, you are reacting to a ball coming at you. When you watch people play both sports, you might think the swing patterns are the same — but they are not. Different dynamics come into play entirely. Golf is a sport cricketers have naturally gravitated towards, partly because it is outdoors, partly because it is deeply challenging, and partly because nothing is quite as humbling. Nothing can be as much of a leveller as golf. It demands far more precision than cricket does.

The connection people draw between the two, though, has a lot to do with how batting has evolved. The older generation batted with their shoulders moving vertically. The modern batter has far more horizontal movement of the shoulders and hips, which is exactly what you see in golf. Once a golfer hits the ball, they are completely square on. The shoulders, the hips, everything is in line with the ball. That is what gives everyone the leeway to talk about the two being similar. And that shift in batting has everything to do with the rise of T20. The way current batters play, especially in white-ball cricket, is completely different from before. Earlier, it was all traditional Test cricket, and you needed to be extraordinary in your technical skills. Now, T20 cricket is more about making an impact than proving your technique. The need is to play as aggressively as possible be-

cause you don't have time to settle in and sort things out. You go out there, play, and hope it comes off on the day. Things can change suddenly, any which way. What that has done to batting stances is significant. In the old days, you only opened up your left hip when playing on the on-side or defending a bouncer. Generally, batters stayed side-on because the idea was to stay in control of every shot. But the idea now is to hit long. And for that, you have to spread yourself, have a broader base — that stability is what allows you to hit long. One man embodied this before anyone else. Kevin Pietersen, even in Test cricket, was one of the greatest exponents of having a wider base and using that stability to hit long. He was very tall, so he had to work out exactly how wide his stance needed to be. He also brought in the switch hit.

But none of that happens without, first, the confidence to attempt it, second, the skill set to execute it, and third, the mindset that says I am not going to conform to the old, archaic method. In all my years of watching the game, I thought he was the one who did things genuinely differently.

The conversation between golf and cricket is hardly new, of course. Cricketers have been finding their way to the fairway for a very long time. Brian Lara played golf right through his playing career. There is a famous story that the very morning he broke the record for the highest individual score, he went out and played a few holes before returning to the field to do it. Going further back, Erapalli Prasanna played golf during his playing days — remarkable because in those days, you wouldn't have heard of golf in India at all. Hanumant Singh, too, was a deeply passionate golfer. For me personally, playing golf and understanding its dynamics helped enormously in my coaching. I could look at body postures differently and understand biomechanics more easily, because I had experienced how two different sports demand completely different things from your body — different postures, different sets of movement. I am not saying everyone must take up golf. But golf has its own things to offer, and that cross-sport understanding genuinely sharpened how I saw the game. It is part of something larger, really — a constant willingness to learn from every source available. We have taken principles from baseball throws, from how fielders run in and get into position. The pursuit has always been to find whatever helps you perform better. Golf fits right into that. And it always has.

## 'World of difference between PSL and international cricket': Basit Ali puts Babar Azam's century in context



Peshawar Zalmi's commanding 118-run victory, built on a Babar Azam century, drew warm praise from former Pakistan cricketers Basit Ali and Kamran Akmal on YouTube channel Game Plan — but both men were equally firm that the performance should not be used to settle debates about Babar's international record. Basit called the innings among the finest in PSL history, citing the quality of the attack Babar had dismantled. "He faced two spinners and Alzarri Joseph — and Joseph is no ordinary spinner, he is a mystery spinner who has kept every batter under pressure in this tournament. That is the kind of century this was," he added simply. "I was loving watching that batting."

The pair were particularly enthusiastic about Babar's partnership with Kusal Mendis, which they said had transformed how Babar plays in the format. "When Mendis scored his hundred, Babar gave him big support. This time Babar scored the hundred and Mendis gave him big support," Kamran said. "This combination is suiting Peshawar Zalmi very well." Basit went further, arguing that the partnership

had unlocked a version of Babar fans had long wanted to see. "In the last two or three years, there was no batter alongside him, the team was not built in a way that allowed him to play his own game, to take himself towards the modern-day style of batting. Mendis has made a big difference." He also credited Harris Rauf's explosive starts at the top of the order, saying that within the first over or two, "he releases all the pressure of batting first."

But when fans on social media pointed to the performance as proof that Babar had silenced his critics, both analysts pushed back firmly. "There is a world of difference between international cricket and PSL," Basit said. "What has happened to Pakistan cricket over the last six or seven years — that is the conversation." He added: "If Babar shows even fifty percent of this standard in international cricket, we will praise him. The problem is our ICC event performances in 2023, 2024, 2025, 2026 — where did we stand? You cannot mix PSL with that. This is not top bowling. These are not top teams." Kamran echoed the point, tracing the problem back to team composition rather than Babar alone. "In the Pakistan team there is no batting lineup like this. Sometimes they send him at four, sometimes at three — it hurts him and it hurts the team." He noted that at Zalmi, Babar always had cover: "If Mendis gets out, Bracewell is there. Samad is there. Faran Yousuf is there. That support is what any good player needs." On the broader tournament picture, Basit said he saw very few teams capable of living with Zalmi in their current form. "In my view, only Multan or Islamabad can give them a fight — and they already beat Multan in a one-sided match." He then raised eyebrows by suggesting Zalmi's form was so dominant they would arguably test Punjab Kings, currently setting the IPL afloat, if the two sides were somehow to meet.

## Rizwan launches emotional retort after being asked if he should retire from T20s



Rizwan's statement came in response to a rather pointed question from a journalist on his ability to play in T20s any more after his side Rawalpindiz lost to Lahore Qalandars by 32 runs in the PSL. "When I was playing in the Big Bash, the (Pakistan) team selection (for the T20 World Cup) happened and I had said that based on this performance, I don't deserve a place in the team," he said.

Rizwan further said that he has admitted to previous Pakistan team managements that he doesn't deserve to be in the team whenever his performances haven't been up to the mark. (AP Photo) Rizwan further said that he has admitted to previous Pakistan team managements that he doesn't deserve to be in the team whenever his performances haven't been up to the mark. Pakistan's Mohammad Rizwan

has said that he knew he never deserved a spot in the country's T20 team based on his performances in the Big Bash League before the 2026 T20 World Cup or now based on how he has fared in the Pakistan Super League. Rizwan, however, said that he is not considering retirement from the shortest format and will continue to work until he feels he is done with the game.

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Rizwan further said that he has admitted to previous Pakistan team managements that he doesn't deserve to be in the team whenever his performances haven't been up to the mark. "There have been several times in the past when I have told a Pakistan captain that my performances have not been good enough, give some youngster a chance instead of me." "For me, cricket is a passion," Rizwan continued. "I play T20, Test, and ODI. I love cricket. That is why I play it. I don't know anything else in my life. I don't have a business. I don't play any other sport. I only play cricket. Yes, I am losing now. My performance is not good. But by the will of God, my hard work is never less. I have worked hard. By God's will, I will stand in front of you again, after my hard work." While he is a regular in the Pakistan Test and ODI teams, Rizwan has struggled in the shortest format for quite some time now. He made his BBL debut this year but scored just 187 runs in 10 matches at a paltry average and strike rate of 18.70 and 102.74 respectively. In the PSL, he has played seven innings and scored 107 runs at just 15.28, with his strike rate languishing at 116.30.

## 'Zeenat Aman not a good actor, Sanjeev Kumar wasn't a big star,' says Mumtaz: 'How many awards has she won?'



Veteran actor Mumtaz has once again clarified her controversial remark about Sanjeev Kumar, reiterating that while he was an exceptional performer, she does not consider him a "big star." In a conversation with Vickey Lalwani, Mumtaz was asked about her earlier statement, where she had said Sanjeev Kumar was not a big hero. Standing by her view, she said, "What did I say wrong? I'm not denying he was an excellent actor. There's a world of difference between being a star and being an actor. Dilip Kumar, Dev Anand, Shammi Kapoor—these were all stars. Sanjeev Kumar did character roles and even supporting roles. He was a very good human being, very well-mannered, but there is a difference between a star and an actor." She further explained that her comment had been misunderstood, "You said he was a very big star, and I responded that he was not a very big star. He was a good actor, but I consider people like Dilip Kumar, Dev Anand and the top heroes as big stars." Zeenat Aman was not a very good actress

Mumtaz also spoke about how the term "star" is often

used too loosely in the industry. When the conversation turned to Zeenat Aman, Mumtaz said, "Zeenat Aman, okay. Zeenat Aman was not a very good actress, sorry to say—I would say sorry to her as well. How many awards did she get? If you call everyone a star, how will that work? Not everyone is a star." She added that stardom is rare and takes years to achieve, "Not everyone can be a star; not everyone can be Dilip Kumar. It takes years to become a star—you lose your hair by the time you get there." According to Mumtaz, only a handful of actors truly earned the title of "star," especially among female leads. "Meena Kumari, Madhubala, Nargis, Rekha—these were the real stars among heroines," she said. Last year, in a conversation with Vickey Lalwani, Mumtaz had opened up about how several leading men in the industry initially refused to work with her.

"Everybody refused to work with me and called me 'Dara Singh ki heroine'. When Shashi refused to work with me in Sachaa Jhutha, the producer asked him to leave the project, as he had worked with me before in the Dara Singh film Faulad. Then Kaka (Rajesh Khanna) stepped in and did the film with me." "The whole industry had refused to work with me, and they all did it anyway. I don't want to name them, but they know who they are." When the host mentioned multiple actors, including Sanjeev Kumar, Mumtaz had remarked, "Sanjeev Kumar, anyway, was not a big hero." Mumtaz and Sanjeev Kumar starred together in the 1970 film Khilona, which was a major box office success. Mumtaz worked with Zeenat Aman in the 1971 iconic film Hare Rama Hare Krishna.

When Mumtaz targeted Zeenat for her views on live-in relationships on social media, asking youngsters to not be overwhelmed by societal disapproval. "I'm aware that Indian society is a little uptight about 'living in sin' but then again, society is uptight about so many things! Log kya kahenge? (What will people say?)" she wrote. Mumtaz not only opposed her views but also dragged in her personal life. "Zeenat should be careful with what she is advising. She has all of a sudden come into this huge social media popularity, and I can understand her excitement about sounding like a cool aunty. But giving advice that is counter to our moral values is not the solution to increasing your following. Aap Zeenat ko hi le lo misaal ke tar par (Take Zeenat for example)... She knew Mazhar Khan for years before marrying him. Her marriage was a living hell. She should be the last person doling out advice on relationships," she had said then.

## Not Nabeel Gabol? Pak leader who asked PM Modi for asylum inspired Dhurandhar's Jameel Jamali



Was Jameel Jamali based on Nabeel Gabol? New insights reveal the Dhurandhar character is largely inspired by Altaf Hussain, with similarities to both leaders.

Ever since Dhurandhar released last December, one question has followed Rakesh Bedi's scene-stealing act as Jameel Jamali: who exactly is this character based on? After the first instalment, many believed the character was based on Pakistani politician Nabeel Gabol, and he himself seemed to confirm it in interviews following the release. But now, it appears the inspiration may lie elsewhere.

The film's research consultant Aditya Raj Kaul has now clarified that the character is not rooted in one individual alone. Speaking on Prakhar Gupta's podcast, he said, "It's a mix of Altaf Hussain from MQM and Nabeel Gabol, but it's mostly Altaf Hussain. He is alive and in the UK. His videos are hilarious. His glasses and overall look are similar to Jameel's character. There were allegations in Pakistan that Altaf Hussain was working for RAW; after that, he left Pakistan and settled in the UK. He also has a daughter." In Dhurandhar, Jameel's daughter Yalina Jamali, played by Sara Arjun, is married to Hamza Ali Mazhari (played by Ranveer Singh). In the first film, Yalina mentions that she was born when her father was 45, and that he married her mother, who was half his age. Interestingly, according to Pakistani media reports, Altaf Hussain married when he was 48, and his wife was in her 20s.

Why did everyone think it was Nabeel Gabol?

When Dhurandhar first released, the resemblance to Nabeel Gabol seemed striking enough for the comparison to start almost instantly. Gabol himself acknowledged it in multiple interviews and also criticised the portrayal. In a viral video after the film's release, he said, "They have shown my character as a very important one in the film, but not accurately. What they've depicted is very dabangg. By that,

I mean they have not portrayed my role properly. They have turned Lyari into a terrorist hub." However, the tone shifted after Dhurandhar 2. The sequel's climax, revealing Jameel as an Indian intelligence agent, reframed the character entirely. Rakesh Bedi on Pak politicians who inspired his character Through all the speculation, Rakesh Bedi has maintained that Jameel Jamali isn't a direct lift from any one political figure.

In an interview with Lallantop, he said, "I would like to say, I love you, Nabeel Gabol. I love you very much, and it's a coincidence that I resemble you a little bit. But I can't help it. Neither your father came to India, nor my father went to Pakistan. We have a slight heaviness in our bodies, which makes us look alike. I even wore similar clothes in the film, so we looked alike. Other than that, there is no similarity between me and him." He added, "Aditya Dhar conceived this character. There are some similarities with Nabeel Gabol because of Lyari—he represents that area and has won several elections from there. But my portrayal operates on its own level. My character is not based on Nabeel Gabol. I've watched many videos of his, as well as of Altaf Hussain and other politicians, and created a mix to play this character. Jameel Jamali is inspired by many such politicians in Pakistan." Even earlier, Bedi had hinted at drawing from real-life political figures. In a conversation with SCREEN, he said, "There's a politician in Pakistan, whom you can spot in the political arenas and the Senate there even today. It's their Parliament, but they call it 'Senate' (laughs). I watched a lot of his visuals, body language, and speeches. I've picked up whatever I could within the framework of our story. He's like a fox. Come what may, he'll remain in power irrespective of which government is in power."

Who is Altaf Hussain?

Altaf Hussain is a British-Pakistani politician and the founder of the Muttahida Qaumi Movement (MQM). Born in Karachi in 1953, he has been living in exile in the United Kingdom since 1992, following a crackdown on his party. Over the years, he has faced multiple serious allegations in Pakistan, including charges of murder, treason, and inciting violence, and has been declared a fugitive by an anti-terrorism court. In the UK, he was tried in 2022 for promoting unrest through hate speech, but was acquitted. According to Indian Express report, the MQM was also accused of harbouring secessionist ambitions and conspiring to break Karachi away from Pakistan, allegedly at the behest of India's Research & Analysis Wing. The "Indian" origins of many of its members and supporters were used to cast suspicion on the party. Adding to this, some of its leaders had fled to India during military operations and were believed to have been in contact with Indian intelligence agencies.

In 2019, Altaf Hussain, then living in exile in the UK, urged Prime Minister Narendra Modi to grant him and his colleagues asylum, or at least financial assistance to take his case to the International Court of Justice. "If India today, and Prime Minister Modi, allow me to come to India and provide me asylum with my colleagues, I am ready to come to India along with my colleagues, because my grandfather is buried there, my grandmother is buried there, my thousands of relatives are buried there. I want to go there, to their graves. I am a peace-loving person. I will not interfere in any politics, I promise. But just give me, along with my colleagues, a place to live in India. I request you to grant some Baloch, Sindhis whose names I give asylum as well," Hussain said in a speech dated November 9. This article discusses fictional character inspirations and real-world political figures for entertainment and informational purposes; the claims and comparisons presented are based on public statements and have not been independently verified.

## 'Shah Rukh Khan is a billion-dollar industry, he's building an empire': Viveck Vaswani on Danny Denzongpa, Rajendra Kumar's wealth



Actor and writer Viveck Vaswani recently spoke about how, while acting is a lucrative job, many actors have made their wealth through business ventures and didn't depend solely on acting. He called Shah Rukh Khan a combination of 'intelligent, shrewd and educated' man and also gave examples of actors like Danny Denzongpa and Rajendra Kumar, who accumulated wealth quickly by investing smartly. Speaking on The Bollywood Minute, he said, "There is a difference between being intelligent, shrewd and educated. Shah Rukh is all the three. Anil Kapoor, Boman Irani, Jeetendra know more about cinema than anyone else. Maybe if we sit and talk about cinema and distribution strategy than Aamir Khan and

Anil Kapoor will come into the picture."

He added, "Shah Rukh has not actually become an actor or star, he has built a business empire. He has a cricket team, he has real estate interests, he has a huge studio. He has a VFX company which works in billions of dollars. Shah Rukh Khan is a one-man industry that is a combination of education, intelligence, shrewdness, and being sharp."

In 2025, Shah Rukh Khan became the first Indian actor who emerged as a billionaire as per the M3M Hurun India Rich List with a staggering wealth of Rs 12,490 crore. This was the first time SRK has been recognized as a billionaire by Hurun. The list credited Red Chillies Entertainment, SRK's production and VFX company, as the primary contributor to his wealth. Besides this, he also owns IPL team Kolkata Knight Riders, among other investments. Talking about Aamir Khan, he said, "Aamir is a very intelligent producer. He has given us legacy films. Like Sarfarosh, Dil Chahta Hai, Lagaan and more. He has also given commercial hits Raja Hindustani, Rangeela, Ghulam and more. He is equally good as Shah Rukh. Aamir has chosen film legacy, Shah Rukh has chosen to build a business empire." Speaking about Danny Denzongpa and his brewery empire, he said, "Danny was the highly paid villain in my time. He has set up an entire brewery industry in Sikkim. Dalberg is the brand he has set up. He is a billionaire not because of his career but because of his business. Also, Rajendra Kumar was a shrewd businessman. When other actors were spending on cars and liquor, Rajendra would invest in stocks and companies. He became a millionaire in those days without depending on films."

## 'I saw her from outside': Mumtaz recalls last visit to Asha Bhosle, singer died 10 minutes later

Legendary singer Asha Bhosle passed away at the age of 92 on April 12, leaving a deep void in the world of music and cinema. Veteran actor Mumtaz, who shared a great bond with the singer, has shared about her attempt to meet Asha Bhosle when she was in hospital. In a conversation with Vickey Lalwani, Mumtaz recalled the moment and said, "I went to the hospital when I found out she had been admitted. I saw her from outside, but the doctor said Asha ji was critical and asked me to come the next day. As I left and sat in the car, within 5-10 minutes, I got a call saying she was gone."

Speaking about their personal bond, Mumtaz said, "She had come to my house a few times. She was a very good friend. No one can replace her—you simply cannot compare." Mumtaz also revealed that a few days before her death, Asha Bhosle had told her that one of her songs was the most difficult she had ever sung. "Asha ji told me before she passed that my song Aaja O Mere Raja, Jannat Ki Sair was the most difficult she had ever sung," she said. Mumtaz spoke about Asha Bhosle's unique place alongside her sister, Lata Mangeshkar. "There is no comparison between the two. What Asha ji could sing, Lata ji couldn't, and what Lata ji could sing, Asha ji couldn't. Asha ji sang playful songs, while Lata ji excelled in classical music—you simply can't compare them." Earlier, Mumtaz had shared a video from Asha Bhosle's funeral. In the clip, she is seen looking at the late singer and saying, "Kitni pyaari lag rahi hai (She looks so lovely)," before asking the videographer to come closer and capture the moment, calling it "yadgaari" (something worth remembering). She captioned the video, "Not every relationship, not every love, is meant for the world to witness. Some bonds live quietly within the heart, where only you truly understand the depth of longing and the weight of grief for those you love. #ashabhosle ji, you will be missed." Mumtaz's tribute to Asha



Earlier, she had also penned a heartfelt tribute, writing, "Today, I feel a deep sense of loss. Asha Bhosle ji was not just a legendary voice, she was the soul behind so many of my most cherished on-screen moments. Her songs gave life, charm, and emotion to my performances in a way that words can never fully express. Working with her voice was truly a blessing. She had a magic that made every song unforgettable. I will always remain grateful for the melodies she gifted me and the industry. Her voice will live on forever in our hearts. May her soul rest in peace." Asha Bhosle was hospitalised at Breach Candy Hospital on April 11 due to exhaustion and a chest infection. She passed away the following day. Her son, Anand Bhosle, performed the last rites at Shivaji Park Crematorium, and she was laid to rest on April 13 with full state honours. Several celebrities, including Aamir Khan, Ranveer Singh, Vidya Balan and Vicky Kaushal, attended the funeral to pay their last respects. Her son Anand Bhosle and granddaughter Zanai Bhosle immersed her ashes in the Ganga in Varanasi on April 20.

## Khatron Ke Khiladi 15: Jasmine Bhasin, Mr Faisu, Karan Wahi approached for Rohit Shetty's show



include Gaurav Khanna, along with fellow Bigg Boss 19 contestants Abhishek Bajaj and Farrhana Bhat. From Bigg Boss 18, Avinash Mishra, Chum Darang, and Shruti Arjun are reportedly in talks. Meanwhile, Bigg Boss 17 contestants Isha Malviya and Samarth Jurel have also been approached, as has Bigg Boss 16 fame Ankit Gupta. Comedian Harsh Gujral, who was last seen on The Traitors, is also likely to appear on Rohit Shetty's show. From The 50, Arbaaz Patel, Manisha Rani, and Digvijay Rathee have been approached to take part in the reality show. Spiltsvilla 16 contestants Sorab Bedi and Niharika Tiwari are the latest celebrities who have been approached for the show. Last year, Khatron Ke Khiladi was put on hold due to differences between the makers and the channel. However, things are back on track now, with the show going on floors soon.

## Jr NTR's movie with 'KGF' director Prashant Neel to come out in June 2027

Hyderabad: Telugu superstar Jr NTR's upcoming pan-India movie with filmmaker Prashant Neel will be released in theatres on June 11, 2027. The first glimpse of the movie will be unveiled on May 20, coinciding with Jr NTR's 43rd birthday.

"When the storm finds its purpose," wrote producer Mythri Movie Makers on X while sharing the announcement. The banner also shared a poster featuring a striking avatar of Jr NTR. The project, which has been postponed multiple times since it went on floors in April 2025, was earlier scheduled to release in June 2026. Directed by Neel, who also penned the script, the film is reportedly titled "Dragon". It is jointly produced by Mythri Movie Makers, NTR Arts and T-Series. Neel is best known for the blockbuster "KGF" franchise and "Salaar Part 1: Ceasefire", the latter releasing in December 2023.