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Nitish Kumar to resign as Bihar CM, set to join Rajya Sabha on Friday?

Patna: In a major political development, Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar is set to take oath as a member of the Rajya Sabha on Friday, signalling an imminent leadership transition in the state.

Speaking to reporters, he explained the reasoning behind his move, "I have accomplished a lot of work in Bihar. Now I felt that I should remain here, and that is what I am doing." He further added, "I will step down from my role there and work here. I will resign in three or four days. New individuals will be appointed as Chief Minister and Ministers." Nitish Kumar was accompanied by Sanjay Jha, National Working President of the Janata Dal (United), and Bihar minister Vijay Kumar Choudhary.

SSC student goes missing in NSP canal in Khammam

Khammam: An SSC student went missing in NSP canal near Maddulapalli village of Edulapuram Municipality in the district on Friday.

According to sources, five students of Edulapuram, who are appearing for their SSC exams, went for a swim in the canal to celebrate a friend's birthday. Among the five friends who went swimming, Puttabanthi Ramakrishna went missing as he had gone farther in the canal waters.

Shah Unveils UCC, Ram Rajya Plan In WB Among 15 BJP Promises

ance of dearness allowance and 7th pay commission for state government employees, women safety and empowerment with 33 per cent reservation in government jobs, rejuvenation of old tea gardens and a Vande Mataram museum.

Reading out them at the launch, Shah compared the TMC-rule with kaal ratri (dark night) and duh swapna (bad dreams) and hoped for its end this time. Urging the voters to exercise their rights without fear, he also sounded confident about BJP getting an 'absolute majority' to form government. On the UCC plan, the Union home minister said, "It will be

implemented within six months after BJP comes to power here so that all citizens will come under the same law."

Asked to explain, he said, "Our Constitution respects each and every religion. But tell me which one is appeasement — if a man marries four times or a man marries once? UCC ends appeasement. It is the recommendation of the Constitution, not ours. Irrespective of what Mamataji does, UCC will be implemented wherever BJP is in power in the country."

Shah also vowed to turn Bengal into Ram Rajya after BJP formed government, saying, "This concept of good gov-

ernance was proposed by Mahatma Gandhi himself during the freedom struggle. If Mamata didi can not even implement it, she should not worry because she does not have time left in her hand. From May 5, we will ensure Ram Rajya is established here."

He assured that the state would have a robust son of the soil as the Chief Minister from his party but did not disclose the name. Taking a potshot at the speculation about the succession plan in the TMC, the Union home minister observed, "We aren't a dynastic party where Bhatija (nephew) will become CM after Didi. Any Bengali, who

is from here and is eligible, efficient, leader and an able-administrator, can be the CM of Bengal from BJP."

Replying to questions about various categories of sops in the BJP manifesto in comparison with that of the TMC, Shah refused to call them "freebies", pointing out that these "booster doses" were required from a government to take out the certain sections of people who "fell into ditches made under a misrule." The BJP stalwart later highlighted the salient features of his party's manifesto at a rally in Debra of West Midnapore and led a roadshow at Kharagpur of the district in the evening.



Kolkata: Union home minister Amit Shah on Friday unveiled BJP's Sankalp Patra (manifesto) with 15 promises, titled Bhoy Noy Bhorosa (Support, Not Fear), to target the three term-rule Trinamul Congress for the April 23 and 29 West Bengal elections.

The list of 15 Bhorosar

Shopoth (pledges of support) includes Uniform Civil Code (UCC) implementation, modernisation of fisheries to connect with Bengalis' fascination for Machh-Bhat (fish and rice), a ₹3,000 monthly allowance each for the women and unemployed which are double

of what TMC has started providing, and eviction of infiltrators, a key agenda of the BJP.

Among others were White Paper on corruption and law and order breakdown under 15-year-rule TMC, end of syndicate and 'cut-money' culture, one crore new jobs, clear-

Ahead of talks, Vance pushes diplomacy as Tehran sets preconditions

New Delhi, March 10

Fresh fault lines emerged ahead of the high-stakes US-Iran talks in Islamabad, with US Vice President JD Vance signalling readiness for negotiations while Iran's Parliament Speaker Mohammad-Bagher Ghalibaf laid down key preconditions, casting uncertainty over the start of dialogue.

Departing for Pakistan, Vance struck a cautious but firm note, saying Washington was open to engagement if Tehran acted in "good faith."

"We are looking forward to the negotiations. I think it is going to be positive. As the President of the United States said, if the Iranians are willing to negotiate in good faith, we're certainly willing to extend an open hand. If they're going to try to play us, then they're going to find that the negotiating team is not that receptive," he said.

However, Tehran signalled that negotiations may not proceed without prior commitments being met. Ghalibaf said two agreed measures — a ceasefire in Lebanon and the release of Iran's blocked assets — must be implemented before talks begin. "These two matters must be fulfilled before negotiations begin," he asserted.



The sharp exchange of positions comes as Pakistan prepares to host the "Islamabad Talks," positioning itself as a key mediator in one of the most sensitive diplomatic engagements in recent months. Islamabad has announced visa-on-arrival facilities for delegates and journalists, easing entry norms to facilitate the negotiations, with senior officials from both sides expected to arrive shortly.

Tensions remain high on the ground despite a recently announced two-week ceasefire between the US and Iran, which followed days of intense hostilities that disrupted global energy markets and raised fears of a wider regional conflict.

Complicating the situation further are rising concerns over the Strait of Hormuz, a critical artery for global oil supplies. Iranian voices have warned that restrictions on US and Israeli tankers could become permanent, while US President Donald Trump has cautioned Tehran against imposing any fees or curbs on shipping, underscoring the strategic stakes involved.

The composition of the delegations — led by Vance on the US side and expected to include top political and diplomatic leadership from Iran — suggests the talks could go beyond stabilising the ceasefire to address deeper issues such as sanctions, nuclear policy and

regional security.

Pakistan has made extensive logistical and security arrangements for the talks, including dedicated immigration counters, airline coordination and a secured venue in Islamabad's Red Zone, reflecting the scale and urgency of the engagement.

Even as diplomatic efforts gather pace, conflicting demands and continued military posturing indicate that the path to a durable agreement remains uncertain.

With delegations converging in Islamabad, the coming days are expected to test whether hard bargaining can yield a breakthrough or deepen existing divides in an already volatile region. -Ujwal Jalali

Vice-President JD Vance is warning Tehran not to "play" the US as he departs for Islamabad for negotiations aimed at ending the war with Iran. President Donald Trump has tasked the member of his inner circle who has seemed to be the most reluctant defender of the conflict with Iran to now find a resolution to the war that began six weeks ago and stave off the US president's astonishing threat to wipe out its "whole civilisation."

Voter lists in 12 states, Union Territories shrink by over 6 crore post SIR

New Delhi, March 10

The combined voters' list of nine states and three Union Territories has shrunk by nearly 6.08 crore following the completion of the SIR exercise on Friday.

Now, following Uttar Pradesh coming out with its final electoral roll, the second phase of the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of voters' lists has been completed.

The final electoral rolls of Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal, Tamil Nadu, Rajasthan, Chhattisgarh, Kerala, Puducherry, the Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Lakshadweep, Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh and Goa have been published.

According to data shared by the chief electoral officers of these states and the Election Commission (EC) over the last few months, the combined electoral rolls of these states and Union territories stood at around 51 crore when the SIR exercise was announced on October 27 last year.

After the SIR, the combined voter list stands at around 44.92 crore—a reduction of 6.08 crore.

While the exercise, which kept the EC in the news, was completed in Bihar earlier, its second phase in the above-mentioned 12 states and Union territories, with nearly 51 crore electors, has now been completed.

The remaining 40 crore electors will be covered in 17 states and five Union Territories when the SIR kicks off in those places, most likely after this month's polls to five assemblies.

In Assam, a "special revision", instead of the SIR, was completed on February 10.

Due to a variety of reasons, the SIR exercise in the nine states and three Union Territories has seen frequent tweaking in schedules.



Congress Accuses Modi Govt of U-Turn on Women's Reservation Law, Demands Apology

New Delhi, March 10

The Congress on Friday accused the Modi government of making a U-turn on the implementation of the women's reservation law, alleging that the move was aimed at masking what it described as "monumental failures" in governance and "severe setbacks" in foreign policy. The Opposition party asserted that the Prime Minister owed an apology to the women of India for not accepting its demand to implement the Nari Shakti Vandan Adhiniyam 2023 from the 2024 elections.

Congress general secretary in-charge communications Jairam Ramesh claimed that the Prime Minister was attempting to project himself as the sole champion of women's reservation through public messaging. He argued that when the legis-

lation was passed unanimously in 2023, the Congress had pushed for its immediate rollout, but the government linked its implementation to delimitation and census exercises that were delayed for years.

According to Raesh, the government had shifted its stance, suggesting that the census-based delimitation process will take too long, despite official indications that census results could be available by 2027. He alleged that the change in position was politically motivated, particularly in the context of elections in states such as Tamil Nadu and West Bengal. He accused the Prime Minister of attempting to claim credit for the shift while avoiding accountability.

The Congress remarks

came a day after Prime Minister Narendra Modi said proposed amendments to the Women Reservation Act reflect the aspirations of millions of women and urged lawmakers to support the move. In a signed article, he described the initiative as a step toward strengthening democracy and advancing equality, adding that Parliament will convene from April 16 to 18 to consider amendments to enable implementation from the 2029 general elections.

The existing law, passed in 2023, provides for 33 per cent reservation for women in the Lok Sabha and state Assemblies but ties its implementation to a delimitation exercise based on census data. Without amendments, it is expected to come into effect only by 2034.

Justice Yashwant Varma Resigns Amid Cash Discovery Controversy

New Delhi, March 10

Justice Yashwant Varma of the Allahabad High Court has submitted his resignation to the President, amid an ongoing controversy over the alleged discovery of cash at his residence.

Justice Varma had earlier been transferred from the Delhi High Court back to Allahabad following the allegations. He took oath at the Allahabad High Court on April 5, 2025.

The judge is currently facing an in-house inquiry into the matter. In addition, the developments have raised the possibility of parliamentary removal proceedings being initiated in connection with the allegations.



Indian Chronicle

English Daily

Forty days of war — Iran endures, US limits exposed

Forty days into the Iran conflict, the dust has not settled — but the contours of a transformed geopolitical landscape are already visible. What was expected to be a decisive assertion of American and Israeli military superiority has instead evolved into a complex demonstration of resilience, miscalculation, and shifting power equations in West Asia. The first and most striking takeaway is this: regime change did not happen. At best, there has been a temporary adjustment within the system — not a transformation of it. The Iranian state remains intact, and in many ways, more entrenched. This underscores a fundamental lesson often ignored in modern warfare — the difference between the destruction of military capability and the destruction of political will. The United States succeeded, to an extent, in degrading Iran's military infrastructure. It did not, however, break the resolve of the Iranian state or its people. Indeed, the war appears to have produced the opposite effect. Iranian society, fractured by years of economic hardship and social unrest, has rallied in the face of external pressure. The regime has emerged more hardened, more vigilant, and arguably more legitimate domestically than before the conflict began. Among external actors, China stands out as a quiet but significant beneficiary. By closely observing the conflict, Beijing has gained valuable insights into American military doctrine, response thresholds, and operational limitations — without expending any resources of its own. For a power with global ambitions, this is strategic capital of the highest order. Iran, too, can claim a form of victory. Despite extensive strikes — reportedly targeting thousands of sites — its core capabilities remain intact.

Demand to Upgrade Rebbena PHC to CHC – AITUC District General Secretary Boge Upender



“Memorandum Submitted to Additional Collector” Indian Chronicle. Jade Srinivas. April, 10. “A memorandum was submitted to the District Additional Collector, David, on Friday by AITUC District General Secretary Boge Upender, demanding the upgradation of the Primary Health Centre (PHC) at Rebbena mandal headquarters into a Community Health Centre (CHC). “Speaking on the occasion, Boge Upender stated that nearly one lakh people from 24 ??????s in Rebbena mandal and nearby mandals depend on the Rebbena PHC for medical services. He pointed out that since the PHC is located beside a national highway, many road accident victims are brought there. However, due to the lack of emergency medical facilities, patients are often unable to receive timely treatment, leading to loss of lives on the way to other hospitals. He further highlighted that adequate treatment is not available for critical cases such as deliveries and snake or scorpion bites. In the absence of a nearby CHC, patients are forced to travel about 30 km to Asifabad or 70 km to Mancherial. As a result, patients miss the crucial “golden hour” for treatment, and poor families are compelled to seek costly treatment in private hospitals, causing financial distress. Citing IPHS norms, he said that there should be one CHC for every 50,000 population in tribal and backward areas. Since Rebbena mandal is predominantly a tribal and backward region, establishing a CHC is essential. “He urged the authorities to immediately upgrade the Rebbena PHC to a CHC with facilities such as General Medicine, Gynecology, Pediatrics, and Anesthesia specialists, along with 30 beds, an operation theatre, X-ray facility, blood storage unit, 24-hour laboratory, and ambulance services. He requested the Additional Collector to forward the proposal to the government at the earliest. AITUC District Vice President Atmakuri Chiranjeevi and leader Balesh also participated in the program. “Yours sincerely, “Boge Upender” AITUC District General Secretary “Komuram Bheem Asifabad District” Cen. 94936 30480

Congress Leaders Meet Waqf Board Chairman Mohammed Azmatullah Hussain

“KISHORE VADDEPALLI, Uppal, April 10 (Indian Chronicle): “Senior Congress leaders from Uppal met Telangana State Waqf Board Chairman Mohammed Azmatullah Hussain on Friday as a courtesy visit. The delegation included senior Congress leader Gaddam Ravi Kumar, Mekala Ramakrishna Reddy, Darga Sridhar Reddy, Katal Mohammed Abdul Nayeem, and Padigannagari Shivaprasad. “On the occasion, the leaders felicitated Chairman Mohammed Azmatullah Hussain with due honors. They also brought several issues related to the Waqf Board to his attention. The Chairman assured them that efforts would be made to resolve the concerns raised.

Make Millet-Based Dishes Available in the Canteen—District Collector Ankit.



Kukkadapu Naresh Kumar, Bhadradi Kothagudem Staff Reporter, April 10, Indian Chronicle: On Friday, District Collector Ankit paid a surprise visit to the Indira Mahila Shakti Canteen operating within the IDOC office premises. During this visit, he personally inspected the food items available at the canteen. After inquiring with the manage-

ment staff about the details of the food items being prepared at the canteen, the collector issued clear directives to ensure that high-quality and hygienic food is provided to the employees and the general public visiting the offices. Specifically, he suggested making healthy dishes prepared using millets—such as idli and dosa—available at the canteen. He gathered details regarding the canteen's operational procedures and ascertained how many years it has been in service. He strictly instructed the administrators to sell only high-quality, fresh food items and to rigorously adhere to hygiene standards. On this occasion, the collector also visited the stalls set up under the aegis of the Department of Women and Child Welfare, organized in connection with the visit of Smt. Danasari Anasuya, the minister for Panchayat Raj, rural development, rural water supply, and women and child welfare. He tasted various food items prepared by women's self-help groups and remarked that such initiatives contribute significantly to the development of self-employment opportunities for women. Accompanying the collector during this program were additional collector (local bodies) Vidya Chandana, women and child welfare officer Swamalatha Lenina, officials from relevant departments, and others.

Homeopathy is the path to balanced health Government gives high priority to education and healthcare Jagtial MLA Sanjay Kumar



“Jagtial Correspondent, April 10 (Indian Chronicle): Jagtial MLA Dr. M. Sanjay Kumar said that homeopathy medicine is the best way to achieve balanced health. He urged people to make yoga a part of their lifestyle. “The

MLA participated in the International Homeopathy Day celebrations organized by the Ayush Department, Jagtial district, as part of the public administration progress plan at Jagtial Maternity Hospital. Earlier, he paid tribute to Dr. C.F.S. Hahnemann, the founder of homeopathy medicine, on his birth anniversary. “Speaking on the occasion, MLA Sanjay Kumar said that homeopathy is India's ancient traditional medicine. He mentioned that Sushruta was the first to perform cataract surgery in the world. The MLA advised people to take precautions to prevent diseases rather than seeking treatment after falling ill. He said the state government is giving high priority to education and healthcare, aiming to provide quality medical services to the people. “The event was attended by Municipal Chairperson Sameendla Vani Srinivas, District Medical and Health Officer Sujatha, Deputy Medical Officer Srinivas, Superintendent Dr. Krishna Murthy, Medical College Principal Dr. Sunil, Dr. Naresh, Councillors Boyinipelli Prashant Rao, Dumala Raj Kumar, Sarpanch Mohan Reddy, MEPMAO Srinivas, leaders Koteswara Rao, Praveen Rao, and other medical staff.

Government to Procure Every Grain Produced by Farmers: Minister Ponguleti Srinivasa Reddy



“State Revenue, Housing, and Information & Public Relations Minister Ponguleti Srinivasa Reddy stated that the government will procure every grain produced by farmers across the state. “He announced that under the Rythu Bharosa scheme, farmers are being provided ₹12,000 per acre annually. He also said that new land passbooks have been issued to approximately 3.8 lakh farmers across the state. “The Minister, along with the District Collector, participated in Indiramma housing housewarming ceremonies and also inaugurated PACS warehouses during his visit. “Avnreddy Khammam Town Reporter April 10, (Indian Chronicle): “State Revenue, Housing, and Information & Public Relations Minister Ponguleti Srinivasa Reddy assured that the government will procure every grain produced by farmers across the state. “On Friday, the Minister toured Kusumanchi mandal along with District Collector Anudeep Durishetty and CP Sunil Dutt, and participated in several development and welfare programs. “The Minister first attended the housewarming ceremony of an Indiramma house constructed by Deepangi Srikant and Veerakumari in Venkatapuram village. “Later, he inaugurated a PACS (Primary Agricultural Cooperative Society) warehouse with a storage capacity of 2,000 metric tonnes, built at a cost of ₹1.52 crore in Chegomma village. “Speaking on the occasion, the Minister said that within two years and three months of governance, the government has fulfilled its promises made before elections by implementing several welfare and development programs for farmers and all sections of society. He stated that within four months of coming to power, the government waived farm loans worth ₹20,670 crore benefiting around 25 lakh farmers. “Under the Rythu Bharosa scheme, the government is providing ₹6,000 per acre per crop, totaling ₹12,000 annually per acre. Additionally, a bonus of ₹500 per quintal is being given for fine paddy along with the Minimum Support Price (MSP). The government is also ensuring that fine rice is supplied to the poor instead of being diverted elsewhere. “The Minister emphasized that the government has already procured every grain produced by farmers and will continue to do so. Payments are being credited

directly into farmers' accounts within a week of procurement. “Highlighting the importance of storage, he said warehouses are essential for preserving harvested crops. Two warehouses with a capacity of 1,000 metric tonnes each have been constructed in Chegomma through the cooperative society and inaugurated today. “He further stated that under the Bhu Bharati initiative, around 3.8 lakh farmers across the state have been issued new passbooks. Detailed land surveys have been conducted, and survey maps are printed in passbooks to prevent future land disputes. “The Minister announced that the second phase of Indiramma housing will be launched soon, and eligible beneficiaries will continue to receive houses in the third and fourth phases. Funds are being released every Monday based on construction progress. “He reiterated that the government is committed to supporting farmers, empowering women, providing employment to the unemployed, and ensuring welfare for all sections of society. Responding to local demands, he assured that the Kondapuram road will be completed before the upcoming rainy season. “District Collector Anudeep Durishetty expressed satisfaction over the inauguration of the two PACS warehouses, stating that the district's storage capacity has increased by 2,000 metric tonnes. This will help farmers store produce locally without depending on other districts. He added that arrangements are in place to procure paddy based on harvest schedules and ensure prompt payment to farmers. “Several officials, public representatives, farmers, and local leaders participated in the program.

Mandumula Parameshwar Reddy Participates in Idol Installation Ceremony of Sri Mallela Maisamma



“KISHORE VADDEPALLI, Uppal, April 10 (Indian Chronicle): “As part of the idol installation ceremony of Sri Mallela Maisamma and Pal Uppalamma at Lakshminarayana Colony in Uppal Division, Uppal Constituency Congress Party In-charge Mandumula Parameshwar Reddy participated on Friday and performed special prayers. “On this occasion, he was accorded a traditional welcome with mangala vaidyams (auspicious musical instruments), and Vedic priests received him with a Poornakumbham. Later, at the temple premises, the priests offered Vedic blessings and presented him with sacred theertha prasadam. “The temple committee members warmly welcomed and honored him with a shawl. Residents of Lakshminarayana Colony and local devotees participated in the event in large numbers.

Govindaram student selected for national level in softball DEO Ramu congratulates the student



Jagityal Correspondent, April 10 (Indian Chronicle): Jagityal district Beemaram mandal Govindaram High School student Vignesh has been selected for the national level softball competition. Vignesh, an 8th class student of Zilla Parishad High School Govindaram, participated in the state-level sub-junior softball competition held at Nellikuduru, Mahabubabad district last month and has been selected for the national level competition to be held in Delhi from 16th of this month. On this occasion, Jagityal District Education Officer Ramu congratulated student Vignesh. School Headmaster MD Ashwak, Physical Director M Prashant, PRTU TS Jagityal district branch president and general secretaries Boyini Pelli Anand Rao, Yalla Amarnath Reddy, and PRTU TS state secretary Mitta Pelli Rajender Rao participated and congratulated Vignesh.

Chairman of State Warehousing Corporation Rayala Nageswara Rao Inspects Warehouses



“Arvapalli Nagesh Khammam Bureau April 10, (Indian Chronicle): “In Khammam district, at Manchukonda, the Chairman of the State Warehousing Corporation, Rayala Nageswara Rao, inspected the warehouses. He examined the fine rice stored in the godowns and checked its quality. He also reviewed the records related to storage. “He closely inspected the methods of using chemicals and instructed that proper precautions should be taken to prevent insect infestation in the rice. He advised that necessary care must be followed in maintaining rice stocks. “Former DCC President Puvvalla Durgaprasad also participated in this program.

Petition Submitted to Zonal Commissioner to Complete Pending CC Roads and Drainage Works in Beerappa Gadda Division — Former BRS State Secretary Neredam Bhaskar Goud



“KISHORE VADDEPALLI, Uppal, April 10 (Indian Chronicle): “On Friday, former BRS State Secretary Neredam Bhaskar Goud met Zonal Commissioner Radhika Gupta and submitted a representation requesting the completion of incomplete CC roads and drainage works in Beerappa Gadda Division. “He explained that due to the negligence of officials and contractors, several roads and drainage systems in the area have been left incomplete, causing severe inconvenience to local residents. He stated that despite bringing these issues to the attention of authorities earlier, no action had been taken. “In some areas, the situation has become so bad that people are unable to walk properly. Bhaskar Goud provided detailed information, including door-to-door numbers, to the commissioner. He also pointed out that motorists are facing significant difficulties while traveling through these routes. “He further highlighted that incomplete drainage works are leading to foul smells and creating serious health issues for the residents. Photographic evidence of the incomplete works was also submitted to the commissioner. “Responding to the petition, Zonal Commissioner Radhika Gupta assured that the pending road and drainage works would be completed at the earliest.

Uppal MLA Bandari Lakshma Reddy Participates in Sri Sri Sri Mallela Maisamma Temple Reconstruction and Idol Installation Ceremony



"KISHORE VADDEPALLI, Uppal, April 10 (Indian Chronicle): "The reconstruction and idol installation ceremony of Sri Sri Sri Mallela Maisamma Temple was held grandly on Friday at Lakshmi Narayana Colony in Uppal. Uppal MLA Bandari Lakshma Reddy attended the event as the chief guest and performed special rituals. Speaking on the occasion, the MLA said that temples are symbols of our culture and traditions, and such reconstruction activities further strengthen the spiritual faith of devotees. He also assured that he would always extend his support for the development of the temple. A large number of local residents, temple committee members, and devotees participated and made the event a grand success.

Anganwadi teachers' services are unforgettable



of progress of women and children under the leadership of Chief Minister Revanth Reddy. He said that several welfare programs are being implemented for the economic self-reliance of women, health security and comprehensive development of children. To further strengthen the Anganwadi system, smartphones are being provided to over 38,000 Anganwadi teachers across the state at a cost of Rs. 54 crore, and as part of this, phones have been distributed to 117 people in the Western constituency. He said that nutrition distribution, health protection of pregnant women and child development programs are important among the schemes implemented through Anganwadi centers, and the role of teachers is crucial in their implementation. He suggested that services should be provided more efficiently through the use of technology. He clarified that the details of each beneficiary should be recorded accurately and that there should be no negligence in the health and nutrition of children. He said that comprehensive protection is being provided to women through programs such as Indiramma Houses, women's welfare schemes, strengthening of self-help groups and nutritional security implemented by the state government. He assured that a special meeting will be held to resolve the problems of Anganwadi teachers and will be brought to the attention of the concerned minister Seethakka. He said that free uniforms (clothes) are being distributed to children in Anganwadi centers in Hanumakonda district. Floor leader Thota Venkateswarlu, corporators Jakkula Ravinder, Potula Sriman, Manasa, concerned department officials, RJD, CDPO, supervisors, Anganwadi teachers and others participated in this program.

--MLA 'Nayini' distributes smartphones to Anganwadi teachers, uniforms to children Devulapally Srinivas Warangal Bureau (Hanamkonda), April 10 (Indian Chronicle): Warangal West MLA Nayini Rajender Reddy said that the services provided by Anganwadi teachers are invaluable to the society. He said that after the formation of the Congress Praja government, they are implementing several innovative schemes by giving top priority to the welfare of women and children. On Friday, in a program organized under the auspices of the District Women Development and Child Welfare Department at the Hanumakonda District Integrated Collectorate Office, the MLA, along with MLC Baswaraju Saraiyah, Mayor Gundu Sudharani and Collector Chahat Bajpai, distributed smartphones to 117 Anganwadi teachers in the constituency. Speaking on the occasion, MLA 'Nayini' said that the government is moving forward with the goal

Successful Surgery for Patient with Completely Severed Ear—A Testament to the Skill of Kothagudem Government Hospital Doctors.



"Kukkadapu Naresh Kumar, Bhadradi Kothagudem Staff Reporter, April 07, Indian Chronicle: Doctors from the ENT Department at the Bhadradi Kothagudem Government General Hospital have once again demonstrated their expertise by successfully performing a complex surgical procedure. Nirmala (40), a resident of Ramavaram village in Chunchupalli Mandal, along with her husband Rayamallu, was admitted to the hospital on April 9, 2026, suffering from a severe injury.

Doctors diagnosed her with a rare and critical condition known as grade-4 traumatic avulsion of the pinna—a complete detachment of the external ear. Accepting this critical situation as a challenge, the ENT medical team performed the surgery with the utmost care and skill, successfully reattaching the severed ear. The stark contrast between the pre-operative and post-operative conditions clearly highlights the severity of the case. Currently, the patient's health condition is stable, and she is showing signs of improvement under the continuous supervision of the medical team.

The ENT medical team successfully completed this surgery under the leadership of Dr. Samson. On this occasion, the collective efforts of the ENT faculty, doctors from the Anesthesia Department, and the Operation Theatre nursing staff and technicians are highly commendable. This successful surgery serves as yet another proof that state-of-the-art, high-quality medical services are indeed available in government hospitals.

Senior BRS leader Erelli Ravinder Reddy receives birthday wishes from MLA Bandari Lakshma Reddy

"KISHORE VADDEPALLI, Uppal, April 10 (Indian Chronicle): "On the occasion of his birthday on Friday, senior BRS leader of Chilukanagar Division and President of Swami Vivekananda Yuvak Sangh, Erelli Ravinder Reddy, met Uppal MLA Bandari Lakshma Reddy and received his blessings. On this occasion, MLA Bandari Lakshma Reddy felicitated Ravinder Reddy with a shawl, offered him sweets, and conveyed his birthday wishes. Speaking on the occasion, the MLA wished that Ravinder Reddy celebrates many more such birthdays and continues to lead in public service. He appreciated the activities carried out by Ravinder Reddy as the President of Swami Vivekananda Yuvak Sangh and commended his efforts in addressing public issues. The MLA encouraged him to continue his service with the same dedication. Senior BRS leaders from Chilukanagar, including Ambati Jagadish Mudiraj, Gudi Madhusudhan Reddy, Palle Nursing Rao, Pittala Naresh Mudiraj, Kompalli Ravinder Mudiraj, Akiti Bal Reddy, Sanigaram Tirumalesh, Photolu Raju, and others, were present at the event.



CBITMUN 2026 Inaugurated with Grandeur, Marking a Milestone 15th Edition



The 15th edition of CBIT Model United Nations (CBITMUN 2026) was inaugurated with great enthusiasm and prestige, setting a powerful tone for three days of rigorous debate, diplomacy, and intellectual exchange. Scheduled from April 10 to 12, the conference has brought together over 350 delegates from across India and internationally, promising a dynamic and professional simulation of global affairs. The inaugural ceremony was graced by the Chief Guest, Gaddam Prasad Kumar, Honourable Speaker of the Telangana

Legislative Assembly. The event was further honoured by the presence of the Guest of Honour, and A. V. Ranganath, IPS, Commissioner of HYDRAA. Their esteemed presence added immense value to the occasion, inspiring delegates to engage in meaningful dialogue and leadership. In his address, Shri A. V. Ranganath spoke on the critical importance of environmental policy and effective implementation, emphasizing the role of responsible governance and informed youth participation in addressing contemporary challenges. Shri Gaddam Prasad Kumar, in his remarks, applauded the organizing team for their dedication and commended the delegates for taking part in such a platform that nurtures awareness, critical thinking, and leadership. The ceremony was also graced by C. V. Narasimhulu, Principal of CBIT, who delivered a thought-provoking address urging delegates to engage constructively, and make the most of the opportunity. His speech reflected the institution's pride in hosting CBITMUN and its continued commitment to fostering globally aware citizens. The organizers extended their sincere gratitude to the faculty coordinators, Dr. Shagufta Parveen, Head, Department of English and Dr. Rahul, Assistant Professor, Department of Mechanical Engineering for their constant guidance, encouragement, and unwavering support in ensuring the smooth execution of the conference. CBITMUN 2026 features six specialized committees, each designed to simulate real-world international and national bodies. With agendas rooted in contemporary global issues, the committees promise intense, well-structured debates and high levels of participation. The inauguration successfully set a professional and inspiring tone for the conference, with meticulous organization and an energetic atmosphere evident from the outset. As proceedings commence, CBITMUN 2026 stands poised to deliver an enriching experience, continuing its legacy as one of the most prestigious MUN conferences in the region.

Congress Strives to Strengthen the Anganwadi System Parakala MLA Revuri Prakash Reddy

"Devulapally Srinivas, Warangal Bureau (Parakala), April 10 (Indian Chronicle): Parakala MLA Revuri Prakash Reddy stated that the Congress "People's Government" is making every effort to strengthen the Anganwadi system, and that the primary objective of the Congress government is the economic upliftment of every family. On Friday, at the Rhythu Vedita (Farmers' Platform) in Konayamakula, Geesugonda Mandal, he distributed mobile phones to Anganwadi teachers from the Sangem and Geesugonda mandals, alongside District Collector Satya Sarada. Speaking on the occasion, MLA Revuri noted that Anganwadi centers provide vital services to women and children in rural areas. He added that mobile phones would play a pivotal role in aspects such as the implementation of government schemes, coordination with beneficiaries, and the rapid dissemination of information.

He reiterated that the goal of the Congress government is to ensure the economic growth of every family. He further mentioned that the Congress government is implementing pre-primary education in government



schools and that, through the use of technology, Anganwadi services would be delivered even more efficiently. MLA Revuri Prakash Reddy explained that these mobile phones would be instrumental in digitizing the management of Anganwadi centers, accelerating the pace of work, and enabling the real-time online recording of health details regarding pregnant women, nursing mothers, and children at the field level.

District Steps Up Road Safety: Collector Calls for Immediate Action



"Indian Chronicle (Taj Khan), April 10, Kumram Bheem Asifabad : District Collector Haritha has called for stringent measures to prevent road accidents in the district. Chairing a District-Level Road Safety Committee meeting held on Friday at the Integrated Collectorate Conference Hall, the Collector reviewed safety measures with officials from Revenue, Police, Transport, Roads & Buildings, Panchayat Raj, Engineering, National Highways, Education, and Health departments. Superintendent of Police Nitika Panth, Additional Collector M. David, Kagaznagar Sub-Collector Shradha Shukla, and Asifabad RDO Lokeshwar Rao were present. Addressing the meeting, the Collector emphasized the need for coordinated efforts to minimize road accidents and ensure

public safety. Key Directions Issued: Safety measures to be strengthened across all roads in the district. National Highways authorities directed to install proper lighting, construct service roads, speed breakers, and side drains in villages along highways. Adequate patrolling vehicles to be deployed. Electricity officials instructed to rectify roadside electric poles and hanging wires; radium markings to be affixed on poles. Transport department to conduct strict inspections of vehicles, including school buses. Roads & Buildings, Panchayat Raj, and Engineering departments asked to expedite road repairs and bridge construction works. Installation of speed breakers, traffic control systems, and signboards to regulate vehicle speed. Immediate shifting of accident victims to nearby hospitals to be ensured. Steps to reduce traffic congestion in municipalities and mandal headquarters. Strict action against drunk driving, over-speeding, and violations such as not wearing helmets and seat belts. Public awareness campaigns on road safety rules to be intensified. The Collector urged all departments to work in coordination to effectively prevent accidents. DRDO Dattarao, Transport Officer Ramachander, DPO Bhikshapathi, SE (Electricity) Uttam Jade, PREE Dharmender, along with officials from education, medical, and National Highways departments, attended the meeting. Issued by District Public Relations Office

Anjaneyulu Sagar Submits Memorandum to Deputy Commissioner Regarding Issues in Anjaya Nagar Division

"Serilingampalli April 10: Anjaneyulu Sagar, a leader from the Anjaya Nagar division, met with Deputy Commissioner N. Balakrishna and submitted a memorandum seeking the resolution of various public issues within the division's jurisdiction. On this occasion, he specifically highlighted the shortage of streetlights in the areas of Anjaya Nagar, Siddiq Nagar, Rajiv Nagar, Banjara Nagar, Gulshan Nagar, and PJR Nagar, requesting that streetlights be installed immediately wherever necessary. He also provided a detailed account of the issues concerning the foot-over bridge. Notably, the memorandum requested that officials take the initiative to expedite the development works at the Anjaya Nagar crematorium, as the project has been facing delays. Deputy Commissioner N. Balakrishna responded positively to these concerns and assured the delegation that measures would be taken to resolve all these issues promptly. Leaders Ch. Suresh Sagar, P. Lakshmaiah Sagar, Ramakrishna Sagar, Rohit Sagar, Kondayya, and others participated in this event.



BJP leaders urge HYDRA officials to provide alternative housing before vacating Pedda Cheruvu residents



that the issue remains unresolved and that the poor are once again being subjected to injustice. On Friday, under the leadership of Bommagoni Raghupathi Goud, the affected families along with BJP leaders approached the HYDRA office and submitted a complaint seeking justice. Former Habsiguda Division President Jillela Ravinder Reddy, senior leaders Vemulakonda Venkanna Goud and Katta Bhaskar Rao also extended their support to the affected families and listened to their grievances. BJP leaders warned that if the authorities continue to neglect the issue and fail to provide alternative housing, they will intensify their protest in support of the poor. Leaders including Bommagoni Raghupathi Goud, Hanumanthu Naik, Chitti Naik, Sharada, Mamuli Naik, Bikku Lal, Naga Naik, Kumar Naik, and Parshu Naik participated in the program.

Bommagoni Raghupathi Goud (Kishore Vaddepalli, Uppal, April 10 (Indian Chronicle): "Government officials on Friday informed around 50-60 poor families, who have been living for the past 40 years near Pedda Cheruvu in Ramanthapur under Habsiguda Division, to vacate the area by Monday. They warned that the houses would be demolished if the residents failed to comply. Speaking on the issue, BJP OBC leader Bommagoni Raghupathi Goud stated that a similar situation had occurred earlier, when former MLA N.V.S.S. Prabhakar had fought on behalf of the poor, demanding that the government provide alternative housing. At that time, officials had assured that houses would be allotted to the affected families. "However, he alleged

Haritha Reviews Schools, EVM Safety and Welfare Initiatives in District



Indian Chronicle (Taj Khan), April 10, Asifabad/Wankidi: Collector Haritha conducted surprise inspections at a government school in Bendara village, stressing quality education and proper mid-day meals for students. "She also reviewed security arrangements at the EVM warehouse and inspected the Collectorate garden, directing officials to improve greenery and infrastructure. "The Collector visited a bamboo handicrafts workshop at Saleguda and assured support for artisans, including electricity supply and pending benefits.

New Sarpanches Must Work with Dedication



Parkal MLA Revuri Prakash Reddy (Devulapally Srinivas, Warangal Bureau (Parkal), April 10 (Indian Chronicle): Parkal MLA Revuri Prakash Reddy stated that newly elected Sarpanches must work with dedication towards the development of their villages. He emphasized the need to improve basic infrastructure within villages and urged them to take proactive measures to prevent drinking water shortages, particularly in light of the approaching summer season. On Friday, a review meeting was held at the MLA's camp office in the Parkal town center, attended by Sarpanches and officials from the Parkal, Nadikuda, Damera, and Atmakur mandals. Speak-

ing on the occasion, the MLA affirmed that the Congress-led "people's government" is taking special initiatives for rural development; he advised the Sarpanches to coordinate effectively with the public and strive collectively for the progress of their villages. "He further directed that government welfare schemes be implemented efficiently to ensure they reach all eligible beneficiaries. He ordered officials to undertake immediate preventive measures to avert water scarcity during the summer months, specifically directing them to expedite actions regarding Mission Bhagiratha water supply, the repair of borewells, and the rectification of pipeline leaks, among other necessary steps.

Artisan Workers' Indefinite Strike Intensifies on Day 3 in Sainikpuri Division



"NARRA SRINIVAS REDDY (NSR) Medchal - Malkajgiri Staff Reporter, April 10 (INDIAN CHRONICLE): "Sainikpuri: The indefinite strike by artisan workers of the Southern Power Distribution Company entered its third day and intensified across the Sainikpuri Division. A large number of workers from all sections of the division actively participated in the protest, raising strong slogans against the management's rigid and unresponsive attitude. The protesting workers expressed anger over the government's continued neglect of their issues, stating that despite their long-standing service and commitment to the organization, their concerns re-

main unaddressed. They also criticized the authorities for failing to initiate any discussions so far, which, according to them, clearly reflects the management's stance. Union leaders warned that the agitation would escalate further in the coming days if their demands are not met, indicating a more intensified phase of protest as part of their future course of action. Key participants in the protest included Venkat Reddy (Habsiguda Circle JAC Chairman), Kishtafer, Janayya, Mallareddy, Paisa Ravi, Mohan Rao, Johnny, Prasad, Jamal, Naresh Goud, Vijay, Krishna, Ramesh, Raju, Venkatesh, Devakumar, Suguna, Lakshmi, Mamata, and Vijaya, among others.

Newly Constructed Road Damaged Within Days, Safety Concerns Rise



"Early cracks raise questions over construction quality"--Heavy vehicle movement worsening the condition "- Locals warn of serious risk if no immediate action "NARRA SRINIVAS REDDY (NSR) Medchal - Malkajgiri Staff Reporter, April 10 (INDIAN CHRONICLE): "Kapra: A newly constructed CC road on the stretch from the Kapra MRO office to Yellareddy Guda has developed major cracks within days of completion, raising concerns over construction quality. Large portions of the concrete surface have broken and lifted, making the road unsafe for commuters. The road is a busy route

with frequent movement of heavy vehicles and trucks, which has further aggravated the damage. Locals say the condition of the road is deteriorating rapidly and may lead to a serious accident if not addressed immediately. Residents also point out that there has been no inspection or response from the concerned authorities so far. The lack of post-construction monitoring is being seen as a major reason behind the current situation. Locals have urged authorities to take immediate steps to repair the damaged stretch, restrict heavy vehicle movement, and divert traffic to safer routes. They warn that delays in action could result in a major mishap.

Toxic Smoke Chokes Zaheerabad Dumping Yard Turns Into a Public Health Disaster

"Zaheerabad "The dumping yard located within the municipal limits of Zaheerabad has become a living nightmare for nearby residents. Thick plumes of smoke and unbearable stench emanating from the yard are making life miserable for people living in surrounding colonies. The continuous burning of garbage is releasing toxic gases, posing a serious threat to public health. "From early morning till late at night, the smoke engulfs entire neighborhoods, forcing residents to shut their doors and windows just to cope. Living conditions have deteriorated drastically, with children, elderly people, and pregnant women being the worst affected. Locals report a sharp rise in respiratory illnesses such as cough, asthma, bronchitis, and breathing difficulties. In addition, cases of eye irritation and skin problems are also increasing. "Even breathing has become difficult," lament residents, expressing their deep distress. The situation is worsening due to the unscientific disposal of waste. Frequent burning of garbage or accidental fires in the dumping yard are intensifying pollution levels. The dense smoke is also reducing visibility on nearby roads, increasing the risk of accidents for motorists. "The impact is not limited to residential areas. Farmers fear that the toxic emissions are contaminating agricultural lands and groundwater in nearby regions, posing long-term environmental and economic threats. Despite repeated appeals from residents



to relocate the dumping yard away from residential zones, authorities have failed to provide a permanent solution. Growing negligence has sparked anger among the public. Residents have now warned that they will no longer remain silent. If immediate action is not taken, they are prepared to launch large-scale protests against the authorities.

Municipal Chairman Conducts Surprise Inspection at Zaheerabad Government Hospital



Chairman Younus Warns of Action Against Negligent Medical Staff... "Orders Improvement in Medical Services... "Zaheerabad, April 10: "Municipal Chairman Mohammed Younus conducted a surprise inspection of the Government Area Hospital in Zaheerabad town on Friday, accompanied by a team of local councillors. The visit aimed to assess the quality of medical services and the availability of basic facilities being provided to patients. During the inspection, the Chairman visited various wards of the hospital and interacted directly with patients undergoing treatment. He enquired about the availability of doctors, the performance of nursing staff, and whether medicines and other essential services were being provided adequately and on time. Several patients brought their concerns to his notice, to which he responded promptly, directing officials to take immediate corrective measures. "The Chairman also reviewed key aspects such as sanitation, drinking water facilities, availability of beds, and the functioning of emergency services. Noticing certain shortcomings in some departments, he instructed the concerned authorities to address the issues without delay. "Speaking on the occasion, Mohammed Younus emphasized that government hospitals play a crucial role in providing healthcare services to the poor and underprivileged sections of society. He stated that negligence in duty would not be tolerated and

directed the medical staff to remain available at all times and ensure the delivery of quality healthcare services to every patient. During the inspection, the Chairman expressed serious displeasure over the absence of a doctor from duty. Responding to this, the hospital superintendent assured that a memo would be issued to the concerned doctor and appropriate action would be taken. The Chairman further instructed that medical teams should continuously monitor patients in every ward to ensure that no inconvenience is caused. He assured that the municipality would remain vigilant regarding public health and extend full support in resolving the hospital's issues. Councillors Jameel, Jangir, Akram, Mahesh Chauhan Vakil, Javid, Nizam, Irmiya, Rafi, and others were present during the inspection."

Continuous Efforts for Public Issues: Municipal Chairperson Mengre Akash and Vice Chairperson M.D. Ahmed



"Indian Chronicle. Jade Srinivas. April, 10 "Asifabad: Municipal Chairperson Akash and Vice Chairperson M.D. Ahmed have reiterated that they are constantly working to resolve public issues in every ward of the town. "In Ward No. 12, residents had been facing a shortage of drinking water for the past week due to a malfunctioning water motor. The residents brought this issue to the attention of Chairperson Mengre Akash, Vice Chairperson M.D. Ahmed, and Councillor Atram Krishnamma. Responding promptly, a new water motor was installed and inaugurated on Friday to restore the water supply."



Speaking on the occasion, the municipal leaders said that, following the residents' request, a new motor was approved on a priority basis, ensuring the smooth resumption of water services. They emphasized their ongoing commitment to the development of all wards as part of public service. "The residents expressed their joy and gratitude, felicitating Chairperson Akash and Vice Chairperson Ahmed with shawls in appreciation of their swift response. "The program was attended by leaders Salman Khan, Atram Bhim Bhai, Noori, Supraj, Jameel Hussain, Aftab, and residents of the colony.

Online friendship turns into Rs 1 crore fraud: Bengaluru woman blackmailed with private photos, videos



GNS News Agency, April 10

The Bengaluru police said Tuesday they have arrested two men for allegedly threatening a woman they befriended on social media and coercing her into handing over gold ornaments worth Rs 85.65 lakh and Rs 20 lakh in cash. According to police, the victim, a resident of an area under the K R Puram Police Station limits, had been in contact with the prime accused, Mahesh, for nearly one-and-a-half years after connecting with him on Snapchat. What began as a seemingly harmless online friendship gradually evolved into manipulation, coercion, and ultimately, blackmail, they added. Investigators said Mahesh, along with his associate Swamy Vishwanath, gradually gained the woman's trust before beginning to cite financial distress as a reason to seek money and gold from her. The police said Mahesh would frequently

meet the victim in person and, over repeated interactions, collected cash and gold ornaments in small amounts, eventually increasing the frequency and value of the collections.

The accused allegedly captured screenshots and videos of the woman's private moments during video calls and later used them to threaten her and continue forcing her to give him money. Amid the harassment, the woman handed over nearly 1 kg of gold ornaments along with Rs 20 lakh in cash. "The accused built trust with the victim over a long period and repeatedly met her to collect valuables. When she demanded her jewellery back and was refused, she approached the police. The private content was also used to threaten her," a police officer said. "We have recovered a substantial portion of the stolen property. The accused had pledged the jewellery and invested the money in online gambling, but lost almost the entire amount," the officer added. Acting on technical intelligence, the police arrested Mahesh on March 3 in Kondur village in Telangana's Nizamabad district. During interrogation, he confessed to the crime and revealed the involvement of his accomplice, Swamy Vishwanath was subsequently arrested on March 19 in Anantapur, Andhra Pradesh. Further investigation revealed that part of the stolen gold had been pledged at two banks and a jewellery shop in Hyderabad. Police teams recovered 571 grams of gold ornaments worth Rs 85.65 lakh between March 20 and March 23. Both accused have been remanded to judicial custody, and further investigation is ongoing.

ECI writes to Govt over guarantee funds release; Shivakumar alleges 'BJP conspiracy'



GNS News Agency, April 10

The Election Commission of India has written to Karnataka Chief Secretary Shalini Rajneesh regarding alleged violations of the Model Code of Conduct (MCC) arising from the release of grants under guarantee schemes ahead of the bypolls scheduled for Thursday. A letter from ECI, dated April 2, was released to the media by the Congress on Tuesday, alleging a ploy to stop the five guarantee schemes. The letter by the ECI secretary said that they had received information regarding "fresh sanction of financial benefits to beneficiaries of the

schemes (Gruha Lakshmi, Yuva Nidhi, Shakti Scheme, Gruha Jyothi, Anna Bhagya) in the districts of the 2 Bye-election going Assembly Constituencies." Bypolls are scheduled in Davanagere South and Bagalkot constituencies on April 9. The letter said that since MCC provisions were in force, no fresh release of funds on welfare schemes should be made without ECI's prior approval. The poll body sought details from Rajneesh regarding the release of funds to beneficiaries in the Davanagere and Bagalkot districts, where the two constituencies are located.

The details, ECI said, should include "the name of the officer concerned who sanctioned such release of funds." It added that if the funds were not released, they should not be released without the Commission's permission. Reacting to the same, Deputy Chief Minister D K Shivakumar said he discussed the release of funds with officials who informed him that benefits under the schemes were provided till March. "This month's instalment will be released after elections," he told reporters in Davanagere. According to Shivakumar, the letter was part of a larger conspiracy of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) to stop guarantee schemes and "thereby attack the poor and unemployed youth." Voters will respond to such acts, he added.

Woman among four held with 16.8 kg of heroin in Phagwara



GNS News Agency, April 10

Punjab Police seized 16.8 kg heroin in Phagwara and arrested four people, including a woman, in a Pakistan-linked narcotics smuggling case. (Representative Image) Punjab Police seized 16.8 kg heroin in Phagwara and arrested four people, including a woman, in a Pakistan-linked narcotics smuggling case. (Representative Image) Kapurthala police claim to have busted a Pakistan-backed narcotics smuggling module with the arrest of its four operatives, including a woman, and seized 16.8 kg of heroin from their possession. Punjab Director Gen-

eral of Police (DGP) Gaurav Yadav said here on Tuesday the arrested persons have been identified as Balwinder Singh of Pandori Mohalla in Sultanpur Lodhi, Sumanpreet Kaur of Gohalwar in Amritsar, Harpal Singh and Jaskaranbir Singh, all residents of Dauke village in Amritsar. Police teams also impounded the Maruti Baleno car they were travelling in. "Preliminary investigations have revealed that the drug trafficking was being orchestrated at the behest of Pakistan and Dubai-based handlers. The consignment was brought from the Amritsar border area and was intended for delivery in Chandigarh," Yadav said. The DGP said, "Further investigation is underway to unearth the entire network. More arrests and recoveries are likely in the coming days." Sharing operational details, Kapurthala Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Gaurav Toora said acting on secret information, a strategic trap was laid by Phagwara police teams. "When the police intercepted the suspects' Baleno car, the accused attempted to run over the police party to escape. After a high-speed chase, the police had to fire rounds at the vehicle's tyres to bring it to a halt," said the SSP. An FIR has been registered under section 21C of the NDPS Act and section 111 of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS) at Sadar Phagwara police station, police said.

UP cabinet approves revamp of 49 bus stations, industrial proposals to drive investment

GNS News Agency, April 10

The Uttar Pradesh Cabinet, chaired by Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, on Tuesday approved the redevelopment of 49 bus stations under the Public-Private Partnership (PPP) model, alongside a series of decisions aimed at boosting industrial investment and employment in the state, officials said. According to officials, under the transport revamp plan, 49 bus stations of the Uttar Pradesh State Road Transport Corporation (UPSRTC) will be modernised in the second phase on a Design, Build, Finance, Operate and Transfer (DBFOT) model. The project is expected to attract investments of over Rs 4000 crore, with no direct financial burden on the state government, officials added. The government aims to transform these bus stations into "airport-like hubs equipped with modern passenger amenities such as improved waiting areas, sanitation, VIP lounges, restaurants, shopping malls, cinema halls and accommodation facilities," the officials said, adding that around 55% of the area will be reserved for public use, while 45% will be utilised for commercial activities. State transport minister Dayashankar Singh said the revised policy framework eases investor participation by reducing technical eligibility requirements and extending project timelines. The lease period has been fixed at either 35 or 90 years, after which ownership will be back to UPSRTC. The second phase of redevelopment expands coverage to 52 districts, including Agra, Barabanki, Azamgarh, Ballia, among others, with remaining districts to be included later. Apart

from infrastructure, the Cabinet cleared multiple proposals under the Uttar Pradesh Industrial Investment and Employment Promotion Policy-2022, based on recommendations of the High-Level Empowered Committee (HLEC). These include approval for issuance of Letters of Comfort (LoC), capital subsidies and project modifications for several industrial units across districts. Key beneficiaries include OFC Tech Pvt Ltd (Rs 589 crore) in Shahjahanpur and AJJ Cane Industries (Rs 1128 crore) in Hathras for SGST reimbursement support, and capital subsidy approvals for units such as India Glycols Ltd (Gorakhpur), Viscose International (Prayagraj) and Integrated Batteries India Pvt Ltd (Greater Noida). A major Rs 16,000-crore project by Avaada Electro in Gautam Buddha Nagar also received approval for modifications to facilitate smoother implementation. With special emphasis on green energy, the Cabinet approved large investments in solar cell and module manufacturing, aimed at developing the Yamuna Expressway and Greater Noida regions as clean energy hubs while reducing import dependence. In another key decision, the Cabinet approved the final bid document for procurement of 25 lakh tablets under the Swami Vivekananda Yuva Sashaktikaran Yojana, with a budget allocation of Rs 2000 crore for 2026-27. The government also approved granting land ownership rights to families displaced during Partition in Pilibhit, Lakhimpur Kheri, Rampur and Bijnor districts, enabling them to access institutional credit and sell produce legally.

Mumbai restaurants are raising prices due to LPG shortage. Here's what's on your bill now — and what's coming



GNS News Agency, April 10

The arithmetic of running a kitchen on scarce and expensive fuel is becoming harder to ignore across the city. The cost of the crisis, absorbed quietly for weeks, is beginning to appear on the bills. Vijay Shetty, owner of Udupi Shri Krishna in Lower Parel and president of the Indian Hotel & Restaurant Association (AHAR), said that the majority of Mumbai's eateries have already increased prices by 10 to 20 per cent. "Vegetables, edible oil, plastic containers for delivery, the induction stoves many had to purchase overnight — all have added up," he said, adding that majority of their members that include QSRs, vegetarian restaurants, permit rooms and fine diners, have increased the price.

The crisis began quietly. On March 5, a government circular asking oil marketing companies to ensure that LPG is supplied solely to domestic consumers triggered hoarding, black marketing, and a supply crunch. Restaurants of all shapes and sizes, from fine dining establishments to small neighbourhood eateries, and bakeries that were compelled by court order to give up their wood-fired ovens last year — all found themselves suddenly without fuel. The cost of a cylinder in black market shot up to Rs 4,000 or above. Most chose to absorb the cost for as long as they could. That period is now ending. At Udupi Shri Krishna, a go-to lunch spot for office-goers in Kurla Mills, prices went up 20 per cent. Veg Sandwich, earlier priced at Rs 70, is now available for Rs 90; Pav Bhaji has gone up by Rs 15 and Cheese Pav Bhaji by Rs 20 and Uttapam by Rs 15. The situation, Shetty says, has improved, but not enough. He gets one or two cylinders a week against a daily requirement of one. "Even 20 per cent of our requirement is too little, we need that much just for making staff food," says Shetty. His menu has been reduced by 30 per cent. Dosa is unavailable at Udupi Shree Krishna and many other places across the city. The frustration runs deeper than logistics. "During the pandemic, restaurants were designated essential services. This time, that recognition has not come even though lakhs and lakhs of people rely on us for their day-to-day meals," said Shetty.

The government is placing an urgent emphasis on the adoption of Piped Natural Gas (PNG) over Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) in urban areas. Responding to it, AHAR has set up a camp at its Wadala office, helping restaurant owners apply for PNG pipeline connections. "We have been told that those who would apply for the connection will get cylinders on priority in the interim," he said. At Aram Vada Pav in CSMT, the prices haven't moved yet, but the decision is already made. From April 13, everything goes up by 7 to 10 per cent. Kaustubh Tambe, 55, the third generation running the business, said, "Oil has gone up by Rs 100 to Rs 125

in a month. Coal, which we have switched to out of necessity, has gone from Rs 38 to Rs 60." Last week they received four cylinders against a daily requirement of two. The menu has been shortened in ways that feel personal to anyone who knows the place. "There is no mirchi with the vada pav. No upma. No upvas missal," said Tambe.

At 118-year-old American Express Bakery, the ovens — electric and diesel-run — have kept the baking process going on, but the fillings for puffs and sandwiches require gas. It is a challenge as they are getting one cylinder every 20 to 25 days. "We have stopped taking bulk walk-in orders and cut down production by about 30 per cent," said Yohann Carvalho, who represents the fourth generation manning the business. Breads and core items will hold their prices, but "we will have to increase the prices for puffs and sandwiches by 10 to 15 per cent, likely from mid to end of May." Vakola-based Vienna Bakery, 67 years old and a neighbourhood institution, is holding its prices until April 15. "Everything has gone up — gas, fat, oil, packaging," said Tara Raj, whose grandfather started the bakery. The increase, when it comes, will be 10 to 15 per cent across the board. The bakery has been operating on a single cylinder received since the crisis began. Shree Thaker Bhojanalay, which shut for a few days at the height of the crisis, is now open again, running on a mix of gas cylinders, coal and induction stoves. "Prices of everything have gone up — coal, milk, vegetables, every raw material. We haven't increased the price yet but we are thinking about it," said owner Gautam Purohit. At Jhama Sweets in Kalbadevi, Vicky Lulla stalled production entirely for a few days before arranging diesel-fuelled bhattis and induction ovens. Jalebis that require consistent high-flame cooking, have moved to induction. "We haven't increased prices yet, but if it doesn't end, we may have to," he said.

At New Edward Bakery in Fort, Omaish Siddique received three cylinders two days ago and is running his menu in full, supplemented by an electric stove. "The wholesale prices cannot move unless the entire association acts together," he said. At his retail counter, however, prices have already moved. The ladi pav that sold for Rs 12 is now Rs 15. Khari toast and butter have also gone up. Pradeep Shetty, spokesperson of industry body HRAWI, was quoted last week saying that since the conflict began on February 28, operating costs in the hospitality sector have risen by roughly 20 per cent. "Hospitality establishments may now be left with little choice but to consider an upward revision in prices to partially absorb the escalating cost burden," he had said. However, those who have found a degree of stability are managing through improvisation. At Hotel Sadanand, Abhishek Shetty received three cylinders last week and expects two more this week. A PNG application has been submitted. "As of now, we are getting 20 to 30 per cent of our LPG consumption and this is helping us move ahead." The thali has quietly expanded — two more vegetables added — and sambhar has moved back to gas from induction. Small signs of normalcy returning. At Lucky Restaurant, owner Mohsen is receiving two to four cylinders a day against a requirement of eight to ten. He has split fuel sources to manage — bulk cooking for gravies and biryani runs on coal, while gas handles frying, Chinese dishes, tea and coffee. The menu is at 70 per cent, fluctuating with availability. His PNG application, however, has hit a wall. "I have applied twice. I have given them letters on my letterhead asking to do my survey. They haven't come yet. Now they are not answering my calls."

Himachal generated Rs 77L from Great Himalayan National Park, eco-tourism sites in 3 years: Sukhu



GNS News Agency, April 10

Himachal Pradesh earned nearly Rs 77 lakh from eco-tourism sites in Kullu over three years. Chief Minister Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu told the Assembly. (Representative Image) Himachal Pradesh earned nearly Rs 77 lakh from eco-tourism sites in Kullu over three years, Chief Minister Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu told the Assembly. (Representative Image) The Himachal Pradesh government has earned nearly Rs 76.97 lakh (Rs 76,96,173) from various tourist and eco-tourism destinations in Kullu over the past three years. Prominent among these tourist and eco-tourism destinations are Jibhi waterfall at Tirthan Valley, Sojha Eco-Tourism Site at the Seraj Valley, Nature Learning Centre in Shairopa at the UNESCO World Heritage site at the Great Himalayan National Park (GHNP), Shamshi, in Kullu, and Seraj Forest Division sites in Kullu. Among the main revenue contributors are the Jibhi waterfall with Rs 10.40 lakh for 2022-23, Rs 7.35 lakh (2023-24), Rs 18.82 lakh (2024-25) and Rs 16.16 lakh (2025-26). The Nature Learning Centre at Shairopa contributed Rs 3.11 lakh (2022-24) and Rs 1.03 lakh (2024-26), while the Sojha Eco-Tourism Site alone generated Rs 20.07 lakh (2025-26). Chief Minister Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu, who also holds the portfolio of the Forest, Environment and Science & Technology, shared this information in the House during the recently concluded Budget Session on April 2, replying to a question by BJP Banjar MLA Surinder Shourie, seeking the record of the total revenue earned from various tourist and eco-tourism destinations and their expenditure. Specifying the entry fee applicable at these sites, Sukhu informed the House that an entry fee of Rs 10 is charged for children, Rs 20 for adults and Rs 50 for foreign tourists at the Jibhi waterfall; at Kullu-Tandi, Rs 20 is charged for children, adults (Rs 30) and foreign tourists (Rs 50); and at the Nature Learning Centre, Shairopa, the fee is Rs 10 for children and Rs 20 for adults. These rates have been approved by competent committees, including the Nature Conservation Society, Kullu, and the Biodiversity Conservation Society, based on earlier executive decisions, the chief minister stated. In the written reply, Sukhu clarified that there is no direct provision to allocate this revenue to the local panchayats. "However, local communities are being engaged in eco-tourism activities, creating livelihood opportunities. Eco-

Tourism Development Committees at the forest level are also benefiting directly, while revenue from the Nature Learning Centre is being utilised for development works, maintenance, research and awareness activities," he added. Spread over one hectare, the Sojha Eco-Tourism site is being operated under a Public-Private Partnership (PPP) model. Currently, the site is in the development phase, and the operator has been authorised to determine user charges for permitted activities once development is complete. "Out of the total Rs 20.07 lakh revenue generated from this site, Rs 15.50 lakh has been deposited as performance security, while Rs 4.57 lakh has been paid as the first quarterly instalment of the annual concession fee in December 2025," Sukhu informed the House. As per the Eco-Tourism Policy 2024, the revenue generated from such sites is distributed in a fixed ratio — 20 per cent to the state government, 20 per cent to the state-level eco-tourism society and 60 per cent to the forest-level society concerned. The funds are utilised for operation and maintenance of eco-tourism sites, upkeep of trekking routes and related infrastructure, the chief minister said. Constituted in 1984 in Banjar Sub-Division of Kullu district in the far Western Himalayas and formally notified as a national park in 1999, the Great Himalayan National Park is spread across four valleys, each offering a wide variety of endemic and exotic flora and fauna. Notified as a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 2014, in recognition of its outstanding significance for biodiversity conservation, the Great Himalayan National Park protects over 1,000 plant species, including many medicinal herbs, 31 mammal species and 209 bird species, as well as amphibians, reptiles and insects. Four of its mammal species and three of its bird species are globally threatened, including the musk deer and the western horned tragopan.

Trainee pilot allegedly raped by institute employee in Hyderabad

Hyderabad: A woman pilot trainee was allegedly sexually assaulted by an employee of the same aviation training institute under Begumpet police station limits. According to the police, the suspect, who has been identified as Mohd Naseemuddin, is a native of Kerala and is working as a trainer at the aviation institute. The victim, who is undergoing pilot training at the institute, lodged a complaint stating that the accused raped her multiple times. In her complaint, the victim alleged that the accused initially took her photos and videos and later used them to blackmail her. Under threats, he allegedly continued to sexually assault her repeatedly since January 2025. Following the complaint, the Begumpet police registered a case and have initiated a detailed investigation into the matter.

U.S., Iran agree to two-week ceasefire



GNS News Agency, April 10

U.S. President Donald Trump on Tuesday (April 7, 2026) said he has "suspended the bombing of Iran" for two weeks and will begin talks with Tehran based on its 10-point proposal, provided Iran reopens the Strait of Hormuz. Iran said it will halt strikes if U.S.-Israeli attacks stop and promised safe passage through the strait in coordination with its forces during the truce. Pakistan, which mediated between the two sides, said all parties and their allies have agreed to an immediate ceasefire on all fronts, including Lebanon, adding that Islamabad will host direct talks on Friday (April 10, 2026). Mr. Trump's announcement came just hours before his latest deadline for Iran to reopen the Strait of Hormuz — a critical waterway linking the Persian Gulf with the Gulf of Oman that handled one-fifth of the world's oil and gas traffic until the U.S. and Israel launched the war on Iran — was set to expire. Earlier on Sunday (April 5, 2026), he had warned that "a civilisation will die tonight" if Iran did not accept his deal.

"Based on conversations with [Pakistan] Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and Field Marshal Asim Munir, and subject to the Islamic Republic of Iran agreeing to the complete, immediate, and safe opening of the Strait of Hormuz, I agree to suspend the bombing and attack of Iran for a period of two weeks. This will be a double sided ceasefire!" Mr. Trump wrote in a social media post. "The reason for doing so is that we have already met and exceeded all Military objectives, and are very far along with a definitive Agreement concerning Longterm peace with Iran, and peace in the Middle East [West Asia]," he added. The U.S. had earlier sent a 15-point ceasefire proposal to Iran through Pakistan, which Tehran rejected. Instead, it submitted a 10-point proposal demanding the lifting of all sanctions and continued Iranian control over the Strait of Hormuz, according to Iran's state media. "We received a 10-point proposal from Iran, and believe it is a workable basis on which to negotiate. Almost all of the various points of past contention have been agreed to between the United States and Iran, but a two-week pe-

riod will allow the Agreement to be finalised and consummated," Mr. Trump added. Iran's Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi said the U.S. requested talks based on its 15-point proposals, and President Trump has accepted "the entirety of Iran's 10-point proposals as a basis for negotiations".

"If the attacks on the Islamic Republic of Iran cease, our powerful armed forces will also cease their defensive attacks. Safe passage through the Strait of Hormuz will be possible for two weeks in coordination with the Iranian armed forces and taking into account existing technical limitations," Mr. Araghchi said in a statement. During the day, Pakistan Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif said talks were progressing and requested Mr. Trump to delay his deadline by two weeks. After the U.S. leader announced the deal, Mr. Sharif invited both sides to Islamabad for direct talks on Friday (April 10, 2026). "I am pleased to announce that the Islamic Republic of Iran and the United States of America, along with their allies, have agreed to an immediate ceasefire everywhere including Lebanon and elsewhere, effective immediately," he wrote in a social media post.

"I... extend deepest gratitude to the leadership of both countries and invite their delegations to Islamabad on Friday, 10th April 2026, to further negotiate for a conclusive agreement to settle all disputes... We earnestly hope that the 'Islamabad Talks' succeed in achieving sustainable peace and wish to share more good news in coming days!" Israel's Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu welcomed the ceasefire, but said it doesn't cover Lebanon. "The United States has told Israel that it is committed to achieving goals, shared by the U.S., Israel and Israel's regional allies, in the upcoming negotiations," Mr. Netanyahu's office said in a statement. "The two-weeks ceasefire does not include Lebanon." Iran's Supreme National Security Council said the country has dealt a "historic and crushing defeat" to the U.S. and Israel, adding that Washington was forced to accept its 10-point proposal. In another post, Mr. Trump hailed the deal and said the U.S. will work with Iran to ensure safe passage of traffic through the Strait of Hormuz. "A big day for World Peace! Iran wants it to happen, they've had enough! Likewise, so has everyone else! The United States will be helping with the traffic buildup in the Strait of Hormuz." He said the deal could lead to a "golden age" in the region. "There will be lots of positive action! Big money will be made. Iran can start the reconstruction process. We'll be loading up with supplies of all kinds, and just 'hangin' around" to make sure that everything goes well. I feel confident that it will.... this could be the Golden Age of the Middle East!"

How Artemis II crew trained to photograph the moon

GNS News Agency, April 10

London: The Artemis II crew has now broken the record — previously held by Apollo 13 — for the farthest distance any humans have ever travelled from Earth. The crew also completed a flyby of the moon's far side and sent back some amazing images of the lunar surface. The flyby was particularly exciting as it offered a stunning new perspective of the lunar surface. It also provided the first operational test of a new science team and evaluation room at Mission Control in NASA's Johnson Space Center in Houston, Texas. And it was fantastic to see the Artemis II crew conduct observations and take photographs of geological landforms on the moon's surface — putting their training at the Kamestastin Lake impact structure, on the territory of the Mushuau Innu First Nation in northern Labrador, into practice. A new view of the moon unlike the Apollo missions, that orbited at approximately 110 kilometres above the surface of the moon, Artemis II was at a much higher altitude — around 6,545 kilometres above the lunar surface. This greater distance allowed the crew to view the moon as a full disk, including regions near both the North Pole and South Pole. The crew was also able to take targeted photographs of various geological landforms on the lunar surface as part of the Artemis II science program. One of the primary goals of these investigations is to inform future missions, including the planned first journey back to the lunar surface with Artemis IV as soon as 2028.

One of the highlights of NASA's livestream during the mission has been the direct conversations between two good friends: Canadian astronaut Jeremy Hansen and science officer Kelsey Young. Science officers are the senior flight controllers responsible for lunar science and geology objectives during Artemis missions. They act as the main interface between the wider Mission Control team and the Artemis II science team, which is located in a totally separate room called the Science Evaluation Room (SER). Both science officers and the evaluation room are brand new for NASA's Artemis program; they did not exist during the Apollo program. A crash course in lunar geology

If you listened in to NASA's livestream and heard any of the geological descriptions the astronauts were giving, I hope you were impressed. Their knowledge is a



testament to the geology training that NASA has provided the crew in the months and years since they were selected for the Artemis program. First, the crew participated in a crash course in lunar geology called "Lunar Fundamentals." This weeklong, classroom-based training offered them the basics to understand lunar geology and the processes that shape the moon's surface — primarily impact cratering and volcanism. However, as somebody who has been teaching for more than 20 years, I know the best place to learn about geology is in the field. That's why NASA also took the Artemis astronauts to a series of field sites in the United States, Iceland and Canada. Early in their training, in September 2023, three of the crew members — Hansen, Christina Koch and back-up crew Jenni Gibbons — undertook geology training at the Kamestastin Lake impact structure in northern Labrador. Then the entire crew travelled to Iceland in August 2024. Kamestastin Lake training expedition Kamestastin Lake was chosen because it offers a similar landscape to the surface of the moon. The Kamestastin Lake crater was formed approximately 35 million years ago by the impact of an asteroid between one and two kilometres in diameter. Not only are rocks like breccias and impact melt rocks produced by the asteroid's impact well preserved here, but the crater also formed in a rock called anorthosite — the exact same rock that makes up the lunar highlands. Kamestastin is in a remote part of northern Labrador. Kamestastin Lake and the surrounding region are on the territory of the Mushuau Innu First Nation.



conflict may end. Even with word of a ceasefire, neither Iran nor the United States said when it would begin, and attacks took place in Israel, Iran and across the Gulf region early Wednesday.

How Trump went from threatening Iran's annihilation to agreeing to a temporary ceasefire with Tehran



GNS News Agency, April 10

Washington: President Donald Trump over the course of a day went from threatening Iran with "annihilation" to proclaiming that the battered Islamic Republic's leadership had presented a "workable" plan that led him to agree to a 14-day ceasefire that he expects to pave the way to end the nearly six-week-old war. The dramatic shift in tenor came as intermediaries, led by Pakistan, worked feverishly to head off a further escalation of the conflict. Even China — Iran's biggest trading partner and the United States' most significant economic competitor — quietly pulled strings to find a pathway toward a ceasefire, according to two officials briefed on the matter who were not authorized to comment publicly and spoke on the condition of anonymity.

"The reason for doing so is that we have already met and exceeded all Military objectives, and are very far along with a definitive Agreement concerning Longterm PEACE with Iran, and PEACE in the Middle East," Trump declared in a social media post announcing the temporary ceasefire, about 90 minutes before his deadline for Tehran to open the critical Strait of Hormuz or see its power plants and other critical infrastructure obliterated. The president is set to meet at the White House on Wednesday with NATO Secretary-General Mark Rutte. The emerging ceasefire and plan to reopen the strait is expected to be at the center of talks. As the deadline neared, Democratic lawmakers decried Trump's threat to wipe away an entire civilization as "a moral failure" and Pope Leo XIV warned strikes against civilian infrastructure would violate international law, calling the president's comments "truly unacceptable." But in the end, Trump may have ultimately backed down because of a simple truth: Escalation could risk involving the United States in the sort of "forever war" that had bedeviled his predecessors and that he had vowed he'd keep the United States out of if voters sent him back to the White House. Controlling the strait would have been a long, costly operation

As Trump boasted about U.S. and Israeli military success over the last six weeks, he appeared to be working from the premise that he could bomb Iran into capitulation. Starting with the killing of Ayatollah Ali Khamenei in the opening salvos of the war, he seemed to discount that the Iranian leadership could opt for a long, bloody war. The Islamic Republic over the last 47 years has repeatedly shown it's willing to dig in, even when it appears to America they're working against their own self-interest. The clerical leadership held Americans hostages for 444 days, from late 1979 to early 1981, at the cost of the country's international standing. The mullahs allowed the ruinous Iran-Iraq war to go on for years, leaving hundreds of thousands dead. It stood by Hamas after the Oct. 7 attack that spurred a war with Israel that would defang the Iran-backed group in Gaza as well as Hezbollah in Lebanon, and created the conditions that led to the collapse of Tehran-backed Bashar Assad's authoritarian rule in Syria.

Iran's leadership — battered and outgunned — ex-

'Draft' label in Sharif's post fuels speculation over who wrote message to Trump



GNS News Agency, April 10

Washington: A social media post by Pakistan's Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif urging US President Donald Trump to delay military action against Iran triggered a storm of controversy after users spotted what appeared to be a drafting error suggesting external authorship. The controversy centres on Sharif's post on X, where he appealed for a two-week extension to allow diplomacy in the West Asia conflict. Shortly after it was published, users circulated screenshots of the post's edit history showing it initially carried the line: "Draft — Pakistan's PM Message on X." According to a report by The Daily Beast, the draft label appeared to have been inadvertently included in the original post before being removed in a subsequent edit. The outlet reported that the episode "exposes" that the Pakistani prime minister appeared to "cut and paste" the message, fuelling speculation about who

authored the text. The issue gained traction after journalists and commentators pointed to the phrasing of the draft. Ryan Grim of Drop Site suggested the message was "likely not written by Sharif," noting that his own staff would not refer to him as "Pakistan's PM." Social media users also highlighted that the post tagged multiple senior US officials, including Trump, Vice President J.D. Vance, and Secretary of State Marco Rubio, adding to speculation about coordination. A report by Forbes said the message faced "extra scrutiny" after "an early draft of his plea appeared written by an entity outside of Pakistan." The controversy comes at a sensitive moment. Trump cited Sharif's request as part of his justification for pausing planned strikes on Iran for two weeks. "Based on conversations with Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif... I agree to suspend the bombing and attack of Iran for a period of two weeks," Trump said in a social media post earlier. Sharif's final version of the post called for diplomacy to "run its course" and urged Iran to reopen the Strait of Hormuz as a "goodwill gesture," while appealing for a ceasefire to "achieve conclusive termination of war." The Daily Beast report noted that Sharif later issued a revised statement with the draft reference removed, and that his office did not immediately respond to requests for comment. Online speculation quickly escalated, with some users suggesting the wording may have been provided by US officials. Others cautioned that the incident could simply reflect a clerical or staff error. The controversy has drawn attention because of its timing. The post came just hours before Trump's deadline for Iran to reach a deal, and as Pakistan positioned itself as an intermediary in the crisis.

"This would be an indefinite operation — so, you know, think: be ready to do this for 20 years," said Connable, a retired Marine Corps intelligence officer. "We didn't think we were going to be in Afghanistan for 20 years. We didn't think we're going to have to be in Vietnam as long as we were, or Iraq." The two-week ceasefire plan includes allowing both Iran and Oman to charge fees on ships transiting through Hormuz, a regional official said. The official said Iran would use the money it raised for reconstruction. It wasn't immediately clear what Oman would use its money for. The strait is in the territorial waters of both Oman and Iran. The world had considered the passage an international waterway and never paid tolls before. Sen. Chris Murphy, D-Conn., said after the ceasefire was announced that Trump was effectively giving Tehran "control" of the strait and delivering "a history-changing win for Iran." "The level of incompetence is both stunning and heartbreaking," Murphy said. Trump has a pattern of backing down from maximalist demands

The ceasefire announcement came after Pakistan's Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif urged Trump to extend his deadline by two weeks to allow diplomacy to advance while also asking Iran to open the strait for two weeks. Two weeks has become Trump's favorite interval to buy himself time when making major decisions. Last summer, the White House said he'd decide about launching an initial bombing campaign against Iran within two weeks — only to have the president order airstrikes that he said "obliterated" Iran's nuclear program before that interval was up. Trump has also repeatedly used two weeks to set deadlines that ultimately led to very little during negotiations to end Russia's war with Ukraine and even going back to his first term, suggesting he'd have major policy issues like health care solved over such a timeframe. Trump has repeatedly made maximalist demands throughout the first 15 months of his second White House term only to dial them back. The president backed off many of the sweeping "Liberation Day" tariffs he first announced in April 2025 after they caused the financial markets to go haywire. Perhaps the most spectacular example came during a January meeting of the World Economic Forum in Davos, where Trump insisted that he wanted the U.S. to take control of Greenland "including right, title and ownership" only to switch course and abandon his threat to impose widespread tariffs on Europe to press his case. The pretext for backing down that time was Trump saying he'd agreed with the head of NATO on a "framework of a future deal" on Arctic security — even though the U.S. already enjoyed widespread military latitude in Greenland, which is part of the kingdom of Denmark. The White House celebrated on Tuesday evening with aides crediting the US military's prowess and Trump's maneuvering for setting conditions for the ceasefire.

authored the text.

The issue gained traction after journalists and commentators pointed to the phrasing of the draft. Ryan Grim of Drop Site suggested the message was "likely not written by Sharif," noting that his own staff would not refer to him as "Pakistan's PM." Social media users also highlighted that the post tagged multiple senior US officials, including Trump, Vice President J.D. Vance, and Secretary of State Marco Rubio, adding to speculation about coordination. A report by Forbes said the message faced "extra scrutiny" after "an early draft of his plea appeared written by an entity outside of Pakistan." The controversy comes at a sensitive moment. Trump cited Sharif's request as part of his justification for pausing planned strikes on Iran for two weeks. "Based on conversations with Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif... I agree to suspend the bombing and attack of Iran for a period of two weeks," Trump said in a social media post earlier. Sharif's final version of the post called for diplomacy to "run its course" and urged Iran to reopen the Strait of Hormuz as a "goodwill gesture," while appealing for a ceasefire to "achieve conclusive termination of war." The Daily Beast report noted that Sharif later issued a revised statement with the draft reference removed, and that his office did not immediately respond to requests for comment. Online speculation quickly escalated, with some users suggesting the wording may have been provided by US officials. Others cautioned that the incident could simply reflect a clerical or staff error. The controversy has drawn attention because of its timing. The post came just hours before Trump's deadline for Iran to reach a deal, and as Pakistan positioned itself as an intermediary in the crisis.

Trump says moment could mark new 'Golden Age' for Mideast

GNS News Agency, April 10

Washington: US President Donald Trump in a social media post declared the ceasefire agreement a "big day for World Peace" and that the US "will be helping with the traffic buildup in the Strait of Hormuz." "There will be lots of positive action!" Trump predicted in his post.

"Big money will be made. Iran can start the reconstruction process. We'll be loading up with supplies of all kinds, and just hangin' around" in order to make sure that everything goes well. I feel confident that it will." Trump's message on his Truth Social website signals Washington's concern about Iran maintaining its chokehold over the narrow mouth of the Persian Gulf, through which 20% of all oil and natural gas passes in peacetime.



Adani wins US court hearing in push to throw out SEC fraud suit



bly allege a "domestic transaction" and it must plead that "irrevocable liability was incurred or title was transferred within the United States".

The SEC charges against Adanis say nothing about where irrevocable liability was incurred, the plea said, adding that the mere fact, taken as true, that some downstream investors were located in the US is irrelevant to the case. "The SEC's claims here solely involve Indian Defendants, an Indian issuer, securities not registered with the SEC and not traded on any US exchange, and underlying conduct alleged to have occurred exclusively in India," it said. "This case is thus conclusively beyond the reach of the US securities laws." The defendants said the SEC does not allege any investor losses, adding that the bonds matured and were fully repaid with interest in 2024.

They also disputed the underlying bribery allegations, saying there is no credible evidence supporting such claims. "The alleged bribery scheme relates to a solar energy project in India for the provision of renewable power in India. There is no allegation that any US company bid on the project, or that any US customer purchased energy in the project. In fact, there was no such US involvement," the plea said. The filing argues that statements cited by the SEC — relating to ESG commitments, anti-corruption practices, and corporate reputation — amount to non-actionable "puffery", or general corporate optimism that investors cannot reasonably rely on. It further said the SEC failed to link either defendant to specific misleading statements or demonstrate intent to defraud.

The defendants are seeking dismissal of the case in full and said they are prepared to appear for a pre-motion conference if required. Adanis argued that the court lacks personal jurisdiction, saying neither had sufficient contacts with the US or direct involvement in the bond offering. "The complaint contains no plausible allegation that Gautam Adani was involved in drafting, reviewing, or approving any document containing any alleged misstatement. Indeed, the SEC does not allege that Gautam Adani even knew these statements were being made," the plea said. "Because there are no allegations tying him to any alleged misstatement, the SEC's claims against Gautam Adani fail as a matter of law." The allegations against Sagar Adani are also deficient. "Even if 'multiple drafts' of the Offering Circular 'were provided to [him]', these allegations do not tie him to specific misstatements, much less show that he had 'ultimate authority' over their content," it said.

The SEC also fails to adequately plead that defendants acted with the requisite intent. "The SEC makes no plausible allegation that Defendants acted with knowledge or recklessness," it said. The defendants intend to move to dismiss the SEC's complaint by April 30, 2026 and, as part of this process, have on April 7, 2026 submitted a letter with the EDNY (Eastern District New York) judge informing the court that the defendants are prepared to attend a pre-motion conference should the court wish to schedule one. The filing of this letter is a standard procedural step in the legal process for the handling of such matters in accordance with the procedural rules prescribed by the EDNY judge.

In the letter, the defendants have briefly set out their grounds for dismissal of SEC's complaint, including that (i) the court concerned lacks personal jurisdiction over the defendants and the claims against them, (ii) the SEC's claims are impermissibly extraterritorial, (iii) the alleged misstatements by the defendants are too vague and general for any reasonable investor to rely upon as a guarantee of any concrete fact or outcome, making them inactionable, and (iii) the defendants' lack of involvement in the transaction bars the SEC's claims against them. Gautam Adani is represented by Sullivan & Cromwell LLP, while Sagar Adani's counsel is Nixon Peabody LLP and Hecker Fink LLP. The SEC has alleged that Gautam Adani, Sagar Adani and others orchestrated a USD 250 million-plus bribery scheme between 2020 and 2024 to secure solar energy contracts in India. Their plea (termed as letter in US legal system) pointed out that SEC does not allege that there were any investor losses as there were none. The bonds have matured and all interest payments were made on time.

The court lacks personal jurisdiction over defendants and the claims against them should be dismissed under Rule 12(b)(2), the letter cited. The SEC must plead that defendants had sufficient "minimum contacts" with the US and that the claims against them arose out of those activities, the letter pointed out. With respect to Gautam Adani, the SEC does not come close, the lawyers added.

The claims, according to the lawyers, "involve Indian Defendants, an Indian issuer, securities not registered with the SEC and not traded on US exchanges, and underlying conduct alleged to have occurred exclusively in India".

Egg sold for Rs 6,000, an apple for Rs 1.05 lakh: Small donations, big auctions as Ladakh contributes to Iran relief efforts



In the Kaksar village of Kargil, a woman turned up outside a mosque last week to donate three hens — her contribution towards the relief efforts in Iran as the conflict in West Asia, following attacks by the US and Israel, drags on. One of those hens later laid an egg. With a view to encouraging further contributions, the egg was auctioned, starting with a Rs 100 bid. A crowd gathered, and the bids began increasing — the egg was eventually sold for Rs 6,000.

Over the past week, the trend took off in Kargil, and small contributions, like eggs or apples being brought in to street corners for donations, began being auctioned. One such apple fetched a price of Rs 1.05 lakh at Karkitchoo village. Sheikh Hasnain, who studies in Iran

and is currently back home in Kargil, was present at one such auction. "It is a way of honouring the sentiment with which a person brings their household item. People are emotional, and this is their way of showing their support. So, if someone brings an apple and another pays a big amount for it, we are showing respect for their contribution as a community," he said. After the killing of Iran's then Supreme Leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, on March 1, people from all parts of the Ladakh region poured out onto the streets to participate in large demonstrations against the war in West Asia. Contributions have also poured in and continue to do so from different parts of the region. These are subsequently sent to the Iranian Embassy in New Delhi. The Karkitchoo apple is famed for its long shelf life. "The season usually ends in November, and it is rare to find apples in March. Someone had one apple left in their home from the last season, so he brought it for the auction," Hasnain said. The bid started at Rs 200, and eventually, a local businessman, Ilyas, bought it for just over a lakh. "This was his way of showing respect for the person who could only bring an apple and making it count," the student said. Kargil has a sizable Shia Muslim population, but over the past month, contributions have poured in from all parts of Ladakh. From school children contributing money from their piggy banks to households bringing their copperware, J&K and Ladakh have come together to offer financial support to Iran. The Iranian Embassy in India has posted social media messages thanking the people of J&K and Kargil, specifically, for their contributions toward rebuilding Iran.

Why this is Pinarayi Vijayan's election — to win or to lose



"Enthoru mattam (What an incredible change)!" It's what a visiting expatriate, dazzled by Kerala's road network, reportedly remarked to Pinarayi Vijayan. The Chief Minister often falls back on the phrase, turning it both into a personal endorsement of his decade-long term and a punchline that anchors the ruling Left Democratic Front's (LDF) campaign for the upcoming Kerala Assembly elections. Ahead of the 2021 elections, Vijayan was projected as the captain of a state caught in a stormy sea of crises — floods, Nipah, cyclone Ockhi, the Covid pandemic. Now, after another term in office, he is being pitched as the man who transformed Kerala. On reels and roadside banners, the CPI(M)'s poll slogan is, "if not LDF, then who?" Given Vijayan's complete hold over his party and government, the question might as well be, "if not Vijayan, then who?" Despite this apparent confidence, as Vijayan aims for a third term, he can't afford to leave anything to chance. The alleged theft and misappropriation of gold in Sabarimala, combined with the setback in the local polls, have left the CPM with a job on its hands. In the last leg of the campaign, the 81-year-old Vijayan has been crisscrossing the state, addressing four rallies a day ahead of the April 9 election.

On March 30, as his SUV rolled into a convention ground at Kottarakkara in the southern district of Kollam, party candidate K N Balagopal paused his speech and extended a brief welcome. As he stepped out of the vehicle, party workers raised their clenched fists and shouted, "Comrade Vijayan, lead us", "Salute to Pinarayi Vijayan". Without stopping to greet any of the leaders waiting for him, Vijayan walked straight up to the stage. After a one-line welcome from a local leader, Vijayan laid out his government's achievements in a calm, flat tone. Urging the crowd to back Balagopal, he wrapped up his speech and walked off as the others on the dais stood up and watched with a mix of awe and reverence. No selfies, no handshakes, no embraces. Vijayan's campaign style reflects his persona — minimalist, disciplined, and focused. The climb to the top of Vijayan's rise from Pinarayi village, the site of the first official meeting of the undivided Communist Party of India in 1939, in north Kerala's Kannur district, to the highest office in the state is a textbook case of political consolidation and power centralisation in a cadre party.

At key moments in his six-decade political journey, faced with rebellious leaders and factions, Vijayan stuck steadfastly to the party line. It didn't matter who was on the other side — friend, foe or mentor — Vijayan rarely let emotions come in the way, earning him the hardliner tag. In 1986, when CPI(M) rebel M V Raghavan posed a challenge to the party in its citadel Kannur, Vijayan, then district secretary, displayed his organisational prowess to prevent the flow of party workers to the outfit of his former mentor. With the support of CPI(M) workers, he ensured that Raghavan, a redoubtable leader, did not take control of party offices in the district. In a twist of fortunes, Raghavan's son M V Nikesh Kumar is now in charge of the party's social media campaign. Another landmark in his political journey was in 1996, when he became the electricity minister in the CPI(M) government led by E K Nayanar. Two years later, he stepped down from the Cabinet to become the party state secretary following the death of incumbent Chadayan Govindan. It was V S Achuthanandan, then a power hub in the party, who hand-picked Vijayan for the key slot as a counter to the CITU lobby within the party. Within a few years, both leaders, hailing from the same Ezhava Hindu community, pulled apart. For the next 15 years, Kerala's politics was dominated by the rift between Achuthanandan and Vijayan. While Achuthanandan turned into a mass leader, Vijayan refused to play to the gallery, instead, placing the party and its discipline above anything else. Several leaders who owed their allegiance to VS were removed from the party. At the same time, Vijayan had no qualms falling back on VS's popularity during the election campaigns of 2006 and 2011. By 2015, when Vijayan demitted the office after being the longest serving party state secretary, he had silenced even the last feeble voice of opposition within the CPI(M). A tightening grip by 2016, when he was voted to power, the CPI(M) had coalesced around Vijayan.

With no effective challenger and the party weakening elsewhere in the country, the Kerala unit of the CPI(M) that he controlled became stronger than ever before. Now, after a decade in power, it's hard to distinguish the man from the party in Kerala, the only state where the CPI(M) is in power. Under him, administrative efficiency became a habit rather than a slogan. With the organisation already in his grip, Vijayan neutralised the belligerence of the party, its trade union outfit CITU and the student wing SFI to carry out a slew of reforms in the industrial and education sectors. Nooku coolii (workers demanding wages without working) was banned and loss of working days due to labour unrest came down. In the state-run road transport corporation, notorious for strikes and trade union dominance, the government hired bus crew on daily wages. Norms were eased, procedural bottlenecks were cleared for ease of doing business, industrial parks were expanded and startups were encouraged through the Kerala Startup Mission.

The CPI(M) also shed its obstructionist approach to Central infrastructure projects that were delayed for several years due to party-led protests — from the GAIL pipeline to land acquisition for National Highways. Road projects, including National Highways and the state's Hill Highway (a north-south road corridor to connect remote hilly areas), were put on track. At the CPI(M) state conference held in 2025, Vijayan's clout helped him get his development agenda cleared by the party. Unusually for a CPM conference, the focus was on industrial policy, infrastructure, investment, and welfare delivery, rather than cadre discipline or organisational restructuring. But the most radical and controversial of Vijayan's fiscal policies was reinventing the Kerala Infrastructure Investment Fund (KIIFB) from an infrastructure agency to a channel for off-budget borrowing to fund projects that were in the limbo for want of financial allocation. KIIFB issued masala bonds on the London Stock Exchange, raising Rs 2,150 crore and signalling a shift to a market-intensive development approach for a party that has shied away from the global capital market.

While the Centre reduced Kerala's borrowing ceiling, the government pumped the funds raised by KIIFB into the state's public education and health systems. KIIFB funds were also used to build roads and bridges across the state, and to acquire land for road widening — laying the foundation for one of the most visible makeovers in the state. Kerala's six-laned national highways won the government praise from several quarters, including Union Minister Nitin Gadkari. While development and governance initiatives took the middle class closer to the party, the government unwrapped a bouquet of social welfare schemes and improved on the existing ones to reach out to the marginalised sections. At least 30 per cent of the population (around one crore of 2.69 crore voters) is covered by direct social security assistance of some kind, with 81 per cent of the beneficiaries in rural areas. Those close to him say that in a state where leaders face constant political scrutiny, Vijayan wasn't scared to be disruptive. CPI(M) parliamentary party leader John Brittas says, "Kerala politics has always been captive to the image politics of its leaders. Be it A K Antony or Oommen Chandy, they were more concerned about their image than delivery of governance. Kerala lagged in infrastructure development because of this. However, Pinarayi Vijayan just bulldozed through it. It brought him ridicule and criticism from his opponents, but he withstood them."

Yet, critics cite this very ability to push through his agenda as evidence of authoritarianism. They also point to his reluctance to nurture a strong second-rung leadership despite helming the party for nearly three decades, and his alleged sidelining of leaders such as P Jayarajan, who had a wide influence in Kannur district. But the most stark example is of K K Shailaja, Vijayan's health minister in his first term who won praise for her ministry's handling of the Covid pandemic and the Nipah crisis. When the LDF returned to power in 2021, the entire Cabinet was dropped, but it was Shailaja's absence that was the most glaring. In the upcoming elections, too, while the party leadership decided that most MLAs would be fielded from their sitting seats, Shailaja was shifted from her Mattannur seat to Peravoor, seen as a tough fight for the Left. "Leaders like Shailaja teacher, C S Sujatha (former MP), J Mercykutty Amma or M Swaraj could have been used more in the government and in the party," says a party leader. Vijayan's critics say that in a party that distinguishes itself with its principled stand on most issues, his decision to promote his son-in-law P A Mohamed Riyas, who is now the Minister for Public Works & Tourism, may have been his worst call. Joy, who served for two-and-a-half years in the Vijayan government, says, "Decisions are taken after deliberations. But once he makes a decision, there is no change. In meetings, he listens attentively to what officials have to say."

Oracle, Amazon, Dell lead global job cuts amid AI push

Hyderabad: A series of layoffs by different tech giants and multinational companies have swept through the first quarter of 2026, with globally around 61,000 jobs, several thousands of them in India, cut as the companies are increasingly shifting towards artificial intelligence that is replacing the workforce. The largest job cut has come from Oracle, a multinational technology company, which reduced its global workforce by 30,000, including around 12,000 jobs in India. The layoffs, according to the company, are part of organisational restructuring amid focus on its cloud and AI infrastructure business. Prior to Oracle, 2026 commenced with Amazon cutting around 16,000 jobs as part of its restructuring and AI-focus. The layoffs also impacted the company's robotics division. This was the second such mass layoff since October last, when the company reduced staff by 14,000. While some companies are publicly announcing reduction of their workforce, a few like Dell Technologies silently cut about 11,000 jobs worldwide during the fiscal year 2026. This reduction, as per reports, is 10 percent of its total staff, which has gone down from 1,08,000 in January 2024 to 97,000 as of January 2026. Joining the layoffs is the Block Inc. (formerly Square), a fintech company, which announced 4,000 jobs cut. The company cited advances in AI as its main reason for downsizing the staff. Epic Games, a video game and software company, and Salesforce, a cloud-based software company, announced layoffs of 1,000 and 1,500 respectively, with similar reasons. These mass layoffs have put professionals under serious stress and anxiety besides financial constraints due to sudden in-



come loss and uncertain future, while in services are insecure about their job. They are flooding social media with posts of anxiety, fear of job loss, financial stress and family issues. A Reddit user sk123_4243 posted "Laid off after 9 years for the only company I've ever worked (for), feeling lost". Another user posted stating that they were laid off twice in the last three months. "I was laid off in January from a tech company after working there for 23 months then joined a warehouse (be...) cause I can't afford to sit at home and now they got rid of half of their staff as well, including me. Honestly, I am so tired of this, I don't even want to work for anyone unless I get job security," the user posted. More layoffs in the offering as over 100 other companies from Amazon, Nike to Verizon, have filed legally mandated WARN

Antibiotics can leave a long-term footprint on our gut microbiome: study



of these types including lower diversity and impact on individual bacteria types where some were reduced and others increased," she added. The most commonly prescribed antibiotic to treat infections outside hospitals in Sweden – penicillin V – was linked to more short-lasting microbiome changes.

For the study, researchers pored through Sweden's National Prescribed Drug Register, while parallelly mapping the gut microbiome of 14,979 adults living in Sweden. Then they compared the microbiome of those who had had several types of antibiotics and those who had not received any at all for the study period. While the reasons remain somewhat evasive, the antibiotic-catalysed changes indeed appear to leave a long-term footprint on the gut microbiome. "We can see that antibiotic use as far back as four to eight years ago is linked to the composition of a person's gut microbiome today. Even a single course of treatment with certain types of antibiotics leaves traces," the first author of the study, Gabriel Baldanzi, said in a press note. The scientists believe these discoveries "may help inform future recommendations on antibiotic use, especially when choosing between two equally effective antibiotics, one of which has a weaker impact on the gut microbiome," said Dr. Fall. "This will enable us to gain an even better understanding of the recovery time and identify which gut microbiomes are more susceptible to disruption following antibiotic treatment," she added. The researchers are now collecting a second sample from almost half of the participants to get a clearer understanding of the recovery time and identify "which gut microbiomes are more susceptible to disruption following antibiotic treatment," said the paper.

We have always known that antibiotics, life-saving drugs in serious infections, affect the composition of our gut microbiome (community of bacteria living in the gut). Now, scientists have found that certain types of antibiotics can be linked to changes that persist in the gut microbiome – and lower its diversity – for as long as up to four to eight years after treatment. A lower diversity of gut microbiome species has been associated with a range of health conditions, such as obesity, diabetes and Inflammatory Bowel Disease, wrote scientists from Sweden in the journal *Nature Medicine*.

Clindamycin, fluoroquinolones and flucloxacillin had the strongest associations, Tove Fall, professor of molecular epidemiology at Uppsala University and principal investigator of the study, told *The Hindu*. "We saw large and long-lasting effects on the overall composition

Why is ORS not used enough in India, and why it should be

For decades, this mixture of salts and glucose dissolved in water has been a familiar remedy in many Indian households, the first line of response when a child develops diarrhoea or vomiting. In recent months, ORS has also entered public discourse after the campaign by Hyderabad-based paediatrician, Sivaranjani Santosh drew attention to sugary drinks marketed as "ORS-like" beverages that do not follow medical standards. It prompted the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India to prohibit the use of the term 'ORS' on food and beverage products that do not meet the approved formulation, highlighting concerns that misleading products could worsen dehydration in children instead of treating it.

Despite the long familiarity with ORS and its affordability and effectiveness, its use in managing childhood diarrhoea and dehydration remains far from optimal. Experts explain what to know about ORS especially during the summer. A life-saving yet underused solution

ORS has played a critical role in reducing deaths from diarrhoeal diseases worldwide. According to M.S. Viswanathan, senior consultant paediatric gastroenterologist at Apollo Children's Hospitals, Chennai, ORS has saved millions of children globally by correcting dehydration caused by diarrhoeal diseases. However, its use is still not universal. Data from the National Family Health Survey-5 (NFHS-5) shows only about 62% of parents in India use ORS when their child has diarrhoea. This gap persists despite campaigns by governments and health organisations. Harish K, consultant in paediatrics and neonatology at SRM Prime Hospital, Chennai, notes that mild dehydration in children can be managed at home with ORS, to prevent progression to moderate or severe dehydration. Yet, many families turn first to antibiotics or anti-diarrhoeal medicines instead of this intervention.

Doctors say lack of counselling and insufficient information on how to prepare and administer ORS are main barriers. Aparna G., consultant paediatrician at Rainbow Children's Hospital, Chennai, points out that simply prescribing ORS without explaining the method of preparation, the required volume and the duration of use can limit its effectiveness. Incorrect preparation, she says, can even lead to complications. Another factor is also the palatability. Proper ORS solutions do not taste appealing, which discourages children from drinking them regularly. Early use matters during summer. Paediatricians say the need for timely ORS becomes important during summer months. Rising temperatures and high humidity levels can increase loss of fluids through sweating, especially as children play outdoors. Dehydration occurs when the body loses more fluid than it can replace. According to doctors, common causes in children include diarrhoea, vomiting, fever, poor intake of food and fluids, and excessive sweating. Research also suggests that for every degree Celsius rise in body temperature above 38°C, the body may require roughly 10% more fluids to maintain balance.

Children usually become dehydrated faster than adults. Early signs include sunken eyes, dryness of the mouth or tongue, increased thirst, irritability, and reduced urination and a sunken fontanelle (soft spot on the head) in infants. Dr. Harish explains that parents can begin giving ORS at home as soon as a child experiences loose stools or vomiting, especially if these signs appear. Dr. Viswanathan adds that children who develop diarrhoea or vomiting during hot weather should receive ORS in small and frequent amounts to help restore fluid and elec-



trolyte balance. And they need to seek medical care if the child cannot retain fluids, shows persistent vomiting or diarrhoea, becomes unusually drowsy, or shows signs of severe dehydration. Doctors stress that parents must encourage children to drink fluids regularly rather than waiting until they feel thirsty, and to also include water-rich foods such as fruits and vegetables in their diet during hot weather. Myths and mistakes around ORS

One of the misconceptions among parents is that ORS should be used only when diarrhoea becomes severe. Doctors emphasise that ORS works best when started early, even at the onset of diarrhoea, as it helps prevent dehydration from developing in the first place. Another belief is that plain water, juices or sweet drinks can adequately replace lost fluids. While water helps maintain hydration, it does not contain the necessary salts and sugars lost during diarrhoea and vomiting. ORS contains a balanced mixture of glucose and electrolytes that makes the intestine absorb fluids effectively. Commercial beverages and fruit juices are also not suitable substitutes. Many contain high levels of sugar that can worsen diarrhoea and increase fluid loss. Correct preparation of ORS is equally important. ORS sachets typically come in two sizes: one meant to be mixed with 200 ml of water and another with 1 litre. If it is not mixed correctly, the solution may become either too diluted or too concentrated, which can be harmful because of excess salt content. Doctors also advise to not add milk, fruit juice, soft drinks or soups while preparing ORS, as this can change and affect the balance of salts and sugars. Once prepared, the solution should be kept covered and used within 24 hours to avoid contamination. Home remedies, need for awareness. Many families depend on home remedies when a child develops diarrhoea. Doctors say some household fluids can help maintain hydration until ORS becomes available. Rice kanji, buttermilk with a pinch of salt, vegetable soup, tender coconut water and lightly salted lemon water can provide fluids and some nutrients. Use within 24 hours, then discard

Note: This is a temporary solution. Use standard ORS packets when available, as they contain the exact balance of salts and glucose. Empty the entire sachet into the exact amount of clean drinking water specified on the packet (usually 200 ml or 1 litre), stir well until fully dissolved, and do not add anything else. However, paediatricians stress that these should support, not replace, ORS. Standard ORS formulations recommended by the World Health Organization contain the precise balance of glucose and electrolytes required for optimal absorption in the intestine. Doctors stress awareness efforts should extend beyond health facilities. Demonstrations on preparing ORS, educational sessions in schools, community programmes, and information campaigns through television, radio and social media can help

have been submitted in the court. He also added that the land parcel is free from encroachments. Subramaniam said his client was willing to undergo mediation for an amicable settlement of the case. Senior advocates Abhishek Singhvi and Gopal Sankaranarayanan, appearing for the foreign firm, said they were agreeable to time-bound mediation to resolve the dispute with a condition that the status quo with regard to the assets of Prasad be maintained and no third party rights be created till the conclusion of mediation. Taking note of the consent of both parties, the CJL appointed Justice Lalit as the sole mediator and requested him to undertake the mediation for expeditious disposal of the case. The bench asked Justice Lalit to undertake the mediation exercise in hybrid mode to enable the representatives of RAKIA to appear through video conferencing, keeping in mind the security situation in the Gulf region. Clarifying its earlier order, the CJL said the Hyderabad-based businessman can use the funds for running "

Beyond the city clinic: why rural India's mental health is a development issue



On paper, mental healthcare in India often looks like a story of expanding services, new helplines, more awareness campaigns, and a growing vocabulary around stress, depression, and addiction. On the ground in rural India, however, it can look very different: a woman with persistent insomnia and body aches who has visited three doctors but never been asked about anxiety; a young man whose drinking escalates after crop loss and debt; an older farmer who quietly stops leaving the house after a failed monsoon, because "what's the point?" The distress is real, but it rarely arrives in neat diagnostic boxes and even more rarely reaches a trained professional on time.

India's National Mental Health Survey (NMHS) reported that 10.6% of adults live with a mental disorder, and the lifetime prevalence is 13.7%. This survey also reports lower measured prevalence in rural areas (6.9% rural vs 13.5% urban), a pattern that likely reflects under-detection and under-reporting in rural settings rather than an absence of distress. Even if we debate exact prevalence estimates, one number is difficult to argue with: the treatment gap. NMHS estimates suggest that 70%-92% of people with mental disorders do not receive appropriate treatment, depending on the condition. In other words, the problem is not only how many people are affected - it is that most people do not get care.

India's mental health numbers at a glance Workforce: The government has states India has approximately 0.75 psychiatrists per 100,000 people; benchmark often cited as 3 per 100,000

A rural mental health strategy collapses if it is built on specialists alone. India's psychiatrist density is routinely cited as well below recommended benchmarks. But the headline shortage hides an equally consequential reality: distribution. Specialists cluster in metros and large cities; rural districts rely on a thin layer of general physicians, overburdened public facilities, and a mix of informal or faith-based care. When a psychiatrist is available only at a district hospital - hours away - "follow-up" becomes a luxury. The predictable result is late presentation, episodic contact, premature discontinuation of medicines, and families cycling between debt, crisis, and resignation. Livelihood insecurity and indebtedness: Agricultural income volatility, informal credit, and debt stress are chronic triggers for anxiety, depression, and harmful alcohol use. Climate shocks: Heat waves, unseasonal rain, droughts, and crop failure push stress into the household - often as conflict, substance use, and hopelessness. Social hierarchy and exclusion: Caste-based discrimination, landlessness, and precarious work contribute to long-term psychological stress and reduced help-seeking. Gendered burden: Women frequently present with somatic complaints, sleep disturbance, and chronic fatigue - symptoms that may mask depression or anxiety - while also facing domestic violence, restricted mobility, and limited financial autonomy. Migration and "left-behind" families: Young adults moving for work can reduce social

support for elders and increase stress for spouses managing households alone. These are not abstract forces - they translate into daily suffering. And sometimes, into death. Suicide is a tragic development indicator. In 2023, India recorded 171,418 suicides. Suicide is multi-causal and cannot be simplistically attributed to "mental illness" alone. But as a public signal, it tells us something important: when distress becomes chronic, support is absent, and help-seeking is stigmatized, risk rises and preventable deaths follow. It's not just about awareness; mental healthcare services depend on access, trust, and continuity. A number of factors hinder access to care in rural areas. One important factor is that symptoms often do not present as "mental health": distress may manifest as pain, weakness, sleep issues, or "tension," so it's missed without routine screening. Another factor is one that both urban and rural India struggle with: stigma. But stigma often has a higher social cost rurally: being seen seeking psychiatric help can affect marriage prospects, reputation, and family standing. Time and travel pose significant barriers as well: reaching district-level care can mean losing a day's wage (or more). For women, this is even more of a barrier due to limited mobility and finances. Breaks in care also contribute to less than optimal care being delivered: when medicines, counselling, and follow-up care are inconsistent, people tend to drop out. Substance use is under-addressed: early, structured help for alcohol-related harm is rare and care often begins after damage is done, contributing to added distress and financial burdens. Rural India's mental health burden is not a niche concern - it is a cross-cutting constraint on nearly every development outcome we care about. Economic participation: Untreated depression and anxiety reduce productivity, increase absenteeism, and intensify household financial strain. Maternal and child outcomes: Maternal depression affects nutrition, early childhood development, and health-seeking. Education: Adolescent distress and substance use shape school dropout, risk-taking, and long-term prospects. Gender equity: Mental health is both a consequence and amplifier of violence and disempowerment. Social cohesion: Untreated illness can increase conflict, stigma, neglect, and in extreme cases, suicide. India has made several policy commitments: the District Mental Health Programme (DMHP) is described as covering 767 districts, mental health services have been added to the package at Ayushman Arogya Mandirs, and the national tele-mental health programme Tele-MANAS is reported to have handled over 1.81 million calls. These are important steps. But coverage is not the same as care. The binding constraints are last-mile: trained primary-care teams, reliable supplies, supervision, and a referral pathway that actually functions. Make primary care the default platform: Train PHC teams to screen routinely for depression/anxiety/substance use, start basic treatment, and follow up - supported by DMHP specialists.

Task-share psychological care: Brief, evidence-based interventions (problem-solving, behavioural activation, motivational approaches for alcohol use) can be delivered by trained non-specialists with supervision. Medicines should not be the only form of care provided. Treat suicide prevention as a local systems goal: Follow-up after self-harm. Community identification of high-risk individuals, and rapid linkage to care can go a long way. Using district data to target hotspots can help. Use digital tools as a bridge, not a replacement: Tele-MANAS can support early contact and anonymity but works best when it connects people to local follow-up. A rural mental health strategy, is not simply "more psychiatrists" (though the workforce must grow).

House panel flags vacancies in UGC, AICTE, says situation 'critical'



A House panel on Wednesday (March 18, 2026) flagged the "critical vacancy situation" at higher education regulators such as the University Grants Commission (UGC) and the All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE). The Union Education Ministry is planning to dismantle both the bodies under its proposed Viksit Bharat Shiksha Adhishthan Bill, 2025. The Department-related Standing Committee on Education, Women, Children, Youth, and Sports - headed by Congress Rajya Sabha MP Dignivijaya Singh - tabled its report on the Department of Higher Education's Demands for Grants for FY 2026-27. It expressed concern about the absence of centralised data on the number of vacancies in Central universities and cautioned the Department against racking up expenditure in the last months of the fiscal year.

It noted the situation at the UGC, saying that "516 out of 763 sanctioned non-teaching positions are vacant", which amounted to a vacancy rate of 67.6%. "This severely impacts UGC's capacity to discharge its statutory functions, including monitoring thousands of universities, processing grant proposals, and implementing NEP 2020," it said. In AICTE, "only 20 posts have been filled up on regular/permanent basis in the last six years", adding that 63.6% of sanctioned posts in the middle and senior administrative levels were vacant, which "may hamper the AICTE's operations and the broader technical landscape as it regulates over 10,000 technical institutions".

The committee highlighted that India's expenditure on education from both the Centre and the States stood at 4.06% of the GDP as of 2022-23, falling short of the NEP 2020 target of 6% of the GDP. The committee called for a "robust quarterly expenditure monitoring mechanism", noting that in FY 2024-25, the department's actual expenditure fell short of the Budget Estimates by about ₹4,500 crore. The panel noted the "alarming 73.9% fall" in the Capital Head (from ₹10.27 crore in BE 2025-26 to ₹2.68 crore in BE 2026-27), recommending that the government prepare a five-year Capital Investment Plan with direct capital allocation from 2027-28 onwards. The government has introduced the Viksit Bharat Shiksha Adhishthan Bill last December proposing to subsume the functions of the UGC, AICTE, and the National Council for Teacher Education in a new higher education regula-

tory structure. This will be headed by a 12-member umbrella commission, under which three separate regulatory, standards, and accreditation councils will operate. The Ministry has justified this reform as necessary to reduce conflicts of interest and reduce the multiplicity of regulations and compliance for higher education institutes. The Bill was introduced to objections from Opposition parties, arguing that it represented "executive overreach", subjected higher educational institutes to "perverse executive control, graded autonomy, intrusive compliance requirements, severe penalties, and closure powers", and went against the principles of federalism. A Joint Committee of Parliament, headed by BJP MP D. Purandeshwari, is currently examining the Bill. On Central universities, the House panel said that these institutes were found to have "efficiently and judiciously" used the resources allocated to them. However, on faculty recruitments and vacancies, the committee noted that despite over 16,000 faculty posts and over 11,000 non-faculty posts being filled from 2022-2025, "significant faculty vacancies persist across Centrally Funded Institutions (CFIs)". It recommended that the government prepare a "consolidated, annually updated vacancy register of all CFIs" that can be used to track vacancies. The committee also noted that there was an issue of "significant increase in fees" in some Central universities, including the University of Delhi, and sought a detailed justification for this. The committee welcomed the Prime Minister's One Nation, One Subscription as a "landmark initiative", which provided equitable access to over 13,000 international academic journals for over 6,500 higher education institutes, but also noted that the government did not have a financial plan in place for when the current three-year subscription ends in 2027.

'BJP diluting rural job scheme': Chhattisgarh Cong. stages protest

Accusing the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP)-led Central government of weakening the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) by replacing it with Viksit Bharat Guarantee for Rozgar and Aajeevika Mission (Gramin) (VB G-RAM-G), the Opposition Congress staged a gherao of the Chhattisgarh Assembly on Tuesday (March). Senior party leaders were present at the protest over changes in the employment guarantee scheme and local issues such as "electricity tariff hikes, betrayal of farmers, failure to fulfil promises regarding paddy procurement, rising gas cylinder prices, deteriorating law and order, and the cultivation and trade of narcotics within the State".

Supreme Court appoints ex-CJI UU Lalit as mediator in Rs 500 crore RAKIA dispute

New Delhi: The Supreme Court on Monday appointed former Chief Justice of India U U Lalit as the sole mediator to amicably resolve the dispute over the execution of a money decree of Rs 500 crore passed by a UAE court in favour of Ras Al Khaimah Investment Authority (RAKIA) and against Hyderabad-based industrialist Nimmagadda Prasad. RAKIA is seeking to enforce a UAE civil judgment for AED 267,941,374 (approximately Rs 543 crore principal and Rs 643 crore with interest).

The case stems from the 'Vanpic Project', a failed 2008 joint venture to develop ports and an airport in Andhra Pradesh. RAKIA alleges that Prasad, in collusion with former RAKIA CEO Khater Massaad, misappropriated USD 120 million intended for the project. On Monday, a bench comprising Chief Justice Surya Kant and Justice Joymalya Bagchi was informed by senior advocate Gopal Subramaniam, appearing for Prasad, that the industrialist has deposited Rs 125 crore as cash security as directed earlier. The senior lawyer also said that the original title deeds of a 37-acre land parcel in Telangana

Kalpakkam fast breeder reactor attains criticality; defining step: PM Modi



The vital second stage of India's three-stage nuclear programme got a boost Monday with the country's first indigenous Fast Breeder Reactor (FBR) at Kalpakkam in Tamil Nadu attaining criticality — the initiation of a self-sustaining nuclear fission reaction that will eventually lead to the generation of power by the 500-megawatt electric (MWe) FBR. Prime Minister Narendra Modi, in a post on X, called it a "defining step" in advancing the country's civil nuclear programme and said the indigenously designed and built reactor reflects "the depth of our scientific capability and the strength of our engineering enterprise" which, he said, is a key step towards harnessing India's thorium reserves under the third stage of the programme.

Attaining criticality is a key milestone before full power generation, indicating that the reactor core is functioning as designed and that each fission event in the core now releases a sufficient number of neutrons to sustain an ongoing series of reactions. The completion of 'core loading', or the process of placing nuclear fuel assemblies inside the core of a nuclear reactor, was wrapped up in March 2024 for the FBR. This reactor will initially use

uranium-plutonium mixed oxide (MOX) fuel, with a Uranium 238 (U238) 'blanket' around the fuel core that will undergo nuclear transmutation to produce more fuel — therefore, the name 'breeder'. Nuclear transmutation involves the conversion of a chemical element or isotope into another chemical element, with the numbers of protons or neutrons in the nucleus of the atom undergoing a change. Efforts to build an FBR were initiated two decades ago, and successive governments have nurtured the project as a step towards India developing comprehensive capabilities that span the entire nuclear fuel cycle, by which electricity is produced from uranium in nuclear power reactors. In 2003, when Atal Bihari Vajpayee was Prime Minister, the Bharatiya Nabhikiya Vidyut Nigam Ltd or BHAVINI was incorporated to build and operate India's most advanced nuclear reactor, the PFBR. The project was expected to be completed by September 2010, but was delayed due to technological challenges. The last set of approvals had revised the completion target to October 2022. Once commissioned, India will be the second country after Russia to have a commercial operating FBR. China has a small programme on fast breeders; programmes in countries such as Japan, France, and the United States were shut down amid safety concerns.

The first stage entails the setting up of Pressurised Heavy Water Reactors (PHWRs) and associated fuel cycle facilities, which is currently in progress. PHWRs are reactors that use natural uranium as fuel and heavy water (deuterium oxide) as coolant and moderator, which form the bulk of India's installed atomic power capacity of 8,180 MWe. The FBR is the vital second stage in the DAE's three-stage power programme which envisages a pathway to utilising India's abundant thorium reserves — found in coastal and inland placer sands on the beaches of Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Odisha,

How India's 'invisible' domestic workers are now ruling social media



The Indian household isn't just about the daily hub-bub of life; it is also a site of invisible labour. This labour is essential — encompassing elaborate kitchen management, cleaning every nook and corner almost daily, and grocery shopping — yet it often goes unacknowledged and is paid peanuts. However, in a curious twist sparked by social media and smartphones, that "invisible" labour is beginning to become visible. Today, domestic workers are emerging from obscurity not just as house helpers but as content creators with larger agency, audiences, and identities. The shift is often catalysed by the very households in which they work. When Archana Puran Singh first introduced her domestic worker and cook, Bhagyashree, in her vlogs during Covid-19, no one could have fathomed that these casual, unscripted glimpses of their bond would provide visibility to a community often ignored. The validation did not stem from pity, but from the very formula for finding an audience online: reliability.

In 2024, another star was born out of Farah Khan's kitchen, Dilip. The resident of Bihar became a viral phenomenon not just among celebrities in Mumbai but also in his village, Madhubani. So much so that the filmmaker also visited his native place. From bagging an ad with Shah Rukh Khan to building a three-story, six-bedroom bungalow, the internet's favourite Dilip has now become a household name. However, these moments are not isolated to celebrities or public figures. Indian social media today has birthed several such domestic workers, who document their cooking, dancing, share slices of their daily routines, or just offer life hacks.

For Heena Ali, a domestic worker in Malad, Mumbai, it all began with a casual conversation with her employer, who suggested that she record her daily life and cooking videos for Instagram. The 35-year-old went on to appear on MasterChef India auditions. "I got a call from the MasterChef India team. They saw my videos on Instagram. I cleared two auditions but couldn't attend the final one due to my daughter's exams," Ali told indianexpress.com. Platforms like Instagram and YouTube are allowing anyone with a smartphone to create and distribute content. For domestic workers — many of whom have practical knowledge, from regional cooking techniques to home management skills — this offers a chance to monetise expertise that has long been undervalued. But the story is more layered than a simple narrative of empowerment. With the help of her employer, who later left the city, Ali managed to create her community of over one lakh followers and nearly 6,000 subscribers on her YouTube channel. However, being a domestic worker in India has several setbacks, inadequate wages being one of them. "I still don't get paid enough despite being a content creator and the fact that I was a part of MasterChef India. People simply say they can't afford it. I have been waiting for brand collaborations, but even they don't pay me," she said.

For 30-year-old Praseon Dargarh, content creation began in the most ordinary of spaces, his kitchen. "For the past three years, Didi and I have been working together in the kitchen. During our evening cooking time, we would chat, share stories, and bond like a brother and sister. One day, we casually decided to record these moments and post them online. The video unexpectedly went

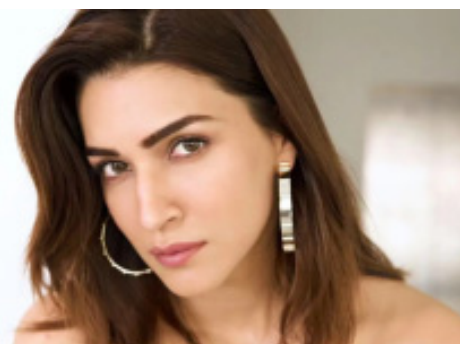
viral, and that's how our journey began," Dargarh shared. "Didi" is Sapna Jamadar, 29, his house help, now a content creator. Beyond cooking, she brings creativity to the table. "She has a strong interest in home decor, knitting, and loves experimenting with new dishes," Dargarh added. Their content thrives on authenticity. "Nothing is scripted or altered; it's all real and organic," he shared. Create own identity

For Jamadar, the decision to be on camera was about dignity and identity. "I wanted to create my own identity in this world. People often think that the work we do in others' homes is not very valuable, and I wanted to change that perspective. Bhaiya (Praseon Dargarh) supported me throughout and always guided me, which gave me confidence," she said. Understanding social media took time, but today, the two function as equals, boasting nearly one lakh Instagram followers. "We've received around 98% positive feedback," he noted. "People recognise me for my work and my recipes... Even at my son's school... that makes me very happy and proud," Jamadar said. The two recently reached a lakh subscriber on their YouTube channel. "Reaching 100K on YouTube in just 2.5 months has been truly overwhelming for both of us," he shared. A journey that began with spontaneity. The rise of domestic workers as content creators in India is no longer a one-off trend. It is becoming a powerful reflection of changing household dynamics, aspirations, and visibility. For Krutika Mittal, 33, and her cook, Dipu, 27, this journey began not with strategy, but with spontaneity.

"Honestly, it wasn't a planned decision," Krutika shared. "We were just capturing our everyday kitchen moments, and people really connected with his simplicity and skills." "I realised that this could give him recognition beyond just our home, so I supported the idea naturally as things grew." At the heart of their content is a conscious effort to preserve dignity and authenticity. "We keep it very real and respectful. We only show what happens naturally in our daily routine, mainly cooking and light moments. I make sure nothing feels forced or uncomfortable for him," she explained. Over time, Krutika also took on the role of guiding Dipu through the unfamiliar world of social media. "Initially, I explained it in a very simple way that people enjoy watching our videos and appreciate his work... I guide him through the technical and brand side of things."

For Dipu, the transition has been surprising. "Didi started making videos while I was cooking, and people liked it. I didn't think much at first, but when I saw people appreciating my work, I felt happy, and we continued," he shared. Now, people recognise him with his social media content. "It feels good when people respect my work. I feel very happy about good comments. It motivates me to do better. And I tell Didi to ignore bad comments. She is like my big sister, and I don't care what people say," he shared. In a heartfelt note, Dipu also addresses speculation around earnings. "I just want to say, whatever Didi gets from brand collabs, she also gives me my share from that, be that whatever amount. Apart from my salary, I never asked for it, Didi knows better," he said. However, as heartwarming as such partnerships appear, mental health experts urge caution. Dr Pavitra Shankar, Associate Consultant, Psychiatry, Aakash Healthcare, highlights the psychological complexities behind this trend. When domestic workers feel obligated to participate, "they might feel anxious or even exploited, especially if they are not sure what the boundaries are." The inherent power imbalance can make it difficult to refuse, leading to "emotional distress and low self-esteem." Social media exposure, particularly for individuals unfamiliar with public scrutiny, can be overwhelming. "If they get comments or are trolled, it can affect their mental health," the expert notes, adding that sudden visibility may heighten vulnerability to "anxiety or depression." To mitigate these risks, experts emphasise the need for structured support like clear consent, financial transparency, digital literacy, and access to counselling.

Kriti Sanon, 35, opens up about her walking and talking habit, not being to gym ever when in Delhi: 'I need to have a goal'



Kriti Sanon, 35, recently encapsulated her fitness journey in a conversation with singer and actor Sophie Choudry. "One habit that I have always had is walking and talking. The moment I pick up a call, I just start walking. It's like sometimes my parents have to come and be like, 'sit!'" she said on the first episode of Famously Fit with Sophie talk show on Amazon MX Player. Admitting that she "never used to work out in Delhi," the actor continued: "I need to have a goal. If I have to look a certain way... in Raabta, I had started working out very hard at that time. I had to look a certain way. There was this period reincarnation thing... that's when I really started working out... I realised what is good and what is not good for me." Inspired by the Mimi actor's candid admission, we consulted an expert on whether pacing while on calls actually yields health benefits.

Consultant dietitian and fitness expert Garima Goyal praised her honest perspective, affirming that it highlights how fitness journeys often begin outside the gym. "This habit is actually a very underrated form of movement. It's spontaneous, consistent, and doesn't feel like a workout. But over time, it contributes significantly to daily activity levels. In today's lifestyle, where most people are sedentary for long hours, even these small bursts of movement can make a big difference," said Goyal. From a health perspective, this falls under what we call non-exercise activity. "It includes all the calories you burn outside structured workouts like gym sessions. Walking while talking, moving around the house, taking stairs, all of this adds up. And for many people, it's more sustainable than forcing an intense gym routine they can't stick to," stressed Goyal. What's also interesting is the mindset shift. Don't wait for the perfect workout plan or ideal conditions. "Stay

active in a way that fits naturally into your routine. That's something a lot of people struggle with. They think if they're not hitting the gym, they're not doing enough," said Goyal. But the truth is, consistency matters more than intensity, especially at the start. "Of course, structured training has its place, especially if someone has specific goals like fat loss, muscle building, or recovery. But habits like walking regularly can build the foundation of an active lifestyle," said Goyal.

Bollywood Celebrities Turning Skincare Entrepreneurs

Bollywood celebrities are no longer just the faces of beauty brands, they are building their own. From premium skincare to affordable everyday essentials, many actors have stepped into the beauty space, turning personal style and wellness into full-fledged businesses. With the beauty industry booming, celebrity led brands are becoming more than just vanity projects. They are shaping trends, influencing consumer choices, and redefining how audiences connect with skincare. Launched in 2022, the brand focuses on combining traditional Indian ingredients with modern skincare science, centred around the idea of self-care simplified. One of its best known products is the Ashwagandha Bounce Moisturiser, designed for hydration and skin barrier support. Targeted at a younger audience, the brand offers accessible, everyday skincare products and has quickly gained popularity in a competitive market. Its focus remains on the idea of the power of nature and potency of science, this brand is vegan, PETA certified, and sustainability focused. A popular pick is the Barrier Care Cream, known for its lightweight and everyday use appeal. Although primarily known for makeup, the brand also focuses on skin friendly formulations suited for Indian skin tones. The Hydrating Foundation remains one of its best-selling products, blending skincare benefits with coverage. A vegan and cruelty free brand, Star Struck offers accessible beauty and skincare products with a youthful appeal. Its Lip Plumper range is among its most popular offerings, widely recognised across its product line.



imposition of US sanctions on Caracas in 2019. Following the sanctions, oil imports from Venezuela stopped within a few months. As per India's official trade data, Caracas was New Delhi's fifth-largest supplier of oil in 2019, providing close to 16 million tonnes, or about 117 million barrels, of crude to Indian refiners. The bilateral trade between India and Venezuela was \$6.40 billion in 2019-20, of which Indian imports—primarily crude oil—were worth \$6.06 billion.

Then in October 2023, the US eased sanctions on Venezuela's petroleum sector, authorising oil exports without limitation for six months. This led to RIL and a few other Indian refiners restarting oil imports from Venezuela. But imports then stopped as the sanction waiver was not extended by Washington after its understanding with Caracas on the conduct of free and fair presidential elections in Venezuela broke down. A few months later, RIL was able to restart Venezuelan oil imports after obtaining a sanctions waiver from the US. But in the summer of 2025, the company halted oil imports from Venezuela after the Trump administration threatened higher tariffs on countries buying Venezuelan crude. In India, RIL and Nayara Energy have been the biggest processors of heavy crudes, the kind which Venezuela produces. Limited heavy crude volumes are also processed occasionally by a few public sector refineries like Indian Oil's Paradip refinery and Mangalore Refinery and Petrochemicals unit in Mangaluru. HPCL-Mittal Energy also processes heavy crudes from time to time, and so do a few other Indian refineries. In January, Kpler had said that planned investments aimed at increasing refinery complexity—such as upgrades at HPCL's Visakhapatnam and a few other refineries—could expand India's ability to process Venezuelan heavy crudes, gradually broadening system-wide intake capacity.

RBI raises India's real GDP growth to 7.6 pc for FY26, pegs FY27 at 6.9 pc

New Delhi: The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) on Wednesday estimated India's real GDP growth at 7.6 per cent for FY26 under a new GDP series, while flagging emerging risks from geopolitical disruptions. The FY26 growth reflects resilience supported by strong services activity, manufacturing expansion and robust domestic demand. For FY27, the Central Bank has projected growth at 6.9 per cent, indicating a moderation as external risks and cost pressures begin to build, said RBI Governor Sanjay Malhotra after the MPC meeting.

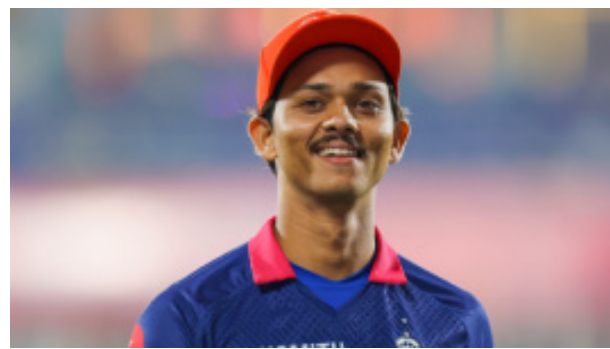
The GDP growth for Q1 FY27 has been revised to 6.8 per cent from 6.9 percent, while Q2 FY27 growth has been lowered to 6.7 per cent from 7 per cent amid global headwinds due to Iran war. "Global growth faces increasing downside risks as the sharp rise in energy rises have stoked inflation fears," said Malhotra.

The GDP growth stood at 7.8 per cent in the December quarter of FY26, from 8.4 per cent in the preceding quarter. The RBI expects the revival in private sector investment to sustain on back of high capacity utilisation. Also, food price outlook remains comfortable in near term, said the Governor. Overall CPI inflation for FY27 is projected at 4.6 per cent. For Q1, it is estimated at 4 per cent; 4.4 per cent for Q2; 5.2 per cent for Q3; and 4.7 per cent for Q4. Malhotra further said that "we will ensure sufficient liquidity in the banking system to meet productive requirements of the Indian economy". As on April 3, India's forex reserves stood at \$697.1 billion. "Net FDI showed improvement on small base of last year. India remains attractive destination for greenfield FDI projects," said the Governor. The RBI expects the revival in private sector investment to sustain on back of high capacity utilisation.



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Yashasvi Jaiswal flexes muscle as Jasprit Bumrah goes wicket-less in third straight game



GNS News Agency, April 10

The Rajasthan Royals set an early marker as the team to beat in IPL 2026, trouncing Mumbai Indians by 27 runs to clinch their third win in a row in Guwahati. Jaiswal bats through these may be early days of IPL 2026, and much of the attention around Rajasthan Royals (RR) has been on Vaibhav Sooryavanshi. But on Tuesday, it was Yashasvi Jaiswal who showed why he remains just as important to their batting line-up.

In a curtailed 11-over game against MI in Guwahati, Jaiswal came out with clear intent. There was no time to settle, and from the very first ball, he looked ready to take control. MI pacer Deepak Chahar was driven over mid-wicket for four. The next ball was dispatched over the same region for a six. A third boundary followed over point. In the space of a few deliveries, the left-hander had set the tone for the innings. He did not slow down after that. Two more boundaries came in the opening over, as RR made a flying start. At the other end, Sooryavanshi

was also finding his range, but his senior partner looked determined to make this his night. Trent Boult, returning after missing the previous game against DC, was also taken apart. RR had raced to 58 runs in a powerplay reduced to 3.2 overs. The MI bowlers were well and truly under the pump.

They did manage to pull things back briefly. The wickets of Dhruv Jurel and Riyan Parag gave them a window. At that stage, RR needed someone to bat deep and hold the innings together. Jaiswal did exactly that. He stayed unbeaten on 77 from 32 balls, anchoring the innings while still scoring at a brisk rate. His knock was well-balanced. Four sixes came on the on-side, while most of his boundaries came through the off-side. He also rotated the strike well, picking up 13 singles. In a team where a teenager has grabbed much of the spotlight, Jaiswal reminded everyone of his own quality. Earlier, alongside Jos Buttler, he was the young tyro who could express himself freely. Now, in Buttler's absence, he has stepped up as the senior batter. On this showing, RR have more than one match-winner at the top. For a bowler widely regarded as one of the best in the world, it has been a rare, quiet start to IPL 2026 for Jasprit Bumrah. For the third match in a row against RR on Tuesday, MI's bowling talisman went wicketless, going for 32 runs in his three overs after returning with figures of 0/35 against Kolkata Knight Riders and 0/21 against Delhi Capitals. The 32-year-old was put under pressure from the outset. Vaibhav Sooryavanshi took him on in his first over, hitting two sixes. Hardik Pandya then held him back and brought him on later. Initially, Bumrah was a bit too straight or short. Later, even his yorkers missed their mark. A home game against Royal Challengers Bengaluru on Sunday could be his chance to find rhythm again.

Shubman Gill to return for Gujarat Titans against Delhi Capitals



GNS News Agency, April 10 | IPL Today Match 2026, Delhi Capitals (DC) vs Gujarat Titans (GT) Playing 11 Today Match, Squad LIVE: Axar Patel's Delhi Capitals will take on Shubman Gill's Gujarat Titans on match 14 of the Indian Premier League 2026 at the Arun Jaitley Stadium in Delhi on Wednesday. The hosts have not lost this season, while the visitors have had the opposite fate. Although Titans have come close in both games, they could not manage to get over the line and have faltered in crucial moments, and Gill's side will be hoping to tie up the loose ends. The most important for Titans is the top three delivering, while Sai Sudharsan delivered, Jos Buttler and Shubman Gill are yet to make a meaningful

contribution. As per Capitals, Sameer Rizvi has been their biggest strength, and they will be hoping that other players, too, come into form and start delivering. KL Rahul, who was the key part last season, will be hoping to get back to runs.

Delhi Capitals Probable XI: KL Rahul (wk), Pathum Nissanka, Nitish Rana, Sameer Rizvi, David Miller, Tristan Stubbs, Axar Patel (C), Vipraj Nigam, Lungi Ngidi, Kuldeep Yadav, T Natarajan, Mukesh Kumar. Gujarat Titans Probable XI: Shubman Gill (C), Sai Sudharsan, Jos Buttler (wk), Glenn Phillips, Washington Sundar, Shahrux Khan, Rahul Tewatia, Rashid Khan, Kagiso Rabada/Jason Holder, Ashok Sharma, Mohammed Siraj, Prasad Krishna. Delhi Capitals Squad: KL Rahul (w), Pathum Nissanka, Nitish Rana, Sameer Rizvi, David Miller, Tristan Stubbs, Axar Patel (c), Vipraj Nigam, Lungi Ngidi, Kuldeep Yadav, T Natarajan, Mukesh Kumar, Ashutosh Sharma, Auqib Nabi Dar, Dushmantha Chameera, Karun Nair, Mitchell Starc, Kyle Jamieson, Ajay Jadav Mandal, Pritivi Shaw, Tripurana Vijay, Abishek Porel, Sahil Parakh, Madhav Tiwari. Gujarat Titans Squad: Sai Sudharsan, Kumar Kushagra, Jos Buttler (w), Glenn Phillips, Washington Sundar, Rahul Tewatia, Shahrux Khan, Rashid Khan (c), Kagiso Rabada, Ashok Sharma, Mohammed Siraj, Prasad Krishna, Jason Holder, Manav Suthar, Anuj Rawat, Jayant Yadav, Shubman Gill, Luke Wood, Ravirivinasan Sai Kishore, Tom Banton, Kulwant Khejroliya, Arshad Khan, Gurnoor Brar, Nishant Sindhu, Ishant Sharma

Why Magnus Carlsen cannot promote his own app Take Take as it enters 'play and learn' sectors

GNS News Agency, April 10

Magnus Carlsen's Take Take app has joined forces with Lichess (a free, open-source platform run by volunteers) to expand its chess offerings to give app users "play and learn" functionality besides the previous option to follow games live. However, on the day that Take Take announced its expansion, the one person who was conspicuous by his absence was the world no 1 from Norway, who is the face of the app besides being the co-founder. Why?

Because—as Take Take CEO Mats Andre Kristiansen explained in a video on the platform's YouTube channel—Carlsen is an ambassador for Chess.com, which is now a direct rival to Take Take, thanks to their entry into the play and learn sectors of chess. "Magnus cannot be here. And there's a very good reason for that. We are now stepping into the play zone area. We are launching a full chess platform with a play zone and the full learning experience. And if I go back a little bit to Toronto in 2023, my first ever chess tournament where I was following Magnus on the Champions Chess Tour and I met Erik (Erik Allebest, co-founder and CEO of Chess.com) and Danny (Daniel Rensch, Chess.com's Chief Chess Officer) for the very first time. And I remember very clearly that Erik told me that I could never enter their domain of play and learn. It was okay for me to build Take Take around the fan experience and the watch zone, but as soon as we entered the play and learn segment, there would be a conflict," Kristiansen said.

"The conflict is really about Magnus being an ambassador to Chess.com. So if we go back another year to



2022, Chess.com acquired Play Magnus (a platform founded by Carlsen) and with that deal came both Chess 24, Chessable—all of these companies and products that Play Magnus Group had built—but also a personal ambassador role for Magnus. So finally Chess.com could unite Hikaru Nakamura and Magnus, who played on different platforms, and the two fan favorites could play together. "But I got this very clear message that we could not enter play and learn without consequences. And the consequences are really that we cannot have Magnus actively promote Take Take as we are now direct competitors," Kristiansen added. Asked what Take Take does now without Carlsen, Kristiansen said: "The reality is that he is both a co-founder and a big shareholder of Take Take while at the same time he's an ambassador for Chess.com. But Magnus does not set the roadmap for Take Take. We had to go beyond the fan zone and the watch zone to build a sustainable company and our focus has always been to build a sustainable business. We always knew that the heartbeat of chess is playing chess. That's what everyone wants."

'Destiny's child ... Give Vaibhav Sooryavanshi his India cap now, don't make him wait'

GNS News Agency, April 10

Former India all-rounder Irfan Pathan wants selectors to stop waiting and hand Vaibhav Sooryavanshi his India cap — and after what the 15-year-old did to Jasprit Bumrah on Tuesday, it's hard to argue with him. Sooryavanshi hit Bumrah on the very first ball he faced, then came back and hit him again off a slower one. He finished with 39 off 14 balls. "Sooryavanshi is a destiny's child," Pathan said. "What he is doing at 15 in white-ball cricket, I don't think we have ever seen anyone do this." Pathan said the youngster had been specifically waiting for this moment. "This 15-year-old wonder kid says — I am waiting for Jasprit Bumrah. I got out to him last year. I will come this year and hit him. And he hit Bumrah on the very first ball."

What impressed Pathan most was that Sooryavanshi had actually forced Bumrah into doubt. "The way Bumrah had no plans visible, the way he moved to the slower one — Vaibhav Sooryavanshi has forced even Bumrah to think. In white-ball cricket, India has not found a bowler like Bumrah. He is a GOAT. And this feat has been achieved against him." Pathan said the secret is in Sooryavanshi's mindset. "Whatever bowler comes in front, he does not watch his action, does not think too much. He only watches the ball. If he gets it, he hits it. This thinking makes him



very special." A few months ago, Pathan said he had asked a selector how far Sooryavanshi was from an India cap. He did not reveal the answer — but pointed to Tuesday's innings as all the answer anyone needed. "Don't make this boy wait too long," he said. "Give him the Indian team cap. Imagine — this boy can play 20 years of professional cricket. This is scary for bowlers." Off the field, Pathan said he was just as impressed. A conversation with Sooryavanshi's coach at the studio the previous day had stuck with him. "He told me this boy is very well-mannered. He comes and touches my feet wherever I am. The mind is in exactly the right place."

Why Ayush Shetty is top-tier already after commanding win over World No 7 Li Shifeng despite chinks in armour; Sindhu starts with a win, Lakshya loses

GNS News Agency, April 10

After Lakshya Sen decimated the Chinese men's singles at All England, Ayush Shetty kept the powerhouse under the pump, with a stunningly poised and powerful 21-13, 21-16 win over Li Shifeng in the first round of the Badminton Asian Championship. While PV Sindhu eked out a 15-21, 21-11, 21-19 comeback win, Lakshya Sen crashed out to a 21-12, 21-19 defeat. Sen briefly resisted from 8-14 down to 16-16 in the second set, but was largely laclustre.

The Indian attack quite simply overran the most attacking of China's shuttlers, as the World No 25 Indian defanged World No 7 Shifeng, playing crisp, crackling badminton. It took 55 minutes, mostly to overhaul early set leads (7.5, 8-5) from Shifeng. The Chinese, just 26 is already from a generation that is being challenged and pushed out by the new bunch of post-teens. "His attack reminded me of Viktor Axelsen when he's absolutely dominant," said coach Vimal Kumar. "He's already beaten difficult Top 10s last year, but he's proving he's right up there. In my interactions with international coaches, I gather they are really worried about his potential, and fear him due to his height and smashes. When he's on top of the shuttle he can meet x those punch clears with hard hits that are troubling big names," he added. Against Li Shifeng, the longest rally perhaps came when Shifeng desperately tried, when trailing 13-19 in the first set, to construct a maze to tire out Ayush. But the Indian stayed solid, did the due retrieving and finished with a smash, which are mic-drops in the sense that Shifeng rarely got near them. Guided by Irwansyah, a perfect fit for Ayush as coach, given his classical power stroke-making, the 6'4" Indian showed composure to work on Shifeng's game — tease out strands of possible openings, locate the precise incisions on court to land his kills just like Indonesians like Jojo Christie. A bulk of points came from Ayush's dependable net interceptions. This one point, he tapped it down, seconds after the shuttle crossed the net and smiled wide, to show his mirth at a job well done. But more than anything, Ayush neatly dispatched all vague, errant lifts and even flick serves to Shifeng's forehead flank, with smashes that travelled like cannonballs — deep. There's a million things Ayush could improve on in his defense and movement on court and shot selection, but the smash, even a round the head or the conventional one struck at highest point, is a finished product, ready to dismantle world hierarchies. It travels at speed, stays within bounds with stinging urgency and lands on the backcourt. A sniper from a vantage. At 9-12, Ayush sent one into the net and he could save tiny energy not grinning and hopping around. But the very next point, he nailed one to Shifeng's backhand and was soon level on 12-12 riding momentum, like a blazing comet's tail. The beauty of the Ayush smash is it doesn't need to engage with the lines — even against a tall retriever like Shifeng who couldn't react quick enough to the Indian's smashes. In fact, Ayush had trailed mostly for the first half of the second set, but made his way back with crisp shot

making and taking the attack to the Chinese. Every Ayush kill was greeted by silence rent with disappointment from the Chinese crowd at Ningbo. The 21-13, 21-16 victory came from a similar smash — though this time Shifeng who had been pumping his fists start of the set, didn't even move and returned leaden-footed as a capacity crowd was silenced. It was supposed to be a battle of big booming attacks, the biggest of Chinese vs biggest of the Indian's, and the Indian was miles ahead, despite operating only at 70 percent of his all-round attack potential. Irwansyah's influence was evident in how Ayush did not prolong the rallies or get lured into needless midcourt exchanges. He can still get sharper and more controlled in defense, but the attack is flowing. He also takes those breathes needed to reorient the nervous energy after a point lost.

While coach Vimal Kumar lauded Ayush's performance in absolutely blowing away Shi Feng in straight games with fearless, attacking badminton, it was the canny use of smashes that impressed him. "The power, the precision, and those thunderous smashes — the Chinese had no answers, completely unable to read or react. A truly dominant display... one to watch for the future," he said. Ayush is still vulnerable against opponents who play a certain gear of the game, if not an entire style. While Li Shifeng pushing pace just did not work against him, his last two tournaments showed a chink in the armour. "Ayush played a similar match against Loh Kean Yew but next round Lakshya completely outplayed him. At All England, Alwi (Farhan, of Indonesia) rushed him, and at Swiss, Brian Yang did the same. He will realise he cannot just hit sharp shots all the time. He has attacking clears that he can use," Vimal says. Ayush will be tested straight away against Taiwanese No 20 Chi Yu Jen on Thursday. "Let's see tomorrow. This is just one round," Vimal cautioned. Those like Alwi and Frenchman Alex Lanier are as old as Ayush, and have worked on the consistency, to start pushing out older players. It's also why training under Irwansyah, who helped Indonesia's top men's singles will help. "We have put together a young group of players to train under Irwansyah alongside Sindhu at our Academy as part of the National camp. Among the girls, Devika Sihag and Isha Rani Barua are included. On the boys' side, we have promising players like Ansh Negi (current U-19 National Champion), Suryaksh Rawat, a few other upcoming boys, and Ayush Shetty has also joined over the last two weeks," Vimal informed. Lakshya remains in another group under the Korean coach. PV Sindhu, back on the court after missing the All England, showed the fight that keeps her in contention at the top level. Besides Satwik-Chirag who actually won the title in 2023, Sindhu came closest to making the Asian final, but had lost to Akane Yamaguchi at the penultimate step. On Wednesday, she played the Malaysian Wong Ling Ching, ranked 38, and lost the first set 15-21. The comeback needed the Indian to perceptibly raise her foot speed and hitting pace to down a pugnacious opponent.

Palak and Mukesh win gold with a world record at the ISSF World Cup



India's Palak Gulia and Mukesh Nelavalli broke the world record en route to winning a gold medal in the 10m air pistol mixed team competition at the ISSF World Cup for rifle and pistol in Granada on Tuesday. The win was impressive, as the field included the world champion Chinese pair of Kai Hu and Qianxun Yao, along with Paris Olympics bronze medalist Veronika Major and Akos Nagy of Hungary.

With Nelavalli, making his senior debut, shooting a score of 294 as compared to Gulia's score of 287, the Indian pair qualified in second spot behind the Chinese pair. An hour later, the Indian pair won the title, with a 2.9-point lead over the second-placed Chinese pair, setting a new world record and junior world record score of 487.7. As per the new mixed team final format, the top four teams will fight for medals, instead of just the top two as it was earlier. The new final format sees a mixed team firing five shots each in 250 seconds in the first three series before three elimination series consisting of three single shots each. Nelavalli came into the final with 11 inner tens in the qualification and his first series of 50.7 as compared to Gulia's series of 49.4 meant that the Indian team (100.1) led the Chinese pair (99.7) by 0.4 points with the Hungarian pair placed at the third spot (98.8) and the American pair of Nathalia Tobar and Nickolaus Mowrer placed at the fourth spot (96.6).

The Indian pair would extend their lead over the second-placed Chinese pair to 2.6 points with Gulia shooting a series of 51.3 and Nelavalli a score of 51.6 after the second series. The last five-shot series saw the Indian pair extending their lead over the Chinese pair to 4.3 points with Gulia shooting a score of 51.4 and Nelavalli a score of 51.0 for a total score of 305.4 with the Chinese trailing at 301.1. The elimination series would see the USA pair bowing out first followed by Hungary, with the Indian pair in the lead by 3.3 points over the Chinese after the fourth and a lead of 2.6 points after the penultimate series. Gulia, who had won the 10m air pistol title in 2023 Hangzhou Asian Games, shot the highest total in the elimination series with a score of 31.5 while Nelavalli shot 30.5 for the Indian pair to win the title. "This was my first senior international and I am happy that I did my best. Final was good and I was focusing on the next shot. I was only competing with Palak and we were looking at each

other's scores and my thought was to be better than her," Nelavalli would tell ISSF TV. The Andhra Pradesh shooter had become the 25m pistol junior world champion in 2024 and also won the 10m Air Pistol mixed team title at the Asian Junior Championships this year. He has been training under Commonwealth Games medalist and World Military games medalist Chandrashekhar Choudhary at Gun For Glory Academy in Pune and Hyderabad for the last six years. "Mukesh's biggest strength has been his willpower and the no fear attitude. We had been working on his trigger movement in recent years, and it has helped him in hitting those high scores," Choudhary said.

Gulia also said that Nelavalli's consistent shooting made the task easier for her. "In mixed teams, the pairings can be different depending on who has qualified for the event from India. And this new format is very challenging with all the four teams in with a chance for a medal. But then it also means that we start afresh. Right from the first shot, I was competing against myself. Mukesh's shooting definitely made it a lot easier for the team and he actually shot better than me for most of the series in the final. That was the cherry on the cake," Gulia said. Except the first series, where only one shot out of the ten by Gulia and Nelavalli was above 10.5, the Indian pair made sure that they maintained their lead throughout the final. The remaining two five shot series and three elimination series saw Gulia hitting six scores of 10.5 or more with a 10.9 off her penultimate shot. Nelavalli, on the other hand, shot nine shots of 10.5 or more with three shots of 10.8 each. "Our team was leading from every stage and in this format, it was really hard to maintain this advantage. But both Palak and Mukesh not only maintained the lead but they also kept increasing the lead. There were a couple of moments where they slipped slightly, but they had plenty of stamina left, and they managed to pull through and regain the advantage. We have been spending time breaking this format down and how to better the level of shooting on our way to the LA Olympics," India's foreign coach Jelena Arunovic said.

Praggnanandhaa loses to Giri, Sindarov extends lead in Candidates chess

Paphos (Cyprus): Indian Grandmaster R Praggnanandhaa almost went out of contention for a top finish after losing to Anish Giri of the Netherlands in the eighth round of the Candidates chess tournament here on Tuesday. On a day when Uzbek Javokhir Sindarov consolidated his lead with a draw against tailender Andrey Espenko of Russia, Praggnanandhaa, who had scored his only victory over Giri in the first round, fell prey to simple tactics from an equal position and suffered his second defeat of the tournament.

Parvathy Thiruvothu says Ranjith's arrest in sexual harassment case 'not a surprise': 'They aren't paying the price'



are mere eyewash. "In the name of punishment, what we get is performance. When the Hema Committee report came out, so many people were asking why the victims weren't coming forward. But they don't realise that the moment they come out, women are kept away from the workforce," she stated. Opening up about the struggles of survivors, Parvathy said, "They can't make money to feed their families. How many women can afford that unless they come from money? These cases go on throughout their lives. The grassroots level reality isn't understood by people. They also want sensationalism. They just want the names to come out. They don't want justice to be served. The fact that there's a real human being on the other side isn't considered by the law, the public and the media."

Pointing out that although the WCC doesn't wield power in the industry like its male-dominated counterpart (Association of Malayalam Movie Artistes - AMMA), she noted that the organisation, nonetheless, won't stop advocating for policies to be put in place. "The collective has worked very hard, and so have other people in the industry, to bring about enough change to say that ICC is a normal and required thing on a film set. I'm not seeking allies anymore. I'm seeking tangible solutions. Unfortunately, nothing is your problem until it impacts you. One would wonder why the report was kept under wraps for four-and-a-half years while the abuses continued. This is exactly why there's no fear of consequence."

Ranjith, the former chairperson of the Kerala State Chalachitra Academy (KSCA), was arrested on Tuesday, March 31, in Thodupuzha, Idukki, after a young actor filed a complaint alleging that he had sexually harassed her inside a caravan during a film shoot in Fort Kochi. He was subsequently suspended from the Film Employees Federation of Kerala (FEFKA). In 2024, another actor had complained that Ranjith misbehaved with her in 2009 in a flat in Kochi during an audition. The director was also accused by a man of luring him to a hotel room and sexually abusing him in 2012. The man subsequently filed a complaint with the Bengaluru police. In July 2025, the Karnataka High Court quashed the criminal case registered against Ranjith in the second case, The Hindu reported. In October of the same year, the proceedings against him in the first case were also quashed. One of the most successful and renowned screenwriter-directors in Malayalam cinema, Ranjith has often been criticised for peddling elitist, patriarchal, and misogynistic ideas through his films. He has courted many controversies over the years. He is most noted for penning movies such as Peruvannapurathe Visheshangal, Johnnie Walker, Devaasuram, Aaraam Thampuran, Summer in Bethlehem, Ustaad, Valyettan, and Narasimham. His directorial ventures include Ravanaprabhu, Nandanam, Black, Chandrolsavam, Kaiyoppu, Paleri Manikyam: Oru Pathirakolapathakathinte Katha, Pranchiyettan and The Saint, and Spirit, among others. Disclaimer: This article discusses serious allegations and sensitive legal proceedings regarding workplace safety and misconduct.

The arrest of renowned Malayalam writer-filmmaker Ranjith Balakrishnan over an alleged attempt to sexually assault a young actor has dealt yet another blow to the regional industry, which is still burning with shame after the Hema Committee report exposed the extreme discrimination and exploitation faced by women. With the same person — who was embroiled in two different serious cases back in 2024, soon after the report's release — now facing a new accusation, many have begun questioning the industry, wondering if the measures it claims to have taken over the past few months to ensure women's safety are even functional.

Meanwhile, two-time Kerala State Award-winning actor Parvathy Thiruvothu, one of the founding members of the Women in Cinema Collective (WCC), has stepped forward, pointing out that the system is failing survivors, who have somehow mustered the courage to speak up, by often leaving the accused scot-free. "This current arrest of Ranjith doesn't come across as a surprise or shock to me. It, of course, is a repeated offence. These are people who aren't paying the price of what they did in the past," she noted during a conversation with News18 Showsha.

Despite this not being the first complaint against the filmmaker, Parvathy pointed out that, as usual, the discussion has landed on whether the survivor's claims should be believed. "People can keep debating on this. We need to live, get work, be activists, carry the weight of these questions, earn money and stay relevant! 'Thak gayi main': Kareena Kapoor Khan recently said this in the context of something else. After that, I keep quoting her. I'm really tired." She further maintained that the so-called punishments that culprits in such cases receive

'I killed 99% of the germs': Samay Raina says Ranveer Allahbadia asked 'obscene' parents question 8 times in infamous Latent episode

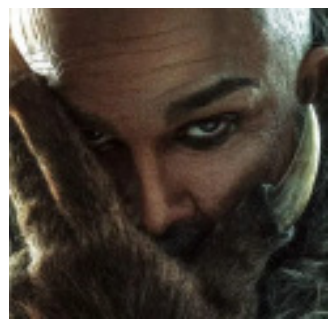


ties, Sunil Pal..." Samay added how Sunil had said that Samay needed to learn from Kapil Sharma, who was supposedly the next guest on his show. Samay also said that B Praak, Mukesh Khanna, and a few others tried to 'gain limelight' from the controversy. Declaring, "India is not a platform to showcase your art," Samay Raina also said that he couldn't have asked for a better ending for India's Got Latent Season 1. He even hinted at the show's season 2 return on YouTube soon. About India's Got Latent controversy In 2025, Samay Raina, Ranveer Allahbadia, and Apoorva Mukhija (The Rebel Kid) found themselves at the centre of a major controversy after an episode of India's Got Latent. The backlash was triggered by an inappropriate question posed by Ranveer to a contestant about his parents, which many viewers found offensive. The segment quickly sparked outrage online, leading to multiple FIRs being filed against Ranveer and the show's makers.

Allu Arjun's movie with Atlee titled 'Raaka'

Mumbai: Telugu cinema star Allu Arjun's upcoming Pan-India movie with director Atlee has been titled "Raaka", the makers announced on Wednesday. Billed as a grand fantasy-action entertainer, the movie marks the maiden collaboration between the "Pushpa" star and the Tamil director. It is backed by production banner Sun Pictures. The title announcement was made on Arjun's 44th birthday and the makers also released the first look poster of the actor from the film. The poster presents Arjun in a striking, menacing avatar — bald head, Kohl-lined eyes staring intensely at the camera, a thick dark beard, and prominent animal claws framing his face. Atlee, known for Tamil films "Mersal", "Theri", and Hindi movie "Jawan", said he is thrilled to bring his passion project to life with "Raaka". "Raaka" isn't just a film; it's a part of me I've carried for years. For 18 years, I held on to one idea, never letting it fade. It tested me, shaped me, and stayed with me through everything. And honestly, this is just the beginning," the director said in a statement.

The scale and ambition of the film reflect a storytelling approach that is rooted in Indian cinema while aiming to connect with a global audience, a press release issued here read. Sun Pictures is privileged to bring together Atlee and Arjun in a project built for the world audience. "Raaka" is a collaboration born of the highest ambitions in Indian cinema.



Comedian Samay Raina and content creators Ranveer Allahbadia and Apoorva Mukhija had gotten embroiled in one of the biggest controversies of 2025 after their infamous India's Got Latent episode received backlash. Now, a year after the controversy, comedian Samay Raina has released a video of his stand-up show, Samay Raina Still Alive, where he has spoken about the controversy. While narrating about the entire controversy, Samay said that Ranveer Allahbadia had said a lot of obscene things that were edited out. What led to the uproar around that episode of India's Got Latent was Ranveer Allahbadia's question to a contestant about their parents' intimacy, which many viewers found inappropriate and offensive. Addressing the backlash during the stand-up set, Samay clarified why that moment wasn't edited out, revealing that the remark wasn't an isolated instance.

He said, "Main tumhe maa ki kasam sach batata hoon. Uss episode main Beer Biceps ne voh sawal 8 baar poocha tha. Aur iske alawa bhi kayi ant shant sawal (rubbish) pooche usne. Toh ab jab maine edit dekha na, maine kaha, 'Yeh toh bohot gandi baatein kari hain isne.' (I swear, in that episode, Beer Biceps asked that question 8 times. Other than this, he had asked lots of rubbish questions too. So when I saw the edit, I realized that he had said many obscene things.)" He added, "Chalo ek rakh deta hoon, baaki sab hata deta hoon." Toh mere POV se maine toh 99 per cent kitaanu (germs) maar diye the na yaar. (I thought I should keep that question once and remove all other bits. So in my point of view, I thought I had killed 99 percent of the germs.)" Samay Raina took a dig at Sunil Pal, Mukesh Khanna, and B Praak

The controversy around India's Got Latent drew sharp criticism from multiple quarters, with several industry voices publicly condemning the remarks made by the young creators. In its aftermath, Samay Raina, Ranveer Allahbadia, and Apoorva Mukhija were summoned by authorities, while even their friends and close associates reportedly faced death threats and legal notices. Recalling how the situation affected his parents, Samay got quite emotional. He later went on to take a dig at industry critics like Sunil Pal, Mukesh Khanna, and others. Saying, "Everyone was ready to devour us, politicians, celebri-

Deepika Padukone hits back at Dhurandhar 2 'silent treatment' chatter, says she watched it 'before any of you did': 'Now who is the joke on?'



Risab Rikhram Sharma's classical music concert in Mumbai the following day.

The caption of the video read, "Deepika Padukone just gave the 'silent treatment' to a ₹500 crore budget. While Dhurandhar 2 shatters global records, Deepika skipped the premiere to hit a sitar concert with her in-laws instead. No posts, no praise, just silence. Is she making a statement against the director or just dodging the internet's favorite drama?" She commented cheekily on the post, "The latter my friend... P.S. I watched it way before any of you did. Now who is the joke on? (hand over mouth emoji)." Several fans of the actor followed it up by rallying in her support in the comment section. He also underlined how Deepika hasn't made her acknowledgement of Dhurandhar 2's record-breaking success public by sharing anything on her social media. He even pointed out that the internet has dug out her visit to Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi during the 2020 protests and blamed her political standpoint for her silence on her husband's movie, being perceived as a right-wing propaganda by many. "Is this a deliberate statement or is the internet reading too much into celebrity social media silence?," asked the anchor at the end of the video. Fake screenshots of Deepika's social media post praising the entire team of Dhurandhar had gone viral last month. On Monday, Ranveer's first co-star from Maneesh Sharma's 2010 romantic comedy Band Baaja Baaraat — Anushka Sharma — hailed his performance in Dhurandhar 2 as "flawless". Her husband and ace cricketer Virat Kohli also heaped praises on Ranveer's towering central performance. While Ranveer hasn't responded to the couple publicly, Dhar reposted their praise on his Instagram Stories, and thanked both Anushka and Virat very warmly. Meanwhile, Dhurandhar 2 has managed to surpass the lifetime India haul of S. S. Rajamouli's Baahubali 2: The Conclusion, which stands at Rs 1,030.42 crore. The film has now reached a total India gross of Rs 1,237.21 crore, with its net collection climbing to Rs 1,033.37 crore so far. Dhurandhar, which released in cinemas last December, crossed the Rs 1600 crore mark at the worldwide box office.

A day after even Ranveer Singh's Band Baaja Baarat co-star Anushka Sharma and her husband Virat Kohli heaped praises on the actor's new blockbuster, Aditya Dhar's spy thriller Dhurandhar 2: The Revenge, the internet continued to wonder and speculate why Ranveer's wife Deepika Padukone hasn't said a word about the film's unprecedented success yet. Deepika Padukone reacts to 'silent treatment' criticism on Dhurandhar 2 However, Deepika on Tuesday finally broke silence on the confusion by commenting on an Instagram reel speculating if all's good in the hood of Ranveer and Deepika's marriage. The video, posted by the Instagram handle Culture Circle on March 23, just four days after the release of Dhurandhar 2 last month, called out Deepika for giving the film's screening a miss, even though she attended

Kushboo calls rumours alleging Sundar C's ban on meat shops in Madurai 'fake': 'Spreading a false narrative'



controversy after rumours began circulating that he claimed he would ban meat shops in the constituency if elected to power. Social media posts and reports allege that he made this promise, claiming that the move would protect the sanctity of the Madurai Meenakshi Amman temple. Nonetheless, Sundar himself dismissed the reports shortly afterwards, following which Kushboo also condemned those spreading such rumours about him. "The news circulating that I said I would shut down meat shops in the Madurai Central constituency if I win the election is completely false. The people themselves know that I respect their sentiments and rights. To those who lack the courage to face the competition directly and resort to such low-level tactics by taking crooked paths, we will give a fitting reply through our unity and victory," he wrote on X (formerly Twitter).

Kushboo, meanwhile, used the situation to attack the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK), alleging that the ruling party was behind the campaign. "When they fail to counter the honesty of a man with integrity, they resort to such fake narratives. DMK is scared, and it's so evident. Spreading such a false narrative to gain support will only boomerang. People of Madurai are very clear and stand with Sundar," she wrote, quote-tweeting one of Sundar's posts.

Will the controversy affect Sundar in the election?

Following in the footsteps of his wife, actor Kushboo, renowned director Sundar C has entered politics and is contesting the 2026 Tamil Nadu Assembly elections from the Madurai Central constituency. He is a candidate of the Puthiya Neethi Katchi (New Justice Party), which is part of the All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (AIADMK)-led NDA alliance. As the alliance is led at the centre by the BJP, of which Kushboo is a part, she has also been promoting her husband, hoping he will emerge victorious in his maiden election. However, affecting his poll prospects, Sundar has found himself in the midst of a

Aditya Dhar lauds Mukesh Chhabra for 'reshaping' Dhurandhar: 'He saw it before I did, pushed me to think bigger'

Aditya Dhar directed Dhurandhar parts 1 and 2 have not only dominated the box office but also swept the recently held Chetak Screen Awards 2026, winning 14 awards from 24 nominations. As the film continues its victory march, the film's director, Aditya Dhar, penned a heartfelt note lauding Dhurandhar's casting director Mukesh Chhabra. In the post, Aditya said how Mukesh saw the might of Dhurandhar even before he could.

Aditya Dhar lauds Mukesh Chhabra for Dhurandhar in a heartwarming post on Instagram, Aditya Dhar wrote, "Here's to Mukesh Chhabra, the man who saw Dhurandhar long before I truly did. There are people who come into a film and do their job, and then there are people who quietly reshape the film itself. Mukesh was the latter. From the very first narration, he believed in the scale, the ambition, the sheer possibility of Dhurandhar far more than I did. Where I was cautious, he was fearless. Where I was thinking within limits, he pushed me to think bigger, not just in numbers, but in depth, in detail, in truth."

"The casting of this film was never going to be easy. The sheer number of actors, the range of characters, and the responsibility of getting every single face right were overwhelming. But Mukesh and his team just went all guns blazing. My only brief to them was simple: bring me great actors, new or old, big or small, it doesn't matter. And

he turned that into a mission. What followed were endless days and nights, sitting together, breaking down every character, debating, exploring, rejecting, and discovering. Conversations that didn't feel like work but like building something brick by brick with absolute honesty," the note further read. Aditya also added, "For him, casting was never about filling roles; it was about finding people who belonged. Even for the smallest part, he went just as deep, just as far, making sure every person on screen felt real, lived-in, and true to the world. But beyond the craft, what I found in him was something even more rare, a friend, a well-wisher, a brother. Someone who stood by the film with complete faith, even when mine wavered. I truly hope this film makes people realise the power of casting as one of the most crucial, yet often overlooked, aspects of filmmaking. It can make a film or break it. And it's unfortunate that our industry still doesn't celebrate casting directors the way it should. This film carries your choices in every single frame, Mukesh! Endless gratitude, respect, and love for you." Mukesh Chhabra reacts to Aditya Dhar's post While Aditya Dhar's post received lots of positive reactions, Mukesh also got emotional as he commented, "Bhai, reading this post... I genuinely don't know what to say. I'm very emotional right now—truly at a loss for words."