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Telangana HC asks MLAs to file counters in disqualification case

Hyderabad: Chief Justice Aparesh Kumar Singh and Justice G.M. Mohiuddin of the Telangana High Court on Thursday directed several MLAs, who were elected on BRS tickets in the 2023 Assembly elections and are alleged to have defected to the ruling Congress party, to file their counters positively by May 6.Geographic Reference

Telangana caste survey findings trigger criticism

Hyderabad: The Telangana government's Socio, Economic, Educational, Employment, Political and Caste (SEEEPC) Survey-2024 has been released, and some of its findings have drawn criticism from sections of society.Geographic Reference

The caste survey was initiated in 2024 and conducted in two phases last year. The data has now been uploaded on the official website www.des.telangana.gov.in.BC WelfareMinister Ponnam Prabhakar defended the delay in releasing the data. He said elections and other factors prevented an earlier release.

The survey covered about 1.12 crore families, accounting for a population of 3.55 crore. It began on November 6, 2024, and the first phase was completed over 50 days.

Numbers Not in NDA's Favour to Get Women Quota Law Passed in Parl

New Delhi, APril 16

The ruling NDA does not have the required numbers in Parliament to get the women's reservation bills passed with a two-thirds majority, unless it can shore up support from other parties or make some of them abstain. While the NDA has the support of 293 members in the Lok Sabha, which is 54 per cent of the house, the opposition has 233 MPs.

While 7 MPs are independents, seven belong to parties like the YSRCP, AIMIM and Shiromani Akali Dal, which have yet to openly support the bills.

The rules require 360 MPs to support the bills, including the Constitution amendment bill, which comes to two-thirds of those present and voting.

For the bills to get approval from the Lok Sabha, at least two main opposition parties from amongst the Samajwadi Party (37 MPs), Trinamool Congress (28 MPs) or DMK (22 MPs) would have to abstain. The Congress has 98 MPs in the Lok Sabha.

On the other hand, the BJP has 240 MPs, TDP 16 and JDU 12 in the Lok Sabha from the NDA.

In case the bills do not get Lok Sabha nod, they will not be taken up in the Rajya Sabha.

In the Rajya Sabha, the NDA has 141 members in their favour, which is 58 per cent of the upper house, and the opposition has 83 MPs in support.

Parties such as the BRS, YSRCP, BJD, and BSP and independents have 20 MPs in the upper house and their votes may help swing the decision.

For the Constitution amendment bill to get through in the upper house, the ruling alliance needs the support of 163 MPs to be present and voting, which is two-thirds majority of the house.

While the BJP has 107 MPs in the Rajya Sabha, the Congress has 28, TMC 13, AAP 10 and DMK 8.

Sources said several BJP MPs have admitted privately that they do not have the numbers to get the key bills passed.

Amending the Constitution requires a special majority in both houses of Parliament: a majority of the total membership (more than 50 per cent) and a two-thirds majority of members present and voting. So if all 540 members, that are there in the house currently, are present and voting, the two-thirds majority mark would be 360. While seeking the support of all parties in getting the bills passed, Prime Minister Narendra Modi made a fervent appeal in the Lok Sabha, saying that he will get all the credit in case the opposition oppose the bills but is ready to give a "blank cheque" to all in case everyone supports the legislation.

The Constitution (131st Amendment) Bill to tweak the women's quota law was introduced in the Lok Sabha on Thursday after a division of votes.

Two ordinary bills -- the Delimitation Bill and the Union Territories Laws (Amendment) Bill to implement the proposed amended women's quota law in Union territories of Delhi, Puducherry and Jammu and Kashmir -- were also introduced.

The bills were introduced in the Lok Sabha after a fiery 40-minute debate, following which the opposition pressed for the division of votes to introduce the Constitutional (131st Amendment) Bill.

The bill was later introduced with 251 members supporting it and 185 members voting against the introduction.

Priyanka Gandhi invokes Chanakya to target Amit Shah in Lok Sabha

New Delhi: In friendly banter, Congress leader Priyanka Gandhi Vadra on Thursday told Home Minister Amit Shah that had Chankaya been alive today, he would have been startled by the BJP leader's "political shrewdness".

Participating in a debate in the Lok Sabha on three bills introduced for amendments to the women's quota law and setting up a delimitation commission, Priyanka Gandhi accused the government of once again wanting to "dupe" people and launching a "big attack on the country's integrity".

"On the one hand there is this big talk of women's reservation, and on the other hand, the rights of OBCs are being taken away. A strong structure is being erected for the next polls by reducing the influence of small states, shredding democracy to pieces," Priyanka Gandhi alleged.

"The home minister is laughing... He has made this full scheme. Had Chankaya been alive, he would have been startled by your political shrewdness ('rajnaitik kutilta'). He (Shah) made the whole plan, and he is laughing now... He agrees with me," the Wayanad MP said.

Hitting out at the government, she claimed the plan involved calling a sitting of Parliament during elections, not calling an all-party meeting, sharing the draft of the bill just a day before the sitting so that the opposition does not get a chance to deliberate on it, starting a discussion in media that Prime Minister Narendra Modi is going to take a big step for women's empowerment and put the opposition in a bind.

"Women's reservation on one hand, and independence to change the structure and neglect the OBC section on the other. It is one thing to be shrewd in politics, and probably we should be a bit more shrewd on this side of the aisle, but it's another thing to take the right decision in national interest, keeping aside the aspirations to remain in power," Priyanka Gandhi said.

In her remarks, she also took a swipe at Prime Minister Modi, saying that from his remarks, it appeared as though the BJP is the sole champion of women's reservation.

"Any woman will tell you that women can instantly spot men who repeatedly try to mislead them," she said.

Giving a background to women's reservation in legislative bodies, the Congress MP said, "When the Women's Reservation Bill was passed in 2023, the Congress extended its full support to it, in alignment with its core ideology. There should be no doubt whatsoever that the Congress stands firmly in favour of women's reservation."

Taking a dig at the government, she said the story began with a man named Nehru "but not the one you try to avoid".

"Motilal Nehru Ji prepared a report in 1928, which he submitted to the Congress Working Committee. Motilal Nehru Ji was the chairman of a committee, and at that time, he prepared a list of 19 fundamental rights.

"In 1931, under the chairmanship of Sardar (Vallabhbhai) Patel Ji, the Karachi session was held, in which this resolution was passed. It was then that the issue of equal rights for women was included in India's politics," she said.

"At the same time, the principle of 'One Vote, One Citizen, One Value' was implemented in our politics," Priyanka Gandhi said, adding that due to this principle, women got the right to vote from the very first day of Independence.

"In countries like America, women had to wait 150 years for this right," she said.

CM calls for micro-macro planning to hit 15% GSDP growth

Vijayawada, April 16

Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu on Thursday directed officials to adopt a combination of micro- and macro-level planning to achieve the State's Gross State Domestic Product (GSDP) growth targets, stressing the need for coordinated short-, medium- and long-term strategies across sectors.

Reviewing the finance department at the Secretariat, the Chief Minister underlined that field-level execution would be crucial to achieving the targeted 15 per cent growth rate, and asked officials to ensure that policy decisions translate effectively at the grassroots level.

Naidu said the government has already ensured availability of key inputs such as water and electricity for agriculture and industry, and called for renewed focus on improving productivity.He noted that despite financial pressures, the government has not increased electricity tariffs and is absorbing an additional burden of Rs 4,600 crore arising from decisions of the previous administration.

He directed revenue-generating departments to meet targets without imposing additional burden on citizens, and emphasised efficiency and streamlined procedures to boost both investments and revenues.

Highlighting infrastructure as a growth engine, the Chief Minister said completion of projects such as Amaravati and Polavaram would significantly enhance wealth creation and economic activity in the State. He assured that funding constraints would not hinder priority projects, adding that support from the Centre would help accelerate their completion.Naidu also instructed officials to maximise utilisation of Central schemes, including Purvodaya and SASCI, to drive development initiatives. He reiterated that welfare programmes would continue to be implemented as per the government's welfare calendar.The Chief Minister further asked officials to focus on securing funds due to the State under the Andhra Pradesh Reorganisation Act, while maintaining fiscal discipline.

Akasa Air, SpiceJet Planes Collide at Delhi Airport, Both Suffer Damage

New Delhi, APril 16

Wings of an Akasa Air and a SpiceJet plane came in contact on the taxiway at the Delhi airport on Thursday afternoon and both aircraft have been grounded due to damages suffered in the incident, according to officials.

The officials said the Akasa Air aircraft was taxiing for take off and the SpiceJet was taxiing towards the parking stand when the incident happened at around 2.15 pm at Terminal 1 of the airport.

Akasa Air's plane was to operate flight QP-1406 from Delhi to Hyderabad while the SpiceJet aircraft had arrived from Leh, they added.

"Akasa Air's aircraft operating flight QP 1406 from Delhi to Hyderabad had to return to the bay on April 16, 2026. Preliminary information indicates that Akasa's aircraft was stationary when another airline's aircraft made contact with it," the airline said in a statement.

The aircraft involved was a Boeing 737 MAX 8.

The airline said all passengers and crew were safely disembarked. "In line with established protocols, the relevant authorities have been informed, and the matter is under investigation," it added.

Indian Chronicle

English Daily

Ensure level playing field for the states

THE Centre's proposed delimitation exercise has caused a furore in Opposition-ruled states, particularly in South India. The Union government's plan to use the 2011 Census as the basis for reallocating Lok Sabha seats has triggered fears that the federal balance could tilt in favour of highly populous states in the Hindi heartland. Opposition parties have reiterated that they fully support women's reservation; their grouse is that it's being used as a pretext to aggravate inequality among states. Tamil Nadu Chief Minister MK Stalin and his Telangana counterpart A Revanth Reddy have accused the Centre of exploiting the demographic arithmetic to undermine cooperative federalism.The necessity of greater representation for women in Parliament and Assemblies cannot be disputed. However, the proposed linkage between the implementation of women's reservation and delimitation — and that too based on a 15-year-old Census — is fraught with complications. Hasty redrawing of parliamentary constituencies without thorough deliberations can only deepen Centre-State mistrust. The timing — right in the middle of an election cycle — is questionable too.The principle of "one person, one vote, one value" must be balanced against the realities of India's development trajectory. Southern states, which have historically invested in population control, education and public health, now find themselves at risk of being penalised for their performance. Kerala CM Pinarayi Vijayan has rightly questioned whether such an approach sends a dangerous message: that governance and demographic discipline may lead to diminished political influence. Delimitation is essentially a political act with far-reaching consequences.

Precautions Essential Amid Rising Temperatures• SP Distributes Cooling Glasses to Traffic Personnel

""Rajanna Sircilla, April 16:"In view of the rising temperatures, District Superintendent of Police Mahesh B. Gite stated that special measures are being taken to safeguard the health of police personnel on duty.On Thursday, as part of the "Arrive Alive" program, cooling glasses were distributed to traffic police personnel at the District Police Office. Speaking on the occasion, the SP advised staff to take necessary precautions while performing duties under extreme heat conditions. He emphasized that traffic personnel, Blue Colts, and patrol car staff should frequently consume water and glucose to stay hydrated and maintain their health. He also urged them to follow all protective measures while on duty.The SP further instructed officials to create awareness among motorists under the "Arrive Alive" initiative. He highlighted the importance of helmet and seat belt usage, and warned about the dangers of rash driving, drunk driving, and minor driving.Traffic RI Suresh, RSI's Samudrala Raju and Srinivas, along with other staff members, participated in the program.

BJP Appoints Bhaja Jayaram as Uppal Division SC Morcha President

"UPPAL, April 16 (INDIAN CHRONICAL):""BJP Uppal Division President Marineni Phanindra has issued orders appointing Bhaja Jayaram as the President of the SC Morcha for Uppal Division."Speaking on the occasion, the newly appointed SC Morcha President Jayaram expressed his gratitude to the party's senior and district leaders for placing their trust in him and entrusting him with the responsibility.He stated that he would work dedicatedly for the prestige and growth of the party in the division and would take all necessary steps to ensure the success of every programme decided by the party leadership."Jayaram further said that special initiatives would be undertaken to strengthen the party in the division ahead of the upcoming Greater elections."He remarked that his appointment itself stands as an example of how the party recognizes every leader who works sincerely for its growth. He also stated that there is no family rule in the BJP and that every hardworking party worker is duly recognized.

SOUTHERN POWER DISTRIBUTION COMPANY OF TELANGANA LTD
METRO ZONE, MINT COMPOUND:: HYDERABAD-63

E-procurement Tender of Spec No. Extension-II of eMZ-49, eMZ-51, eMZ-52, eMZ-53, eMZ-54 of 2025-26 & eMZ-05/2026-27 (New)

Tender Notice No. 02/26-27 (Paper Notification)

Tenders are invited from eligible agencies for **Extension-II of e-Tender:** Extension of 33KV HT Supply to M/s. Dept Manager at TGSRTC **a)** Farooqnagar Depot under **General Category (eMZ-49), b)** Kachiguda Bus Depot under **General Category (eMZ-51), c)** Barkathpura Bus Depot under **General Category (eMZ-52), d)** CBS, Gowliguda under **General Category (eMZ-53), e)** Musheerabad Bus depot under **General Category (eMZ-54)** under Capital Works and **f)** Bifurcation of **11KV Hussainialam Feeder** emanating from 33/11 KV Petlaburj SS under **General Category of eMZ-05/26-27 (New)** of Hyd South Circle under T&D Improvements to original works. Any further information in this regard can be viewed from the website of www.tender.telangana.gov.in and www.tgsouthernpower.org

Chief Engineer, Operation, Metro Zone, Hyderabad

R.O. No. : 832-PP/CL/ADVT/2026-27, Date: 16-04-2026

BJP leaders caught unawares in the Adilabad Cement factory issue

"S. Harpal Singh, Adilabad, April 16**The Bharatiya Janata Party Adilabad unit was caught unawares even as the process for dismantling the closed cement factory began here. The BJP had won the 2023 Assembly and the 2024 Parliament elections wherein one of the promises made by it was to reopen the unit of the Cement Corporation of India.""We had no idea that the Union government had awarded the contract to dismantle the huge cement unit. The disposal of the factory has put us under tremendous pressure as locals are reminding us of the promise to reopen the unit which our leaders have made since the last few years," said an angry BJP worker as he talked about the latest development."The Indian Chronicle had broken the story two days back and all the local media gave coverage to the issue subsequently. The coverage that the issue received has alerted the locals among whom were farmers who had lost their agricultural lands when the factory was established."These farmers went to the CCI premises and forced the machine operators to stop work on clearing the bushes and shrubs. They demanded the government come out with a reply to their demands of reopening the factory."Meanwhile, the Congress party has questioned the BJP on what had become of their promise. District Congress Committee spokesperson B. Goverdhan Reddy said it was not only the BJP MLA Payal Shankar and MP G. Nagesh who had made the promise but as higher up a functionary as Home Minister Amit Shah had promises to reopen the CCI Adilabad unit, he pointed out.

Government Prioritises Public Safety Alongside Welfare and Development

99-Day Praja Palana Progress Plan is a Great Initiative," says: State Planning Commission Vice Chairman Dr. Jillela Chinna Reddy"" District Collector Adarsh Surabhi urges farmers to adopt crop diversification"

*Wanaparthy correspondent, April 16:(Indian Chronicle)::""State Planning Commission Vice Chairman *Dr. Jillela Chinna Reddy* said that along with development and welfare, the safety of the people is also the government's top priority, and as part of this commitment, *Road Safety Week celebrations* are being conducted under the *99-Day Praja Palana Progress Plan.On Thursday, a mandal-level programme was held at the **Tahsildar office premises in Gopalpet mandal, where the *"Arrive Alive" road safety awareness programme** was organised as part of the Praja Palana initiative. Dr. Jillela Chinna Reddy and *District Collector Adarsh Surabhi* attended the event as chief guests.Before the commencement of the programme, a message from Chief Minister *A. Revanth Reddy* on the *99-day Praja Palana action plan* was read out to the villagers, highlighting the welfare and development activities implemented over the last two and a half years.Speaking on the occasion, Dr. Chinna Reddy said the government was giving equal importance to *development, welfare, and public safety. He noted that meetings were being conducted in all mandals across the district as part of the 99-day programme.8 and urged everyone to wear helmets to protect their lives. He also stated that the government's aim is to ensure welfare benefits reach every eligible poor family.Dr. Chinna Reddy said the government was investing heavily in education and advised parents to encourage their children to pursue higher studies. He also called on people to maintain affection for their native villages and contribute to their development.Urging farmers to adopt **crop diversification, he advised them to reduce the use of chemical fertilisers and move towards organic farming. Pointing out the growing demand for **palm oil cultivation, he said the government was offering attractive incentives for farmers who take up the crop.He further appealed to people to avoid corruption and lead contented lives, and urged communities to work together to eliminate **belt shops* in villages.Highlighting the welfare measures implemented since the present government assumed office, Dr. Chinna Reddy mentioned schemes such as *Rythu Bharosa, farm loan waiver, Mahila Shakti, Gruha Jyothi, Indiramma houses, Cheyutha pensions, and free saree distribution, all of which have earned public appreciation.In **Gopalpet mandal, **3,897 farmers* benefitted from a *loan waiver of ?30.02 crore, while **12,637 farmers* received *?13.96 crore* as investment support under *Rythu Bharosa. Out of **10,534 ration cards* in the mandal, *962 new ration cards* were issued. District Collector *Adarsh Surabhi* said the Praja Palana Progress Plan was designed to explain to the people the welfare measures and development works taken up by the government over the last two and a half years, while also understanding the needs of the public.He explained the implementation of schemes such as *farm loan waiver, Rythu Bharosa, Gruha Jyothi, ration cards, interest-free loans to self-help groups, and works under the employment guarantee scheme.The Collector said **408 Indiramma houses* had been sanctioned in Gopalpet mandal. He added that *?51.73 crore* had been credited to *5,088 farmers* for the procurement of crops during the *2025-26 Kharif season, while **5,139 women* received *free sarees* and *627 women self-help groups* were provided *?1.63 crore in interest-free loans.Under the **Gruha Jyothi scheme, electricity up to **200 units* is being provided free of cost, benefiting *4,316 households* in the village.As part of the *Arrive Alive* campaign, the Collector reminded everyone to follow traffic rules and wear helmets while driving two-wheelers. He revealed that *26 people lost their lives in road accidents in the district this year*, and urged the public to be cautious.""*DSP Venkateshwarlu* also called upon the public to follow road safety regulations.

He said the police department was distributing helmets to two-wheeler riders to create awareness on road safety.""## *Free Eye Check-up Camp for Auto Drivers*"As part of the Arrive Alive programme, a *free eye screening camp* was organised for *auto drivers* at the Tahsildar office. The chief guests visited the camp and encouraged the drivers to make full use of the facility."Helmets were also distributed to two-wheeler riders jointly by the *Police Department* and the *Transport Department. The participants later took a **road safety pledge, promising to follow traffic rules.During the programme, **Polikepadu village Sarpanch Bangarayya* was felicitated for taking steps to eliminate belt shops in the village. Posters prepared by *RDS* to promote the eradication of *child marriages* were also unveiled.The programme was attended by *DSP Venkateshwarlu, DTO Manasa, Special Officer Sudheer Reddy, Gopalpet Sarpanch Swapna, local leaders, public representatives, officials, and villagers.*

Handloom workers and their family members should undergo medical check-ups in medical camps and grow healthy

Yadadri Bhuvanagiri District Local Bodies Additional Collector Bhaskar Rao""(Yadadri Bhuvanagiri District Bureau.. Indian Chronicle..April 16):- Handloom workers and their family members in Yadadri Bhuvanagiri district should take advantage of this opportunity to undergo medical check-ups in medical camps, said Additional Collector of Local Bodies Bhaskar Rao. On Thursday, a "Health Assurance" program was organized for handloom workers at Gowda Sangha Bhavan, Aleru. Handloom is a profession of weaving clothes with silk threads using handlooms. With the aim of providing health assurance to handloom workers who continue this profession as a cultural heritage, this program was organized in coordination with the District Center, Health Department, District Handloom & Textiles Department, Yadadri Bhuvanagiri. The program was inaugurated by Aler Municipal Chairperson Balamani Bhaskar. The Additional District Collector said that this program was undertaken as part of the 99-day Public Administration Progress Plan undertaken by the Telangana State Government on the instructions of the District Collector. On this occasion, health tests were conducted for the handloom workers at the Gowda Sangha Bhavan and necessary treatments and lab tests were provided. Health cards were distributed to the handloom workers and necessary medicines were provided.

The complete medical details (Medical History) of each worker were recorded in the health card. He said that a comprehensive understanding of the health status of the handloom workers was created through this program. He advised the officials to pay more attention to the health of the handloom workers and make good use of the government health services. He said that such programs will be organized more widely in the future. Speaking on this occasion, the Municipal Chairman said that he was happy to organize medical camps for the handloom workers as they face many physical problems professionally.

He said. District Medical Officer Dr. Manohar, speaking, said that those with health problems should use this opportunity and get treatment. Municipal Vice Chairman Anjaneyulu, DRDA PD Nagi Reddy, AD (Handloom & Textiles) Srinivas, YBD District Program Officers, Municipal Councilors, members of the Urban Handloom Association, Srinivas Reddy (Municipal Commissioner, Aler) Dr. Haimavathy (Medical Officer, Sarajipet), other health staff and field staff participated in this program.

PUBLIC NOTICE

This to inform to the general public at large that, my client Kondgir Radheshyam S/o Kondgir Vittal R/o Village Dhanora-B, Mdl: Indervelly, Dist. Adilabad, that my client is owner of Plot No. 820, in Sy. No.12, situated at Village, G.P. & Mandal Mavala, Dist. Adilabad, newly merged into Adilabad Municipality, and he is availing a loan from State Bank of India, Br. Shivaji Chowk, Adilabad.

That is link document No. 8110/2021 has lost.

If anyone has any claim, right, title or interest of any kind in the said property, they may contact the undersigned within 7 days of the publication of this Notice, with all documents of claim and title.

If any one finds the above document kindly handover to undersigned.

If anyone got/found the above document No. 8110/2021, they shall hand over to my client or can hand over to the address below.

If no objection is received within 7 days, and if any claim and objection arise, it shall be deemed to have been waived Dt. 15-04-2026.

Bipin Kumar Patel
Advocate,
ADARSH Building,
N.H.No.44, Adilabad
Cell: 9440005500

Government of Telangana
District Collector, Warangal
(Primary Notification)
Form – VI

(See Sub - rule (1) of rule - 19 and Section -11(1) of the Act-30/2013)

Warangal District Gazette No.20/WGL/2026, Dated: 09.04.2026
District Collector, Warangal Prodgs. No. G / 707/2026 Dated: 09.04.2026
Rc.No.B/722 Dated: .03.2026

Whereas it appears to the District Collector, Warangal that an extent of Ac.5-29 gts of land is required in **Divitipally** village of Wardhannapet Mandal of Warangal District for public purpose, namely acquisition of land for excavation 3R-D-6L & 4L-D-6L on Nashkal Main Canal under J.Chokka Rao Govadavi Lift Irrigation Project.

Therefore, it is notified that for the above said project in the Divitipally Village of Wardhannapet Mandal, Warangal District land measuring, more or less acres of standard measurement, whose detail description is as following is proposed for acquisition as per Right to Fair Compensation and Transparency in Land Acquisition, Rehabilitation and Resettlement Act, 30 of 2013 read with Telangana Amendment Act, 2016 (21 of 2017) in its application to the state of Telangana vide G.O.Ms. No.63 Irrigation & CADD Dept., dated: 29.07.2017 and accordingly hereby in the public interest, SRSP Stage-I exempt from the application of provisions of the Chapter-II and Chapter III of RFCT LA R&R Act, 2013.

Therefore, it is notified that for the above said project in the Divitipally village of Wardhannapet Mandal of Warangal District a piece of land measuring, more or less Ac. 5-29 gts of standard measurement, whose detailed description is as following, is under acquisition.

Schedule

Sl. No.	Sy. No.	Type of Title	Type of Land	Area Under Acquisition (Ac-gt,	Name of the Enjoyer & Actual owner of the land	Structures /Trees
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Divitipally Village Wardhannapet Mandal (3R- D-6L of Naskal Main Canal from KM 0.000 to KM 0.170)						
1	351	Patta	Dry	0-36	**As per Bhubharathi** Sri Burgu YellaSoud J/o Venkatnarru Damera Rajamallu 5/o Achalah Damera Yellaiah S/o Achhaiah Kathula Tirupati J/o Yellaiah	
			Total	0-36		
Divitipally Village Wardhannapet Mandal (4L- D-6L of Naskal Main Canal from KM 0.000 to KM 0.925)						
1	355	Patta	Dry	0-03	**As per Bhubharathi** Vadlakonda Suresh S/o Sammaiah Vadlakonda Swamy S/o Komraiah Nyaramneni Sunithadevi S/o Kishan Theegala Jyothi W/o Dayakar Rao Thotakura YadaSiri S/o Komuraiah Mucha Vijayalaxmi W/o Ramaswamy Vangala Tirupati S/o Yakireddy Roads	
2	357	Patta	Dry	0-17	**As per Bhubharathi** Kanneboina Kumari W/o Chennaiah Kanneboina Komuraiah S/o Chennaiah Theegala Jyothi W/o Dayakar Rao Vadlakonda Swapna W/o Swamy Bajjuri Padmavathi W/o Krishnamurthi Roads	
3	358	Patta	Dry	0-28	**As per Bhubharathi** Kanneboina Shobha W/o Kumari Kanneboina Komuraiah S/o Chennaiah Vardhineni Harirh Kumar S/o Laxman Rao Vardhineni Laxman Rao S/o Chalapathi Rao	
4	360	Patta	Dry	0-18	**As per Bhubharathi** Kanneboina Shobha W/o kumari Kanneboina Komuraiah S/o Chennaiah Bommithetti Yellamma W/o Somaiah Bommineni Papamma W/o Komraiah Kanneboina Laxmi W/o Komraiah Kola Nagaraju S/o Yadagiri Kola lambaraju S/o Sadaiah Kola Naresh S/o Yadagiri Kola Swamy Ganesh S/o Sadaiah Shivarathri Komuraiah S/o Mallaiah Kanneboina Yakaiah S/o Narsaiah Kanneboina Chandrasekhar S/o Komuraiah	
5	359	Patta	Dry	0-36	**As per Bhubharathi** Kanneboina Kumari S/o Chennaiah Kanneboina Komuraiah S/o Chennaiah Engala Anitha W/o Ramchander Kola Nagara.iu S/o Yadagiri Kola Sambaraju S/o Sadaiah Kola Naresh S/o Yadagiri Kola Swamy Ganesh S/o Sadaiah	
6	381	Patta	Dry	0-22	**As per Bhubharathi** Gangula Mahipal Reddy S/o Venkat Narsimha Reddy Angala Anitha W/o Ramchander Gangula Ravimohan Reddy S/o Venkatnarsimha Reddy	
7	380	Patta	Dry	0-31	**As per Bhubharathi** Bommishetti Yellamma W/o Somaiah Gangula Ravimohan Reddy S/o Venkatnarsimha Reddy Bommishetti Papamma S/o Komraiah Shivarathri Laxmi w/o Komraiah Shivarathri Yellajwamy S/o Pardaiah Shivarathri Ramaiah S/o Yellaiah	
8	382	Patta	Dry	0-38	**As per Bhubharathi** Gangula Ramreddy S/o Venkatnarsimha Reddy Kulla Venkataiah S/o Rajamallaiah C,ande Murali S/o Seetharamulu Gande Somaiah S/o Seetharamulu Yengala Anitha W/o Ramchander Gangula Saritha W/o Ramreddy Gangula Ravimohan Reddy S/o Venkatnarsimha Reddy Kasarla Radhakishan Rao S/o Narsinga Rao Polepalli Tirupati Reddy S/o Komurareddy Jonnala Ravinder S/o Shankaraiah Bomineni Papireddy S/o Venkat reddy	
Total				4-33		
Grand Total				5-29		

This notification is made under the provisions of section 11(1) of the Right to Fair Compensation and Transparency in Land Acquisition, Rehabilitation & Resettlement Act 2013 (Act No. 30/2013) to all whom it may concern.

A plan of the land may be inspected in the office of the District Collector, Warangal & Revenue Divisional officer, Warangal on any working day during the working hours. The Government of Telangana/ Collector-cum-Appropriate Government, Warangal is pleased to authorize officer Revenue Divisional officer, Warangal and his staff to enter upon and survey land, take levels of any land, dig or bore into the sub-soil & do all other acts required for the proper execution of their work ar provided and specified in section 12 of the said Act.

Under section 11(4) of the Act, no person shall make any transaction or cause any transaction of land i.e sale/purchase, etc., or create any encumbrances on such land from the date oi publication of such notification without prior approval of the Collector.

Objection to the acquisition if any may be filed by the person interested within 60 (sixty days) from the date of publication of this notification as provided U/s 15 of the Act before District Collector, Warangal/Revenue Divisional Officer, Warangal.

Land Acquisition Officer & Revenue Divisional Officer Warangal | **Addl. Collector Warangal** | **District Collector Warangal**

DIPR RO No: 51/LA-PP/ADVT/Pub/2026-27

Little Flower School, Uppal Achieves Grand Success in Class 10 CBSE Results

""UPPAL, APRIL 16 (INDIAN CHRONICAL):""Students of Little Flower School, Uppal, achieved outstanding success in the recently announced Class 10 CBSE examination results, bringing laurels to the institution.A total of 150 students from the school appeared for the examinations this year, and the school proudly recorded a 100 percent pass rate, earning widespread appreciation."Among the toppers, Miss B. Advitiya secured 96 percent, emerging as the school topper. She was closely followed by J. Srithan Reddy, who also scored 96 percent. T. Rishik Reddy and G. Shiva Sai secured 95 percent each, marking an impressive performance."Notably, 33 students scored above 90 percent, reflecting the high academic standards maintained by the school."Speaking on the occasion, Principal Reverend Brother Joseph praised the students for their hard work and dedication. He stated that the remarkable success was made possible through the students' sincere efforts, the teachers' special coaching, and the constant support of parents."On behalf of the school management, he congratulated all the students for their excellent achievement.

Little Flower Degree College Marks Annual Day Celebrations with Academic Excellence and Grand Honours

--Retired IAS Officer Ajay Mishra lauds students and faculty; meritorious achievers felicitated at Golden Jubilee Auditorium"""UPPAL, APRIL 16 (INDIAN CHRONICAL):""Little Flower Degree College in Uppal celebrated its Annual Day for the academic year 2025–26 with great enthusiasm and grandeur on Thursday at its Golden Jubilee Auditorium, showcasing the institution's academic excellence and outstanding achievements in co-curricular fields."The event was attended by retired IAS officer Ajay Mishra as the chief guest. The programme was graced by Correspondent Rev. Brother Arun Prakash, Director Rev. Brother John Kallarackal, Principal Jayanthi Reddy, faculty members, and students."Presenting the annual report, Principal Jayanthi Reddy highlighted the college's notable accomplishments during the academic year, including impressive academic results and achievements in extracurricular activities. She credited the success to the relentless efforts and dedication of both students and staff."As part of the celebrations, the college honoured students who excelled in various disciplines. Special awards were presented to those who achieved 100 per cent attendance and students securing an SGPA of 9.5 and above. Students who distinguished themselves in academics, sports, cultural events, NCC, and NSS activities were also felicitated."

The institution also recognised the significant contributions of its faculty members. Awards were conferred for publication of research papers in prestigious journals such as Web of Science and Scopus, completion of PhDs, patents, best research paper awards, PhD registrations, publication of book chapters, and completion of ten years of service. The awardees were also presented with cash prizes."Speaking on the occasion, chief guest Ajay Mishra said the achievements of the teaching staff serve as a source of inspiration for students. He urged students to pursue their goals with discipline, determination, and perseverance."Director Rev. Brother John Kallarackal congratulated the students and faculty for their commendable achievements across multiple fields and praised their dedication in bringing laurels to the institution."The Annual Day celebrations concluded on a successful and inspiring note, leaving students and staff motivated to strive for greater heights."

The water problem of the people in Pahadi Nagar Banjara Hills in Ward 31 should be resolved immediately

Ward 31 Councilor Summaiya Thabbassoom""(Yadadri Bhuvanagiri District Bureau.. Indian Chronicle.. April 16):- Bhuvanagiri Municipal Chairman Tangellapalli Srivani Ravi Kumar and Municipal Commissioner Kondal Reddy were handed over a petition by Ward 31 Councilor Summaiya Thabbassoom. Speaking on this occasion, they asked the concerned ward councilors to repair the leakages in about (5) areas of the pipeline that brings fresh water to Bhuvanagiri town through Sainikpuri, including Awshapur, in front of AIIMS Hospital, Pagidipalli, at Toll Plaza Gate, and at Anantaram. Due to the tank overflowing at Karimguda, approximately 10 to 12 hours of water was wasted, the valve at R&B tank was broken, the valve at Tata Nagar tank was broken, and water was not supplied properly, and due to the unauthorized and illegal use of water by AIIMS Hospital through the pipeline installed by the municipal corporation in the middle of the route, the people of Bhuvanagiri town, especially the people of our 31st ward, are not getting water supply and the people of the ward town are facing serious problems." The pipeline coming from Sainikpuri was immediately inspected at the field level and the above-mentioned problems were identified. Therefore, appropriate measures were not taken at the water tank where the overflow occurred. Appropriate measures should be taken to conserve water, repair leaks and valves, and stop the unauthorized supply of water immediately, so that water can be supplied without any problems during the summer season, on behalf of the urban people of our ward. Anusha Jyoti Shafiq Ahmed and others participated in this program.

Modi government is planning for employment guarantee scheme

Telangana Agricultural Labor Union District General Secretary Kondamadugu Narsimha """(Yadadri Bhuvanagiri District Bureau..Indian Chronicle..April 16):- As a result of the struggles of left parties and agricultural labor unions. Kondamadugu Narsimha, District General Secretary of Telangana Agricultural Labor Union, criticized the Modi government at the Center for harassing the workers for the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme. After visiting the employment guarantee workplace in Modgumpalli village under Bibinagar mandal on Thursday, Narsimha addressed them and said that the Modi government will act as if they have brought a change in the living conditions of the rural poor and canceled the employment guarantee scheme which provides two meals a day by canceling the employment guarantee scheme. He criticized that he is making the workers suffer by bringing many kinds of living things in the guarantee of employment which did not get the 200 rupees that were difficult. He said that due to the introduction of e-KYC system, there is no proper net in the work place and there are many twists and turns. He expressed his concern that if the photo does not come in e-KYC, there will be no situation to take work that day. He criticized that no government that knows such false creatures on the poor and their life conditions will not bring such policies and lives. They demanded that the government should repeal the Jeeranji Act and continue the old employment guarantee law and cancel the new JIOs brought by the government. They demanded that 200 working days a year should be provided in the employment guarantee, a daily wage of 800 rupees should be provided, a tent for shade, drinking water, medical kit and accident insurance facility should be provided at the work place. Narsimha called upon the workers to participate in the dharna programs organized from 20th to 25th of this month in front of all the mandal MPDO offices across the district. After that ORS packets were provided to the workers. Agricultural Labor Union Mandal Convenor Gadi Srinivas, CITU Mandal Convener Bandari Shravan Kumar, Field Assistant Narsimha, Workers Matta Padma, Venkatamma, Anjamma, Manasa, Siliveru Manjula, Kavitha, Gorukanti Aruna, Krishnaveni, Padma, Lalita, Gundu Yadamma and others.

Social Development and Welfare of the Poor are the Goals of the Telangana State Government

: Rekha Baburao, Chairperson, Bhuvanagiri Agricultural Market Committee""(Yadadri Bhuvanagiri District Bureau – Indian Chronicle – April 16): Bhuvanagiri: Kanukuntla Rekha Baburao, Chairperson of the Bhuvanagiri Agricultural Market Committee, stated that government schemes—which are intended to benefit everyone regardless of political affiliation—will be delivered to every eligible poor person with the cooperation of Bhuvanagiri MLA Kumbham Anil Kumar Reddy. Speaking on Thursday at a Mandal-level meeting held at the MPDO office—as part of the State Government's prestigious "99-Day Praja Palana (People's Administration) Progress Plan"—she noted that Bhuvanagiri MLA Kumbham Anil Kumar Reddy is striving to ensure that every eligible poor resident across his constituency receives the benefits of government schemes, transcending party lines. She added that, under the leadership of Chief Minister Revanth Reddy, the "People's Government" is moving forward with the primary objective of ensuring the welfare and comprehensive development of the poor in rural areas; furthermore, she affirmed that the government is committed to fulfilling the promises made to the public in the days to come. She highlighted that whenever Sarpanches bring village-level issues to his attention, the MLA responds promptly to every concern, focusing specifically on developing infrastructure with the support of the State Government to resolve these problems. Bhuvanagiri DSP Ravinder, Tahsildar Jagan Mohan Prasad, MPDO Srinivas, MPO Dinakar, along with other officials and public representatives, participated in this event.

Shops on Yadadri Hill"Tender irregularities.. Ignoring officials.. Cancel old tenders and issue new tenders -

BJP District General Secretary Kaduri Achaiah""*Traders' Association leaders occupied shops with political support and money power without issuing tenders""(Yadadri Bhuvanagiri District Bureau.. Indian Chronicle... April 16):- In Yadagirigutta, traders illegally occupied shops on the hill without issuing tenders with political support.. with money power.. and continued illegal business. On Wednesday, a petition was submitted to the EO regarding the hilltop trade association under the auspices of the urban BJP branch in Yadagirigutta to take action against such traders. Speaking on this occasion, District General Secretary Kaduri Achaiah said that business complexes on the hilltop have been in the hands of only one group for the past 30-40 years. They said that the commercial association is running shops with the lowest rent by using political power and money to block these without tendering. They said that this temple belongs to all Hindus and is not your uncle's jagir, and that these business dealings are in a way to exploit the devotees who come to the hill, that there is a retirement for the temple employees on the hill.. but not for the commercial association, and that today the commercial association is running shops as if grandfathers, fathers.. and sons said. Similarly, even if there is any tender on the hill, they are acting in a way that prevents outsiders from coming, creating a monopoly and a market and creating fear. They are threatening the relevant officials and preventing renewal, and they are supporting whatever government comes in.. and offering bribes to them and getting these renewed. They are selling a single coconut for Rs. 100.. and a water bottle for Rs. 40. They are robbing the devotees. He said that in Yadadri town and mandal, there are a few hundred unemployed youths who have to go to Patnam to work for a salary of 10,000, but they are living in a state of poverty by taking 50,000 per month in the name of sub-leases. He said that if there are any truly poor people in this trade association, they should be exempted. The authorities should respond immediately and immediately dissolve this association and organize a tender auction, which will bring in a few crores of revenue for the temple, and if the trade association is not dissolved, they will hold large-scale protests under the auspices of the BJP. State Council Member Raccha Srinivas, Town President Karre Praveen, former Town Mandal President Guntupalli Satyam District Council No. Akula Chandramouli, Town Secretaries Dommata Prabhakar, Avula Satyam, Aleti Karna, Suresh, Senior Leaders Lenkalapalli Srinivas, Miryala Krishna, Boda Buchibabu, Banda Chiru Sai, Sudhagani Prashanth, Vijay, Srinath, Shyam and others participated in this program.

Nari Shakti Vandan Abhiyan – 33% Reservation for Women Key to Building a New India

--Sadineni Geetha, President, Pragathi Women's Organisation""UPPAL , April 16 (INDIAN CRONICAL):""The Nari Shakti Vandan Abhiyan marks a significant step towards women's empowerment in India. The primary objective of this initiative is to provide 33% reservation for women in the political sphere, ensuring greater representation and equal opportunities in decision-making processes."Women play a vital role in the nation's development; however, their representation in politics has remained comparatively low for many years. This initiative has been introduced to address that imbalance and promote gender equality in governance."Providing 33% reservation for women will enhance their participation in leadership and policy decisions. It is expected to boost women's confidence and establish stronger gender equality in society. The initiative will also encourage leadership opportunities for women at the grassroots and rural levels, bringing fresh perspectives and innovative ideas into governance."The campaign is seen as a major encouragement for women to step forward into public and political life. It also serves as an inspiration for young women, motivating them to aspire to leadership roles. Increased representation of women leaders is expected to ensure that issues concerning women are better understood and addressed."Experts believe that women's active involvement in governance can also contribute significantly to poverty alleviation and social welfare. This initiative is not merely about reservation, but a symbol of equality, justice, and respect for women's rights. It reflects the country's commitment to providing equal opportunities for all."While there are certain challenges and opposition from some sections of society, the long-term benefits of the initiative are considered far greater. Greater participation of women in decision-making will strengthen democracy and accelerate social development."The increase in women's representation in politics is expected to promote justice, fairness, and equality in society. Providing equal opportunities to women is essential for the nation's future, and the Nari Shakti Vandan Abhiyan is a major step in that direction."In conclusion, the 33% reservation for women is highly beneficial for society as it unlocks the potential and strength of women, paving new paths for the country's progress. The Nari Shakti Vandan Abhiyan truly stands as a symbol of women's empowerment.

Cyberabad Police arrest main accused in microfinance scam

Hyderabad: In a major development in the microfinance cheating case, the key suspect, Ramavath Madhu, has been arrested by the Cyberabad Police on Thursday.According to allegations, Madhu and his associates collected nearly Rs 150 crore from victims under the guise of microfinance operations. Multiple cases had already been registered against him in Cyberabad, and he had reportedly gone into hiding after the fraud came to light.The case has also drawn attention due to claims made by advocate S Subbarao, who alleged the involvement of popular singer Mangli and her brother.

Khammam District: Collector Calls for Transformative Change Through 99-Day Praja Palana Action Plan

“KHAMMAM, KUSUMANCHI APRIL 16 (INDIAN CHRONICLE):““District Collector Anudeep Durishetty emphasized that a comprehensive transformation should be achieved in villages through the effective implementation of the 99-day Praja Palana Pragathi Pranalika (Public Governance Progress Plan).“He was speaking on Thursday at a mandal-level Praja Palana program held at Vijaya Rama Function Hall in Kusumanchi mandal headquarters.“The Collector stated that, under the directions of the Chief Minister, the state government launched the prestigious 99-day Praja Palana initiative on March 6. He noted that all components of this program have been successfully implemented in Khammam district so far.“As per government guidelines, village-level programs were successfully conducted on April 2, followed by awareness programs at mandal headquarters. He added that newly elected representatives in gram panchayats and municipalities are enthusiastic, and coordination with them is essential to achieve government goals.“To ensure quicker resolution of local issues, the government has released pending funds. The Collector instructed officials to identify and prioritize problems in every village, with special focus on sanitation, street lighting maintenance, and timely payment of wages to multi-purpose workers.“Regarding the Indiramma Housing Scheme, he said that 3,500 houses were sanctioned per constituency, with around 16,500 houses allocated to Khammam district. Of these, 2,800 houses have been completed, and slab work has been finished for 8,200 houses. Nearly 10,000 houses are expected to be ready for inauguration soon.“In Kusumanchi mandal, 690 houses were sanctioned, and he directed sarpanches and local leaders to immediately begin construction of the remaining 43 pending houses. Funds are being released to beneficiaries every Monday, he added.“The Collector also highlighted that the foundation has been laid for a new junior college and a 100-bed hospital in Kusumanchi, with development works progressing rapidly.“He urged officials to ensure that welfare schemes—such as 200 units of free electricity, fine rice distribution, new ration cards, ?500 gas cylinders, interest-free loans, ?500 bonus per quintal, and Kalyana Lakshmi—reach every eligible beneficiary.“The Collector called for making Kusumanchi mandal a model in resolving public issues and effectively implementing government schemes.“The meeting was attended by officials from various departments, including Special Officer Ramesh, MPDO Rajarao, Tahsildar Saidulu, Agriculture Officer Vani, Medical Officer Dr. Sai, and others.“

Prja Palana Completes 99 Days: Town Hall Held in Vemulawada

* Focus on Welfare and Development – Chairman Pulkam Raju“““““Vemulawada, April 16:“As part of the 99-day Public Governance Progress praja palana Programme, a town hall meeting was on Thursday at Mahalingeshwara Garden in Vemulawada. The event was conducted in the presence of Chairman Pulkam Raju and Municipal Commissioner Sampath Kumar.Speaking on the occasion, Chairman Pulkam Raju elaborated on various welfare schemes being implemented by the state government. He highlighted key initiatives such as the breakfast scheme for students from pre-primary to intermediate level, Indira Family Life Insurance, expansion of the mid-day meal programme, crop diversification, and promotion of organic farming.He further stated that efforts are being made to ensure that benefits like Indiramma housing, new ration cards, and pensions reach the poor sections effectively. He urged citizens to make proper use of government welfare schemes.The Chairman also noted that under the leadership of MLA and Government Whip Adi Srinivas, major development works are underway, including ?150 crore for the development of Rajarajeshwara Devasthanam, ?46 crore for main road expansion, and ?4.20 crore for roads and drainage works in the town. On the occasion, a wheelchair was distributed to Ponnala Swamy through ICDS, and water purifiers were provided to Anganwadi centres in Ayyarupalli and Parvathipuram.The programme was attended by RDO R.V. Radhabai, Town CI Veera Prasad, muncipal Vice Chairman Narala Shekhar, ward councillors, Indiramma committee members, and local residents.

Archaka Sangham Leader Slams Chinna Jeeyar Swami Over Remarks on Lord Shiva, Questions Caste

“Kothagudem, Telangana – Shirla Vancha Krishna Chari, representative of the Dhoopa Deepa Naivedya Archaka Sangham, launched a sharp attack on Tridandi Chinna Jeeyar Swami over his alleged remarks in a recent debate that "Lord Shiva does not exist".““Key allegations made by Krishna Chari:“- On Shiva remark: Called it "laughable" that Chinna Jeeyar Swami denied the existence of Lord Shiva, whom crores of Indians worship as the supreme deity. Questioned, "If Shiva resides only in cremation grounds, then is the body of those wearing a Shiva Linga equal to a cremation ground?" Challenged the seer to "go to Kailash with his body and return" to prove his point.“- On caste and Brahmin identity: Directly asked "What is Chinna Jeeyar's caste?" Citing Puranic references, he claimed Vasishtha was the son of Urvashi and Arundhati was the daughter of Matanga Muni. He asked, "How did those born to a courtesan's son and a Matanga woman become Brahmins?" He also invoked the Vajrasuchi Upanishad, stating many Gotra Rishis were born to animals and birds.“- On Vishwakarma Brahmins: Asserted that as per the Purusha Sukta, the true first Varna Brahmins are from the Vishwakarma lineage. Claimed Brihaspati, Vishwarupa Acharya, Shukracharya, Kashyapa, and Bhrigu were all descendants of Vishwakarma. Said his community is called "Deva Brahmins" and invited an open debate to prove it.““Warning to the seer: Krishna Chari warned that "those who hate Shiva will pay the price" and accused the swami of arrogance and hoarding wealth. He said Shiva devotees are ready for a debate anywhere if needed. He added, "In this modern age people want evidence, not fictional stories. The days of believing fabricated tales are gone."““Context: The statement comes amid ongoing debates between Shaiva and Vaishnava traditions. Chinna Jeeyar Swami, a prominent Vaishnava seer, has often stated that "caste is not by birth but by qualities and deeds," which has sparked discussions among different sections of Sanatana Dharma.““Note: These are allegations and viewpoints expressed by Shirla Vancha Krishna Chari. Chinna Jeeyar Swami's exact remarks and response to these claims were not part of the provided text.

Jagriti College Students Shine; Chinnareddy Felicitates Toppers

Wanaparthy correspondent, April 16 (Indian Chronicle: ““ Vice Chairman of the State Planning Commission, Jillella Chinnareddy, on Thursday congratulated the students of Jagriti Junior College for their outstanding performance in the recently announced Intermediate Board examinations.The college achieved remarkable success, with students securing the *2nd rank at the state level* and *1st rank in the undivided district. In the BiPC stream, **Uzma Hazara* scored *438 out of 440 in the first year, while **Anushna* secured an impressive *994 out of 1000 in the second year*, setting new academic benchmarks.During his visit to the college, Chinnareddy appreciated the students for their dedication and hard work. He noted that Wanaparthy has had a strong reputation in the field of education for many years and expressed satisfaction that institutions like Jagriti are continuing that legacy.

He also lauded the efforts of Principal Ambati Vinod, the college management, and faculty members for their commitment to academic excellence and shaping students into responsible citizens.Encouraging the students to aim higher, he called upon them to achieve even greater success in the coming years and help place Wanaparthy district at the forefront of education in the state.The programme was attended by college management members Shyam, Satyanarayana, Bhaskar, faculty, and students.

Strong Measures for Permanent Resolution of Land Issues — Collector Anudeep Durishetty

KHAMMAM, APRIL 16 (INDIAN CHRONICLE): ““District Collector Anudeep Durishetty stated that the government is taking concrete steps to ensure permanent resolution of land-related issues and to provide transparent and simplified services to citizens.“On Thursday, the Collector reviewed the implementation of the Integrated Bhu Bharati Pilot Portal Project with revenue and other concerned officials at the Tahsildar’s office in Kusumanchi mandal.“Speaking on the occasion, the Collector said that the government has introduced the Integrated Bhu Bharati Portal as a pilot project in Kusumanchi mandal of Khammam district. The initiative brings together the Revenue, Land Survey, and Registration departments under one platform to resolve land issues efficiently.“He explained that the portal has been designed to provide survey maps at the time of land registration at the Tahsildar’s office. Farmers can also book survey slots from home through the portal. Once logged in, land details are displayed, and farmers can request surveys for specific extents of land by paying the prescribed fee.“The request is then forwarded to licensed surveyors in the respective village. Within two days, notices are issued to neighboring landowners, and the survey is completed within seven days. After completion, the surveyor uploads the details into the system, and unique survey map and Bhudhar numbers are generated and recorded in the Bhu Bharati portal.“He further stated that once the survey is completed, the survey map is generated and uploaded to the portal. Citizens receive SMS updates at every stage of the process—from application registration to completion—on their registered mobile numbers.“The Collector reiterated that the Integrated Bhu Bharati Portal is currently being implemented as a pilot project in Kusumanchi mandal.“He directed officials to prioritize the resolution of land-related issues and to take systematic measures to clear all pending applications under the Bhu Bharati initiative at the earliest.“The meeting was attended by Palair Constituency Special Officer Ramesh, Kusumanchi Tahsildar Saidulu, Bhu Bharati Superintendent Nageswara Rao, and other officials.

Support to Noida Workers’ Struggle: Protest Held in Khammam Rural

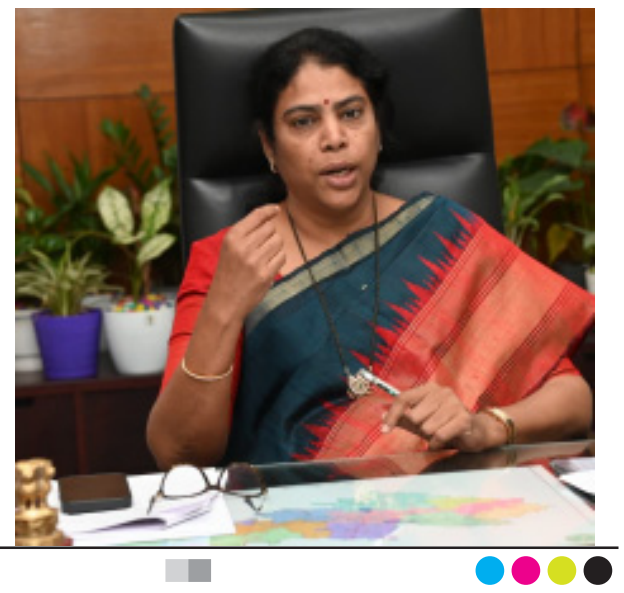
Khammam Rural APRIL 16 (INDIAN CHRONICLE): ““As part of a nationwide protest call given by the Centre of Indian Trade Unions (CITU) in solidarity with the ongoing struggle of workers in Noida, a protest program was organized at Warangal Cross Road under the leadership of the CITU Khammam Rural Mandal Committee.“On this occasion, CITU State Secretary B. Madhu called upon workers and the public to extend support to the Noida workers who are fighting for minimum wages and basic rights. He strongly condemned the repression being carried out by the BJP-led state governments of Uttar Pradesh and Haryana against the workers.He criticized the brutal suppression of the ongoing workers’ movements in Noida, Greater Noida, Gurugram, and across the National Capital Region (NCR). He stated that these incidents clearly show how the government machinery is being used to protect corporate interests by suppressing workers’ rights.CITU has appealed to the working class across India to organize protest programs in support of the striking workers and to resist the increasing attacks on labor rights.“The struggle, he said, is against the contract labor system in permanent jobs, starvation wages, inhumane working conditions, anti-worker labor codes, and government repression.“The strike, which began on April 9 in Noida Phase-II, has expanded significantly. Around 40,000–50,000 workers in Noida alone are reportedly participating in the agitation.““Key Demands and Issues:““Workers are demanding a minimum monthly wage of ?26,000, stating that the government’s recent wage hike is inadequate given rising inflation.“Contract workers are currently paid only ?10,000–12,000 per month.“Workers are forced to work 10–13 hours a day without double overtime pay.“Basic benefits such as ESI, PF, bonus, and job security are not being implemented.“He further highlighted that due to prevailing conditions, cylinder prices in the black market have risen to ?400–600, and food prices have surged, making life extremely difficult for migrant workers. Unable to bear these hardships, workers have taken to the path of struggle.“Instead of resolving these issues, the BJP governments are allegedly harassing workers and blaming them. Over 300–400 workers have reportedly been arrested, CITU leaders in Noida have been unlawfully detained, and even women workers have faced physical assaults. He also alleged attempts to portray the movement as “anti-national.”“CITU leaders demanded that the BJP governments immediately withdraw repression against workers and take concrete steps to resolve their issues.“The protest was attended by CITU State Committee member Perumalla Palli Mohan Rao, district leaders of the All Automobile Showrooms Employees and Workers Union (CITU), including President Naga Srinivasa Rao, Vice President Boosipogu Venkateswara Rao, Treasurer Garrepalli Praveen, Assistant Secretary Jakkula Prakash, and several others.

WJI Leaders Express Condolences Over the Death of Mohammed Javed

“KHAMMAM APRIL 16 (INDIAN CHRONICLE):““Leaders of the Working Journalists of India (WJI) have expressed deep sorrow over the demise of Mohammed Javed, former president of the Khammam City Congress Committee and PCC member.“WJI Telangana State General Secretary Ravikanti Srinivas and Secretary N. S. Rao conveyed their condolences, expressing shock and grief over his death in a road accident. They recalled that Javed maintained cordial relations with journalists and said his passing is an irreparable loss to the journalist community in Khammam.“They also praised his dedicated service to the party, noting that he worked with commitment for its growth and earned a distinct identity in Khammam politics. Praying for the peace of his soul, they extended heartfelt sympathies to his family members.

Collector Haritha Issues Summer Guidelines to Protect Farmers

“Indian Chronicle, Kagaznagar, April 16: In view of the intense summer heat, District Collector K. Haritha has directed strict safety measures at paddy procurement centers to protect farmers and staff.“Temporary sheds, tarpaulin covers, and “chalivendrams” (cooling points) with drinking water, buttermilk, and ORS have been made mandatory. Farmers are advised to bring produce before 11 AM or after 4 PM, while heavy outdoor work between 12 PM and 3 PM should be avoided.“First-aid kits, ice packs, and emergency contacts, including 108 ambulance services, must be displayed at all centers. Officials have also been asked to identify heatstroke symptoms and respond immediately.“Special arrangements for cattle, including shade and water, have also been ordered. With chances of sudden rains, tarpaulins must be kept ready to protect paddy.“The Collector urged officials to ensure smooth procurement without disruptions, prioritizing farmer safety.



Make May Day celebrations a success..CITU State Vice President J Mallikarjun demands

"(Yadadri Bhuvanagiri District Bureau.. Indian Chronicle..April 16):- CITU State Vice President J Mallikarjun demanded that the BJP governments of the respective states stop the lockdown imposed by the industrial owners on the thousands of workers working in the National Capital Region (NCR) around the national capital Delhi demanding minimum wages, reduction in working hours and other legal facilities. On Thursday, a rally was held from the local CITU district office to Prince Square and later a dharna was held at the square. Earlier, Mallikarjun, who attended the program as the chief guest after the district workshop chaired by CITU District President Komatireddy Chandra Reddy, said that after the nationwide general strike on February 12 against the four labor codes brought by the central BJP government, thousands of workers working in industries in the National Capital Region were given low wages of 8000/-, 9000/- and made to work for 12-13 hours a day, and the management did not even implement the facilities that should be implemented according to the law. He said that instead of resolving the strike of the workers, they are trying to suppress the strike by torturing them in various ways. He said that false cases have been filed against the workers who are in the struggle and about 400 people have been detained in jail. He said that it is shameful that the respective state governments, which should solve the problems of the workers, are acting in favor of investments and are servile to the managements, without condemning the detention being carried out by the managements. He said that the Indian working class should strongly condemn the policies of the BJP government at the Center and the state governments like Uttar Pradesh, Delhi, Rajasthan, and Haryana, who are not implementing the existing minimum wages, despite the large-scale strike-like struggles of all the trade unions in the country to set the minimum wage for workers at Rs. 26,000 in line with the increased prices in the market, and are acting harshly towards the workers in favor of corporate powers, despite the orders of the Central Government. He demanded the conditional release of all the workers in jail, withdrawal of the illegally filed cases, and immediate resolution of the just problems of the workers. Otherwise, he warned that the struggle would take another form." CITU District President and Secretaries Komatireddy Chandra Reddy, Kalluri Mallesham District Vice President Dasari Pandu, District Office Bearers MD Pasha, Turkapally Surender, Maya Krishna, Gorige Somulu, Siluveru Ramakumari, Chekka Ramesh, Subburu Satyanarayana, Burugu Sapna, Pushpa, CH Srinivas, Janni Jangaiah, Chimakandla Sriramulu, Gandhamalla Mataiah, Manchala Madhu, Potharaju Jahangir, Syed Umar, Bandaru Shravan, Vaddepalli Yadagiri, SK Srinu, Appam Surender, Palugula Munishwar Reddy, Jammu Rajasekhar, Balda Siddhu, Thooti Venkatesham and others participated in this program.

No Lapses in Healthcare Services, Warns Collector

"Indian Chronicle, Kagaznagar, April 16: District Collector K. Haritha has directed officials to ensure better medical services for patients visiting government hospitals."At a review meeting with District Medical Officer Sitaram and health staff, she stressed punctuality, accountability, and strict attendance by doctors and staff."With rising temperatures, the Collector urged awareness on heatstroke prevention, advising people to avoid going out between 10 AM and 3 PM. ORS packets and safe drinking water must be made available through health workers and Anganwadi centers."She also called for stronger sanitation measures to prevent mosquito-borne diseases and emphasized public participation in maintaining cleanliness."Highlighting maternal and child healthcare, she directed 100% registration of pregnant women and encouraged institutional deliveries in government hospitals. Special care and nutrition were advised for anemic mothers."Officials were instructed to identify TB patients, ensure treatment, and prevent maternal and infant deaths. Under central schemes, medical teams must visit tribal areas regularly and screen for diabetes and BP."The Collector stressed coordinated efforts to strengthen healthcare services across the district.

Kanakapudi Veeraswamy Receives 'Dalit Ratna' Award at Ravindra Bharati

KHAMMAM KAMEPALLI APRIL 16 (INDIAN CHRONICLE):""Kanakapudi Veeraswamy, a resident of Mucherla village in Kamepalli mandal of Khammam district, was honored with the prestigious Dalit Ratna Award on the occasion of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar Jayanti."The award ceremony was held grandly at Ravindra Bharati in Hyderabad under the aegis of the Dr. B.R. Ambedkar Jayanti Celebrations Committee. The event was presided over by Committee Chairman Sudarshan and Co-Convener Shivakumar. Prominent leaders, including TMHDD State President Dr. Koripalli Srinivas, presented the award.According to the organizers, Veeraswamy was selected for this honor in recognition of his continuous efforts and dedicated service towards the upliftment of marginalized and weaker sections of society, as well as his commitment to addressing their issues."Several speakers at the event praised his contributions, stating that his work in supporting underprivileged communities is commendable and expressing hope that he will continue his public service with the same dedication in the future."Speaking after receiving the award, Kanakapudi Veeraswamy expressed gratitude for the trust placed in him. He said the recognition has increased his responsibility and affirmed that he would intensify his efforts for the welfare and rights of marginalized communities. He added that he is committed to following and promoting the ideals of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar.

Call for 'Chalo Hyderabad' on April 18: Telangana Movement Activists Demand Implementation of Promises

KHAMMAM APRIL 16 (INDIAN CHRONICLE):""Leaders of the Telangana Movement Activists Forum have urged the state government to immediately fulfill the promises made to activists who participated in the second phase of the Telangana movement, stating that delays are unacceptable."Speaking at an emergency meeting held on Thursday at the Forum's district office in BK Bazaar, Khammam, District Convener Dr. Palakurthi Krishna and Media Convener Manda Venkateswarlu criticized the Congress government for failing to implement its assurances even after nearly two and a half years in power.The meeting was presided over by movement activist Kelothu Ravichandra Chauhan. Addressing the gathering, the leaders recalled that during elections, the Congress had promised strong support to Telangana movement activists. The assurances included allocation of 250 square yards of house sites, a monthly pension of ?25,000, health cards, identity cards, and transport facilities."However, they expressed concern that none of these promises have been fulfilled so far and termed the delay as unjustified."In this context, they announced a state conference on April 18 in Hyderabad under the leadership of the Telangana Movement Activists Forum. The event will be held at Maroju Veeranna Grounds, Marri Krishna Reddy Function Hall, Tarnaka. They called upon a large number of activists to participate in the "Chalo Hyderabad" program to press for their rights."Several leaders and activists attended the meeting, including representatives from the Bahujan Workers Union and women leaders of the forum from various districts."

Karimnagar Fire Personnel Donate Blood

District Fire Officer M. Srinivas Reddy leads by example; 18 staff take part.

Karimnagar, April 16 (Correspondent): Karimnagar Fire Station organised a blood donation camp during the ongoing Fire Services Week celebrations, with participation from fire personnel of Karimnagar and Rajanna Sircilla districts.A total of 18 Fire Department personnel voluntarily donated blood. Karimnagar District Fire Officer M. Srinivas Reddy also donated blood, motivating his staff by leading from the front.The programme was conducted in association with the Indian Red Cross Society. Its secretary Keshava Reddy, Dr. M.L.N. Reddy, Lion Madhusudan Reddy, and Fire Station In-charge B. Mahender were present, along with other fire service personnel.Officials highlighted the importance of voluntary blood donation, stating that it plays a crucial role in saving lives during emergencies.

Applications Invited for Gurukul Admissions in Nelakondapalli

"KHAMMAM, NELAKONDAPALLI APRIL 16 (INDIAN CHRONICLE):""Applications are being invited for admission into Intermediate First Year at the Social Welfare Gurukul Girls School in Nelakondapalli, Principal G. Srilatha announced.Speaking at a press conference held in her chamber at the school on Thursday, she stated that applications for the 2026–27 academic year are now open. Interested students can submit their applications online until the 25th of this month."She informed that students who have appeared for the Class 10 examinations this year are eligible to apply online."The Principal also mentioned that selected candidates will receive training under the COE (Centre of Excellence) vocational education program, including coaching related to Sainik School training. Students can also secure admission into the Junior College in groups such as MPC and others."For further details, students and parents are advised to contact the local Gurukul college. She encouraged students to make the best use of this opportunity.

KCR-2026 boosts sports spirit

"•Tournament concludes successfully in Vemulawada – Cash prizes for winners.""Siricilla, Vemulawada, April 16: BRS leaders and Vemulawada constituency in-charge Chalmeda Lakshminarasinha Rao said that the KCR Cup-2026 tournament, which is aimed at promoting sports spirit among the youth, has concluded successfully. He said that Kalvakuntla Taraka Rama Rao will always be at the forefront in encouraging the youth. Vemulawada Commanders and Vemulawada Royals teams faced each other in the final match held in Vemulawada Town Municipal limits on Thursday.The Commanders team emerged victorious in this competition and received a trophy and a cash prize of Rs. 50 thousand.The Royals team, which emerged as the runner-up, was given a cash prize of Rs. 20 thousand. Man of the Series: Srikanth Reddy – 3,000, Best Batsman: Raju 1,000, Best Bowler: Sayyad Ateek – ?1,000 Later, medals were presented to the players of other teams and encouraged them. Speaking on the occasion, BRS Vemulawada Constituency In-charge Chalmeda Lakshminarasinha Rao recalled that Kalvakuntla Chandrasekhar Rao founded the party in 2001 and laid the foundation for the achievement of Telangana. He said that this tournament is being organized as part of the Silver Jubilee celebrations to celebrate the 25th anniversary of the party's establishment. He advised the youth to actively participate in sports and showcase their talent, accept victories and defeats equally and develop the spirit of sports.from Senior leaders Ramathirtapu Raju, Nimmashetti Vijay,Sirigiri Chandu,Thoom Madhu, Kranti Kumar, Maram Kumar, Amjath Pasha,Sunkapaka Raju and local people participated in the program in large numbers.

Demand to Announce PRC Immediately, Release Pending DAs: TPTF Leader Vengal Rao

"KHAMMAM,NELAKONDAPALLI APRIL 16 (INDIAN CHRONICLE):""TPTF District General Secretary T. Vengal Rao has demanded that the government immediately announce the Pay Revision Commission (PRC) and release the pending Dearness Allowances (DAs) for employees."A poster and pamphlet release program was held at the Government School in Nelakondapalli in connection with the upcoming TPTF State Educational Conference scheduled to be held on the 30th of this month at Sundarayya Vignana Kendram in Hyderabad."Speaking on the occasion, Vengal Rao urged the government to strengthen primary education by introducing Nursery and KG classes and appointing one teacher per class. He also appealed to take all necessary steps to increase enrollment in government schools."He further demanded that the monitoring system in the education sector be strengthened and that vacant supervisory posts such as MEO and DEO be filled immediately. He called for resolving issues related to service rules and clearing all pending bills."The TPTF leader also stressed the need to release four pending DAs and implement the PRC without delay. He urged the government to focus on the development of schools across Telangana and assured that TPTF would continue to fight for the welfare of teachers and the improvement of public education."Additionally, he demanded the abolition of the CPS (Contributory Pension Scheme) and the implementation of the old pension scheme (OPS). He also called for the withdrawal of the New Education Policy and demanded fair salaries for teachers and employees working on a contract basis in KGBV and Sarva Shiksha institutions."Several teachers and union leaders, including mandal representatives, participated in the program.

2 Students Enrolled in Garikapadu High School Under 'Badi Bata' Programme

"KHAMMAM, WYRA APRIL 16 (INDIAN CHRONICLE):""As part of the Badi Bata enrollment drive, 12 students were newly admitted into Class 6 at Garikapadu High School in Wyra mandal."The program was conducted under the leadership of Headmaster D. Satyanarayana at the school premises. The newly admitted students had successfully passed Class 5 in the 2025–26 academic year."According to school authorities, the admissions include:"6 students from PS Garikapadu"3 students from PS Lingannapalem"2 students from PS Vippalamadaka"1 student from UPS Vippalamadaka"These students have been provided admission into Class 6 for the upcoming academic year."Officials stated that due to the implementation of the ECR Programme in government schools, along with improved infrastructure and enhanced student learning outcomes, parents are increasingly showing interest in enrolling their children in government schools."On this occasion, Headmaster D. Satyanarayana appealed to parents to admit their children in government schools."The event was attended by headmasters from various schools, including Saraswati, Rajashree, Ravikumar, Latha Madhuri, Govardhan Reddy, Soujanya, CRP Yesukrupa, high school teachers, and members of the Amma Adarsha School Committee.

Why Mamata is warning Bengal voters 'not to take money from BJP'

GNS News Agency, April 16

West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Monday said her party never makes false promises during elections – a pointed dig at the BJP, which recently announced in its manifesto that a BJP government would give Rs 3,000 per month to women of Bengal under a scheme called Annapurna Bhandar, widely seen as a counter to Banerjee's Lakshmir Bhandar scheme.Addressing a rally at Suri, Banerjee said, "In the last election, I said I will give Lakshmir Bhandar. I started with Rs 500. Because we never give false promises for votes. In Bihar, before the polls, they gave Rs 8,000 and took it back later. I can show videos. They say they will give Rs 3,000. Have they ever given even Rs 1,000?"

She also warned voters against accepting money from the BJP. "Don't take money from the BJP at all. Never make that mistake. My job is to warn you. First, you will open an account, and they will deposit money. Then you will see that black money has been given. Then ED-CBI will file a case," she alleged.On the question of jobs, the Trinamool Congress chief said, "Will the BJP give jobs? They have taken away railway gangmen posts. Army vacancies remain unfilled. And still they talk about recruitment. Ask Modi babu – what happened to the two crore jobs? It has been 12 years. Where have those jobs gone? And whenever we move to fill vacancies, they file cases in court to block them. Now they are talking about jobs – don't play these tricks with the people of Bengal." She ended with a rallying call to supporters: "On election day, if I am a warrior, will you be my comrade?"

Banerjee also responded to Prime Minister Narendra Modi's claim – made at Suri earlier – that he was the candidate across all 294 seats in West Bengal, a formulation Banerjee herself has traditionally used. "Modiji says he is the candidate for 294 seats. Fine – then leave the post of Prime Minister. Tell people you will be the Chief Minister of Bengal. Confirm it: will you be Prime Minister of the country or Chief Minister of Bengal? You are an outsider in Bengal. Tackle Delhi first. After that, think about Bengal," she said.The Chief Minister also attacked the BJP over the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls and the National Register of Citizens (NRC), alleging that the party was attempting to come to power by splitting votes and deleting names of Bengal's residents from voter lists. She also hit out at the BJP over what she called divisive religious politics. "Their religion means a poison tree – pouring poison on people's heads is their religion. My religion is humanity," she said.Banerjee further turned the BJP's chargesheet against the party itself, alleging corruption in the coal sector and at Haldia port. "Are you giving a chargesheet against Trinamool? How much money do your leaders make from coal? How much goes to Delhi? I won't say more for the sake of courtesy. A hint is enough," she said.On the voter list deletions, Banerjee alleged that 60 lakh names had been removed and said her efforts had secured the reinstatement of 32 lakh voters. She said she would continue to work for those whose names remained deleted.

Stuck for 6 years, now on track: Metro Line 4's final piece falls into place

GNS News Agency, April 16

"The company was able to obtain a stay on the notice from the Bombay High Court, and MMRDA retracted the notice," said an official."The company was able to obtain a stay on the notice from the Bombay High Court, and MMRDA retracted the notice," said an official.After a six-year delay, the Mumbai Metropolitan Region Development Authority has acquired land for the long-pending Laxmi Nagar station in Vikhroli, the only remaining station on the under-construction Metro Line 4 (Wadala–Kasarvadavali).

All other stations on the 32.32-km corridor are already built. The acquisition of the 16,762 sqm plot last week is seen as a key breakthrough for the project, which is targeting full operations by 2027.The land in Vikhroli East belonged to Godrej & Boyce Manufacturing Company Ltd, which owns large tracts in the area. Talks began in 2019, but faced multiple hurdles. In 2021, MMRDA issued a notice under Section 299 of the Mumbai Municipal Corporation Act, 1888, but had to withdraw it after the company secured a stay from the Bombay High Court, as no road was marked on the Development Plan."The company was able to obtain a stay on the notice from the Bombay High Court, and MMRDA retracted the notice," said an official.

With consent not forthcoming, the authority initiated compulsory acquisition under the Land Acquisition, Rehabilitation and Resettlement (LARR) Act, 2013. Officials said the process was prolonged due to the high cost over Rs 167 crore as per ready reckoner rates and the need for multiple state-level approvals."When the cost of land acquisition goes over Rs 100 crore, approvals have to be taken from the state government. The chain of command is long, hence any query raised travels the entire loop to be answered. This adds to the time taken," the official said.The land has been acquired for Rs 164.31 crore, of which Rs 157.7 crore has been paid so far. Possession was handed over on March 30.The Laxmi Nagar station and adjoining viaduct will now be built on the site, along with an access road. While construction has not yet begun, surveys are underway.Officials said land acquisition for the corridor is nearing completion, with only a small 200 sqm plot in Bhandup pending for a high-tension tower, expected to be resolved within a month.

High-powered panel links MMR air pollution to traffic jams, parking chaos, untested vehicles

GNS News Agency, Sept 21

The High-Powered Committee (HPC) of two former judges appointed by the Bombay High Court to monitor compliance with air pollution-control directions has raised concerns over vehicular emissions in its preliminary report recently.The panel directed the traffic department to take steps, including dedicated bus lanes on wider roads to ensure less impact on overall traffic flow in case a bus breaks down, preventive maintenance for such vehicles to avoid mechanical failures and barrier-free tolls across Mumbai and surrounding areas.

The panel also observed that the Mumbai Air Pollution Mitigation Plan of Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) should also be made equally applicable to all planning authorities and local bodies to ensure several on-going construction works, including public infrastructure projects undertaken by them, do not remain unregulated.The report was submitted last month to the HC bench of Chief Justice Shree Chandrashekhar and Justice Gautam A Ankhad hearing a suo motu (on its own) public interest litigation (PIL) raising concerns over deteriorating air quality in Mumbai Metropolitan Region (MMR). The key findings from the preliminary report of February, this year were recently made available to the parties to the matter.The HC on January 29 had formed the HPC comprising former Chief Justice of the Himachal Pradesh High Court Amjad A Sayed (who earlier served as Bombay HC judge) and retired Bombay High Court Justice Anuja Prabhudessai. The HC had formed the panel after observing "insufficient monitoring" by civic authorities.

"After cursorily going through the record, the Committee has found that the major sources of air pollution in MMR are vehicular emission, construction and demolition activities, industrial emission, road side dust, open burning of solid waste/garbage and other waste and other sources like cooking emissions," the preliminary report observed.On RTO officer's submission of Pollution Under Control (PUC) drives to ensure carbon monoxide and hydro carbon levels are within normal limits, the HPC noted, "the detection of default remains relatively meagre compared to the sheer volume of the vehicular traffic".The panel told the transport officials that "issuing PUC certificates without actual testing is a growing concern because they allow highly polluting vehicles to bypass environmental regulations". The panel sought special drives to identify PUC centres with "suspicious patterns" and deterrent action including cancellation of licenses of fraudulent operators.The officials further informed HPC over steps taken to synchronise the traffic signals to speed up the traffic during rush hours. The panel then directed the authorities "to explore the use of Google Maps for effective synchronisation to streamline traffic management".

It also asked the authorities to take measures "to evaluate time-bound implementation of barrier-free tolling following the model used at Atal Setu".After the police officials informed the panel that main cause of traffic jams was breakdown of vehicles, including buses, the panel suggested regular preventive maintenance schedules for maintenance of such public transport buses. It also suggested implementation of a "policy where help is dispatched from the closest depot or mobile unit and not necessarily the original depot"."The committee also suggested implementing dedicated bus lanes on wider roads to ensure that even if a bus breaks down, it is restricted to a single specific lane, thus reducing the impact on overall traffic flow," the panel noted. It also directed authorities to deploy towing vans and emergency teams at strategic locations to move the such vehicles, including trucks and lorries to avoid disruption in traffic flow.Moreover, on the issue of congestion due to poor condition of roads, the panel directed the senior officer of Traffic Cell and BMC engineer to conduct joint inspection to identify traffic hotspots and potholes and take immediate measures.The panel also observed that "persistent disorderly parking despite available designated parking spots highlights a significant failure in enforcement". It recommended demarcation of roadside parking spots with bright paint and strict imposition of fines and towing vehicles.As the matter could not be heard on Thursday due to time constraints, the HC posted it to April 30, when it will hear suggestions on panel's report.

'Answer bomb with ballot': Amit Shah attacks TMC in Birbhum, promises UCC and 7th Pay Commission

GNS News Agency, Sept 21

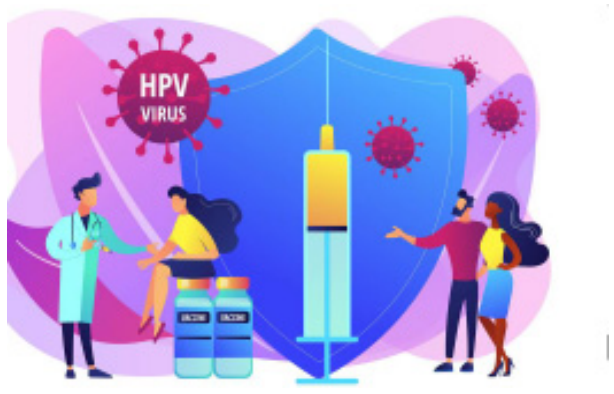
Union Home Minister Amit Shah Monday urged people to vote for the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) as he launched another scathing attack on Mamata Banerjee-led TMC, accusing the ruling party of corruption and alleging that people are forced to pay "cut money" even for basic services in West Bengal.With the West Bengal Assembly elections scheduled for April 23 and April 29, Shah positioned the BJP as the only force capable of ending "cut money" corruption, infiltration, and the "bomb culture" in the state. He predicted a "double-engine government" would take charge after the May 4 results.Addressing a gathering in support of BJP candidate Dudhkumar Mandal in Mayureshwar in Birbhum district, Shah urged voters to respond to violence through democratic means. "Answer the bomb with the ballot. The people of Bengal will respond to fear with trust," he said."You should find the lotus symbol on the machine. Bid Mamata Banerjee goodbye. After May 4, a double-engine government will be formed in Bengal, and a new era of development will begin. This time, Birbhum has to make a record; all 11 seats have to be given to the BJP."

'Who is she to scare and instil fear?'

Shah alleged that the TMC has inflicted atrocities on the BJP workers in Mayureshwar. "Our workers have been beaten up. I am telling all the TMC goons that on April 23, stay locked in your houses; otherwise, after May 5, we will search each and every one of them and put them behind bars."Hitting out at the ruling TMC government, Shah said that Mayureshwar has become a godown for bombs and gunpowder."I was listening to a speech by Didi. She was trying to instil fear in the majority community that if TMC is not there, then that community's identity will not be there. Who is she to scare and instil fear? During her tenure, there were riots in Murshidabad, an attack on Ram Navami, and the Saraswati Puja was stopped. Where was she?"

Assuring the people of the state of peaceful and free and fair polling, Shah said, "The time has come when none of Didi's goons can touch anyone on the day of polls. The EC has over 800 companies to ensure peaceful polls, so no one needs to be scared. This election is in order to remove infiltrators…. it is our promise that not only in Bengal but we will take out infiltrators from all over the country ."On women's safety, Shah criticised the Bengal Government, citing incidents such as Sandeshkhali. The Union home minister said that even though there is a woman chief minister, women are not safe in her state."Mamata Didi says women should not go out after 7 pm. She should be ashamed that, being a woman CM, she is unable to protect the state's women. When we come to power, a girl can freely roam around even at 1 am. There will be no Sandeshkhali, R G Kar, South Kolkata law college or Durgapur case. All will be safe and secure," he added.Shah also attacked the state government over Central projects. "Modiji has given crores of rupees for the Jal Jeevan Mission. But that money has not reached the common people. Where has that money gone? Trinamool goons have embezzled it."At the same time, he took a dig at local development, saying, "Such roads have been built here; they can be removed by hand."Outlining the BJP's promises, Shah said that if voted to power, the party would implement the 7th Pay Commission for state employees. He also promised monthly assistance of Rs 3,000 for women and unemployed youth, Rs 21,000 support for pregnant women, and Rs 2,000 pensions for the elderly and widows.He further pledged 33 per cent reservation for women in government jobs, free bus travel for women, land rights for tea garden workers, free medical treatment up to Rs 5 lakh, revival of closed jute mills, and an end to what he described as "mafia rule."Speaking about Santiniketan, Shah said, "Rabindranath Tagore's house has been demolished and the municipality could not stop it. The TMC cannot protect Bengals asmita… Modiji has given Unesco recognition to Santiniketan and given the status of a classical language to Bengali."

Misinformation slows HPV vaccine uptake despite statewide push



GNS News Agency, April 16

Cervical cancer is the second most prevalent common cancer in India.Frontline workers in Maharashtra are struggling with HPV vaccine hesitancy, with Mumbai recording only 568 vaccinations out of a target of 1.06 lakh girls due to social media misinformation. (Representational Image)More than a month after Maharashtra rolled out its HPV vaccination drive for adolescent girls, uptake remains slow, with frontline workers citing misinformation on social media as the key barrier.In Mumbai, only 568 of the 1,06,045 identified girls have been vaccinated so far, reflecting hesitancy despite availability."There are a lot of misconceptions on social media. People don't have confidence about the HPV vaccine. They don't say yes, they don't say no. They say they will think about it and then they won't come back," said ASHA worker Mrunali Manohar Jangam, who has been conducting door-to-door outreach in Worli.Launched on February 28, the state programme targets girls aged 14–15 years to prevent cervical cancer. Vaccinations are being administered through primary health centres and tracked on the U-WIN platform. As of April 10, 27,956 girls have been vaccinated across Maharashtra against a target of 9,84,414.

Officials said the slow uptake is not due to supply constraints but growing hesitation driven by misleading content online. Claims about infertility, safety concerns and even population control are circulating widely on platforms such as WhatsApp, YouTube and Instagram.In Worli, Jangam said even educated families are reluctant. "They say they will ask their father, but they never get back. Parents fear that something will go wrong with their daughters health such as fertility as one of the major concerns. These are educated, middle-class families. Still, they believe what they see on social media. Meetings held in schools with doctors, teachers and parents have yielded little response. We explain everything, but it is not making much difference yet," she added.A similar pattern is visible in rural areas. In Wardha district, only 496 of 10,334 identified girls have been vaccinated so far.

"The impact of social media is huge. People are watching videos and believing them. One such video questions why the Chief Minister's daughter is not taking the vaccine first?" said ASHA worker Archana Ramdas Ghugare.She added that misinformation has led to fears about fertility and even conspiracy theories. "People are saying the government is trying to reduce the population by giving this vaccine to young girls," Ghugare said.

Mistrust has also translated into unusual demands. "People are asking us to bring a written, signed document from the government saying they will take full responsibility if anything happens to their daughters in their lifetime. When we raise these concerns in meetings with authorities, we are told such a letter cannot be given but we are being pressurised to convince parents. We don't know how to."Health officials acknowledged the concerns but said they are not evidence-based. "There is nothing to worry about medically, the challenge is the mindset. It is good that people are enquiring about the vaccine and that is how it should be. They ask why the vaccine is needed, whether it affects fertility, what happens if they don't take it. They want to verify everything," said a senior state health official.The state has reported zero serious adverse events following immunisation so far. Experts said the HPV vaccine has been extensively studied and is safe and effective, with no evidence linking it to infertility.To counter hesitancy, the state has stepped up door-to-door counselling and school outreach, along with social media campaigns. However, officials said misinformation continues to spread faster than corrective messaging."Social media is where misinformation spreads the fastest. So while we are putting out correct information, we are also focusing more on interpersonal communication. When we visit each home and speak to families directly, the discussion is more meaningful. In rural areas, there is some fear, but people eventually take the vaccine. In cities, people tend to overthink and rely more on online information. It will take some time for acceptance and understanding because it is a new vaccine," the official said.

Dry heat for south Bengal, rain in north: IMD forecasts sharp weather divide this week

GNS News Agency, April 16

Most districts, including Howrah, Hooghly, North 24 Parganas, South 24 Parganas, Nadia and East Midnapore, will continue to experience dry weather. (File Photo)Most districts, including Howrah, Hooghly, North 24 Parganas, South 24 Parganas, Nadia and East Midnapore, will continue to experience dry weather. (File Photo)A gradual rise in temperature, largely dry skies in the South and intermittent rain in the hills – West Bengal's weather this week presents a familiar April contrast. While the plains brace for increasing heat and humidity, the northern districts continue to experience spells of rain and thunderstorms.Temperatures across the state are set to climb gradually by 2-3°C over the next few days. In western parts of Bengal, the weather is expected to get very warm, with daytime temperatures likely reaching the high 30s, around 38-39°C. While there is no heatwave warning for now, rising heat combined with high humidity could make afternoons feel particularly uncomfortable.Kolkata will witness mostly clear skies through the day, turning partly cloudy by the afternoon. The maximum temperature is expected to be around 35°C with the minimum near 27°C. Humidity will remain high, making conditions feel warmer. No rainfall has been recorded in the past 24 hours, and dry weather is likely to continue. Over the week, temperatures may inch up further with partly cloudy afternoons becoming more frequent.Most districts, including Howrah, Hooghly, North 24 Parganas, South 24 Parganas, Nadia and East Midnapore, will continue to experience dry weather.However, western districts such as Jhargram, Purulia, Bankura, West Midnapore, Birbhum and parts of West Bardhaman may see isolated light rain or thundershowers from midweek.The India Meteorological Department (IMD) has indicated hot and humid conditions in several districts, especially from April 14 onwards. In Jhargram, Purulia and Bankura, there is also a possibility of thunderstorms with gusty winds of 40-50 kmph and lightning on select days. Residents have been advised to avoid prolonged sun exposure between late morning and afternoon and to stay hydrated.Meanwhile, North Bengal districts such as Darjeeling, Kalimpong, and Jalpaiguri are likely to witness light to moderate rain or thundershowers in multiple places throughout the week. Alipurduar and Cooch Behar may see lighter and more scattered rainfall.Thunderstorm activity is expected to remain active in the hills, with IMD warning of gusty winds of 30-40 kmph and lightning in Darjeeling, Kalimpong and Jalpaiguri over the next few days. People are advised to seek shelter during storms and avoid open fields and vulnerable structures.Districts like Malda, North Dinajpur and South Dinajpur are expected to remain mostly dry initially, though isolated rain may occur later in the week.Temperatures across the state are set to rise steadily by 2-3°C through the week, with humidity climbing in the southern districts, while the north continues to see periodic rainfall and thunderstorms.

Constructed in 2016 for nearly Rs 50 crore: Public money goes down drain as Sec 17 multilevel parking remains underutilised

GNS News Agency, April 16

Built in 2016 at a cost of nearly Rs 50 crore, Chandigarh's first multilevel parking facility at Sector 17 was envisioned as a solution to the chronic parking problem the city had been battling with, but a decade down the line, it stands as a white elephant as the parking crunch in Sector 17 remains unresolved.Despite a peak capacity of 900 vehicles, daily occupancy is reported around just 200-250, mostly of traders located in the Sector 17 market. Visitors to Sector 17 avoid the multilevel parking facility due to its deteriorating condition, lack of maintenance, and inconvenient design.

The infrastructure project has now become a cautionary tale without user-friendly planning, upkeep, and incentives; even ambitious projects fail to deliver.The facility has ground plus three underground-level parking. The surface level and the first underground level are preferred, but the second and third levels remain unutilised.Seepage in the ceilings, poorly maintained premises, and signs of wear and neglect indicate the crumbling multilevel parking structure.

BJP councillor Mahesh Inder Singh Sidhu said, "It's a perfect example of a well-planned, but poorly executed project. Crores of rupees of taxpayers is going down the drain every day. Efforts should be made to re-purpose it to make it viable in the current form to prevent it from further deterioration."Vinod Vashisht, Convener, City Forum of Residents Welfare Organisations (CFORWO), told The Indian Express, "In general, people wish to park vehicles on the surface-level parking lots for their convenience. The parking fee at the facility is Rs 10 for four-wheelers and Rs 5 for two-wheelers, which is cheaper than other parking lots in the city; even then, visitors don't prefer the multilevel parking facility. In fact, the poor maintenance, with half of the basement level occupied by cycles of the public bike sharing project, and other storage, makes the area dingy."

"The civic body needs to ensure proper upkeep, putting signage and directions for the multilevel parking on the Sector 17 entry roads to encourage visitors," Vashisht suggested."As the top concrete surface of the parking is completely vacant, it can be utilised for starting a kids' play and fun zone. Also, starting an attractive monthly parking scheme for shop owners and staff of institutions located in Sector 17 will encourage them to park their vehicles there," he added.Frequent users of the parking have reported inconvenience and safety concerns.Pradeep Kumar, a resident of Sector 37 in Chandigarh, said, "I prefer shifting back to the roadside parking, leakage in the roof allows water to percolate down and fall on my car. Then, having your vehicle parked there doesn't make you feel safe because there is no proper security."Many visitors have pointed out that the parking facility is at a distance, making it inconvenient for them to walk to the main plaza area of Sector 17.Raj Kumar, a shopkeeper, said, "Visitors don't prefer to park their vehicles at the multilevel parking as they have to walk a long way.""The location is another reason why people don't prefer the multilevel parking. "An elderly person visiting Sector 17 can't walk that far after parking their vehicle there," he said."Moreover, when there were issues of leakages reported, shopkeepers complained that a chemical was dripping on their vehicles, and thus, people wouldn't prefer to park vehicles there," he added.Chandigarh Mayor Saurabh Joshi said they would try to incentivise the parking so that people prefer to park their vehicles at the multilevel parking facility."Yes, it is not being preferred much, but we will try to introduce some initiatives so that people park their vehicles there. The parking rates were also made nominal, but due to location issues, not many people park their vehicles there," he added.Under vigilance scannerThe UT Vigilance Department had found serious anomalies in the construction of the multilevel parking, and accused an engineer on deputation from Punjab, currently posted as an executive engineer with the civic body, for allegedly favouring the construction firm.Soon after the construction of the multilevel parking, there were reports of breakage and leakage in the building. Following complaints, the vigilance took over the investigation, and the then commissioner had also recommended action against the firm that built the parking.

19-year-old student killed on her way to college in Himachal Pradesh's Mandi

GNS News Agency, April 16

A 19-year-old college student was allegedly killed by a bike-borne assailant in the Mandi district of Himachal Pradesh Monday morning. The victim was identified as Siya Guleria, a resident of Nain village near Sarkaghat. According to reports, the woman was on her way to college when she was attacked in the Gopalpur town of Sarkaghat subdivision.Sources said the assailant allegedly slit her throat and stabbed her on the neck and arm before fleeing the spot around 9.30 am. Police sources said the assailant has been apprehended and is being interrogated to ascertain the motive behind the crime.Vinod Kumar, Superintendent of Police, Mandi, said, "The investigation is on. We have cordoned off the entire area."A police team from Sarkaghat police station rushed to the scene upon receiving information and secured the victim's body.

The police formed several teams and reviewed CCTV footage from nearby areas to trace the accused's movements before nabbing him.Meanwhile, Leader of Opposition and former chief minister Jai Ram Thakur raised questions about the law and order situation in the state. "The incident involving the young girl in Sarkaghat is deeply disturbing to even think about. Such a crime in daylight is unimaginable in our Devbhoomi," said Thakur."This incident has not only brought shame to the entire state but has also instilled fear among families whose daughters step out of their homes for education. In a state we once considered safe, how have criminals become so emboldened?" asked Thakur.Thakur claimed that it was shocking that instead of apprehending the accused, the police were seen restraining residents and family members at the scene.

'My salary increased by Rs 39 last year': Voices from Noida's angry garment workers

GNS News Agency, April 16

As a four-day-long protest by garment workers in Noida Phase 2 took a violent turn on Monday morning, with incidents of stone pelting, vandalism and arson being reported, several protesters had just one thing to say: their salaries are barely enough to meet living expenses.The protests started on Friday. Workers who took part in it are engaged in the industry and export business.From an 18-year-old from Sambhal to a 28-year-old from Bihar, The Indian Express speaks to three workers who were part of the demonstrations:Kashyap pointed out that salaries of workers in Manesar, near Gurgaon, have been increased to Rs 20,000 for eight hours of work. "So why not ours?""I earn Rs 13,000, pay rent of Rs 4,000… a gas cylinder now costs Rs 400, how should we manage?" he asked.He also said the target set by his employer is very unrealistic. "They set a target for 70 pieces an hour and if we don't supply, they humiliate us. For years, they have given a mere Rs 320 hike… They force us to work at night… If we're unwell, they say don't come next time. And if we don't work on Sunday, they threaten to fire us."(Left to right) Surender Kashyap, Muhammad Noor Alam, Rahul. (Drishti Jain) (Left to right)

Surender Kashyap, Muhammad Noor Alam, Rahul. (Drishti Jain)Rahul has been doing the job since 2018. He is married, with two children aged three and one."I earn Rs 13,500 — I do not save anything and can't send any money home. I have to pay Rs 5,000 for room rent, Rs 4,000 for ration. Some money is deducted for PF, so I'm only left with Rs 3,000 in the end to feed my family of 4. How can I manage? How do I educate my children?" said Rahul

BJP fields over a dozen leaders' kin in 4 major Gujarat cities, party says they are already in politics

GNS News Agency, April 16

Amid political discourse over the issue of dynastic politics and nepotism, the ruling BJP has fielded a number of candidates, who are family members or relatives of current or former party leaders, for the April 26 elections in four major cities of Gujarat – Ahmedabad, Vadodara, Surat and Rajkot.Names of the candidates were declared on Friday and nomination papers were filed on Saturday.In Vadodara, at least seven candidates, who are relatives of party leaders, have been nominated for the Vadodara Municipal Corporation (VMC) elections.Hiren Sukhadia, son of former Sayajigunj MLA Jitendra Sukhadia, has been fielded from Ward No. 17 of the VMC.

The BJP has also fielded Krunal Patel, Pavan Hemnani, Shrirang Ayare, Dikshita Ray and Nidhi Patel, all relatives of party leaders.Krunal is son of former corporator Pravin Patel whereas Pavan is son of Purushottam Hemnani, another former corporator.Shrirang Ayare, a corporator in the outgoing elected body of the VMC, is son of former Corporator Rajesh Ayare. Dikshita is daughter-in-law of former corporator Kanchan Ray. Nidhi's parents Nitin Patel and Jyoti Patel have both been corporators of the VMC.Upendra Prajapati, BJP candidate from Ward No. 11, is the son of former Congress Mayor Dalsukh Prajapati, who had joined the BJP in 2018.

Pareshkumar Lalji Anand, son of former mayor and former chief of BJP's city unit Lalji Parmar has been fielded from Khadia ward in Ahmedabad. Lalji Parmar was Ahmedabad Mayor from 1997 to 1998.A young first timer, Kranti Koumil Gandhi, niece of former MLA Bhushan Bhatt, has been fielded by the BJP from Paldi ward. Bhushan Bhatt was BJP MLA from Jamalpur Khadia constituency in Ahmedabad from 2012-17 but lost in 2017. His father late Ashok Bhatt was Speaker of Gujarat Legislative Assembly who got elected a record eight times from the same constituency of Khadia.Another BJP candidate who has been repeated is Maulik Gautam Patel from Isanpur ward. A Leuva Patidar, Maulik is son of Gautam Patel, a two term BJP councillor from Isanpur ward and former chairman of Town Planning Committee of the AMC. After Gautam Patel's demise due to heart attack in 2021, Maulik was elected from the ward within six months.

In Rajkot, at least two candidates who are relatives of former corporators of the party have been nominated by the BJP for the elections of Rajkot Municipal Corporation (RMC). The RMC has 18 wards with 72 posts of corporators.From Ward No. 1 of the RMC, the BJP has nominated Anjana Morzariya, wife of Alpesh who was BJP corporator in the outgoing elected body of the RMC.The other BJP candidate having dynastic roots is Nehal Shukla who has been nominated by the party from Ward No. 7 of the RMC.Nehal is son of veteran Jan Sangh leader from Rajkot late Chimanbhai Shukla and brother of senior party

leader and former councilor Kashyap Shukla. Notably, Nehal's name had come up as BJP candidate for Ward No. 7 as a last minute change. In the list of candidates for the 72 post of corporators for the RMC declared by the party on Friday, his name was not there. However, at the last minute before filing of the nomination, Shailesh Jani, who was declared BJP candidate, was replaced by Nehal. In fact, Jani had reached the district Collector's office to file his nomination papers when he came to know that he was replaced by Nehal, who eventually filed his nomination papers as the BJP candidate.When asked about the nomination of the two 'dynast' candidates, a senior party office bearer from Rajkot said, "Both Anjanaben and Nehalbhai have got elected as corporators earlier as well. They are nominated on their merits."

In Surat, at least four candidates nominated by the BJP for the elections of Surat Municipal Corporation (SMC) are relatives of current or former office bearers of the party.Satish Maisurya has been nominated from Ward No. 14. In the outgoing elected body of the SMC, Maisurya's wife Rajshree was BJP corporator from the same ward.From Ward No. 29, Suhani Yadav has been fielded by the party. In the previous elected body of SMC, Suhani's father-in-law Banshu Yadav was BJP corporator from the same ward.Kamini Patel, wife of Surat BJP media convenor Soham Patel, has been fielded by the party from Ward No. 28.In another instance, Anjali Upadhyay has been nominated by the party from Ward No. 27. Anjali's husband, Subham Upadhyay, is an elected member of the Surat Municipal Education Board.When contacted over the selection of candidates who are relatives of party leaders, Gujarat BJP spokesperson Anil Patel said, "They (such candidates who are relatives of party leaders) are those candidates who are active in politics for a long time. If a leader gets tickets for his sons who are doctors and not active in politics, then it could be called nepotism because none of them are active in the political field.""Those (candidates who are relatives of party leaders and) who are politically active for a long time, we do not consider it as nepotism," he added.

ED carries out searches at Nashik, Shirdi and Pune against 'godman' Ashok Kharat

GNS News Agency, Sept 21

The Enforcement Directorate Monday searched 11 premises in Maharashtra linked to its probe into the money laundering aspect linked to self-styled godman Ashok Kharat, who has been accused of sexual exploitation of a number of women.ED officials said the searches were being conducted in 5 premises in Nashik, 3 in Pune, and 3 premises in Shirdi since the morning.

According to ED, preliminary findings suggest that Ashok Kharat opened multiple bank accounts in cooperative credit societies in Nashik district in the names of third parties, while he remained the nominee. He allegedly used his mobile number across these accounts to control their operations.The agency also said that during initial inquiries, it found that Kharat sold ordinary items as "blessed" objects, claiming they had divine healing powers.ED further alleged that money collected from victims and through extortion was invested in land purchases through his chartered accountant, Prakash Pophale, and his sons.Searches are being conducted at residential and commercial properties linked to Ashok Kharat, Pophale, their relatives, and branches of the cooperative credit societies involved.Meanwhile, the Maharashtra Government has

formed a Special Investigation Team (SIT) under DCP Tejaswi Satpute to probe sexual harassment allegations against Kharat. Several cases related to the exploitation of women have already been registered.Following these complaints, financial fraud, illegal land deals, and other allegations also surfaced, prompting ED to register an Enforcement Case Information Report (ECIR) earlier this month based on the First Information Report (FIR) filed by the Nashik police.

Haryana municipal polls set for May 10, counting on May 13

State Election Commissioner Devender Singh Kalyan announced that counting will take place on May 13. Nominations will be filed between April 21 and 25, with election symbols allotted on April 28. These elections will choose mayors and ward members in the three corporations, along with the president and members of the Municipal Council of Rewari, and the municipal committees of Sampla in Rohtak, Dharuhera in Rewari and Uklana in Hisar.

GNS News Agency, April 16

Haryana civic polls 2026 are scheduled for May 10 across seven municipal bodies, including Panchkula, Ambala and Sonipat, with nominations from April 21 to 25 and counting on May 13.Haryana civic polls 2026 are scheduled for May 10 across seven municipal bodies, including Panchkula, Ambala and Sonipat, with nominations from April 21 to 25 and counting on May 13.Haryana is heading into another round of civic polls with seven municipal bodies, including the corporations of Panchkula, Ambala and Sonipat, scheduled to vote on May 10 this year.

State Election Commissioner Devender Singh Kalyan announced that counting will take place on May 13. Nominations will be filed between April 21 and 25, with election symbols allotted on April 28. These elections will choose mayors and ward members in the three corporations, along with the president and members of the Municipal Council of Rewari, and the municipal committees of Sampla in Rohtak, Dharuhera in Rewari and Uklana in Hisar.The reservation draw conducted in January set aside the Ambala mayoral seat for a backward class woman, while Panchkula and Sonipat remain open to candidates from all categories. In Rewari, the council president's post has been reserved for a Scheduled Caste woman, and Uklana's for a general category woman, while Sampla and Dharuhera posts remain unreserved.

The last municipal elections were held in December 2020, when the BJP and its ally JJP contested together but faced mixed results. Congress won the Sonipat mayoral seat, while BJP managed a narrow victory in Panchkula. Ambala went to the Haryana Jan Chetna Party (JCP), led by former minister Venod Sharma, marking the first time direct mayoral elections were held in these three cities. The BJP secured the Rewari civic body chief's post, while an independent backed by former Chief Minister Bhupinder Singh Hooda triumphed in Sampla. The JJP suffered setbacks in Uklana and Dharuhera.

The political landscape shifted ahead of the October 2024 Assembly polls. Nikhil Madaan, then Sonipat mayor from Congress, joined the BJP and won the Sonipat Assembly seat. In Ambala, Shakti Rani Sharma, who had been mayor as a Haryana Jan Chetna Party leader, also joined the BJP and won the Kalka Assembly seat. These moves helped the BJP secure a third consecutive term in government.In March 2025, the BJP consolidated its dominance in municipal politics, winning nine of ten mayoral contests, with only Manesar going to an independent candidate. The party's candidates prevailed in Gurgaon, Faridabad, Ambala, Hisar, Karnal, Rohtak, Panipat, Sonipat and Yamunanagar, defeating Congress rivals. That round of elections included contests in seven municipal corporations, while bypolls were conducted for the mayoral posts in Ambala and Sonipat.Now, as Punjab prepares for Assembly polls in early 2027, Haryana's municipal elections will once again test the strength of the BJP, Congress, and Aam Aadmi Party, setting the tone for the next phase of state politics.

Pune to Bengaluru in 14 hours: Vande Bharat sleeper gets Railways' nod

Swapnil Nila, Chief Public Relations Officer, Central Railway, said the launch date and final travel time for the Vande Bharat Sleeper service have yet to be finalised.Vande BharatUpgraded sleeper berths and enhanced safety features in the Vande Bharat are expected to improve and modernise rail travel. Train travel may soon become a more attractive option for Pune residents commuting to Bengaluru for work, education, or other purposes. Indian Railways has approved a new Vande Bharat Sleeper service on the Mumbai–Bengaluru route, with Pune expected to be a key stop along the corridor.Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw confirmed the approval in an official letter to Bangalore Central MP P C Mohan, who shared it on his X account Saturday.Currently, Pune commuters have limited and often inconvenient options for travelling to Bengaluru by

train.The fastest and most direct rail link is the weekly Trivandrum Express (16331) between Pune Junction and Bengaluru's Krishnarajapuram station

South Korean president's Holocaust remarks spark outcry from Israel and controversy at home

SEOUL,GNS News Agency, April 16 South Korean President ?Lee Jae Myung has sparked a diplomatic row with Israel and criticism at home after ?comparing Israeli military actions against Palestinians to the Holocaust in a post on social media platform X.The controversy began on Friday after Lee said "wartime killings" by the Israel Defense Forces were "no different from the Jewish massacre" by the Nazis in World War Two, ?and reposted footage with a caption that said it showed Israeli troops had tortured and thrown a ?Palestinian from the roof of a building.

The Reuters Iran Briefing newsletter keeps you informed with the latest developments and analysis of the Iran war. Sign up here.Israel's Foreign Ministry said in a post on ?X on Saturday that Lee "for some strange reason, chose to dig up a story from 2024." It said ?the incident occurred during an IDF operation against what it called "terrorists" and had been thoroughly investigated.The ministry accused ?Lee, who had said that he needed to verify the footage, of the "trivialization of the massacre of Jews on the eve of Holocaust Remembrance Day in Israel," saying his remarks were "unacceptable and warrant strong condemnation."Israel marks Yom HaShoah on Monday remembering the ?six million Jews murdered by the Nazis.

The Israeli military said in 2024 it was investigating the incident in the ?videos and described the actions as serious and not in keeping with its values.Friday's comments are a rare instance of Lee discussing ?international ?politics on social media and come as his government navigates a surge in energy prices following U.S. and Israeli strikes against Iran. Tehran has closed the Strait of Hormuz to tanker traffic and South Korea is one of the world's largest importers of oil and gas.Lee did not mention the Iran war in his posts but ?said that South Koreans were ?today feeling "immense pain and ?national hardship."The president later on Saturday said it was "disappointing" that Israel criticised his comments and that it was natural to feel sorry if someone was suffering.South Korea's foreign ministry ?later said it was regrettable Israel "misunderstood" Lee's remarks, which were about universal human ?rights.Lee's comments also ?proved controversial at home.South Korea's conservative party hit out at Lee for failing to speak more prudently and said he was showing double standards for his silence on human rights abuses in North Korea, while Lee's Democratic Party praised him ?for speaking ?out on the universal value of human dignity.The mainstream Joongang Ilbo ?newspaper said on Monday Lee would be well advised to recognise the weight of a president's remarks and the risk of misunderstanding from unfiltered ?comments on social media, especially in sensitive global disputes.

ASEAN foreign ministers urge US and Iran to push for permanent resolution

MANILA, - ASEAN foreign ministers called on Monday for the United States ?and Iran to continue negotiating a permanent ?eGNS News Agency, April 16nd to their conflict, and to implement the ceasefire fully and effectively.The ministers, who met virtually to discuss the war ?in the Middle East, also called for the restoration of ?safe, unimpeded and continuous passage of vessels and ?aircraft in the Strait of Hormuz.The Reuters Iran Briefing newsletter keeps you informed with the latest developments and analysis of the Iran war. Sign up here. Beyond immediate security ?concerns, ASEAN highlighted the broader implications of the ?conflict on regional stability, especially on energy and food supplies. The ministers of the 11-member bloc stressed the need to prioritise energy ?access for member states during crises. They reaffirmed their ?commitment to strengthening a regional mechanism linking member states with China, ?Japan, ?and South Korea to prevent and respond to food shortages, price shocks, and supply disruptions. Philippine Foreign Affairs Secretary Ma. Theresa Lazaro said at a press conference that the ?ministers also discussed ?joint approaches ?to securing fertiliser and other critical agriculture inputs. They also explored the possibility of ?establishing an ASEAN foreign ministers' crisis ?communications protocol ?that could be convened rapidly, Lazaro said.As ASEAN chair, the Philippines is committed to proceeding with the leaders' ?summit ?in May, which will focus on ?food and energy security, as well as the safety of its ?nationals, she added.

Turkey says NATO should reset ties with Trump at next summit, prepare for future

ANKARA, GNS News Agency, Sept 21- Turkey said on Monday that NATO allies should use their July summit in Ankara to reset ties with U.S. ?President Donald Trump and prepare for a potential reduction of ?U.S. involvement in the alliance.Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan said that Turkey believed Trump would attend the NATO leaders' summit on July 7-8 due to his "personal ?respect" for President Tayyip Erdogan, but added he understood Trump ?was otherwise reluctant come to the meeting.The Reuters Iran Briefing newsletter keeps you informed with the latest developments and analysis of the Iran war. Sign up here.

Trump has criticised NATO ?for years and last week threatened to pull the United States ?out of the alliance over European members' refusal to send ships to ?unblock the Strait of Hormuz near Iran. That compounded friction within the bloc over his earlier plans to acquire Greenland.Fidan told the state-owned Anadolu news ?agency that allies had long considered Trump's criticisms to be ?rhetoric, but were now planning around the possibility of reduced U.S. involvement and ramping ?up ?their own defensive capacities."NATO countries need to turn this Ankara Summit into an opportunity to put ties with the United States on a systematic basis," he said."If there will be a U.S. withdrawal ?from some NATO ?mechanisms, there needs ?to

be a plan and programme to phase this out so nobody is left in the open," ?he added.NATO Secretary General Mark Rutte has said ?he understood ?Trump's frustrations with the alliance, but that the "large majority of European nations" had been helpful to Washington's war effort in Iran.A senior White ?House ?official told Reuters last week that Trump, ?as part of frustration with NATO, had also considered the option of removing some U.S. ?troops from Europe.

Peru election marred by delays as conservatives lead early count

LIMA,GNS News Agency, April 16 - Polling station delays and early uncertainty over the runoff contenders marked Peru's general election on Sunday, as voters chose a new president and Congress ?from a fragmented field of more than 30 candidates.Early official results showed former congresswoman Keiko Fujimori narrowly in the lead with 17.17% closely followed by right-wing former Lima mayor, Rafael Lopez Aliaga with 16.97%, with 37% of votes counted, according to Peru's electoral body, ONPE.The Reuters Iran Briefing newsletter keeps you informed with the latest developments and analysis of the Iran war. Sign up here.

Exit polls had shown Fujimori, daughter of ex-President Alberto Fujimori who was imprisoned for human rights abuses, in the lead, although Lopez Aliaga emerged in the lead earlier in the count underlining the fluidity ?of the race.Years of political turmoil in the Andean nation have eroded confidence in institutions and left voters deeply disillusioned.With no clear frontrunner and all major candidates polling ?well below the 50% needed to win outright, a June 7 runoff appeared likely — a scenario that could prolong uncertainty in the world's third-largest ?copper producer at a time of rising crime and intensifying competition for influence between the United States and China."I want to express my solidarity with the citizens who today were denied the ?opportunity to exercise their right to vote," Fujimori said in a brief statement to the press, adding that she would begin a new campaign for the runoff from Monday.

Delays to polling stations ?opening were reported in some areas on Sunday morning, centered in the capital Lima, following logistical issues involving a contractor responsible for the distribution of electoral material.The disruptions prompted authorities to extend voting hours by one more day, until 6 p.m. local time (2300 GMT) on Monday, for over 50,000 people who were unable to cast their ballots.Roberto Burneo, head of Peru's electoral authority (JNE), said legal action would be taken against the company responsible for distributing the ?voting materials.Voter Margarita Sandoval, 35, said she had waited in line for two hours without being able to enter her ballot station in Chorrillos, a southern district of the capital.

I have ?to work and I can't vote," Sandoval said. "These elections are a disaster."Item 1 of 6 People vote during Peru's general election, in San Juan Miraflores district, in Lima, Peru,[1/6]People vote during Peru's general election, in San Juan Miraflores district, in Lima, Peru, s Paucca Purchase Licensing Rights, opens new tabSince 2018, Peru has cycled through eight presidents, fueling skepticism that any new administration will last a full five-year term following ?a dizzying turnover ?driven by impeachments, corruption scandals and weak governing coalitions that have paralyzed decision-making.

"People really despise the current Congress," said Martin Cassinelli at the Atlantic Council. "They recognize

them as responsible for the political chaos we've had over the last 10 years," he added.Political distrust has fueled a crowded field spanning the ideological spectrum, including seasoned politicians, a far-right businessman and a television comedian.Among the best known is conservative Fujimori, making her fourth presidential bid after reaching the runoff in all three previous races.Educated in the U.S. and leader of the powerful Popular Force party in Congress, Fujimori has framed herself ?as a guarantor of order and economic ?stability, appealing to voters alarmed by surging ?violent crime. Her candidacy remains polarizing, however, due to her family legacy and past legal troubles.Former Lima mayor Lopez Aliaga, a wealthy businessman with socially conservative views, campaigned on an ultra-conservative platform and had seen support fluctuate in the weeks leading up to the election.Center-left Jorge Nieto, who has pitched himself ?as a unifying figure with institutional experience, was polling in third place late on Sunday, with 14.1% of the vote.Ricardo Belmont, a ?former Lima mayor running for ?the center-left Civic Works Party, saw a late rise in support, elevating him in polls in recent days.

Public insecurity has emerged as the dominant theme of the campaign. Homicides and extortion have climbed in recent years, driven in part by drug trafficking and illegal mining. Most leading candidates have proposed expanding the role of the armed forces in internal security.The election also carries geopolitical implications. Peru's deepening ?economic relationship with ?China -- now its largest trading partner and a major investor in mining and infrastructure - has raised concerns in Washington, which ?has stepped up diplomatic and security engagement ahead of the vote. The two leading candidates have said they will maintain close ties with the U.S.Whoever advances to the runoff will face a fractured Congress and newly reinstated Senate, which may ?complicate efforts to pass legislation and raise the risk of renewed impeachment battles.Reporting by Lucinda Elliott and Marco Aquino; Editing by Cassandra Garrison, Bill Berkrot, Laura Gottesdiener, Lincoln Feast and Kate Mayberry

Why US-Iran talks in Islamabad failed

GNS News Agency, April 16

The failure of the latest round of negotiations between Iran and the United States should not come as a surprise. If anything, it reflects the structural depth of disagreements that have long defined this relationship. These were not tactical gaps that could be bridged over a few rounds of talks; they were fundamental divergences rooted in security perceptions, economic pressures and, above all, a profound trust deficit.At the core lies the unresolved nuclear question. Iran's insistence on retaining its uranium enrichment programme continues to collide with Washington's demand for verifiable limits. Layered onto this is the equally contentious issue of sanctions relief. Tehran seeks immediate access to its frozen assets and economic normalisation, while the United States prefers a phased approach tied to compliance. This sequencing problem has historically derailed diplomacy, and it remains unresolved.

Equally significant is the emergence of the Strait of Hormuz as a central point of contention. Iran increasingly views Hormuz not merely as a geographic feature but as strategic leverage—hinting at control mechanisms, even the possibility of imposing costs on passing vessels. This stands in direct opposition to the long-standing global consensus that these waters must remain open for free navigation.Add to this the regional dimension — particularly tensions linked to Lebanon, ceasefire dynamics, and questions of accountability — and it becomes evident why negotiations faltered. Trust, already fragile, could not sustain such a wide spectrum of disagreements.Yet, the collapse of talks does not signify the end of diplomacy. Negotiations of this nature are inherently iterative, unfolding over months, even years. In the immediate term, a fragile ceasefire is likely to hold, if only because both sides appear to be searching for an exit from escalation.

What is striking, however, is how the strategic narrative has shifted. At the onset of the conflict, Hormuz was peripheral to the discourse. Today, it is the centre of gravity. This transition indicates that Iran has, at least temporarily, seized the initiative. By foregrounding Hormuz, it has reframed the conflict— from a bilateral confrontation to a global economic concern.But such leverage is inherently limited. Disrupting Hormuz is not a cost-free strategy. It places pressure not only on adversaries but also on neighbouring Gulf economies and major Asian consumers of energy. Nearly 89% of the oil passing through Hormuz is destined for Asian markets, making countries such as India and China particularly vulnerable.For India, the implications are immediate: a significant proportion of its LPG imports — nearly half — are sourced from this region, much of it transiting through Hormuz. Any sustained disruption would translate into higher energy costs and economic strain.

Recent developments have further complicated the situation. The United States has signalled an intention to monitor and potentially block vessels suspected of complying with Iranian demands, including the payment of transit-related charges. This introduces an unprecedented layer of contestation —effectively placing two actors in a position to influence maritime movement through a single chokepoint. The logistical feasibility of such enforcement, however, remains questionable.The Strait, though narrow at approximately 33 kilometres at its tightest, is a high-traf-

fic international waterway. Policing it comprehensively would require enormous naval resources and coordination.Moreover, this sets a troubling precedent. If strategic waterways such as Hormuz become arenas for unilateral control, it raises broader concerns about other chokepoints —from the Strait of Malacca to the Bab el-Mandeb. The global trading system relies on the principle of open seas; any erosion of this norm risks cascading disruptions.The economic consequences are already being felt. Reports suggest that vessels have been compelled to pay substantial sums — running into millions of dollars — to ensure safe passage. Such practices, whether coercive or precautionary, add to shipping costs and, by extension, global inflationary pressures. For energy-importing regions, particularly in Asia, the impact could be severe despite the existence of strategic reserves.At a strategic level, Iran's use of Hormuz as leverage may ultimately prove counterproductive. While it provides short-term bargaining power, it risks long-term isolation. Gulf countries, already uneasy, may increasingly align against such tactics. Indeed, there are indications of growing frustration within the region, with some states even hinting at the possibility of stronger responses.This is where the concept of diminishing returns becomes relevant. The more Iran relies on disruption as a tool, the more it risks alienating not just adversaries but also potential partners. In the long run, such a strategy may weaken its position rather than strengthen it.The United States, for its part, appears to be recalibrating its approach. Rather than direct intervention, the emphasis is on containment — managing escalation while avoiding deeper entanglement. This reflects both strategic caution and domestic political considerations. Similarly, Iran, despite its assertiveness, appears aware of the risks of overextension. The result is a paradoxical situation where both sides project strength while quietly seeking an off-ramp.

The nuclear dimension further complicates matters. Technically, Iran is closer than ever to weapons capability. Once enrichment levels cross the 80% threshold, the transition to weapons-grade material becomes relatively swift. Yet, Iran's calculus is likely shaped by regional consequences. A rapid move towards weaponisation could trigger a broader proliferation cascade, particularly among Gulf states.

Meanwhile, non-state actors such as Hezbollah continue to inject volatility into the equation. Operating beyond the full control of state institutions, they complicate efforts at de-escalation. Israel, too, may view the current moment as an opportunity to recalibrate its regional posture, particularly vis-à-vis Hezbollah.

Southport girls' murders should have been prevented, UK inquiry says

LIVERPOOL, England, GNS News Agency, April 16 - The murders of three young girls at a Taylor Swift-themed dance event in Britain in 2024 should have been prevented, ?but there was a "fundamental failure" by state bodies to recognise ?the risk the killer posed, a public inquiry concluded on Monday.Teenager Axel Rudakubana launched the frenzied knife attack at the summer vacation event in Southport, northern England, ?on July 29, 2024, in what Prime Minister Keir Starmer ?called "a devastating moment" in British history.The Reuters Iran Briefing newsletter keeps you informed with the latest developments and analysis of the Iran war. Sign up here.He was jailed for at ?least 52 years after he admitted the killings shortly before his trial ?last year.

Inquiry chair Adrian Fulford said there was a failure by ?agencies – including the police, the counter-radicalisation scheme Prevent and social services – to "take ownership of the risk" Rudakubana posed."This failure lies at the heart of why (Rudakubana) was able to ?mount the attack, despite so many warning signs of his capacity ?for fatal violence," he added.Rudakubana was referred to Prevent three times, firstly in December ?2019 ?after taking a knife to school and searching online for school shootings, but no further action was taken.Rudakubana attended his previous school later in December 2019 with a hockey stick and a knife, which Fulford ?described as "a watershed ?event"."If appropriate ?arrangements and reasonable resources had been in place to address the risk that (Rudakubana) posed to others from December ?2019 onwards, it is highly likely that the ?tragedy ... would ?not have occurred," Fulford said.He also said Rudakubana's parents "bear significant responsibility" for failing to alert the authorities to the risk their son posed.Rudakubana, then ?17, ?killed Bebe King, six, Elsie Dot Stancombe, ?seven, and Alice Dasilva Aguiar, nine, and wounded another 10 in an attack which was ?followed by days of nationwide rioting.

UK and France to co-host talks this week on possible defensive naval mission for Hormuz

PARIS/LONDON - Britain and France will this week co-host ?talks aimed at restoring freedom of navigation in ?the Strait of Hormuz, including discussions on what President Emmanuel Macron described as a possible strictly defensive naval mission.The talks are intended ?to bring together Britain, France and other countries ?willing to join a peaceful multinational mission aimed at ?restoring freedom of navigation in the strait.

The Reuters Iran Briefing newsletter keeps you informed with the latest developments and analysis of the Iran war. Sign up here."This strictly defensive ?mission, which will be separate from the warring parties, is ?intended to be deployed as soon as the situation allows," Macron said in a post on X.Tensions in the Gulf have intensified after ?the United States said it would begin a blockade of ?maritime traffic entering and exiting Iranian ports, while Iran has effectively shut ?the ?Strait, a route that carries about a fifth of the world's oil consumption.British Prime Minister Keir Starmer said the continued closure of the Strait of Hormuz was deeply damaging ?global shipping ?and was adding ?to cost-of-living pressures.

Japan snap election: PM Takaichi counts on her popularity to win Sunday's poll

GNS News Agency, April 16

Japan's Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi is leveraging her popularity to help her party win Sunday's (February 8, 2026) snap election as she pushes her right-wing agenda to boost her country's economy and military capabilities in the face of growing tensions with China and an unpredictable Washington.The ultraconservative Ms. Takaichi, who took office as Japan's first female leader in October, has since enjoyed high ratings and support as her style and "work, work, work" mantra resonates with younger fans.Latest polls indicate a landslide win in the lower house for Ms. Takaichi's Liberal Democratic Party. The opposition, despite the formation of a new centrist alliance and the rising far-right, remains too splintered to be a real challenger.

Ms. Takaichi's relatively safe bet is that her LDP party would, together with its new partner, the Japan Innovation Party, or JIP, secure a majority in the 465-seat lower house, the more powerful of Japan's two-chamber parliament.Simple majority likelyStill, the latest surveys by major Japanese newspapers show there is a possibility Ms. Takaichi's party could win a simple majority on its own, while her coalition could win as many as 300 seats — a big jump from a thin majority it held since a 2024 election loss.The coalition lacks a majority in the other chamber, the upper house, which leaves it dependent on cooperation from the opposition to pass legislation, a risk to stability.Ms. Takaichi said Sunday's election is about deciding if she should stay on as Japanese leader and tackle her "nation-splitting policies."If the LDP fails to win a majority, "I will step down," she said.A big win by Ms. Takaichi's coalition with its right-wing new partner JIP could mean a significant shift in Japan's security, immigration and other policies further to the right as far-right populists gain ground, such as the anti-globalist, surging nationalist party Sanseito.Opposition centrist alliance

The Buddhist-backed dovish Komeito party, which had split from the LDP over Ms. Takaichi's political views and lax anti-corruption measures, has formed a centrist alliance with the liberal-leaning main opposition — the Constitutional Democratic Party of Japan — promising policies that include a "realistic" security, a nuclear weapons-free world and diversity.Komeito's ability to turn out multimillion votes from the Soka Gakkai sect could present a minor setback to the LDP, but surveys for the centrist alliance are not promising.Left-leaning parties are increasingly losing ground as younger voters see their war-renouncing and anti-nuclear policies as unrealistic, and their further decline is inevitable, said Izuru Makihara, a University of Tokyo professor and expert in Japanese politics.Ms. Takaichi has pledged to revise security and defence policies by December to bolster Japan's offensive military capabilities, lifting the ban on lethal weapons exports and moving further away from the country's postwar pacifist principles.She has been pushing for tougher policies on foreigners, anti-espionage and other measures that resonates with a far-right audience but ones that experts say could undermine civil rights.Ms. Takaichi needs to find ways to increase defence spending in response to U.S. President Donald Trump's pressure on Japan to loosen its purse strings.In her campaign speeches, Ms. Takaichi stayed away from contentious issues and focused on the economy, tougher immigration and measures on foreigners, including tougher requirements for foreign property owners and a cap on foreign residents.Chiharu Sasaki, a resident of Tokyo, said that while it's good to have a female leader, she has to see what Ms. Takaichi will do."There is an image that Ms. Takaichi is someone who gets things done, but she hasn't really proved it yet ... so I'm still a bit cautious," Sasaki said.

Tensions with ChinaJapan has been facing escalating tensions with China after Ms .Takaichi suggested Japan could get involved in the case of Chinese military action against Taiwan, a self-governing island that Beijing claims as its own. Her comment, deviating from other Japanese leaders' strategic ambiguity in the past, angered China. Beijing has since stepped up economic and diplomatic retribution.The prolonged tensions and economic impact from China's trade and diplomatic reprisals have raised concerns, prompting Ms. Takaichi to step back from her right-wing rhetoric.Mr. Trump wants Japan to spend more on weapons as U.S.-China rivalry continues in the region.On Thursday, Mr. Trump gave a rare endorsement for Ms. Takaichi on X, announcing his invitation for her to visit the White House on March 19 and praising her as "a strong, powerful, and wise leader.""She will not let the people of Japan down!" Mr. Trump said.Record snowfall in northern Japan over the last few weeks, which blocked roads and was blamed for dozens of deaths nationwide, could hinder voting or delay vote counting in that part of the country.Ms. Takaichi's party is also reeling from political funds scandals and its deep-rooted ties to the Unification Church, which surfaced during the investigation of the 2022 assassination of former Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe.Opposition leaders demand that Ms. Takaichi clarify allegations in newly surfaced documents that link her and her party to the controversial church, which has faced hundreds of lawsuits in Japan from families who say that it manipulated members into draining their savings to make donations.Also in the mix ahead of the vote on Sunday are uncertainties as to just how Ms. Takaichi's popularity among younger generations, traditionally known for low turnout at the polls, could translate into party votes

India-U.S. deal does not include any item that would hurt Indian farmers, says Piyush Goyal

GNS News Agency, April 16

India and the U.S. early morning issued a joint statement in which they announced that the two countries had reached a framework for an Interim Agreement, and would continue working together towards a more comprehensive Bilateral Trade Agreement.While U.S. President Donald Trump has already signed an executive order removing the 25% tariffs the U.S. had imposed on imports from India for its trade in Russian oil, Mr. Goyal said that another executive order is expected next week that would reduce the remaining 25% reciprocal tariff to 18%."We have not included any item where any Indian farmer will be hurt," Mr. Goyal said at a press conference later in the day. "All sensitive items have been kept out of the deal. No genetically modified items will enter India, and no tariff relief has been given [to the U.S.] on meat, poultry, dairy, soybean, maize, rice, wheat, sugar, millets, fruits such as bananas, strawberries, cherries, citrus fruit, greenpea, kabuli chana, moong, oilseeds, ethanol, and tobacco."

How India will benefitHe further listed out a number of other sectors that would see duties on exports to the U.S. being reduced from 50% to 0%. These include gems and diamonds, pharmaceutical products, aircraft parts, machinery parts, generic drugs, pharma products, some auto parts, gems and diamonds, platinum, clocks and watches, essential oils, home decor items such as chandeliers, lamp parts, some inorganic chemicals, some paper, plastic, and wood items, among others. "Several agricultural exports will see zero duty from 50%, such as spices, tea, coffee, copra, coconuts and coconut oil, vegetable oil, areca nut, Brazil nuts, cashew nuts, chestnuts, several fruits and vegetables, such as avocados, bananas, guavas, mangoes, kiwis, papaya, mushrooms, material for vegetable plating, vegetable sap, vegetable roots, cereals like barley, some processed foods," Mr. Goyal said.

Where India has reduced tariffsThe Commerce Minister acknowledged that India has reduced or removed tariffs on items that India needs and does not produce, or those that it produces but not in enough quantities. "Some items will see tariffs being removed immediately, while others will see tariffs removed in a phased manner, while some others will also see quota-based tariffs," Mr. Goyal said. These items include apples, Distillers Dried Grains with Solubles (DDGS), wines and spirits (with a minimum import price), pista, walnuts, almonds, some industrial production inputs, many medicines for cancer treatment, heart treatment, neurological treatment, some cosmetics, organic and inorganic chemicals, several products related to computers, and several medical equipments. "It is big win for India that the U.S. has agreed to provide us with various ICT products that we need," Mr. Goyal.

OpenAI unveils AI agent service as part of push to attract businesses

GNS News Agency, April 16

OpenAI ?on Thursday said it is launching a service, ?called Frontier, for companies to build and ?manage so-called artificial-intelligence agents, or AI ?tools that can complete specific tasks, like fixing a software bug.The platform is part of a broader effort by OpenAI to seize the enterprise market from its rivals, notably the AI startup Anthropic, which draws the bulk ?of its revenue from companies. Last year, OpenAI ?CEO Sam Altman said enterprise growth would be a "huge focus" for his company.The enterprise market is just one ?of many places ?where OpenAI and Anthropic are going head-to-head. Both companies are preparing to go public, a process that will pit them against each other ?for investor attention.

The two companies will ?also be running rival ads during the Super Bowl. Anthropic's ad appears to ?be a thinly veiled jab at OpenAI's decision to bring ads to ChatGPT, a critique ?that ruffled feathers at OpenAI on Wednesday. In a post on X, Altman described Anthropic's ad as funny but "clearly dishonest."OpenAI executives said Frontier is meant to work with a company's preexisting infrastructure as well as AI agents built by third parties. OpenAI is unsatisfied

with some of Nvidia's latest AI chips, and it ?has sought alternatives since last year, eight sources familiar with the matter said, potentially complicating the relationship between the two highest-profile players in the AI boom.That approach means that companies might ?adopt OpenAI's enterprise tools faster than is otherwise possible, said Fidji Simo, who oversees OpenAI's product and business teams as the startup's CEO of applications."This is us saying we're going to build an intelligence layer that's going to help every enterprise turn on agents in a much easier way," she said.

Bitcoin falls 9%; Asian shares slip as Wall Street hit by tech losses

GNS News Agency, April 16

U.S. futures and Asian shares traded mostly lower, tracking Wall Street's losses as technology stocks again dragged on markets.Bitcoin sank to roughly half its record price, giving back all it gained since U.S. President Donald Trump won the White House for his second term.Tokyo's Nikkei 225 was up 0.5% to 54,073.52, recovering from losses earlier this week, with technology-related stocks leading gains. SoftBank Group rose 1.9%, and chipmaker Tokyo Electron rose 3%. Japan will also be holding its general election on Sunday (February 8, 2026), in which Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi expects to win a stronger public mandate for her policies.South Korea's Kospi lost 1.7% to 5,076.69, weighed down by tech shares. Samsung Electronics, the country's biggest listed company, fell 0.9%. Chipmaker SK Hynix was down 0.6%.Hong Kong's Hang Seng fell 1.2% to 26,569.14. The Shanghai Composite index was flat at 4,075.37. In Australia, the S&P/ASX 200 shed 1.6% to 8,745.60. Taiwan's Taiex fell 0.2%.

Against the backdrop of the technology sell-off this week, Bitcoin, the world's largest cryptocurrency, saw dimming enthusiasm and was trading about 9% lower at just under $65,000 on Friday (February 6, 2026), after it briefly sank more than 12% to below $64,000 on Thursday (February 5, 2026). That's down from a record of above $124,000 in October.The future for the S&P 500 was 0.3% lower, while that for the Dow Jones Industrial Average fell 0.2%.On Thursday (February 5, 2026), the S&P 500 fell 1.2% to 6,798.40, its sixth loss in the seven days. The Dow Jones Industrial Average fell 1.2% to 48,908.72. The Nasdaq composite dropped 1.6% to 22,540.59.

Technology stocks were among the worst hit as concerns persist over whether massive AI investments by many of the Big Tech firms will pay off.Chipmaker

Qualcomm sank 8.5% despite better-than-expected quarterly revenues. Alphabet lost 0.5% as investors were focussed on its huge spending on AI.Amazon fell 11% in after-hours trading on Thursday (February 5, 2026) after it announced plans to boost capital spending by more than 50% to $200 billion in AI and other areas.American Artificial Intelligence startup Anthropic's new AI tools also fuelled the sell-off of software stocks on Wall Street this week, as its sophistication means many traditional software development services and products could be disrupted or replaced.Gold and silver prices have been volatile this week following a months-long rally as investors moved into safe-haven assets, prompted by factors including elevated geopolitical tensions. Gold prices fell 1% on Friday to $4,843.70 per ounce, after nearing $5,600 last week.Silver prices dropped 6.6% to $71.63 per ounce after rising earlier this week. It lost more than 31% last Friday.In other dealings early Friday, the U.S. benchmark crude oil gained 35 cents to $63.64 a barrel. Brent crude, the international standard, rose 36 cents to $67.91 a barrel.

India-U.S. interim trade deal: Closely engaged with America for electronics and IP, Union Minister Vaishnaw says

GNS News Agency, April 16

The Indian government is closely engaged with the U.S. for electronics and IP-related matters, Union Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw said on Saturday (February 7, 2026), as the two nations announced that they have finalised a framework for an interim trade agreement.The U.S.-India joint statement on the interim agreement for trade deal has called for addressing non-tariff barriers that affect bilateral trade.It specifically mentions barriers related to the trade in U.S. medical devices, U.S. Information and Communication Technology (ICT) goods.Asked about views on the statement and its expected impact, Mr. Vaishnaw said the commerce ministry is the nodal body to share details but as far as electronics is concerned India is closely engaged in the discussion."We are very closely engaged from our side as far as electronics and IP is concerned. We believe in co-development, co-creation, we believe in IP, respecting IP. We believe that India has a lot to offer to the entire world in terms of new products, new ideas, new technologies and that journey is progressing at a very rapid measure, good pace," the minister said.The joint statement calls for working towards a positive outcome, within six months of the agreement getting into force on whether U.S.-developed or international standards, including testing requirements, are acceptable for the purposes of U.S. exports entering the Indian market in identified sectors.

As per the statement, India and the U.S. will significantly increase trade in technology products, including Graphics Processing Units (GPUs) and other goods used in data centers, and expand joint technology cooperation.Sharing his views on the GPU agreement, Mr. Vaishnaw said data centres are going to be a major growth

journey in the coming years.He said that under the India AI mission, the country has procured over 34,000 GPUs as part of the common compute facility and very soon about 20,000 more will be added."So far we have committed investments of $70 billion, if we add the other announcements, it is about USD 90 billion. I expect that in the coming months, this number will go beyond $200 billion. That is the general expectation which is coming up and that will generate new opportunities for our service providers, for the young startups who can provide new solutions," Mr. Vaishnaw said.During October-December, Google announced an investment of $15 billion, Microsoft $17 billion, Amazon $35 billion and Digital Connexion $11 billion.Mr. Vaishnaw said that the investments in data centres will create that strength which is needed in all the five layers of the AI architecture, AI stack."Many of our startups will be very keen on having more and more compute facilities available in our country through these data centres, so that they can use it for developing solutions and also providing the solutions to the world," Mr. Vaishnaw said.

Three arrested in Peshawar linked to suicide attack at Shia mosque

GNS News Agency, April 16

Pakistan's police have arrested two men and a woman in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's Peshawar linked to a suicide attack at a Shia mosque in Islamabad on Friday .At least 31 people were killed and 169 others injured when a suicide bomber blew himself up at Khadijah al-Kubra mosque-cum-imambargah in the Tarlai area of Islamabad, in one of the worst terror attacks targeting the community in recent years.A police official said that during the operation late on Friday (February 6) night, two brothers of the alleged suicide bomber and a woman were arrested and interrogation is currently underway.According to investigation officials, an identity card recovered from them helped establish the attacker's identity as Yasir.Mourners arrange the coffins of the victims of Friday's suicide bombing inside a Shiite mosque, during a funeral prayer, in Islamabad, Pakistan, Saturday, Feb. 7, 2026.

Mourners arrange the coffins of the victims of Friday's suicide bombing inside a Shiite mosque, during a funeral prayer, in Islamabad, Pakistan, Saturday, Feb. 7, 2026. (AP Photo/Anjum Naveed) | Photo Credit: Anjum NaveedOfficial records show that his permanent address was Abbas Colony, Shiro Jangi, Charsadda Road, Peshawar, while his temporary residence was in Ganj Mohalla Qaziyan, Peshawar.Investigators have also revealed that prior to the Islamabad suicide bombing, the attacker had remained in

Afghanistan for approximately five months where he allegedly received formal training in weapons handling and suicide attacks.

Following this disclosure, investigation agencies have shifted their focus toward identifying and dismantling the network operating behind the attack.Police officials stated that further raids are being conducted in Peshawar and Nowshera to identify potential facilitators and contacts.Authorities emphasised that the investigation into the Islamabad suicide bombing is being carried out from all angles, and additional evidence is expected to surface, which may help clarify the full scope of the terrorist incident.

Rudrankksh Patil wins gold in Asian Championship men's 10m air rifle

New Delhi: Former world champion shooter Rudrankksh Patil offered a glimpse of what lies ahead this season by clinching the gold medal, while Olympian Arjun Babuta finished second, as India made a telling statement in the men's 10m air rifle event at the Asian Championship here Friday.Rudrankksh, one of the finest rifle marksmen to emerge from the country after Olympic gold medallist Abhinav Bindra and Gagan Narang, shot a superb 251.9 in the final to hold off the challenge from compatriot Babuta (250.7) and stamp his authority on the sport. The duo, along with Vishal Singh, also earned India the team gold in the event.

The 22-year-old Rudrankksh, who endured the disappointment of missing the Paris Olympics despite earning a quota place for the country, underlined his class by topping the qualification round with a superb 632.1. Two more Indians — Babuta (628.0, fifth) and Vishal (624.6, eighth) — also advanced to the eight-shooter final.Rudrankksh began the final on a slow note, sitting sixth after the first set of five

shots in the competition stage, but quickly found his rhythm in the next series to move up to second. From there, he never looked back during the elimination round.

This was Rudrankksh's maiden individual gold at the continental level, having previously claimed the mixed team top-podium spot in Jakarta in 2024.

Two tankers with Iranian oil anchor off Indian ports; Iran-flagged Felicity off Sikka, Curacao-flagged Jaya near Paradip

After a crude oil tanker laden with Iranian oil reached the waters off the port of Paradip in Odisha, another Iranian oil tanker has reached the anchorage of Gujarat's Sikka port, according to ship tracking data. These tankers mark the first cargoes of Iranian crude to reach Indian ports in almost seven years, following the sanctions waiver announced by the US last month. The one-month waiver allowed sale of Iranian oil already in tankers on the water in a bid to ease the supply disruption in the global market and keep oil prices in check. After peace talks failed over the weekend, the US has now announced a blockade of Iranian ports in an effort to restrict Tehran's revenue from oil exports.

Very large crude carrier (VLCC) Felicity dropped anchor off Sikka port late Sunday (April 12), according to vessel tracking data. The tanker sails under the Iranian flag and is operated by the National Iranian Tanker Company (NITC), as per shipping database. As of Monday 10 am, its location was the Sikka anchorage, according to data from maritime analytics provider MarineTraffic. Trade sources indicated that Felicity may be laden with 2 million barrels of Iranian oil meant for private sector refining giant Reliance Industries (RIL). The company did not immediately respond to a request for comment.Felicity follows Jaya, a Curacao-flagged VLCC, which reached the waters off Paradip port a couple of days earlier, and is estimated to be carrying 2 million barrels of Iranian crude for public sector refiner Indian Oil Corporation (IOC). Both Felicity and Jaya—among the tankers sanctioned by the US—lifted crude from Iran's main oil export facility of Kharg Island, according to trade sources. Jaya is estimated to have been loaded late February, just before the US and Israel launched strikes on Iran. Felicity is estimated to have lifted oil from Kharg sometime in the middle of March.

A recent Reuters report had said that India's shipping ministry gave special permission to four tankers carrying Iranian oil to berth at the Sikka port. Felicity was among the tankers for which the permission was reportedly given. Industry experts believe that some more Iranian crude is expected to reach India over the coming days, before the US waiver for Iranian oil purchases expires on April 19.A few days back, the government confirmed that India is buying Iranian crude and there were no payment-related hurdles in buying Tehran's oil, following the sanctions waiver for Iranian oil on water. "India imports crude oil from 40+ countries, with companies having full flexibility to source oil from different sources & geographies based on commercial considerations. Amid Middle East supply disruptions, Indian refiners have secured their crude oil requirements, including from Iran; and there is no payment hurdle for Iranian crude imports…," the Petroleum Ministry had said in an April 4 post on social media platform X. It had also announced that a tanker carrying Iranian liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) was discharging cargo at the New Mangalore port.

Amid the West Asia war, the US on March 21 suspended for a month the sanctions on Iranian crude already loaded on tankers in a bid to allow as many barrels of oil as possible to flow into the international market to improve the global oil supply situation and curb spiralling crude oil prices. The waiver from Washington was similar to the one issued for Russian oil earlier in March; India's Russian oil imports have surged since the war began. India hasn't imported Iranian crude since May 2019 due to reimposition of US sanctions on Tehran by the first Trump administration.According to the general licence issued by the Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) of the US Department of the Treasury on March 21, transactions related to the sale, delivery, or offloading of crude oil and petroleum products of Iranian origin – loaded on any vessel, including tankers sanctioned by the US, as of 12.01 eastern daylight time (9.31 am India time) on March 20 – are authorised until April 19.Vessel movements through the Strait of Hormuz were effectively halted due to the conflict that began on February 28; Iranian oil shipments largely continued unabated though. The Strait accounted for one-fifth of global oil and liquefied natural gas (LNG) flows. Around 2.5–2.7 million bpd of India's crude imports—around half of the overall oil imports—have transited the Strait in recent months, while the longer-term average is around 40%. India depends on imports to meet over 88% of its requirement of crude oil.

'I changed most of the furniture…': Inside Dhurandhar actor Gaurav Gera's minimal and unfiltered 28-year-old Mumbai sanctuary

There is something quietly grounding about spaces that are not curated for display but shaped by lived experience. Step into Gaurav Gera's Mumbai apartment in Oshiwara, and you find a home that reflects just that. It is simple, functional and deeply personal. During a candid home tour with Curly Tales, the Dhurandhar actor opened up not just about his home but also about the thought process behind it. From white walls and a neutral palette to indoor plants and a seamless layout, the space feels calm without trying too hard.His connection to the neighbourhood itself is rooted in time and familiarity. "I am here from 1998… So, around 28 years. Since I have come, I have always stayed in Andheri. So, I am familiar with this place… So, this area is, I feel, where I belong," he shared, reflecting a sense of belonging. The house itself mirrors his personality. Minimal, practical, and free from unnecessary indulgence. As he put it, "I didn't do much… The things that were there earlier, I put them there. Rest, I changed most of the furniture. IKEA's, I thought, it was easy… Very practical."

What stands out are the personal details that give the space character without overwhelming it. From fish motifs brought back from Thailand—"Fish is for good luck. So, I wanted it. Fish is pointing upwards. So, I really wanted to bring it"—to repurposed furniture and everyday objects like "utensils with broken handles" that he chooses not to discard, the home reflects continuity and emotional attachment. The environment also supports his need for quiet and focus, with cosy nooks where he likes to spend most of his free time.At the same time, there is a contrast within the home. While most of it leans towards minimalism, his gadget and content room is filled with technology, reflecting his creative side. "I am very, heavily into gadgets… Rest, I don't like cars, clothes, anything else," he admitted. This duality between simplicity and creative stimulation, along with personal corners filled with awards, photographs, and memories, creates a space that feels both functional and emotionally layered.Even everyday habits, like cooking his own meals or adapting to lactose intolerance, add to the sense of a home that supports independence while staying rooted in comfort and familiarity. Altogether, the apartment is less about aesthetics and more about emotional ease, identity, and lived experience.How do minimalist, clutter-free living spaces impact mental clarity, stress levels, and overall emotional well-being?

Neha Cadabam, senior psychologist and executive director, Cadabam's Hospitals, tells indianexpress.com, "A minimalist, clutter-free environment reduces cognitive overload by limiting constant visual stimuli competing for attention. This allows the brain to process information more efficiently, improving focus and mental clarity."Gaurav Gera home Creating distinct zones within a home helps the brain establish clear contextual boundaries (Source: YouTube/Curly Tales)From a psychological standpoint, she says, organised spaces are associated with lower cortisol levels, which directly impacts stress reduction. Such environments also create a sense of control and predictability, both of which are essential for emotional stability and overall well-being.How designing separate zones for work, rest, and creativity within a home support better mental balanceCreating distinct zones within a home helps the brain establish clear contextual boundaries, confirms Cadabam, which is critical for regulating attention and emotional states. When work, rest, and creative activities are spatially separated,

it reduces role overlap and mental fatigue.Gaurav Gera home From fish motifs brought back from Thailand to repurposed furniture and everyday objects that he chooses not to discard, the home reflects continuity and emotional attachment.)"This zoning enables more effective switching between focused productivity and relaxation, improving both output and recovery. For individuals in creative fields, dedicated spaces can also act as psychological triggers that enhance flow and ideation," concludes the expert.

'Can you be both insulin resistant and have elevated blood sugar?'

The idea of having both insulin resistance and elevated blood sugar levels isn't just possible — it is the hallmark of Type 2 diabetes. While the body can initially compensate for insulin resistance by producing more insulin, blood sugar levels inevitably rise once the pancreas can no longer keep up with the demand.

The discussion recently flared up on Quora, where an internet user enquired 'Can you be both insulin resistant and have elevated blood sugar?'. We reached out to Dr Rajiv Kovil, Head of Diabetology and weight loss expert, Zandra Healthcare and Co-founder of Rang De Neela Initiative, seeking answers, rooted in medical facts."The answer is a clear and clinically important yes," the diabetologist tells indianexpress.com confirming the possibility."It is often the earliest detectable abnormality in metabolic disease, long before glucose levels begin to rise," the diabetologist notes, pointing out that the human body has a remarkable ability to compensate.In the early stages, you can be insulin resistant while your blood sugar still looks completely normal. That's because the body produces extra insulin to keep glucose levels in check.Even during this phase, changes may already be underway—higher insulin levels, increasing belly fat, and low-grade inflammation—often without obvious warning signs.Over time, this balance can break down. When the pancreas can no longer keep up with the body's rising insulin demand, blood sugar begins to rise. That's when both insulin resistance and elevated glucose exist together—often signalling progression toward Type 2 Diabetes."By the time glucose rises, years of metabolic injury have already occurred," Dr Kovil says.Why normal reports can be misleading—and what to watch forRoutine tests like fasting glucose or HbA1c don't measure insulin resistance directly.

"They reflect glucose levels, not insulin dynamics and often detect disease only when it is established," he explains.This is why some people may still experience fatigue, weight gain, or post-meal energy crashes despite having "normal" reports.The encouraging part: insulin resistance doesn't always progress to Type 2 Diabetes. With timely lifestyle changes—like regular exercise, balanced nutrition, good sleep, and weight management—insulin sensitivity can improve significantly."Normal sugar does not always mean normal metabolism," Dr Kovil emphasises. To put it simple, catching insulin resistance early is key; because by the time blood sugar rises, the condition may already be well underway.

LPG tanker Jag Vikram crosses Strait of Hormuz; first Indian vessel to transit since US-Iran ceasefire announcement

Liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) tanker Jag Vikram crossed the Strait of Hormuz between Friday night and Saturday morning, becoming the first India-flagged vessel to cross the maritime chokepoint since the announcement of the temporary two-week ceasefire between the US and Iran, according to ship tracking data. Jag Vikram is the ninth Indian ship to exit the Persian Gulf since early March; another 15 India-flagged vessels are in the Persian Gulf with its exit. As of 8 pm (India time) on Saturday, the tanker was in the Gulf of Oman, well beyond the Strait, and was sailing eastwards towards India's west coast.According to the government, Jag Vikram is carrying around 20,400 tonnes of LPG with 24 seafarers on board. It is expected to arrive at Mumbai on April 15. The tanker is a mid-sized gas carrier (MGC) owned by Mumbai-based Great Eastern Shipping Company, as per shipping databases. The tanker has a deadweight capacity of over 26,000 tonnes. Deadweight tonnage is the total weight a vessel can carry, including cargo, fuel, fresh water, ballast water, provisions, and crew.

According to trade sources, Jag Vikram had been waiting to cross the Strait of Hormuz for over a week now. On April 3, The Indian Express had reported that LPG tankers Green Asha and Jag Vikram were expected to cross the crucial waterway in a few days' time. Green Asha transited the Strait on April 5. Scores of vessels have been stranded in the Persian Gulf since the war began, with only a few being able to safely transit the Strait, and that, too, in coordination with Iran.Seven of the eight other Indian LPG tankers that crossed the Strait of Hormuz over the past few weeks were very large gas carriers (VLGCs), with more than double the LPG carrying capacity than an MGC. One was an MGC. The remaining 15 Indian vessels in the Persian Gulf include at least one more LPG tanker, four crude oil tankers, one liquefied natural gas (LNG) tanker, one chemical products tanker, three container ships, two bulk carriers, and a few vessels undergoing routine maintenance.While transiting the Strait of Hormuz, Jag Vikram was signalling that it was an Indian ship with Indian crew on board. Such identity broadcasts have become a standard of sorts among vessels crossing the Strait in coordination with Iranian authorities, which are regulating vessel movements. The Strait of Hormuz is a narrow waterway between Iran and Oman that connects the Persian Gulf with the Arabian Sea; it is a critical maritime chokepoint for global energy flows. Around one-fifth of global oil and gas flows transited the Strait before the war began.

India is among the countries that have been engaged with Iran at the diplomatic level for safe passage of their ships through the Strait of Hormuz, where Tehran brought vessel movements to an effective halt amid the ongoing West Asia war. With the ceasefire announcement on Wednesday, there were hopes that vessel movements through the Strait would progressively increase. While some movement in traffic has reportedly picked up a bit, flows remain highly constricted.Amid reports that Iran wants to impose a toll or a transit fee on merchant vessels crossing the Strait of Hormuz, India continues to press for free and safe navigation through the waterway. In response to reports regarding the potential formalisation of a toll by Iran for passage through the Strait, a senior Foreign Ministry official recently said that there has been "absolutely no discussion" on the issue between India and Iran, adding that India maintains its long-held stance on the matter and will evaluate future scenarios if and when they arise.

There had been reports that Iran was already charging a "toll" from some vessels before allowing them to cross the Strait of Hormuz. The Indian government has been categorically denying the payment of any toll or charge to the Iranians for the passage of India-flagged ships through the waterway. Since the war began, eight India-flagged vessels—all LPG tankers—have returned from the Persian Gulf. India has high dependence on West Asia for its oil and gas supplies, most of which come to the country via the Strait of Hormuz. The Strait is also important for India's supplies of other commodities, including fertilisers and petrochemicals."On the question of toll…there has been no discussion on this point between us and Iran. So that is where we are. As to what will be the scenario if a certain situation arises or happens in future, we'll see when the time comes. But our point of view at this point in time is that we continue to call for free and safe navigation through the Strait of Hormuz," Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal said on Thursday.

Like most other natural waterways that are shipping chokepoints, the Strait of Hormuz is an international strait, and no tolls are charged just for crossing them, as per the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS). Although neither Iran nor the US have ratified the convention, it is widely accepted as international law, and Washington and Tehran have mostly abided by it. Sources indicated that changing the status of the Strait of Hormuz is a question of international law and would be required to be done through the UN.Prior to the ceasefire, Iran had said that non-hostile vessels linked to countries other than the US, Israel, and their allies can cross the strait in coordination with Iranian authorities. With the ceasefire announcement on Wednesday, Iran's Foreign Minister Seyed Abbas Araghchi said that safe passage through the Strait of Hormuz will be possible for two weeks but "via coordination with Iran's Armed Forces and with due consideration of technical limitations".

India's inflation rises to 3.4 per cent in March on CPI data

New Delhi: India's inflation rate, based on the new Consumer Price Index (CPI) series with 2024 as the base year, edged up to 3.4 per cent in March compared to the same month of the previous year, according to data released by the Ministry of Statistics on Monday.

The commodities that recorded the highest inflation during the month were silver jewellery, which saw a 148.61 per cent jump in prices, and gold jewellery, which clocked a 45.92 per cent increase in prices.Overall food inflation in March stood at 3.87 per cent, largely because vegetables such as tomato and cauliflower turned more expensive during the month. However, the prices of onion, potato, and garlic recorded a double-digit decline during the month compared to the same month of the previous year, while pulses also turned cheaper. The prices of arhar and tur daal dropped by 9.56 per cent, while chickpea registered a 7.87 per cent fall in price.Sequentially, the inflation in March was a tad higher than 3.21 per cent in the previous month of February and the revised figure of 2.74 per cent for January this year, when the new series was launched.

Dipika Kakar describes hospital visits as 'one of the most difficult days', says 'everyone is worried about me'

Dipika Kakar, 39, recently visited the hospital to understand the next course of treatment. On her YouTube vlog, the Sasural Simar Ka actor expressed, "I have to go to the hospital today. Would get to know about the future course of treatment. A hospital visit is one of the most difficult days. Everyone is smiling in front of me. But I know that everyone is worried about me, including my mom and mother-in-law. They manage to smile and put on a brave front, which keeps my strength going…and gives me blessings," she said in Hindi.Taking a leaf out of her expression, let's understand how illness is not just a physical issue but a deeply emotional and even psychologically draining one, too.

Psychotherapist and life coach Delnna Rrajesh said that moments like hospital visits carry layers of emotional weight. "There is fear of the unknown, anxiety around health outcomes, physical exhaustion, and an unspoken pressure to stay composed, particularly when there is a child involved. For many mothers, the struggle becomes twofold: processing their own pain while simultaneously protecting their child from it," Delnna said.This creates what psychology refers to as emotional duality — the ability to hold grief and strength at the same time. On the outside, there is composure. "On the inside, there may be fear, vulnerability, even moments of breakdown," described Delnna.Strength often includes moments where emotions overflow. "Tears, fatigue, and emotional vulnerability are not signs of weakness. They are natural responses to uncertainty and stress," shared Delnna.One of the most overlooked aspects of serious illness is the anticipatory anxiety it brings. "Hospital visits are not just about treatment. They represent waiting, uncertainty, and the mind constantly imagining possibilities. Research in health psychology shows that uncertainty can sometimes be more distressing than the diagnosis itself, because the brain struggles with lack of control," said Delnna.

For caregivers and parents, this is further intensified by the need to maintain normalcy, mentioned Delnna.*From a psychological and emotional healing lens, the first step is allowing emotional expression without guilt. It is important

Psychotherapist and life coach Delnna Rrajesh said that moments like hospital visits carry layers of emotional weight. "There is fear of the unknown, anxiety around health outcomes, physical exhaustion, and an unspoken pressure to stay composed, particularly when there is a child involved.

to recognise that feeling overwhelmed does not make you less strong; it makes you human. Suppressing emotions may create temporary control, but over time it can lead to emotional fatigue or burnout.*Then there is a need to create safe emotional outlets. "This could be through talking to a trusted person, journaling, or even moments of solitude where emotions can be processed without interruption. Emotional release is essential for maintaining mental well-being during prolonged stress," said Delnna.*Another important aspect is redefining strength. Strength is not about constantly holding it together. "It is about knowing when to pause, when to ask for support, and when to simply feel."*Practices like mindful breathing or short moments of stillness can help regulate the nervous system during overwhelming phases, said Delnna.

National Sports Awards delayed as Sports Ministry reviews Arjuna Award selection process

National Sports awards delayedAccording to a source, the awards committee had nominated 24 athletes for the Arjuna Award, continuing the trend of the growing number of recipients for the award in the last few years. The National Sports Awards have been delayed this year, as the Sports Ministry wants to re-evaluate the process f giving the Arjuna awards to ensure that only the deserving athletes get the honour. Despite the awards selection committee giving its recommendations in December last year, the ministry has held the names and is re-assessing the recommendations."The list of Arjuna award recommendations is being re-evaluated right now. The value of these awards should not get diminished, that's the goal. We want to follow a stringent process of selection," a Sports Ministry source close to the development said on Monday.As per the ministry source, in the past, a few of these awards have gone to athletes who didn't deserve the recognition. "It shouldn't be the case that every other athlete is an Arjuna Awardee and when you ask them about their accomplishments, there is nothing much to show. The prestige of the award needs to be maintained. And also the number of litigations that come out in some cases is outrageous," the source said, referring to the instances when athletes drag ministry to the court.

According to a source, the awards committee had nominated 24 athletes for the Arjuna Award, continuing the trend of the growing number of recipients for the award in the last few years. In the 2010-2019 decade, there was only one instance of more than 20 recipients of the award but 32 athletes received the award in 2024 only.The ministry's opinion on the matter is that instead of selection panel there should be a clear criteria with points to ensure only worthy athletes are nominated."It's like the prize money, if you have won an Olympic medal, you shouldn't have to fill a form to get your Rs 75 lakh prize money. The system just knows and transfers the money suitably. Similarly, an athlete who has achieved the requisite shouldn't have to be evaluated again by a panel," said the source.The awards were traditionally presented on August 29, the birth anniversary of hockey legend Major Dhyan Chand, by the President. However, this tradition has not been followed in the past few years due to scheduling issues and the process of nominations getting affected by major events.

Dale Steyn reacts to Jasprit Bumrah's spell of 0-35 against RCB: 'He's put on a show tonight'

GNS News Agency, April 16

In a tournament where he has so often been the difference-maker for the Mumbai Indians, Jasprit Bumrah has endured a rare lean start to IPL 2026. The 32-year-old is yet to pick up a wicket after four matches, with figures of 0/123 from 15 overs.While his control and execution have largely remained intact, the lack of breakthroughs has stood out in a struggling bowling unit and for a team searching for momentum, Bumrah's quiet start has only added to their early-season concerns.

South African pace bowling legend Dale Steyn, however, backed Bumrah's spell against RCB on Sunday, saying that he 'put on a show' with his skill set and his yorker, in particular, was "fantastic"."You'd take those figures every day of the week, in this total. He has put on a show tonight with all his skills, his yorker in particular has been fantastic. Yes, he has missed his length on occasion, but you don't see that often from him," Steyn said on Star Sports.Former India off-spinner R Ashwin had also come out in support of the pacer on Sunday, saying Bumrah's ability to bowl yorkers was more crucial than him being on the wickets column."The lack of wickets narrative for Bumrah can hamper the teams cause! Him nailing yorkers and choking the opposition for every single run is even more important than him looking to get wickets, especially in venues like the Wankhede.When you can't bowl overs on the trot, your wicket taking ability depends on your partners who hand the over to you. We have had so many years of T20 cricket now & bowling in partnerships as a defensive group is still a seed in the minds of bowling groups. Malinga nailed it, when he spoke during the 10th over mark," Ashwin wrote on X on Sunday. The lack of wickets narrative for Bumrah can hamper the teams cause!It hasn't just been Jasprit Bumrah who has struggled for wickets, with the rest of the MI attack also failing to step up. Trent Boult has managed just one wicket in three matches, conceding 110 runs at an economy rate of 12.22, underlining the team's broader bowling concerns. While Shardul Thakur has picked up five wickets, those returns have come at a price, with the runs conceded undermining his overall impact.

'They need to maximise Bumrah's impact by using him at key stages': Faf du Plessis' advice to Mumbai Indians

GNS News Agency, April 16

Former South Africa skipper Faf du Plessis suggested that Mumbai Indians have to let go of their over reliance on pacer Jasprit Bumrah, urging them to use the seamer at key stages of the match. Mumbai Indians, who started with a win against the Kolkata Knight Riders, are yet to win any of their other three matches with Bumrah failing to open his account in all the 4 matches."When you look at that bowling attack, especially in high-scoring games of 250 or more, you have to assess what the rest of the attack is conceding beyond Bumrah's four overs, which are usually very economical. That's where Mumbai Indians need to find answers," du Plessis told Star Sports.

"They need to maximise Bumrah's impact by using him at key stages, but it doesn't get any easier with strong batting line-ups continuing to dominate. They will need to sit down and reassess their approach, particularly in the Powerplay, whether that involves tactical changes or bringing in different personnel," he added.Mumbai's latest defeat came on Sunday against the Royal Challengers Bengaluru when they conceded 240 runs and failed to chase it down, falling 18 runs short. Among the six bowlers they used, Bumrah was the most economical at 8.80 giving away 35 runs in 4 overs. Except for captain hardik Pandya, all the other 4 bowlers had an economy of more than 10."I think that was always going to be catch-up. I think it's been the

last couple of games as a bowling unit or even as a batting unit, we've been quite catching up to the game rather than leading the game. Really need to reflect, really need to see what best we can do and how we can get that momentum and that click which we require," Pandya said after their defeat to RCB at the Wankhede."To be very honest, now a lot of things need to be rethought. Definitely, it's not working. A couple of games, we have won the toss, but maybe we need to see what the other options are, as well as the batting group or bowling group that we can have. We still need to bat well, we still need to bowl well, irrespective of the toss," admitted Hardik.

'Lot of things need rethink': Hardik Pandya reacts after MI's third consecutive IPL 2026 loss

GNS News Agency, April 16

Mumbai Indians' indifferent start to the IPL 2026 season with three successive defeats, including a second straight loss to Royal Challengers Bengaluru at the Wankhede Stadium after a gap of 10 years, has left captain Hardik Pandya scrambling for answers.After getting thumped by Rajasthan Royals in an 11-over contest in Guwahati, MI's bowlers came under the scanner yet again on Sunday night after defending champions RCB hammered a colossal 240 for four, their highest total at the Wankhede Stadium in Mumbai.

Mumbai's chase was worsened after an injury forced Rohit Sharma to retire hurt early on, while Suryakumar Yadav and Tilak Varma failed to up the scoring rates. Despite a late blitz from Sherfane Rutherford and skipper Hardik, Mumbai fell short by 18 runs, meaning they have now lost three in succession starting with a defeat to Delhi Capitals away from home."I think that was always going to be catch-up. I think it's been the last couple of games as a bowling unit or even as a batting unit, we've been quite catching up to the game rather than leading the game. Really need to reflect, really need to see what best we can do and how we can get that momentum and that click which we require," Pandya said after the defeat, their third in a row.Despite winning the toss and opting to field, the MI bowlers were put under tremendous pressure, prompting Hardik to rethink their entire team strategy across all departments."To be very honest, now a lot of things need to be rethought. Definitely, it's not working. A couple of

games, we have won the toss, but maybe we need to see what the other options are, as well as the batting group or bowling group that we can have. We still need to bat well, we still need to bowl well, irrespective of the toss," admitted Hardik.

MI's hopes were kept afloat by impact sub Rutherford, who was traded in from the Gujarat Titans prior to the season. Rutherford smoked nine sixes during his unbeaten 31-ball 71, helping MI to reduce the margin of defeat in the end, receiving appreciation from the skipper."When we got Rutherford, it was always exciting for us. We always knew the kind of potential and the kind of power he has and the way he batted, it just gives us extra cushion and at the same time confidence, if we want to make some changes or we want to see what this team requires, we can definitely do it because of the way he is batting," said Pandya.

India eyes spot in 2027 F1 calendar, government says will 'help organisers in getting the tax relaxations'

GNS News Agency, April 16

Sports Minister Mansukh Mandaviya on Monday confirmed that the government is working towards removing the hurdles that resulted in the sport leaving the nation in 2013. "We will have an F1 race in India very soon. The target is to get a race at the Buddh International Circuit in the next three to six months," Mandaviya told the reporters at a press briefing. "It will take another six months for the paperwork."The Indian Grand Prix was held at the Buddh International Circuit in Greater Noida thrice between 2011 and 2013, but F1 never returned to the country, primarily due to taxation disputes between the race organisers and the government.

Mandaviya said the government is 'finding a solution to make it more viable for the organisers'. "The government will help in getting the tax relaxations that had become a bone of contention so that it is a viable venture for the organisers. Either the tax will be removed or there will be a way to reimburse the tax to the organisers," he said.Mandaviya added that the ongoing conflict in West Asia has resulted in many companies expressing interest to host motorsports events in India. The Saudi and Bahrain GPs, which were to be held in April, were cancelled due to the war. This meant that the 24-race season will now have 22 races."Given the global situation due to the ongoing Iran war, India is being seen as a safe and viable venue for sporting events, including F1. Three different companies have reached out to us and we are looking at possible options," Mandaviya said. "The Federation of Motor Sports Clubs of India (FMSCI) is in talks with Formula One right now, we will be facilitators."The Adani Group is set to acquire the Jaypee Group's debt-laden assets, which includes the 5.14 km Buddh International Circuit. The port-to-power conglomerate has also shown interest in bringing back F1 to India.However, India has found it tough to sustain big-ticket motorsports events. The circuit was last used for a major international event in September 2023, when Bharat MotoGP was held as one of the new races on the MotoGP calendar. However, the event faced multiple challenges and was later scrapped due to operational issues.Among the problems were visa delays, a 45-minute delay to the practice session due to a shortage of marshals, and extreme heat and humidity. As a result, the 24-lap race was shortened to 21 laps. Marco Bezzecchi won the reduced race, finishing ahead of Jorge Martin and Fabio Quartararo.Like MotoGP, Formula E was hosted in 2023 in Hyderabad but it was dropped from the calendar due to a change in the state government.

YMCA Secunderabad to host B.M.Vinaysager knockout basketball tournament

GNS News Agency, April 16

Hyderabad: YMCA Secunderabad Alumni will be conducting B M Vinaysager Knockout Basketball Tournament for Men at YMCA Secunderabad basketball courts from April 20 to 24.The tournament is open to all affiliated clubs/departments/academies of The Hyderabad District Basketball Association.

Last date for entries is April 17 and will be restricted to a maximum of 16 teams on a first confirmation basis. Further details can be had from Dr G. Eugene George (9848755266) and S. Raja Reddy (9666600091) ""John

Vinaysagar, an alumni of Wesley Boys School, Secunderabad ,and hailing from a family in basketball with both his older brothers Charles Dayanand and Nicholes representing AP team, started his playing career at the YMCA Secunderabad under the tutelage of G M Sampath Kumar and went on to represent the Indian Schools team before joining South Central Railway.

Playing as a point guard, Vinaysager played alongside legends of the game like Arjuna Awardees Sarabjit Singh, Abbas Moontassir and internationals Kamal Pasha, Olympian D P Irani, Ali Pasha Quadri, Yadagiri Rao.Vinaysagar who captained the erstwhile Andhra Pradesh for many years continued his contribution and as coach of the AP women guided the team to a medal position at the National Games. He was also coach of the South Central Railway team and makes his presence felt even now at basketball tournaments in and around the city.

Sherfane Rutherford reacts to MI's poor start in IPL 2026: 'It's just small margins for us'

GNS News Agency, April 16

The Mumbai Indians suffered their third consecutive defeat of IPL 2026 on Sunday, losing to Royal Challengers Bengaluru by 18 runs at the Wankhede Stadium. One of the major concerns for the five-time champions so far has been the lack of wickets; their overall tally stands at 15 with the talismanic Jasprit Bumrah yet to open his account.

Middle-order batter Sherfane Rutherford, however, brushed aside those worries, adding that the opposition batsmen have had the upper hand in the team's matches."It's definitely not a concern. If we be honest, other teams bat well. I think we need to give credit where it's due. I think the guys bat well.""As I said, it's just a small margin for us. We are probably two fields changing or something in the field. I don't think it's much to do with our bowlers. I think it's just about executing and getting better," Rutherford said in the post-match presentation.

The 27-year-old said that MI had been preparing well as a team but were losing matches due to small margins, adding that it was crucial as to how they pick up momentum from here, moving forward."I think it's just small margins. As a team, I think our preparation has been good; as a unit, I think we have been preparing well. It's just small margins. I think the last game was a matter of fact of 3-4-8s. Same thing in this game, about 3-4-8s. I think what is important for us is to keep learning.""It's a long tournament, and in a long tournament, it's not how you start, but it's how you pick up momentum. I think moving forward, that will be the most important thing for us," he added.One of the talking points from Sunday's match was the number of interruptions, especially in the second innings. The West Indian stressed the need to be hydrated during soaring temperatures in the summer."I think in conditions like this, you need to be very hydrated. The guys that are out there, it takes a lot of energy out of them. Bowling, feeling. So I think what is important is just to stay hydrated," Rutherford said.

Krunal Pandya on using bouncers as a spinner in IPL 2026: 'I am someone who follows my gut'

GNS News Agency, April 16

Bouncers are usually bowled by fast bowlers, so it's rare to see a spinner use one in T20 cricket. But with batters dominating and innovation becoming more important, Krunal Pandya has started using the surprise bouncer to keep ahead of the game.

The RCB all-rounder, who used the short ball ploy during his spell of 1/26 against Mumbai Indians on Sunday, mentioned that the Impact Player rule had played a role in him using the bouncers to try to contain the batter from taking him on."I have never shied away from trying different and new things. Because if you see with the impact player rule, previously, without an impact player, you had a number six all-rounder, a number seven all-rounder. Batsmanship was quite different, but now having 8 pure batters, plus the skill set. You see the young boys like Mukul, Vaibhav, so many of them are just coming and hitting from ball one consistently."

"So again, as a bowler, I always want to be one step ahead with the skill set as well as with the mental battle as well. It has just purely come from that. Whether it is me bending my knee and bowling that ball or a bouncer.""I am glad that it is coming out well and hope that in this format, there are finger spinners who will survive and who can take something out of it. And do well in this format. Because for

finger spinner with having flat tracks has 8 batters, it has become very difficult. So yeah, I am glad that I have been able to contribute in a nice way," he said in the post-match presentation.Pandya said his use of the bouncer isn't preplanned but driven by instinct, adding that he relies on his gut feeling in the moment and backs whatever decision he makes with full commitment."I am someone who follows my gut. I don't pre-plan that I want to bowl a 4th or 5th or 6th ball bouncer. There are days where I will bowl two bouncers back to back, and suddenly I will bowl first ball and a 6th ball. So there are no such plans that I want to bowl. But yeah, it is more sort of a gut feeling when to bowl which ball, and I just commit 100% to that," he added.

Mukesh Khanna reacts to Samay Raina announcing India's Got Latent Season 2: 'The whole country will stand up against him'

Comedian Samay Raina recently stirred controversy after addressing the India's Got Latent row during his stand-up special, Still Alive. While the set featured a few emotional moments, Raina also hit back at Mukesh Khanna for his earlier criticism. He concluded by announcing a new season of India's Got Latent.Soon after the video of the stand-up special went viral, the Shaktimaan actor slammed Raina's remarks and also criticised his decision to announce a new season of India's Got Latent.

What Samay Raina said about Mukesh Khanna and India's Got Latent 2?

Revisiting the controversy, Samay Raina had said, "Everyone was ready to devour us, politicians, celebrities, Sunil Pal…" He added how Mukesh Khanna and B Praak also tried to get limelight from the controversy.

He even hinted at a new season of India's Got Latent. In the video, Samay said, "I don't think my show could have ended on a higher note than this. Let me rephrase that, I don't think my show's season one could have ended on a better note than this. I will bring the show back, because it was fun making the show. Till the time I am alive, I want to have fun. I want to do a wild show; we will put out a very mild version of it on social media. I am going to take away all your phones, and the first question I would ask the contestants is, "Would you rather…"

Mukesh Khanna on India's Got Latent Season 2

While Mukesh Khanna slammed Samay Raina for his comments, he also opposed the show getting a new season. The Shaktimaan actor told Hindustan Times, "Nahi aane dena chahiye. Mujhe hairani hai ki yeh banda chhati thok ke kyun keh raha hai ki mera season 2 aa raha hai? Galti inki nahi hai, galti inko program dene waalo ki hai. Main YouTube ko bhi kahunga ki aap kaise aise ashleel program ko allow kar dete ho. How do you allow people who crack below-the-belt jokes? Khule aam gaaliyan de rahe hain. Aisa platform kisi ne toh diya hoga. Toh main isko kuchh nahi bol raha, isko mila hai toh use karega, par diya kisne hai yeh platform? Mujhe unse shikayat hai. I have a complaint against the listeners who laugh at their words. Do these people not have their own conscience or values, that they are entertaining such language? How can you think of it as a medium of entertainment? This is not a joke. Even a joke has a limit. No one must be hurt."

He further added, "Only time will tell if the show will return or not. Poora desh khada ho gaya tha iske program aur Allahbadia (Ranveer Allahbadia) ke khilaaf. A year later, he says he's coming back with season 2. I am shocked. Let's see, let it come. Then the whole country will stand up against him. Yeh aadmi apne aap ko itna bada samajhta hai ki Shaktimaan tak ko criticise kar raha hai. Toh usko Mukesh Khanna ek actor kya samjhaayega? Jisko Shaktimaan ka vajood nahi pata, importance nahi pata, uss aadmi ko main baithke kya samjhaaunga? Ek bigda hua jo youth hota hai, usko jab khud realise hota hai, toh hi sudharta hai. Naa woh maa ki sunta hai, naa woh baap ki sunta hai. Aaj kal sab log Google ki sunte hain."Mukesh Raina hit back at Samay RainaAfter Samay Raina's comments against on Still Alive, Mukesh Khanna strongly condemned the comedian. He said, "Samay Raina is no normal creature. He's been roasted in filth. The whole country insulted him, but he's struck back, inviting himself to get bashed up all over again. The only way now is to blacken his face, make him sit on a donkey, and parade him across cities, where kids would throw tomatoes and eggs at him because he's insulted their superhero Shaktimaan."

Before KH x RK Reunion, landmark Malayalam film Twenty:20 tried to bring Rajinikanth and Kamal Haasan together; producer reveals why it didn't happen

With "Superstar" Rajinikanth himself confirming that his highly anticipated upcoming project, marking his on-screen reunion with Kamal Haasan after 47 years, is scheduled to go on floors in August 2026, movie fans are excited like never before. Tentatively titled KH x RK Reunion, the film is helmed by Nelson Dilipkumar, and the makers unveiled its first promo in February, taking the internet by storm.Two of the most celebrated icons in the history of Indian cinema, Rajinikanth and Kamal Haasan, have starred together in several classic films, including Apoorva Raagangal, Avargal, Moondru Mudichu, and Pathinaru Vayathinile. Although it was director IV Sasi's Malayalam-Tamil bilingual fantasy film Allauddinum Albhutha Vilakkum (1979) where the two last appeared together in central roles, Rajinikanth and Kamal Haasan also shared the screen in Thillu Mullu (1981), where the latter had a cameo.

Nonetheless, we wouldn't have had to wait so long to see the two legends together on screen had the plans for a segment in a Malayalam movie come together as initially envisioned. In fact, had the makers of the film pulled it off, it would have been an unprecedented, monumental event in Indian cinema history.

Why is Twenty:20 a landmark film?Helmed by legendary filmmaker Joshiy, Twenty:20 (2008) remains one of the most awe-inspiring achievements in Malayalam cinema history, not for its narrative or technical quality, but for bringing together a massive number of recognisable faces in the industry. Made as a fundraiser for the Association of Malayalam Movie Artists (AMMA), Twenty:20 featured some of the biggest names in Malayalam cinema, including Mohanlal, Mammootty, and Suresh Gopi, in key roles.Must Read | Maniyanpilla Raju's father-in-law almost rejected him after he made Mohanlal look like a bad guy in Ariyaatha VeethikalWhile renowned actors like Bhavana, Jayaram, Gopika, Mukesh, Vijayaraghavan, Siddique, Manoj K Jayan, Madhu, and Kalpana, among others, played supporting roles, several other artistes appeared in small roles, and some like Nayanthara, Prithviraj Sukumaran, Kunchacko Boban, and Jayasurya even made cameo appearances, making Twenty:20 a once-in-a-lifetime achievement. The movie was produced by actor Dileep, who also starred in it.

While the iconic track "Deewangi Deewangi" in Farah Khan's Om Shanti Om (2007) brought together some of the biggest names in Bollywood for one song, and director Zoya Akhtar's Luck by Chance (2009) featured cameo appearances by several bigwigs in Hindi cinema, Joshiy achieved what no other industry has managed so far and made an entire movie with almost all the mainstream actors in his language, giving a large number of them fleshed-out characters. Unsurprisingly, Twenty:20 turned out to be one of the biggest hits of its time.Allauddinum Albhutha Vilakkum was the last film where Kamal Haasan and Rajinikanth appeared together in central roles. Kamal Haasan and Rajinikanth at a Nadigar Sangam meeting. (Express archive photo)

Producer wanted Rajinikanth, Kamal Haasan to appear in a songInterestingly, the film was supposed to feature Rajinikanth and Kamal Haasan too, albeit in just one song. Producer Dileep initially wanted to include a special song in the film featuring many A-listers from across the country. In fact, he had even approached both Rajinikanth and Kamal Haasan to make the request. However, the plan eventually fell through as the makers didn't have ample time to pull it off.Nonetheless, Dileep himself once revealed that Kamal Haasan was on board with the idea and even rang him up after noticing there was no further word from him on the shooting schedule. "He called me and asked, 'Aren't you doing that song? When should I come for it?' However, by then, we reached a stage where we had to complete the film and release it soon," Dileep shared during a conversation with CinePlus Productions.Twenty:20 was also the last film to feature Mohanlal and Mammootty together in central roles. The two are currently gearing up for an on-screen reunion in director Mahesh Narayanan's Patriot. Also starring Nayanthara, Fahadh Faasil, Kunchacko Boban, Darshana Rajendran, Revathy, Rajiv Menon, and Zarin Shihab in key roles, Patriot will hit the screens on May 1.

Akshay Kumar reveals son Aarav was terrified of Vidya Balan for 6 years after watching Bhool Bhulaiyaa: 'He refused to meet her'

Actor Akshay Kumar will be seen in Priyadarshan's Bhoot Bangla. The film is slated to release in theaters this Friday. Recently, at the film's promotional event in Delhi, Akshay Kumar spoke about his latest film and also shared how it's different from Bhool Bhulaiyaa. The actor also shared an anecdote on how his son Aarav reacted after watching Bhool Bhulaiyaa back in 2007. During a conversation with Hindustan Times, Akshay recalled that his son was scared of Vidya Balan for six years.Akshay Kumar on how Aarav reacted to Vidya Balan after watching Bhool Bhulaiyaa

Talking about the difference between Bhoot Bangla and Bhool Bhulaiyaa, Akshay Kumar said, "Bhoot Bangla is a horror fantasy; it's like a Disney movie. Bhool Bhulaiyaa was a psychological thriller. When it starts, you can see she is possessed, and later learn that it's a mental problem. In Bhoot Bangla, we have explained how Vadhusur came in and why he is doing what he is. The film is meant for children, also."Talking about how his son Aarav was scared of Vidya Balan for six years after Bhool Bhulaiyaa, Akshay Kumar said, "I was talking to my son, and he told me, when he saw Bhool Bhulaiyaa for the first time, he was scared of Vidya Balan for six years. Whenever she came home, he refused to meet her, didn't look into her eyes; he could see Manjulika in her. He had developed a problem with her. I actually had to nurture him and tell him that she wasn't Manjulika, she was Vidya, and she is a nice person. But he was never convinced. For six years, she was scarred."

A few weeks back, Akshay and Priyadarshan also spoke to SCREEN about Bhool Bhulaiyaa kickstarting the horror comedy universe. Director Priyadarshan said, "Bhool Bhulaiyaa faced its set of challenges, fortunately we were working with a very powerful studio. When you do a certain kind of experiment, and the producer has the power to take

the film forward, we are more confident that what we are doing will definitely work. Something unusual is always attractive. That time, it was an unusual attempt, and I was very positive about the film.

We were confident, and the film worked well, only to become a trend later."Akshay Kumar also added, "I just went with faith and trust, I didn't want to question him." Priyadarshan added, "And you should remember the main protagonist, Akshay Kumar, enters only three scenes before the interval." Akshay continued, "I just asked him, he said, 'Please do it, it is great, you will enjoy it.' I just went ahead; I didn't even know the script. I learned about it much later. There are very few people in this industry that I trust and go ahead with."

Ram Charan initially rejected Madame Tussauds, till his dog Rhyme made him say yes: 'She's like a feisty daughter'

Ram Charan is not someone who jumps at every opportunity that comes his way. Even when that opportunity is a wax statue in his honour.In a recent interview with Esquire, the Telugu superstar opened up about the story behind his wax statue, and it turned out to be far more personal than anyone might have expected. "I was initially hesitant, even a little shy, and I hadn't really responded to the museum," he admitted.

For a star of his stature, the hesitation might seem surprising. Ram Charan is one of Telugu cinema's biggest names and shot to global recognition with the blockbuster RRR in 2022. Yet, when the museum came calling, he did not rush to say yes.The back and forth went on long enough that the situation eventually landed in the hands of his wife, Upasana Kamineni Konidela. "Finally, in mild frustration, someone approached my wife Upasana," he said. Upasana found a solution that cut straight through her husband's reluctance. She told him that Rhyme, their beloved dog, could be included in the statue. "She knew that would get me to say yes, and it did," Ram Charan said with characteristic honesty.

The detail is small but revealing. It says something about who Ram Charan is outside of the spotlight. For all the larger than life roles he plays on screen, the thing that pushed him over the line was not the prestige of being immortalised in wax. It was the chance to have his dog beside him.Once the decision was made, things moved quickly. "The very next month, I was in London giving measurements," he said. And when he finally experienced the process up close, something shifted. "It was actually more meaningful for me," he added.

To understand why Rhyme holds such a special place

in the family, Ram Charan offered a glimpse into their life at home. He described the dog in terms most people reserve for a close family member. "She's like a feisty daughter. Very, very conscious. She knows what she's doing," he said.What followed was a moment that clearly stuck with him. Rhyme, he said, actively keeps his daughter Kaara away from the swimming pool. "She doesn't let Kaara go near the swimming pool. I've seen this so many times. She actually blocks her," Ram Charan said, the quiet pride in his words hard to miss.Ram Charan's wax statue at Madame Tussauds London marks a significant milestone, placing him among a select group of Indian actors to have been honoured by the iconic museum. His entry into that list, however, came with a story that is decidedly personal, one that his fans will likely find more endearing than any red carpet moment.

Pawan Kalyan backs Vijay's political move: 'It's great to serve the people'

Andhra Pradesh Deputy Chief Minister and Jana Sena Party founder Pawan Kalyan sat down with the youth of the state at Janasenani with GenZ, an open interaction event designed to give young people direct access to one of the state's most prominent political figures. The event covered a wide range of topics, from governance and youth aspirations to broader questions about public life and leadership. It was in this setting that a question came up about Tamil star Vijay, who made headlines in 2024 when he formally stepped into politics by founding the Tamilaga Vettri Kazhagam party in Tamil Nadu. The attendee asked Pawan whether he had any advice for Vijay, given his own experience of making the same transition from cinema to active politics.Pawan Kalyan's answer was immediate and clear. "I don't give advice to anyone, even if it's my children," he said, adding, "Everyone is capable of doing things."

When pressed specifically about Vijay, however, Pawan was openly appreciative. "When it comes to Vijay, he is a very big star," he said. He went on to frame political participation as a fundamental right that belongs to every citizen. "All of us have the right to get into politics, set up a political party. I think it's great to serve the people with whatever role he's into."The comments come from a place of lived experience. Pawan Kalyan founded Jana Sena Party in 2014 after years as one of Telugu cinema's most bankable stars. His political journey was not without setbacks.

The party struggled in its early years and faced significant losses in the 2019 state elections. But the 2024 Andhra Pradesh elections marked a turning point. Jana Sena contested in alliance with the Telugu Desam Party and the BJP, and the alliance swept to power. Pawan went on to be sworn in as the Deputy Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh, completing a transition that many had once doubted.Vijay, affectionately called 'Thalapathy' by his fans, is at the beginning of that same kind of journey. One of Tamil cinema's biggest stars for over two decades,

Nag Ashwin compares Mrunal Thakur to Madhubala, Smita Patil amid Allu Aravind's viral marriage advice

As Mrunal Thakur and Adivi Sesh starrer Dacoit crossed Rs 40 crore worldwide within just three days of its release, according to its makers at Annapurna Studios, the team hosted a success meet with filmmaker Nag Ashwin, Allu Aravind and many others as the chief guest. Speaking about Mrunal, who briefly appeared in his passion project Kalki 2898 AD, Nag Ashwin compared her to legendary actors Madhubala and Smita Patil.At the event, he said, "Mrunal, I think you are amazing. I am generally very protective of the stuff that you pick. Whenever you do something that's not great, I am like why is she doing that? She deserves to do much better stuff. And whenever there's a character that has that depth or sorrow or pain, I think you are like that era of Madhubala and Smita Patil, there are not many people like this. So please don't do random stuff and do good stuff."At the same event, Allu Aravind, father of Pushpa star Allu Arjun, advised Mrunal to marry someone from the Telugu film industry.

He said, "I wish you marry someone from the Telugu film industry and settle down here. I bless you—that's the only way we can keep you with us. We want you." His remark left the audience in splits, while the actress blushed, hiding her face behind her veil.He said, "I wish you marry someone from the Telugu film industry and settle down here. I bless you—that's the only way we can keep you with us. We want you." His remark left the audience in splits, while the actress blushed, hiding her face behind her veil.Mrunal

has been basking in the success of Dacoit: Ek Prem Katha opposite Adivi Sesh. She first gained prominence with Super 30, starring Hrithik Roshan, and went on to achieve major success in the Telugu film Sita Ramam alongside Dulquer Salmaan (2022). This was followed by Hi Nanna (2023), starring Nani. The success of these films also led to her cameo in Kalki 2898 AD. Mrunal began her career as a television actor in 2012. While working in television, she also appeared in Marathi films before making her Bollywood debut with Love Sonia. She later played the romantic lead opposite Hrithik Roshan in Super 30.

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