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Arshdeep and Prabhsimran star as PBKS hammer MI

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Yash's Toxic: A 'Sinners' Like Raw Gangster Film?



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Telangana's New Voice: Vem Narender Reddy and Abhishek Singhvi Take Oath in Rajya Sabha

New Delhi: In a significant boost to Telangana's presence in the Rajya Sabha, Congress leaders Vem Narender Reddy and Abhishek Manu Singhvi were sworn in as Members of Parliament on Thursday.

The oath-taking ceremony was conducted in the presence of Rajya Sabha Chairman Jagdeep Dhankhar, marking the beginning of their six-year terms after being elected unopposed from Telangana in March 2026. Telangana Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy, along with cabinet ministers and senior Congress leaders, attended the ceremony from the gallery.

Narender Reddy, a close associate of the Chief Minister and former government advisor, took his oath in Telugu. His entry into the Upper House is viewed as a strategic move to strengthen the state government's voice at the national level.



SHORT TAKES



Women's Reservation Act Comes into Force; Implementation Awaited

The Women's Reservation Act, 2023—formally known as the Nari Shakti Vandan Adhiniyam—came into force on Thursday following a notification by the Union Law Ministry. The landmark law provides 33% reservation for women in the Lok Sabha and state legislative assemblies. However, officials clarified that the quota will not apply to the current House. Implementation of the reservation is contingent on a fresh delimitation exercise based on the next Census. While the Act was originally expected to take effect after this process—likely post-2034—the government is now pushing for its rollout by 2029 through fresh legislative measures currently under debate in Parliament.

An official attributed the early notification to "technicalities," without further details.

NEW DELHI



2014 Andhra bifurcation worse than Partition

A political row erupted after BJP MP Tejasvi Surya said the Congress-led UPA's division of undivided Andhra Pradesh into Telangana and Andhra Pradesh in 2014 was worse than the Partition of India in 1947.

NEXT DOOR 05

Delimitation vs Reservation The Battle Over the 131st Amendment



NEW DELHI, APR 16

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 in the House. The Bills were introduced 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 introduc-

tion. Congress' K C Venugopal questioned why the proposed changes in the women's quota law were not incorporated when it was passed earlier by Parliament. "Bills to tweak the women's quota law and set up a delimitation panel are anti-constitutional," he said. Samajwadi Party's Akhilesh Yadav questioned the rush to introduce the bills. "We support women's quota in legislature but why not hold a census?" he asked. Union Home Minister Amit Shah hit back, saying the Census 2027 is on and the Centre has also decided to go for caste enumeration, but reservation based on religion is "unconstitutional". DMK members dressed in black clothes in the Lok Sabha to protest amendments to the women's reservation law. [CONTINUED ON PAGE 2 >](#)

No Discrimination in Delimitation Exercise, Assures PM Modi in LS

New Delhi, April 16: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday assured the Lok Sabha that no state—whether large or small, from the north, south, east, or west—will face discrimination in the upcoming delimitation exercise linked to the implementation of the women's reservation law.

Intervening during a debate on key legislative proposals, including the Constitution (131st Amendment) Bill, 2026, the Union Territories Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2026, and the Delimitation Bill, 2026, the Prime Minister sought to allay concerns raised by several states, particularly in southern and eastern regions.

Modi emphasized that the proportion of Lok Sabha seats allocated to each state would remain unchanged. "There will be no reduction in any state's share. Any increase in seats will be proportional," he stated.

The proposed legislation aims to expand the strength of the Lok Sabha to 815 members, with 272 seats—approximately 33 percent—reserved for women. [CONTINUED ON PAGE 2 >](#)

Hyderabad emerging as global hub for advanced engineering: Sridhar Babu



HYDERABAD, APRIL 16

Minister for IT and Industries D. Sridhar Babu announced that leading U.S.-based digital manufacturing company Protolabs will establish its Global Capability Centre (GCC) in Hyderabad as part of its India expansion, further reinforcing Telangana's position as a premier destination for global technology and engineering investments.

A delegation of Protolabs met Sridhar Babu at the Secretariat on Thursday and held detailed discussions regarding the company's India entry strategy and plans for setting up its Hyderabad GCC.

The Protolabs delegation included Chief Financial Officer Dan Schumacher, Chief Human Resources Officer Agnes Semington, Chief Technology and AI Of-

ficer Marc Kermisch, and India Managing Director Ashish Sharma.

Speaking on the occasion, the Minister said Hyderabad has rapidly emerged as one of the world's most preferred destinations for next-generation Global Capability Centres, driven by its strong engineering talent pool, robust digital ecosystem, progressive industrial policies, and expanding manufacturing base.

"We are pleased to welcome Protolabs to Hyderabad and to India. Telangana has created a future-ready ecosystem that supports the seamless integration of design, engineering, prototyping, and manufacturing. Hyderabad offers the ideal platform for global enterprises looking to build innovation-driven capability centres," he said. [CONTINUED ON PAGE 2 >](#)

KTR calls for vigilance, urges cadre to protect every vote during SIR

HYDERABAD, APRIL 16

Bharat Rashtra Samithi working president KT Rama Rao has called upon party cadres to remain vigilant and prevent any irregularities by the Congress and BJP during the upcoming Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of the electoral rolls in Telangana.

Addressing party leaders and cadre through a teleconference on Thursday, KTR emphasised that every single vote must be protected at the booth level.

He cautioned that there is a strong possibility of the ruling Congress and the BJP misusing their power to register bogus votes and manipulate the voter list.

KTR pointed out that serious allegations have emerged across the country where, under the guise of electoral roll



revision by the Election Commission, lakhs of opposition votes were reportedly deleted in several states by the BJP. He also reminded party members of the recent Jubilee Hills by-election and municipal elections, where the Congress allegedly benefitted by adding bogus votes into the voter list. [CONTINUED ON PAGE 2 >](#)

MP Vamsi slams delimitation as BJP conspiracy to muffle south India

NEW DELHI, APRIL 16

Peddapalli MP Gaddam Vamsi Krishna on Thursday strongly criticised the proposed delimitation exercise, calling it a big conspiracy by the BJP to increase its seats in the northern states while deliberately reducing the voice of south India. "There is a big conspiracy going on. The BJP is in a situation where they can't win even a single seat in South India. So, they are planning to increase their share in the north to do vote bank politics," Vamsi said while speaking to the media outside Parliament. [CONTINUED ON PAGE 2 >](#)

TG BJP chief hails Women's Reservation Act as pivotal milestone

HYDERABAD, APRIL 16

BJP Telangana president N. Ramchander Rao said that the Nari Shakti Vandan Adhiniyam (Women's Reservation Act) marks a pivotal milestone in the history of the nation and the BJP government at the Centre has introduced the legislation with the specific objective of implementing a 33 percent reservation for the women in legislative bodies.

He also said that driven by a firm resolve to further strengthen the political empowerment of women, the Modi government had also introduced an amendment in the Parliament to ensure the implementation of this Act starting from 2029. [CONTINUED ON PAGE 2 >](#)

POWER, PRINCIPLE, OR POLITICAL ACROBATICS?

CHANDRABABU NAIDU IN THE EYE OF A STORM AS NAGESWARA RAO STRIKES HARD

A FIERCE PUBLIC ATTACK BY RETIRED IPS OFFICER M. NAGESWARA RAO HAS REIGNITED LONG-STANDING ALLEGATIONS AGAINST ANDHRA PRADESH CHIEF MINISTER, N. CHANDRABABU NAIDU, LINKING HIS CURRENT SUPPORT FOR THE WOMEN'S RESERVATION FRAMEWORK WITH PAST POLITICAL REVERSALS ON TELANGANA AND THE 1995 POWER SHIFT WITHIN TDP. THE CLASH EXPOSES A DEEPER NATIONAL FAULT LINE OVER DELIMITATION, REGIONAL POWER BALANCE, AND THE COST OF POLITICAL ALIGNMENT.



BY C. SUBRAHMANYAM The latest political flash-point comes not from the opposition benches but from a former top cop, M. Nageswara Rao, former CBI Director who has launched

a blistering critique of N. Chandrababu Naidu. His accusation is not subtle. It is a full frontal charge of political betrayal spanning decades. [CONTINUED ON PAGE 2 >](#)

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GITAM Hyderabad Bids Farewell to Graduating NCC Cadets

Hyderabad: The Directorate of Sports and NCC at GITAM Deemed to be University organized a warm farewell ceremony for its graduating NCC cadets on Thursday, celebrating their service, discipline, and contributions to the institution. Prof. D.S. Rao, Pro Vice-Chancellor, attended as the Chief Guest and congratulated the cadets on their achievements. He underscored that NCC training goes beyond earning a 'C' Certificate, instilling resilience, discipline, and courage to face future challenges. Resident Director DVVSR Varma and Ambika Philip, Director of Hospitality and Campus Life, were present as Guests of Honour and appreciated the cadets' commitment and dedication. During the event, Associate NCC Officer Lieutenant S. Ajay Kumar was felicitated for successfully completing his ANO training and formally receiving his designation. The programme featured reflections from outgoing cadets on their NCC journey, while junior cadets expressed gratitude and admiration.

Recognizing Excellence, Inspiring Futures

Balanga Police's Inter-Student Awards

SAMUDRALA KIRAN |
CORRESPONDENT

Medchal-Malkajgiri, April 16: In a ceremony that blended celebration with guidance for the road ahead, Balanga Police honored standout intermediate students who achieved top results in the latest examinations. The event, held on the precinct grounds, paired public recognition with practical support to reinforce the link between education, personal growth, and future opportunities.

Honorees included G. Lakshmi Nithyanand Gupta of Sri Chaitanya Junior College in Kukatapally, B. S. Sawtik of Narayan Junior College in Kukatapally, Omara Mehrin of Sri Chaitanya Junior College in Kukatapally, Pooja of Sri Chaitanya Junior College in Habiganj, Shaik Sana Sabih of Physics Waala Junior College, and M. Akshar of Sri Chaitanya Junior College in Miyapur. The lineup underscored a diverse set of institutions contributing to academic excellence in the region.

Inspector Narasimha Rao delivered a message about the importance of setting clear goals in a rapidly evolving world, urging students to study diligently and become role models within their communities. He congratulated the top performers and framed education as a path to service and perseverance. Sub-



spector Saritha Reddy encouraged students to stay focused on their futures, resist distractions, and seek opportunities across government and corporate sectors through sustained effort and high-quality education.

The event drew broad participation from the police ranks, including Detective Inspector Sakarama and Sub-Inspectors Saritha Reddy, Hajji Mia, Vinod Kumar, and ASI Hanumayya, along with parents and local residents. Their presence highlighted the strength of collaboration between law enforcement, families, and schools in inspiring young people to aim higher. Honoring achievement is about more than trophies; it cultivates perseverance, planning, and responsible citizenship. Community in-

vestment in students' aspirations helps sow the seeds for a more educated, empowered society.

This gathering also emphasized the broader impact of recognizing academic success. Recognition reinforces a culture of excellence and goal-setting, while mentors and role models from the community can offer guidance beyond the classroom. By focusing on education as a pathway to opportunities in both public and private sectors, the ceremony motivated sustained effort among students. The Balanga Police ceremony served as a concrete reminder: when communities partner with schools to celebrate achievement, they illuminate a hopeful, opportunity-rich future for the next generation.

Delimitation, Women's Quota and a New Electoral Map

Telangana Leader Backs Centre's Push for Sweeping Political Reset

SAMUDRALA KIRAN |
CORRESPONDENT

Medchal-Malkajgiri, April 16: The Centre's move to introduce a trio of major electoral reform bills has triggered fresh political debate, with Telangana leader Kanta Rao Madhavaram hailing the package as a historic intervention that could recast India's democratic structure. Madhavaram, in-charge of the Kukatapally Assembly segment, said the proposed changes—covering women's reservation, delimitation and assembly reapportionment—had the potential to alter the country's political map in a profound way. He described the initiative as a decisive step toward expanding representation and modernising the electoral framework ahead of the 2029 general election.

At the core of the legislative push are the Constitution (131st Amendment) Bill, 2026, the Delimitation Bill, 2026, and the Union Territories Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2026. Together, they seek to lift the constitutional barrier that delayed delimitation until after 2026, redraw constituencies using 2011 Census data, and expand the Lok Sabha from 543 seats to a maximum of 850, including



815 for states and 35 for Union Territories. The government's broader aim is to implement 33 per cent reservation for women in the Lok Sabha and in State and Union Territory Assemblies before the next general election, rather than postponing the exercise until after 2034.

Madhavaram said the expansion in Lok Sabha seats would make the women's quota easier to implement without sharply disrupting the existing political structure. He also argued that the changes could lead to a corresponding rise in the number of seats in state assemblies, thereby widening political participation across the board. Thanking Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the party leadership, he said the reform package reflected long-term political vision and could mark a turning point in the evolution of representative democracy in India.

He also attacked opposition parties for, in his words, trying to mislead people in southern India by portraying the reap-

portionment exercise as a threat to regional interests. Madhavaram insisted that the process would be carried out strictly in accordance with constitutional provisions and said the principle of "one person, one vote, one value" must remain central to any delimitation exercise. His remarks come amid growing concerns from several opposition formations that the use of 2011 Census figures may not accurately capture current demographic realities and could upset the delicate balance of federal representation.

If enacted, the bills are expected to carry sweeping consequences for Parliament, state legislatures and the future of political competition in India. Supporters see the package as a long-overdue correction that addresses population growth, underrepresentation and the persistent exclusion of women from elected office. Critics, however, warn that rotating reservation, census-linked seat redistribution and a dramatic expansion of the Lok Sabha could intensify regional and political fault lines. With the 2029 election already shaping the calculations of every major party, the battle over these bills may become one of the defining political contests of the coming years.

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Hyderabad emerging as global hub..

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Sridhar Babu stated that Protolabs plans to commence operations this month and scale up its Hyderabad GCC to 200-300 employees in the near term, with a strong emphasis on recruiting engineering talent.

He stated that the proposed centre will focus on advanced engineering, digital manufacturing technologies, and product development, strengthening Hyderabad's growing footprint in high-value manufacturing and next-generation industrial technologies.

"This investment will significantly enhance Hyderabad's capabilities in advanced engineering and dig-

ital manufacturing, while further cementing the city's reputation as a national hub for innovation-led growth," the Minister added.

He noted that Protolabs' entry into Hyderabad will provide a major boost to the local innovation ecosystem by expanding expertise in rapid prototyping and low-volume manufacturing—critical segments that enable startups, MSMEs, and enterprises to accelerate product development and reduce time-to-market.

"Hyderabad is steadily transforming into a city where software, engineering, and manufacturing converge. Investments such as this will generate

high-quality employment and accelerate Telangana's transition toward product-led and innovation-driven economic growth," he said.

Sridhar Babu said the proposed GCC aligns with Telangana government's strategic vision of attracting cutting-edge investments in deep tech, advanced engineering, and innovation-led industries. "Telangana remains committed to creating an industry-friendly environment and forging strategic partnerships that generate employment, foster innovation, and drive long-term economic growth," he said. IT advisor Saikrishna also participated in the meeting.

Delimitation vs Reservation

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"We favour the 2023 women's quota law, but the present Bill is aimed at delimitation," DMK's T R Baalu said. RSP's N K Premchandran opposed the women's quota law amendment, saying it is not meant for reservation but delimitation.

Venugopal said a Constitutional amendment bill cannot be discussed together with other ordinary bills. Shah, however, rejected his objection saying it can be done. Speaker Om Birla cited precedents to say that the Constitution amendment Bill can be discussed with other Bills as they relate to the same subject. According to the Constitution (131st Amendment) Bill, Lok Sabha seats will be increased to a maximum of 850 from the current 543 to "operationalise" the women's reservation law before the 2029 parliamentary polls, following a delimitation exercise based on the 2011 Census. Seats will also be increased in state and Union Territory assemblies to accommodate 33 per cent reservation for women. The seats reserved for women in the Lok Sabha and legislative assemblies "shall be allotted by rotation to different constituencies in a state or Union territory", the draft bill circulated among Lok Sabha members said. Several opposition parties on Wednesday decided to unitedly vote against the delimitation provisions in the Constitution amendment bill in Parliament, while asserting that they are not against reservation for women in legislative bodies.

No Discrimination in Delimitation Exercise, Assures PM Modi in LS

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Addressing political concerns, the Prime Minister said the government is not seeking credit for implementing the women's reservation law, expected to take effect by 2029. He even invited opposition parties to share in the credit, noting that cooperation would ensure no political advantage for any single party. Highlighting the significance of the reform, Modi described women's reservation as a rightful entitlement rather than a political concession. He warned that parties opposing the measure risk facing backlash from women voters. "Women across the country are watching. They will judge not just our decisions but our intent," he said.

Recalling earlier delays, the Prime Minister noted that while there had been calls to expedite the legislation in 2023, implementation requires adequate preparation time. He stressed that 2029 presents a crucial op-



portunity and urged lawmakers not to delay further. Framing the move as a decision in the national interest, Modi called for bipartisan support, cautioning against politicizing the issue. "This is not the time to weigh decisions on political scales," he added.

The debate in the Lok Sabha is expected to continue as lawmakers deliberate on the proposed expansion and restructuring of parliamentary constituencies.

POWER, PRINCIPLE, OR POLITICAL ACROBATICS?

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From the dramatic 1995 takeover of power from N. T. Rama Rao to the shifting stance on Telangana, and now to backing the Nari Shakti Vandan Adhiniyam, Rao constructs a narrative of one consistent motive: pursuit of power. The language is sharp. The tone is unforgiving. But beneath the rhetoric lies a set of verifiable political events that refuse to fade from public memory.

THE HISTORY THAT REFUSES TO DIE THE NTR EPISODE STILL HAUNTS

The 1995 political coup within the Telugu Desam Party remains one of the most defining and controversial episodes in Andhra politics. Naidu's rise came through an internal revolt against his own father in law. That event is not disputed. What remains contested is its moral interpretation. Critics call it betrayal. Supporters call it political necessity. Nageswara Rao revives that moment deliberately, using it as the foundation of a larger argument: that the method has not changed, only the context has.

TELANGANA LETTERS & THE POLITICAL FLIP

The second pillar of Nageswara Rao's argument rests on documented history. The 2006 letter sent by TDP leadership supporting a separate Telangana state is real. It aligns with subsequent communications made in 2008 and beyond. Yet, when the Telangana movement intensified, Naidu recalibrated his public stance toward a united Andhra position before eventually navigating the post bifurcation reality. This is not unusual in Indian politics. But Rao frames it as a pattern rather than a one-off shift.

NDA ALLIANCE CALCULUS

Naidu's current positioning cannot be separated from alliance arithmetic.

His alignment with the NDA brings political leverage at the Centre. Supporting flagship reforms strengthens that equation.

The counter argument is equally sharp: does alliance politics justify long term regional compromise?

THE PRESENT FLASHPOINT WOMEN'S BILL OR DELIMITATION TROJAN HORSE

At the centre of the current storm is Naidu's strong backing of the Women's Reservation framework. Publicly, the argument is straight forward: political empowerment of women. But the controversy lies not in the intent of reservation, but in its structural linkage to delimitation. Delimitation based on population is expected to alter parliamentary representation. Southern states, which have stabilised population growth, face the prospect of reduced relative influence. Northern states stand to gain.

Most southern leaders have raised red flags. Naidu has taken a different route. He has endorsed the framework and described the process as scientific.

"THE ISSUE IS NOT WOMEN'S RESERVATION. THE ISSUE IS WHO GAINS POWER AFTER DELIMITATION."

Rao's charge is precise here. He argues that backing the framework aligns Andhra Pradesh with a central political agenda at the cost of southern bargaining power.

THE KCR FACTOR OLD RIVALRIES RESURFACE

The reference to K. Chandrashekar Rao adds another layer of political theatre. The rivalry between the two leaders has been intense and often personal. While the exact quote cited may not be traceable in identical wording, the sentiment mirrors years of hostility and accusations exchanged between the camps. Nageswara Rao

uses that history strategically, reinforcing his claim that criticism of Naidu is not isolated but part of a broader pattern of distrust.

THE DELIMITATION DILEMMA

Southern states face a structural paradox. They succeeded in controlling population growth, improving human development indicators, and stabilising demographics. Now, the same success could reduce their representation in Parliament. If delimitation expands seats proportionally to population, political gravity shifts northward. This is not a theoretical concern. It is a structural recalibration of power within the Union.

THE REAL BATTLE NARRATIVE VS INTENT

Nageswara Rao's post is not just criticism. It is narrative building. It strings together disparate events into a single storyline of ambition overriding consistency. But politics rarely operates in straight lines. Leaders evolve, reposition, and respond to shifting realities. The real contest here is between two interpretations: One sees a leader adapting to changing national dynamics. The other sees a leader abandoning principles for proximity to power.

THE PRICE OF ALIGNMENT

Naidu stands at a politically sensitive crossroads. His support for the Women's Reservation framework places him on the side of a nationally popular reform. At the same time, it exposes him to charges of weakening southern leverage in a future shaped by delimitation. M. Nageswara Rao's attack gains traction not merely because of its aggression but because it draws from documented history that continues to influence public perception. The immediate issue may be a bill in Parliament, but the underlying conflict is far larger. It is about trust, memory, and whether political reinvention strengthens leadership or erodes credibility over time.

KTR calls for vigilance..

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Highlighting the risks, KTR stated that both the Congress and BJP may attempt to misuse the SIR exercise in Telangana as well, and urged party workers to be extremely cautious. He stressed that BRS cadres must not only safeguard their own votes but also ensure that no fake or ineligible voters are added to the rolls.

TG BJP chief hails Women's Reservation Act as pivotal milestone



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"Concurrently, we are also moving forward with the delimitation process. With this legislation, the dream of equal representation—which the women have cherished for many years—is finally set to become a reality," he said. "On the occasion of this historic decision, I extend my heartfelt gratitude to Prime Minister Narendra Modi on behalf of the women of Telangana and the people of the state. Likewise, I convey my best wishes to all the women across Telangana. I firmly believe that this decision will chart a new course for women's empowerment," he said. Speaking to the media here on Thursday, the BJP Telangana chief claimed that the legislation bill became possible solely under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and its implementation would vastly expand the

Explaining the importance of the exercise is meant to correct errors in the voter list and facilitate the registration of new voters. He urged party workers to utilise this opportunity effectively to identify and remove bogus voters on a booth-by-booth basis.

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role of the women in the country's political landscape. He noted that given that the nation's population has reached 1.4 billion, this legislation also paves the way for increasing the total number of the seats by approximately 50 percent and added that by reserving 33 percent of these seats for the women, it ensures that they receive due representation.

Ramchander Rao made it clear that the narrative suggesting that this legislation would cause harm to any specific state or region was entirely false propaganda.

He urged the public not to be swayed by this malicious campaign being orchestrated by the Congress party. The BJP leader said the historic decision, introduced for the empowerment of women, would ensure that they secure their rightful representation in the legislative bodies.

MP Vamsi slams delimitation as BJP conspiracy to muffle south India

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He highlighted the unfair treatment meted out to South India despite its immense financial contribution. "South's contribution on a population basis is almost 3% representation in the House. But from a financial contribution point of view, it is 5-6%. That is a double percentage contribution. Even then, they take funds from the south. But they don't want votes from the south," Vamsi Krishna pointed out.

The MP accused the BJP of clearly showing that they do not want the South to be part of the government. "For this, Telangana will not agree. We have already agitated for formation of Telangana state. If you don't agree to this, we will agitate on the streets again and grab our rights," he warned.

Termining the delimitation exercise as a "Jhumla", Vamsi said the Centre is taking all efforts to shut down the voice of the South in the House.

He made it clear that Telangana will raise its voice strongly in Parliament in the spirit of equality and representation laid down by Dr. B.R. Ambedkar in the Constitution. The Congress MP also questioned the logic behind the BJP's stand. "You're doing this Jhumla of delimitation as you are not getting votes from the South. When you don't need South's vote, then why are you utilising South's funds? Cut South's funds then. Give South's funds only to South then. And let South's voice remain only in South," Vamsi demanded.

Bridging the Digital Divide: Innovations and Roadmaps for a Viksit Bharat @ 2047

Samudrala Kiran, Correspondent

HYDERABAD

The two-day National Seminar on "Harnessing Digitalization for a Viksit Bharat @ 2047: Innovations, Challenges, and Roadmap" commenced today at Government Degree College for Women, Hussainialam, organized by the Department of Economics. The inauguration began at 9:30 AM in the presence of eminent academicians and dignitaries, with a traditional lamp-lighting ceremony symbolizing the dispelling of darkness and the pursuit of knowledge.

Distinguished leaders highlighted the transformative potential of digital transformation for inclusive and sustainable development. The Chief Guest, Prof. B. Sudhakar Reddy, Dean of the Faculty of Social Sciences and Director of ICSSR-Southern Regional Centre, Hyderabad, emphasized how digitalization can accelerate progress across sectors, while the Keynote Speaker,



Prof. Razaullah Khan, underscored the importance of integrating technology with economic policies to build a resilient nation.

A panel discussion on the theme "Bridging the Digital Divide: Ensuring Inclusive Digital Growth for a Viksit Bharat (@ 2047)" was chaired by Prof. Koti Reddy, Vice Chancellor of ICFAI University. Experts from reputed institutions across India deliberated on challenges and strategies to ensure equitable digital access and inclusive growth, highlighting the need for

cost-effective infrastructure, skilled human capital, and policies that foster innovation.

Day One featured sessions that focused on Digital Infrastructure & Connectivity and Digital Economy & Financial Inclusion. These discussions explored advancements and challenges in building robust digital systems and examined the role of fintech, digital payments, and inclusive financial services in economic development. The sessions drew active participation from academicians, researchers, and

students, making the opening day informative and intellectually engaging.

Organizational support and contributions were evident throughout the event, with the program guided by Principal Prof. CH. Appiya Chinamma and the organizing team comprising Dr. K. Shobha Rani as Convenor, Mrs. Farzana Begum as Co-Convenor, and Prof. Prasanna Khadkikar as Organizing Secretary. Faculty members from various colleges and research scholars participated by presenting papers aligned with the seminar theme, bringing diverse perspectives and meaningful academic insights.

A notable highlight was the formal release of papers published in the ISSN-recognized journal Research Nebula by the Chief Guest, signaling the institution's commitment to promoting research and academic excellence. Students and faculty members actively contributed to the program, their engagement and scholarly discourse enriching the seminar and underscoring a shared commitment to leveraging digitalization for an inclusive and prosperous India by 2047.

Unity in Service: Bowenpally Pastors Prayer Fellowship Announces 2026-2028 Leadership Team

Samudrala Kiran, Correspondent

MEDCHAL-MALKAJIRI

The Bowenpally 119 Division Pastors Prayer Fellowship (Regd. No. 161/2023) unveiled its new executive committee for the 2026-2028 tenure in a unanimous decision, as announced by President Bishop Dr. John Victor Seelam. The two-year term aims to strengthen community leadership and spiritual advocacy across the division, bringing together a diverse group of spiritual leaders dedicated to the fellowship's mission.

The newly formed committee comprises President Bishop Dr. John Victor Seelam, Chairman Rev. Sudhakar Dayadi, Working President Dr. A. Sudhakar, Vice-President Rev. T. Syam Kumar, General Secretary Rev. T. Vasanth Kumar, Treasurer Rev. M. Dasanna, Joint Secretary Rev. B. Samson, Legal Advisor Rev. Muthu Thinnakaran, and Asst. Treasurer



Rev. N. Karunakar, with Chief Advisors Rev. B. Devasahayam, Rev. G. Anil Kumar, Bro. Leonard Meagher, and Rev. J. Prabhakar Rao, and Executive Members Rev. B. Nehemiaiah, Rev. V. Jayaraj, Rev. N. Wilson, and Rev. P. Ezra. The leadership is set to guide the fellowship through its two-year mandate, focusing on community service, spiritual growth, and service to the broader public.

In his address, Bishop Dr. John Victor Seelam outlined the dual objectives of the fellowship, stating that the committee is primarily dedicated to the upliftment of Christian brotherhood and the enhancement of the di-

vision's spiritual well-being. He emphasized that the leadership would also extend beyond the church's walls, aiming to foster social justice and civic duty by acting as a bridge between the state and the people to ensure that eligible beneficiaries within the community can access and benefit from various government welfare schemes. The Bishop's remarks underscored a broader vision for the new leadership: to nurture a strong sense of fellowship while actively engaging with public welfare initiatives. Through this approach, the committee intends to strengthen both spiritual life and social responsibility.

Training for CAG Office Staff at ESCI

Agreement between Comptroller and Auditor General of India and ESCI

HYDERABAD

It has been decided to provide training in capacity building and professional development to engineering-related staff working in the Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) of India at the Engineering Staff College of India (ESCI), Hyderabad. This was stated by Shri Bijay Kumar Mohanty, Director General of the department in New Delhi, along with Deputy Director Shri Jishnu J. Raju. Responding to an invitation from the CAG office in New Delhi, Dr. G. Rameshwar Rao, Director, ESCI, visited the CAG office on Thursday, 16th April 2026. During discussions with senior officials, it was agreed that both engineering and non-engineering staff of the CAG would be trained by ESCI in a phased manner over the next five

years in the areas of capacity building and professional development activities. Dr. Rameshwar Rao stated that 800 personnel would be sent to Hyderabad for training during the current financial year, and the remaining staff would also be deputed in phases over the next five years. Among the 800 engineers, only a few are members of the Institution of Engineers (India). Application forms for membership were distributed at the CAG office for those who are not members, and the registration process has already been initiated. As part of the training programmes, it was also agreed to invite the President of the Institution of Engineers (India) along with other senior officials. Dr. Rameshwar Rao expressed that the Agreement between CAG and ESCI is a historic agreement between the two institutions and hoped that this collaboration would continue for a long time. He also conveyed his gratitude to the CAG senior officials on this occasion.



Oakwood International School Achieves Remarkable Success - 100% Results Shine Bright



HYDERABAD

Oakwood International School (CBSE Affiliation No: 3630105), New Maruthi Nagar Branch, Kothapet, has once again delivered outstanding academic results, achieving a remarkable 100% pass percentage. This achievement reflects the institution's consistent commitment to academic excellence and holistic development. Among the top performers, M. Sareedhana secured the highest score with an impressive 95%. B. Gopika followed with 92%, while Vipplii Gayatri, Lakshmi Prathika K., Avikshit Jenugu, and Ishanvi Singh each scored 91%, showcasing exceptional academic performance.

Amamchi Manobhiram, P. Shanmukha Sreekar, and Udvatika Usha Kiran each scored 90%, while B. Sahithi achieved 89%. Additionally,

M.D. Anju secured 88%, and Harsh Datta along with N. Srishti Reddy scored 84%, contributing to the school's overall success.

Subject-wise highest scores highlight academic strength:

English - 98
Telugu - 94
Hindi - 94
Mathematics - 91
Science - 89
Social Studies - 97
Information Technology - 100

Renowned educationist and environmentalist Dr. Komatireddy Gopal Reddy congratulated the students and staff, stating,

"Achieving 100% results is a reflection of the students' dedication, the teachers' commitment, and the institution's academic vision. These

results set a benchmark for quality education."

On this occasion, Chairman Laxma Reddy, Directors Srinivas Reddy and Sharadha Reddy, Komatireddy Abhishek Reddy, Principal Shirisha, along with in-charges and teachers, extended their heartfelt congratulations to the students.

The school management stated

"This success is the result of collective efforts - students' hard work, parents' support, and teachers' disciplined and focused teaching methodologies. We remain committed to nurturing excellence in every student." With this outstanding achievement, Oakwood International School continues to strengthen its reputation as one of the leading educational institutions in the city.

EFLU Organizes a Distinguished Talk on the Indian Constitution

HYDERABAD

The English and Foreign Languages University (EFLU) organized a lecture titled "The Unfinished Constitution: Liberty, Equality, Fraternity in Contemporary India" on the occasion of Bharat Ratna Dr. B. R. Ambedkar Jayanti.

The distinguished talk was delivered by Prof. Srikrishna Deva Rao, Vice-Chancellor of NALSAR University of Law, and chaired by Prof. N. Nagaraju, Vice-Chancellor of EFLU. Prof. Rao highlighted the aspirational character of the constitution, while noting that constitutional development is a continuous process requiring interpretation and execution.

Prof. Rao elaborated on the triad of liberty, equality, and fraternity, noting that fraternity—though indispensable—remains under-realized. Describing fraternity as "social endosmosis," he called it a shared project of solidar-

ity essential for social cohesion. Prof. Rao cautioned that political democracy cannot remain stable without a just social order. He stressed that the three arms of government must work in harmony - legislature to enact effective laws and to operationalize constitutional principles, executive to ensure implementation so guarantees are realized, and judiciary for deepening understanding through interpretation of rights. Prof. Rao emphasized that India's future depends on deepening our collective understanding of liberty, equality, and fraternity. Concluding his lecture, Prof. Rao asserted that building a just society is the shared responsibility of both the Constitution and its citizens. The event witnessed enthusiastic participation from the Registrar, Sini Manchala, Proctor, Prof. Shyam Rao Rathod, OSD to VC, Dr. Rajaram, faculty members, non-teaching staff, and students.

Ponnam demands expulsion of BJP MP Tejasvi Surya

HYDERABAD

Minister for Transport Ponnabharak demanded that BJP MP Tejasvi Surya, who made controversial remarks regarding Telangana state, must immediately retract his statements and tender an apology to the people of Telangana.

He said the Congress leaders were going to lodge a formal complaint with Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla, urging him to strip Tejasvi Surya off his MP post and expel him from Parliament for speaking disparagingly about Telangana. Addressing media persons at Gandhi Bhavan on Thursday, Prabhakar demanded that Tejasvi's remarks must be expunged from the parliamentary records.

"It is a truly deplorable situation—one that would make Mother Telangana weep—that while the bills passed in the Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha for the formation of the state are being insulted, the eight BJP Members of Parliament elected from Telangana sit there listening to it all with utter shamelessness and apparent enjoyment," he said. The Minister said the remarks made by BJP MP Tejasvi were an insult to the self-respect of the people of Telangana and the martyrs.

"The remarks made by BJP MP Tejasvi—uttered without wisdom and in sheer ignorance—were an affront to the Constitution and the parliamentary system," Ponnabharak said.

He said that the Prime Minister ought to take cognizance of these remarks and added that they had already sent an email to their party leader Rahul Gandhi, regarding this matter.

Sridhar Babu invites U.S. investment in Telangana's aerospace, defence and space sectors



HYDERABAD

Telangana has emerged as one of India's most promising destinations for investment in the aerospace, defence and space sectors, with the State recording over 30% annual growth and a 103% compound annual growth rate in exports between 2024 and 2026, according to IT and Industries Minister D. Sridhar Babu.

Addressing a high-level delegation from the U.S. National War College at the Dr. B.R. Ambedkar Telangana Secretariat here on Thursday, Mr. Sridhar Babu invited American companies and investors to partner with Telangana in advanced manufacturing, defence technologies and space systems.

He said the State government was pursuing a focused strategy to position Telangana as a global hub for drones, counter-drone systems,

aerospace components and defence electronics, while also building capabilities in cyber security, artificial intelligence in defence, satellite systems and advanced communications.

"From rocket manufacturing to next-generation drones, and from fighter aircraft components to satellites, the 'Made in Telangana' footprint is increasingly visible across the world," the Minister said.

Mr. Sridhar Babu said the sector's rapid growth was being driven by the presence of major global companies such as Lockheed Martin, Boeing, Safran, Airbus and Dassault Aviation. Telangana is also home to key public sector and defence institutions, including DRDO, BHEL, MIDHANI, BDL, RCI and HAL.

More than 1,500 MSMEs engaged in precision engineering, drones and defence electronics are contributing to the State's growing prominence in

the sector, he said.

Referring to the Financial Times fDI rankings, the Minister said Hyderabad had been ranked the world's most cost-effective aerospace city. Telangana has also received the Government of India's "Best State for Aerospace" award for five consecutive years, he added.

He said the State was building a future-ready industrial ecosystem for the sector. Under the TG-iPASS policy, industrial approvals are being granted within 15 to 30 days, while the Young India Skill University is being leveraged to create a skilled workforce for the aerospace, defence and space industries.

Mr. Sridhar Babu said Telangana was ready to emerge not only as an investment destination, but also as a long-term strategic partner for the United States in technology, research, manufacturing and skill de-

velopment. He invited collaboration with U.S. companies, universities and research institutions in artificial intelligence, cyber security, advanced manufacturing and space technology.

Minister-Counsellor at the U.S. Department of State Paul Narain said the United States was keen to work with progressive States such as Telangana and would take steps to deepen bilateral cooperation in the coming years.

The delegation from the U.S. National War College included representatives from the Navy, Army, Defence Security Cooperation Agency, Defence Intelligence Agency, Air National Guard and Defence Information Systems Agency.

TGIC Managing Director Shankar, Industries Department Director Nikhil Chakravarthi and Aerospace and Defence Director Praveen were also present.

SOUTHERN RAILWAY		
(Electrical (General), Construction, Egmore, Chennai)		
Tender Notice No.E-HQ-CN-MS-EOT-02&03-2026-27		
dt.10/04/2026 & 13/04/2026.		
For and on behalf of the President of India, The Deputy Chief Electrical Engineer / General / Construction / Southern Railway / Egmore, Chennai - 600008 invites E-Tender for the following Work.		
Name of Work:		
1. Provision of Industrial Air-Conditioning System in Relay Room/El Cabins/ Huts at Various Locations of Arakkonam Junction.		
2. Electrification and power supply arrangements for station buildings, Platforms, LC gate lodges, S&T Huts, Pumping arrangements, Electrification of Camp Office, Railway Staff Quarters etc in Tindivanam Nagari - Sholinganur - Walajah Road section Reach 4 @ Kodakkal (H) & Sholingur Town - Works Contract		
Tender Notice No. and Date	E-HQ-CN-MS-EOT-02-2026-27 Dt.10.04.2026	E-HQ-CN-MS-EOT-03-2026-27 Dt.13.04.2026
Period of Completion	3 Months	4 Months
Approximate Cost of Work	₹47,93,765.64/-	₹74,48,330.52/-
Cost of Tender form	Nil	Nil
Earnest Money Deposit (EMD)	₹95,900/-	₹1,49,000/-
Tender Closing Date & Time	06/05/2026 at 11.00AM.	11/05/2026 at 11.00AM.
Tender Opening Date & Time	06/05/2026 at 11.30AM.	11/05/2026 at 11.30AM.
Complete details can be seen on www.ireps.gov.in .		
Dy. Chief Elec. Engineer/Gen./Cons./S.Rly, Egmore, Chennai-8		

GOVERNMENT OF MANIPUR	
DIRECTORATE: TRANSPORT DEPARTMENT	
NOTIFICATION	
No.M-TPT/117/2022-DoTPT-DT/4265: The undersigned, on behalf of the Transport Department, Government of Manipur, issues this notice inviting applications from Vehicle Location Tracking (VLT) Device Manufacturers (OEM) (AIS-140 Certified) for verification of legal and technical details for the registration/listing of OEMS for Vehicle Location Tracking (VLT) Devices (AIS-140 Certified) with Emergency Systems for vehicles, as mentioned in Rule 125H of the Central Motor Vehicles Rules, 1989 and as per the notification dated 28.11.2016(GSR-1096 E), 25.10.2018 (S.O. 5453 E and 5454 E), and G.S.R. 617 (E) dated 3/8/2022 issued by the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways (MoRTH), Government of India and amended from time to time.	
2. Interested firms are requested to submit their applications through email to dir.transport-mn@gov.in or dir.transport-mn@gov.in , and a hard copy should reach the Transport Department, Government of Manipur with the document to Director (Transport), Manipur, Babupara, Imphal - 795001.	
3. The last for submission of application is 30 th April, 2026.	
sd- Imphal, 13th April, 2026	Khumanthem Diana Devi Director (Transport), Manipur

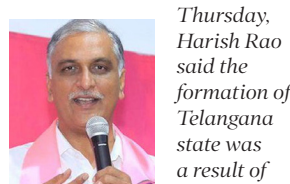
SHORT TAKES

Gutha directs immediate start on central hall construction in Assembly

HYDERABAD: Telangana Legislative Council Chairman Gutha Sukhender Reddy held a meeting at his chamber with officials from the R&B department, the Aga Khan Trust, and the Telangana Legislature on Thursday. During the meeting, Sukhender Reddy issued directives to expedite the completion of pending works within the Legislative Council premises. Furthermore, acting in accordance with the instructions of Chief Minister Revanth Reddy, he stated that work on the Central Hall, situated between the Legislative Council and the Legislative Assembly, should be commenced immediately.

Harish slams BJP MP over 'India-Pakistan' comparison of Telangana formation

HYDERABAD: Former minister and BRS MLA strongly condemned the comments of BJP MP Tejaswi Surya who compared Telangana formation with the India-Pakistan partition. In a statement here on



Thursday, Harish Rao said the formation of Telangana state was a result of decades of struggle, thousands of students, youth, employees and people's sacrifices. "Tejaswi's arrogant comments are the proof that BJP is unable to tolerate the constitutionally formed Telangana state. BJP leadership should immediately condemn these comments and clarify what is his party's stand. Otherwise people will think that this is the official stance of BJP," Harish Rao said.

"Accidents Must Be Prevented Through Safe Travel..."



'Arrive Alive' Program Under Praja Palana-Pragati Plan as per CM Revanth Reddy's Orders: DGP B. Shivadhar Reddy

* Police Machinery Steps Up Across the State on Day 4 of 'Arrive Alive'

HYDERABAD

A moment of negligence can not only take a precious life but also devastate an entire family. With the resolve of the State Chief Minister, A. Revanth Reddy, to prevent such tragedies, the "Arrive Alive" program has been launched as part of the Praja Palana-Pragati Plan, said State Director General of Police B. Shivadhar Reddy.

As part of the road safety initiative "Arrive Alive," the DGP attended a large-scale road safety awareness program held on Thursday at Jadcherla in Mahabubnagar district, organized under the leadership of District SP D. Janaki. Earlier in the day, at a junction identified as a "black spot" on National Highway 44 near Peddayapalli in Balanagar mandal, the DGP distributed helmets to motorists along with MLA Janampalli Anirudh Reddy. Later, he participated in a seminar at Chandra Garden attended by around 3,000 students, drivers, and members of the public.

Speaking on the occasion, DGP B. Shivadhar Reddy said that over-speeding, reckless overtaking, and drunk driving are the primary causes of road fatalities. He expressed concern that many young people—vital to the nation's future—are losing their lives in road accidents. He noted that road accident deaths are 9 to 10 times higher than murders annually, which prompted the launch of this initiative. He added that the Chief Minister, recognizing the severity of the situation, directed the inclusion of the "Arrive Alive" road safety program in the 99-day Praja

Palana-Pragati Plan. During the event, first-aid kits provided by the Jadcherla Medical Association were distributed to auto drivers. Free eye check-ups, distribution of spectacles, and driving licenses were facilitated through stalls. Reflective stickers and pamphlets bearing the "Arrive Alive" logo were also unveiled. Due to such innovative initiatives, road accidents in Mahabubnagar district have decreased by 20% from January to April this year compared to the same period last year, as explained by SP Janaki.

Victims who lost loved ones in road accidents shared their grief at the seminar, and a message from a young child deeply moved the audience. DIG L.S. Chauhan, District Collector Khushboo Gupta, MLA Anirudh Reddy, DTC Vani, RTC RM Santosh Kumar, Municipal Chairperson Pushpalatha, and others attended the event.

Following the DGP's directions, police forces across the state intensified activities on the fourth day of the program. In Karimnagar and Warangal Commissionerates, CID Additional DGP Charu Sinha participated in seminars. In Karimnagar, under the leadership of CP Gaush Alam, Medicovert doctors conducted CPR demonstrations for students and distributed helmets at Astra Convention Hall. In Narsampet, drivers were provided with spectacles.

At Adilabad RIMS, a seminar was held with 250 medical students under the supervision of Additional DGP Dr. Anil Kumar and SP Akhil Mahajan. A damaged car from an accident was displayed to raise awareness, and reflective stickers were affixed to lorries at Gudihatnoor.

At Woxsen University (Sangareddy), Additional DGP Mahesh M. Bhagwat and SP Paritosh Pankaj attended a seminar and appreciated a "smart helmet" designed by students. Eye camps were supervised by Additional DGP Sanjay Kumar Jain in Gandhari (Kamareddy district) and Additional DGP Swathi Lakra in Siddipet.

In Nalgonda district, Singarajupalli Gram

Panchayat in Gudipalli mandal passed a unique resolution: "No Helmet - No Entry." MLA Balu Naik distributed 100 helmets on this occasion. In Nizamabad, CP Sai Chaitanya informed drivers that those who help accident victims reach hospitals within the "Golden Hour" will receive a cash reward of ₹25,000 from the government.

In Nirmal district, SP Dr. Janaki Sharmila observed the fourth day as "Social Media Day," promoting defensive driving awareness online. In Wanaparthy district, Planning Commission Vice Chairman Chinnareddy and Collector Adarsh held meetings with sarpanches at Gopalpet. In Jogulamba Gadwal, SP Srinivas Rao launched a special awareness vehicle. In Kumuram Bheem Asifabad, helmet rules are being strictly enforced for visitors to the Collectorate and SP office. In Suryapet district's Munagala, collectors and SPs set an example by distributing helmets to school students. In Kodad, traffic police themselves undertook road repairs.

Recognizing that many accidents occur due to vision problems among drivers, especially during night travel and long-distance driving, mega medical camps were organized in several districts. In Mahabubabad, Railway and Road Safety IGP K. Ramesh Naidu and SP supervised eye tests for 800 drivers. In Medak, Collector Pratima Singh and SP Srinivas Rao organized eye check-ups and CPR training for Blue Court staff.

In Bhadradi Kothagudem and Narayanpet districts, SPs Rohith Raju and Dr. Vineeth conducted eye camps for hundreds of lorry and auto drivers, distributing free spectacles and medicines. In Khammam and Jagtial districts, awareness programs and free eye camps were organized for driver unions at police stations.

On the fourth day of the "Arrive Alive" program, people, students, and youth across various regions actively participated and took a pledge for road safety.

Kavitha warns of Telangana-style agitation over delimitation row

HYDERABAD

Telangana Jagruti President K. Kavitha has raised serious concerns over what she described as a deliberate attempt to undermine Telangana in the upcoming delimitation of parliamentary constituencies.

She accused the BJP-led Central government of attempting to curtail Telangana's political representation and warned that any such move would be strongly resisted.

In a video message released on Thursday, Kavitha questioned the rationale behind linking the Women's Reservation Bill with the delimitation process.

She emphasised that both are fundamentally separate issues and alleged that the government is using the Women's Bill as a pretext to push forward delimitation.

Kavitha noted that Telangana currently holds approximately 3.13% of seats in the Lok Sabha and asserted that this share must not be reduced under any circumstances. She criticised proposals to increase the total number of parliamentary seats by 50%, stating that such measures could disproportionately benefit larger states.

Drawing comparisons with states like Bihar, Kavitha pointed out that Telangana may receive a relatively

smaller increase in seats, thereby weakening its political voice.

She further alleged that the Centre's approach favors more populous states, deepening regional inequalities. According to her, Telangana has already faced discrimination in fund allocation and the granting of national project status, and any reduction in representation would further aggravate this imbalance.

Warning of serious political consequences, Kavitha stated that Telangana—and southern states more broadly—would not tolerate such injustice. She indicated that, if necessary, a movement on the scale of the historic Telangana agitation could be revived.

Kavitha also demanded that BJP Members of Parliament from Telangana respond unequivocally to Tejaswi Surya's remarks, calling them an affront to the dignity of Telangana society.

She questioned whether they endorse such statements and urged them to immediately condemn the remarks and ensure that an apology is issued. Failing this, Kavitha asserted, they forfeit their moral right to represent the people of Telangana. She further stated that if they are unable to safeguard the state's self-respect, they should step down from their positions.



KTR slams BJP over anti-Telangana remarks in Parliament

HYDERABAD

BRS working president KT Rama Rao has strongly denounced the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) leaders for once again displaying their disdain toward the formation of Telangana state, suggesting that these leaders lack respect for its existence in light of their statements in Parliament.

In a statement released on Thursday, KT Rama Rao condemned the comparison between the formation of Telangana and the India-Pakistan partition as extremely misguided, criticising such arrogant and anti-Telangana remarks.

He noted, "BJP leaders have consistently made it a practice to undermine the pride of the people of Telangana and the sacrifices made by our revered heroes. From Prime Minister Modi to Member of Parliament Tejaswi Surya, there has been a persistent expression of opposition to Telangana, tainting the narrative surrounding its formation. The people of Telangana will remember these disparaging comments from the BJP." KTR emphasised that the creation of Telangana

did not come about through anyone's goodwill or charity. It was achieved after a prolonged struggle and the sacrifices of countless young individuals. He accused the BJP of revealing its true nature by likening the democratic fight for the people's existence to tragic incidents such as the partition of the country.

He expressed disappointment that eight BJP MPs from Telangana remained silent in Parliament while such remarks were made. He noted that even Congress MPs from Telangana had at least criticised the silence over Tejaswi Surya's comments, highlighting the ongoing insults directed at Telangana which were visibly ignored. "The people of Telangana are observing how these MPs prioritise political gains over the interests of the state," he remarked.

KT Rama Rao called for Tejaswi Surya to retract his derogatory statements immediately and issue an unconditional apology to the people of Telangana. He also urged the BJP to apologise for Surya's comments, warning that failure to do so would imply that such views are part of the party's official stance. (NSS)



SCR seeks Telangana support for land acquisition, infrastructure projects

HYDERABAD

South Central Railway (SCR) General Manager Sanjay Kumar Srivastava held a co-ordination meeting at Rail Nilayam, Secunderabad on Thursday with state Chief Secretary K. Ramakrishna Rao and other senior state officials to discuss the issues related to railway projects in Telangana.

Satya Prakash, SCR Additional General Manager Satya Prakash, principal heads of the departments, Divisional Railway Managers - Secunderabad & Hyderabad divisions and other senior officials participated in the meeting.

This is the first meeting held on the Railway premises with participation of the Chief Secretary and other senior officials aimed at strengthening the relations and co-ordination between state government



and Railways.

During the meeting, the Railway officials gave a detailed presentation on various issues pertaining to infrastructure projects such as Road Under Bridges (RUB) / Road Over Bridges (ROB), laying of new Railway lines, station developments, station approaches etc., being executed in the Telangana.

An extensive discussion was held on assistance required from state government during process of sanction and execution of Road Under Bridge/Road Over Bridge works in Telangana. The Railways sought the support of state government in terms of NOCs, land acquisition, diversion of traffic, shifting of electric lines, pipelines etc. Further,

the officials also discussed the new railway lines in the state and sought cooperation of State government with regards to land acquisition, cost sharing etc.

Preliminary discussions were held on the proposal of High speed Rail corridor connecting Hyderabad with Bengaluru, Chennai and Pune. The officials also reviewed the proposal of Regional Ring Rail project.

Addressing the gathering, Sanjay Kumar Srivastava stated that the completion of various on-going Rail infrastructure projects discussed today will not only be beneficial for the people, but will also contribute to the economic development of the state.

He stated that the support from state government will greatly accelerate the pace of execution of these projects.

A New Chapter in Academic Leadership:

Vice-Chancellor Prof. Kumar Molugaaram Welcomes New Executive Council Appointments

HYDERABAD

Following the recent notification by the Government of Telangana (G.O.Rt.No.52), Osmania University (OU) formally welcomes the newly constituted members of its Executive Council (EC). This strategic reinforcement of the University's principal executive body marks a significant milestone in its 109-year legacy of academic brilliance.

A Message of Gratitude and Vision from the Vice-Chancellor

The Hon'ble Vice-Chancellor of Osmania University, Prof. Kumar Molugaaram, expressed his profound gratitude to the Government of Telangana and Dr. Yogita Rana, IAS, Secretary to Government, for their proactive leadership and swift action in finalizing these appointments.

"The timely constitution of the Executive Council is a testament to the

Government's unwavering commitment to higher education." Prof. Kumar Molugaaram stated. "We are particularly grateful to Dr. Yogita Rana for ensuring a seamless and merit-based appointment process. This new council brings together a formidable blend of veteran academic wisdom and diverse professional expertise, essential for navigating the challenges of a modern educational landscape."

High Responsibility in Governance and Ethics

Prof. Kumar Molugaaram highlighted that the new members carry a high responsibility in steering the university toward a future defined by uncompromising honesty and absolute transparency. As the principal executive authority, the Council is tasked with being the custodian of the university's values, ensuring that every administrative and academic decision is rooted in ethical governance.

Commitment to Quality and Skill Development

A central pillar of this new administration will be the relentless pur-

suit of Academic Quality and Global Skills. The Vice-Chancellor extended his heartfelt congratulations to the following appointees, noting their collective role in elevating the university's standards:

- Sr. Prof. P. Ushasri (University Colleges)
 - Prof. M. Vijulatha (Principal, University College of Science)
 - Dr. Thumulari Srilakshmi (Principal, Affiliated College)
 - B. Sujatha Naik (Teacher, University Colleges)
 - Dr. J. Neeraja (Teacher, Affiliated Colleges)
 - Dr. Banapuram Madhusudhan Reddy (Eminent Person)
 - Narri Yadaiah (Eminent Person)
 - Suram Ravindar Reddy (Eminent Person)
 - Prof. G. Gopal Reddy (Eminent Person)
- A Collective Mission for Student Success
- The Vice-Chancellor emphasized that the primary focus of this Council will be the holistic development and larger interests of the students. With the collective expertise of these dis-

tinguished individuals, the University aims to:

- Elevate Educational Quality: Implementing rigorous benchmarks for research and teaching excellence.
 - Empower with Skills: Bridging the gap between the classroom and the industry by prioritizing vocational skills and professional competence.
 - Uphold Integrity & Transparency: Strengthening governance frameworks to ensure an environment of honesty and accountability.
 - Modernize Infrastructure: Enhancing research facilities and campus digital transformation.
- "Our goal is to work in unison to ensure that Osmania University remains a beacon of hope and opportunity," Prof. Kumar Molugaaram added. "By honoring our rich 109-year heritage while embracing future-ready policies, we will ensure that our students are equipped to lead on the global stage with both skill and character."
- The University Administration is now set to initiate the first session of the newly formed Council to deliberate on immediate developmental goals.

Jupally slams Tejaswi Surya's derogatory remarks on Telangana formation

HYDERABAD

Minister for Tourism and Culture Jupally Krishna Rao on Thursday took strong exception to the remarks made by BJP MP Tejaswi Surya regarding the formation of Telangana, describing them as the pinnacle of ignorance.

In a statement, the Minister condemned the MP's rhetoric, asserting that it was a direct affront to the collective self-respect of the people. Jupally Krishna Rao maintained that such comments undermine a movement defined by democratic persistence and the supreme sacrifices of the state's youth.

The Minister stated that such reckless comments belittle the decades of struggle and the ultimate sacrifices of Telangana's youth, turning a sacred milestone into a tool for political controversy. He noted that

the birth of the state was the culmination of a long-standing public demand, validated by the highest legislative body of the country.

The Minister further alleged that the MP's remarks reflect a "deep-seated bias" within the BJP leadership. He claimed that the party has consistently failed to acknowledge the legitimacy of the Telangana identity, recalling previous instances where senior leaders had used derogatory analogies to describe the bifurcation.

Jupally Krishna Rao also credited the then-leadership of the UPA, particularly Sonia Gandhi, for recognising the emotional aspirations of the region despite potential political risks. He accused the BJP of maintaining a contradictory stance—seeking votes in the state while allegedly harboring "ill-will" toward its very existence.

Vakiti demands apology from Tejaswi Surya over derogatory remarks

HYDERABAD

Minister for Animal Husbandry, Fisheries and Sports Vakiti Srihari on Thursday strongly condemned the derogatory remarks made by Karnataka BJP MP Tejaswi Surya on the bifurcation of the Telangana state.

He asserted that the formation of Telangana—accomplished with the approval of Parliament in accordance with the Indian Constitution—was a historic democratic process.

The Minister remarked that it was distressing to hear such irresponsible comments from someone, who is evidently unaware of the sacrifices and struggles that underpinned the decades-long movement for the creation of Telangana state. Vakiti Srihari criticised leaders of the BJP—the party currently in power at the Centre—for making such remarks, arguing that this clearly exposes their double standards. The Minister emphasised that Telangana already stands as a model for the nation in terms of development and added that such comments cannot impede the state's progress.

Ukhand CM, MHA Review Char Dham Yatra Preparations

DEHRADUN: (APR 16)

Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami reached Rudrapur on Thursday to review arrangements for the upcoming Char Dham Yatra in Uttarakhand, which is set to begin on April 19. The Union home ministry also held a meeting with state officials in this regard. The pilgrimage begins on the occasion of Akshay Tritiya with the opening of Gangotri and Yamunotri temples in the Uttarkashi district. The gates of Kedarnath in Rudrapur will open on April 22, followed by Badrinath in Chamoli on April 23. The chief minister travelled by road from Rudrapur to Guptkashi on NH-107 to assess arrangements for pilgrims' movement.

Deleted Bengal voters can vote if tribunals clear their appeals: Supreme Court

The Supreme Court invoked its powers under Article 142 to rule that those whose appeals against exclusion from the voter list are allowed by appellate tribunals will be permitted to vote in the upcoming Bengal polls.

The Supreme Court has cleared the way for thousands of excluded voters in West Bengal to cast their ballots, but only if their appeals are decided in time.

In an order released on Thursday, three days after a key hearing, a bench comprising Chief Justice of India Surya Kant and Justice Joydip Mukherjee invoked its powers under Article 142 to ensure that eligible voters are not left out of the upcoming Assembly polls. The court said individuals whose ap-



peals against exclusion from the voter list are allowed by appellate tribunals will be permitted to vote in the two-phase elections scheduled for April 23 and April 29. "Whenever the Appellate Tribunals are able to decide the appeals by 21.04.2026 or 27.04.2026, as the case may be, such appellate orders shall be given effect to by issuing a supplementary revised electoral roll, and all necessary consequences with respect to the

right to vote shall follow," the court said. At the same time, the top court drew a clear line. "However, it goes without saying that the mere pendency of appeals preferred by excluded persons before the Appellate Tribunals shall not entitle them to exercise their right to vote," it added.

During Monday's hearing, the bench had shown reluctance to allow deleted voters to participate while their appeals were still pending. It

had, however, indicated it may consider allowing supplementary rolls. The Election Commission of India, which had already frozen the voter list, will now issue supplementary special intensive revision (SIR) rolls to reflect tribunal decisions. No new names can otherwise be added without specific court directions.

The court noted that once an appellate tribunal issues a conclusive direction for inclusion or exclusion, "such directions shall be duly effectuated" before polling in the respective phases. The order comes amid a massive Special Intensive Revision (SIR) exercise which saw 90.8 lakh people struck off the voter rolls in Bengal. An estimated 34 lakh appeals are pending before 19 appellate tribunals set up across the state. The case reached the top court after 13 individuals challenged the

deletion of their names, alleging the Election Commission acted without due process and that appeals were not being heard promptly. The court had earlier termed the plea "premature" and directed them to approach the tribunals.

Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee welcomed the ruling. "I had been telling everyone to be patient. If not today, then tomorrow—everyone's name would eventually appear," she said.

"Today, the Supreme Court has issued an order. For those who applied on the 21st, the final supplementary list is to be published before the first phase at 23rd April... I am happy. I am proud of my judiciary," Banerjee added. Bengal's 294-member Assembly will vote in two phases on April 23 and April 29, with counting set to take place on May 4.

"Homeopathy Stimulates the Body's Natural Healing Power,"

Hon'ble Governor of Andhra Pradesh, Shri S. Abdul Nazeer
TADEPALLIGUDEM / PITHAPURAM, APRIL 15 :



In a prestigious recognition of holistic healthcare, the Hon'ble Governor of Andhra Pradesh, Shri S. Abdul Nazeer, has issued a high-level commendation for the joint efforts of ASR Homeopathic Medical College and Hospital (ASRHMC) and the Umar Alisha Rural Development Trust (UARDT). The Governor's message was released during the joint celebration of World Homeopathy Week 2026, commemorating the 271st Birth Anniversary of the Father of Homeopathy, Dr. Samuel Hahnemann. In his official message from Lok Bhavan, Shri S. Abdul Nazeer emphasized that health is more than the mere absence of disease. Lauding the homeopathic system, the Governor stated: "Homeopathy looks beyond the disease to cure their causes rather than merely their symptoms, and it stimulates the body's own natural healing powers to bring health, vitality, and well-being." The Governor further noted that Homeopathy plays a vital role in strengthening the biological system's ability to respond adaptively to environmental challenges. He extended his best wishes for the success of the ongoing programs organized by ASRHMC and UARDT.

- Disease Screening and Treatment: These programs focused on the early detection and management of non-communicable diseases, such as Diabetes, Hypertension, and Thyroid disorders.
- Academic Excellence: The week featured a high-level National Seminar and various competitions designed for faculty and students to foster research and clinical knowledge. The celebrations culminated in a grand tribute to Dr. Samuel Hahnemann on April 10th. Prof. Dr. Ananda Kumar Pingali, Principal of ASRHMC, remarked on the significance of the Governor's endorsement: "We are deeply honored by the Hon'ble Governor's words. This recognition reinforces our mission to make holistic, natural healthcare accessible to all and to advance the science of Homeopathy as envisioned by Dr. Samuel Hahnemann." About ASR Homeopathic Medical College and Hospital: Based in Tadepalligudem, ASRHMC is a premier institution dedicated to academic excellence, clinical research, and affordable holistic healthcare. About Umar Alisha Rural Development Trust: Located in Pithapuram, the Trust is a leading NGO committed to rural upliftment, health awareness, and humanitarian service.



2014 Andhra bifurcation worse than Partition: Tejasvi Surya's remark sparks row

A political row erupted on Thursday after Bengaluru South BJP MP Tejasvi Surya said the Congress-led UPA's division of undivided Andhra Pradesh into Telangana and Andhra Pradesh in 2014 was worse than the Partition of India in 1947. The remark triggered a furore from BRS leader KT Rama Rao, who called Surya's remarks foolish and demanded an apology from him.

A prolonged mass movement. "Telangana was formed due to the protracted struggle and sacrifices of its people," he said, adding that such comments undermine the self-respect of the people of the state. He also targeted BJP leaders from Telangana, questioning why they did not intervene. "It is utterly shameful that eight Telangana BJP MPs sitting in the same House could neither stop nor correct their fellow MP's unacceptable remarks. I condemn these remarks and demand an unconditional apology from Tejasvi Surya," he said. The remarks have revived sensitivities around Telangana's 2014 formation – a deeply emotive issue rooted in a prolonged statehood movement led by the BRS – that continues to trigger sharp political reactions.

KTR's sister and former BRS leader K Kavitha did not mince words and demanded his resignation. "How dare you, Tejasvi Surya? You are not only insulting those who fought for Telangana for over six decades, but also dishonouring the memory of thousands who sacrificed their lives," Kavitha, the president of Telangana Jagruthi, said. Targeted BJP MPs from Telangana, she said, "Speak up or resign. You don't deserve to represent Telangana if you cannot uphold the sanctity of our emotions."

Speaking in Parliament during a discussion on the three bills to operationalise the Women's Reservation Act, Surya said, "The way the Congress divided Andhra Pradesh and Telangana, it was done in a worse fashion than how the British did the Partition of India and Pakistan. This is the kind of legacy they have." Surya's remarks triggered sharp reactions in Telangana, with KT Rama Rao (KTR) accusing the BJP of repeatedly insulting the state's formation. "The BJP spits venom against the formation of Telangana yet again! Likening the Telangana demerger to the India-Pakistan Partition is foolish and deserves strong condemnation," he wrote on X. KTR stressed that Telangana was not a political decision taken lightly but the result of

CM directs officials to make efforts to achieve 15 percent growth rate

AMARAVATI:

Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu directed officials to implement both micro and macro-level planning strategies to achieve the state's Gross State Domestic Product (GSDP) targets. He emphasized the need for short-, medium, and long-term planning to attain optimal productivity levels across sectors. During a review meeting of Finance department held at Secretariat today, the Chief Minister stressed that field-level execution is critical to achieve the targeted 15 percent growth rate. He instructed officials to ensure effective implementation of these plans down to the grassroots level.

The CM noted that the state is already providing essential resources such as water and electricity to agriculture sector and industries, and called for focused efforts to further enhance productivity. Despite

Amaravati and Polavaram contribute significantly for wealth creation: CM
CM's stress on micro and macro level planning to achieve state GSDP targets
Officials asked to utilise central government schemes to take up development programmes



financial constraints, the government has not increased electricity tariffs and is also bearing an additional burden of Rs 4,600 crore arising from decisions taken by the previous administration. He directed revenue-generating departments to meet their targets without imposing any burden on the public. The Chief Minister highlighted that completion of key projects like Amaravati and Polavaram would significantly boost wealth creation in the state. He assured that there is no shortage of funds for priority projects and that, with the support of the Central Government, these projects will be completed to accelerate development. He asked the officials to utilise central government schemes including Purvodaya and Sasei schemes to take up development projects. The Chief Minister re-

iterated that welfare schemes will be implemented in line with the welfare calendar. He further directed officials to focus on securing funds due to the state under the Andhra Pradesh Reorganisation Act. Criticizing the previous government for shutting down Anna Canteens, he said that despite challenges, the current government is providing meals to poor through 269 Anna Canteens across the state. He also emphasized the need for improving efficiency and simplifying procedures across government departments to attract investments and enhance revenue. Minister for Finance Payyavula Keshav, Chief Secretary G Sai Prasad, Principal Secretary, Finance, Piyush Kumar and other senior officials attended the review meeting.

AAP MP attacks Centre's delimitation move, calls it unfair to Punjab

The proposed delimitation exercise has drawn sharp political fire, with the Aam Aadmi Party calling it an "assault on fair representation" and warning of a nationwide challenge against the move.



Punjab AAP MP Malvinder Singh Kang launched a strong attack, saying the exercise was not a routine democratic step but a targeted action against certain states. "The proposed delimitation exercise

is not a routine democratic correction; it is a calculated assault on fair representation, one that punishes states like Punjab," Kang said. **AAP WARNS OF NATION-WIDE PROTEST**

Kang said Punjab's contributions to the country cannot be ignored and warned that the state would resist any move seen as undermining its voice. "Punjab has given this nation its food, its soldiers, its peace, and its sacrifices. We will not accept quiet disenfranchisement," he said. He added that the party would challenge the proposal across multiple platforms. "We will oppose this draconian move in the streets, in the courts, and in every democratic forum." **FEDERALISM CONCERNS RAISED**

The AAP leader said the proposed changes risk weakening the federal structure of the country. "The soul of Indian federalism must not be allowed to be weakened," Kang said, framing the issue as a broader constitutional concern rather than a state-specific dispute. The delimitation exercise, which involves redrawing parliamentary and assembly constituencies based on population, has increasingly become a flashpoint, with opposition parties raising concerns over its potential political impact.



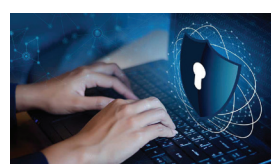
CSMRS Team Conducts Second Day of Tests at Polavaram Project

POLAVARAM, APRIL 16:

At the Polavaram Project, a team from the Central Soil and Materials Research Station (CSMRS) carried out inspections and testing for the second consecutive day on Thursday.

Team members Lalit Kumar Solanki and Hanuman Prasad Meena examined the rock structures at the project site, as well as the concrete being used in construction. As part of their visit, they inspected the ongoing grouting works at G-Hill. The team expressed satisfaction with the quality of concrete being utilized there. Officials including Water Resources Department Executive Engineer D. Srinivas, MEIL General Manager Gangadhar, Deputy General Manager Murali Pammi, and Quality Control DGM Shankar Rao briefed the scientists on various aspects of the construction and quality measures. The scientists had earlier

inspected the concrete used in the diaphragm wall construction on Wednesday. On Thursday, they conducted further quality assessments of the same. Concrete samples used in the diaphragm wall were collected in block form and preserved for testing. These samples were subjected to high-pressure water tests to determine the extent of water absorption. During the testing process, the blocks were covered with plastic sheets. It was noted that plastic sheets had also been placed on both sides of the diaphragm wall before pouring the concrete, and similar testing procedures were followed to simulate actual conditions. The results of these tests confirmed that the concrete used in the diaphragm wall is of good quality. Additionally, the team conducted further quality tests at the Adco Laboratory, which has been set up by the Water Resources Department specifically for quality inspection purposes.



Online Fraud: Bundi Police Catch 2 in 'Mule Hunter' Drive

KOTA: (APR 16)

Police, here under the campaign 'Mule Hunter', have arrested two people for allegedly committing online fraud with people situated as far away as Murshidabad, West Bengal. 'Mule Hunter' is a special campaign underway here to crack down on cybercrime. According to Superintendent of Police Avneesh Kumar Sharma, the action was carried out by a team from the Dei Police Station as part of the statewide campaign to curb rising incidents of cyber fraud.

Southern Railway records major improvement in Operational Efficiency in FY 2025-26

CHENNAI, APRIL 16

Southern Railway has registered significant strides in Operating efficiency performance during the recently concluded financial year 2025-26. From introducing more trains to cater to the burgeoning requirements of passenger traffic, providing additional stoppages, speeding up of trains, the Zone has recorded noteworthy achievement in every facet of working.

Introduction of Train Services
Southern Railway introduced 28 pairs of New Trains and 2 Nos. of One-way services in FY 2025-26, the highest in the last 10 years. This includes, KSR Bengaluru – Ernakulam Vande Bharat Express, 10 pairs of Amrit Bharat Express trains, facilitating faster and affordable long dis-

Southern Railway introduces the highest number of trains (28 pairs & 2 one-way services) in FY 2025-26, enhancing Passenger connectivity
Southern Railway tops Zonal Railways with an Overall Punctuality Rate of 93.22% in FY 2025-26 despite extensive engineering works



tance travel connecting South to Northern & Eastern India. Further, 12 pairs of Mail/Express Trains were introduced during FY 2025-26 that includes the fully unreserved Antyodaya Weekly Express between Thiruvananthapuram North-Mangaluru Jn. Additionally, 7 pairs of Passenger/MEMU services were also introduced giving a fillip to suburban and short-distance connectivity. **Extension/Speeding Up/ Increase in Frequency/ Additional Stoppages**
Southern Railway has also undertaken significant service enhancements during the year, aimed at improving connectivity and passenger convenience across its network. A total of 05 pairs of trains

along with 01 single-direction service have been extended, enabling seamless travel to additional destinations and catering to emerging passenger demand. Further, frequency of 04 pairs of trains has been increased, offering greater flexibility and availability of berths to commuters. In a major operational improvement, 98 trains have been speeded up, resulting in reduced travel time and enhanced efficiency of train services. Additionally, 246 new stoppages have been provided at various stations, ensuring improved accessibility, especially for passengers from smaller towns and rural areas. **SR tops Zonal Railways in Overall Punctuality Performance**

Reinforcing its focus on efficient train operations, Southern Railway has achieved commendable punctuality performance during the year, recording an impressive 93.22% in terms of overall punctuality covering Mail/Express and Suburban services, surpassing all other Zones, with Western Railway and North Western Railway securing the second and third positions respectively. Southern Railway also secured the 3rd position in Indian Railways, following Western Railway and North Western Railway achieving 91.3% punctuality in Mail/Express trains segment. The punctuality performance has been maintained despite the Zone carrying out extensive engineering works.

EDITORIAL

DIGITAL DEBT TRAPS: THE LETHAL INTERSECTION OF PREDATORY LENDING AND REGULATORY GAPS

The tragic demise of Nithin Raj, a first-year dental student in Kannur who passed away last week following a fall from the summit of a five-story building, has prompted a police investigation identifying harassment stemming from an app-based loan as a significant contributing element. This heartbreaking incident marks the third high-profile suicide connected to predatory lending applications within Kerala in a mere four-month span. Since the beginning of January, the Thiruvananthapuram Rural district alone has seen the registration of more than 35 formal complaints involving these digital platforms. In the specific context of Raj's death, parallel inquiries are simultaneously scrutinizing allegations of caste-based discrimination at his educational institution, while the National Commission for Scheduled Castes has formally requested a comprehensive report from the State police within a one-week deadline.

The operational mechanics of these applications are invasive; once they are installed on a device, they systematically extract the user's contact lists, private photo galleries, and GPS location data, exporting this sensitive information to remote servers frequently situated in North India or international locations. Should a borrower experience any delay in repayment, debt recovery agents initiate a calculated escalation of harassment. This psychological warfare involves relentless abusive phone calls to the borrower, the targeted harassment of individuals listed as references on the initial application, and the deliberate infliction of severe reputational damage. Kerala presents a unique paradox in this crisis: the state maintains exceptionally high levels of smartphone penetration and digital literacy, yet it suffers from a lack of corresponding financial literacy, all while hosting a substantial student demographic with pressing needs for small-scale credit.

Furthermore, despite the existence of the RBI's Digital Lending Guidelines, these predatory applications continue to operate without legitimate regulated status. They often fabricate partnerships with Non-Banking Financial Companies (NBFCs), funnel transactions through opaque payment gateways, hide various fees and deductions during the disbursement process, and offer absolutely no mechanism for grievance redressal. These apps successfully exploit a regulatory blind spot; while the RBI maintains oversight of financial entities, the harmful components of these services function within the app and data layers, which fall outside traditional banking supervision.

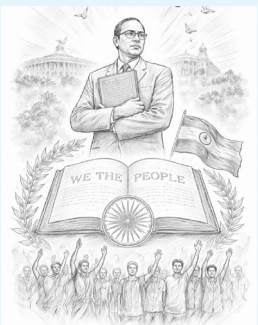
To combat this, a primary technical intervention should involve smartphone manufacturers implementing an OS-level sandbox. Within this environment, any application classified under the "financial" category would be technically prohibited from accessing contacts or photos, even if a user inadvertently grants permission. Additionally, because the call centers utilized by these apps are often located in different states or foreign countries, they remain largely beyond the jurisdictional reach of local law enforcement.

Consequently, India must prioritize the enactment of stringent legislation that carries mandatory prison sentences and substantial financial penalties for illegal digital lending activities. This is crucial because when a malicious app is purged from a store or directory, its developers typically relaunch the service immediately under a different brand name. A third necessary measure involves the government mandating that every financial application carry a cryptographically signed certificate of association from a regulated bank or NBFC. App stores would then be required to verify all listings against an official Reserve Bank of India whitelist. This regulatory vacuum is precisely why the Kerala government is currently contemplating new state-level legislation to regulate digital lending platforms and provide local police with the legal empowerment to act against entities operating from outside state borders.

Finally, the nation requires the implementation of rigorous disclosure standards regarding effective interest rates and total fees, alongside strict mandates governing the conduct of recovery agents. There must also be heightened "Know Your Customer" (KYC) obligations for payment aggregators and the deployment of risk flags on UPI IDs linked to lending operations that demonstrate a high frequency of consumer complaints.



ONE NATION — ONE CONSTITUTION



Upon a continent of tongues and time,
Where myriad memories breathe and chime,
There stands a text not ink, but flame
A people's will, a nation's name.
In the hush beneath the soil's deep core,
Where buried histories ache and soar,
It speaks — a solemn, sovereign vow
Of human dignity, here and now.
From dust of the damned, from silence sealed,
It kindled a fire no night could shield
In Ambedkar's vision, vast and bright,
It summoned dawn from endless night.
It shattered the walls of ancient divide,
Where caste and cruelty long resided
And poured, like rain on a thirsting land,
The grace of justice with equal hand.
A river of rights in ceaseless flow,
Where freedoms rise and tyrannies go,
A chorus woven of every voice,
Where even the smallest soul has choice.
Its fragrance — not of power, but care,
A brotherhood breathed in common air;
Its pulse a promise, fierce and clear,
That none shall bow, and none shall fear.
No narrow borders can confine
The arc of its inclusive spine
It breaks the cage of fractured sight,
And lifts a nation into light.
One Nation not in word, but breath,
Unbowed, undivided, defying death;
One Constitution a living flame,
That guards each soul beyond all name.
Our steps in truth, our voices in right,
Shall keep its eternal vigil bright
For in its spirit, ageless, free,
Resides our shared humanity.
An undying fire, a moral sea
The soul of India's destiny.

...: Dr. Peruka Raju ...
7810032847

OPEN FORUM

Samajwadi Party Polishes Muslim Politics Through the Women's Reservation Bill

During the debate on the Women's Reservation Amendment Bill, the demand by the Samajwadi Party (SP) to provide separate reservation for Muslim women created uproar in the Lok Sabha. This issue not only intensified the parliamentary debate but also triggered a new round of political accusations between the BJP and SP. An SP leader said in the House that Muslim women should be given separate reservation to empower them, as their share in general reservation is low. BJP strongly opposed this statement, saying that reservation based on religion is against the Constitution. BJP spokespersons in the Lok Sabha clearly stated that SP is trying to give a communal color to the House in order to attract Muslim votes. This incident becomes even more significant in the backdrop of the 2027 Uttar Pradesh Assembly elections, where SP is adopting a strategy to polarize Muslim voters. The debate in the Lok Sabha has provided an opportunity to examine the statements of leaders from both parties through a political lens.

BJP accused SP of Muslim appeasement due to this move, while SP described it as an issue of women's empowerment. During the debate, a close associate of SP leader Akhilesh Yadav said that Muslim women are backward and should be given a separate quota so they can progress in society. In response, a Union Minister from BJP said that the demand for reservation in the name of religion hurts the spirit of the Constitution and that SP is engaging in vote-bank politics. This statement by SP is not merely a legislative proposal but appears to be a well-planned

electoral move.

In a state like Uttar Pradesh, where Muslim voters play a decisive role, SP is trying to consolidate these votes by raising this issue. BJP's opposition is equally sharp, as it views this as an attempt to create Hindu-Muslim division. During the Lok Sabha debate, an SP MP argued that if OBC and Scheduled Caste women are getting reservation, then why not Muslim women. BJP refuted this by saying that many sub-castes within the Muslim community fall under OBC categories, and additional religion-based reservation would be unconstitutional. This exchange divided the House into two camps. Meanwhile, the Home Minister said that if the Samajwadi Party wishes, it can give tickets to all Muslim women within its own party. Overall, SP's stance appears to be part of its preparations for the 2027 elections, especially since in previous elections a large portion of Muslim votes in western Uttar Pradesh was fragmented. Now SP wants to create a new polarization in the name of Muslim women. A BJP leader said in the House that SP's proposal is a conspiracy to isolate Muslims and that they will never allow it to succeed. This statement makes it clear that BJP views the issue in connection with its Hindutva ideology. SP's statement carries an emotional appeal centered on the alleged neglect of Muslim women. They presented figures claiming that Muslim women's representation in legislatures is negligible. However, BJP challenged these figures, stating that reservation is based on caste and economic criteria, not religion. SP's move indicates a deviation from socialist ideology, as during Mulayam Singh

Yadav's time the party fought for all backward classes, but now it appears focused on Muslims. BJP reminded SP in the House that despite Muslim votes, the SP-BSP alliance lost the 2019 Lok Sabha elections, and now SP is repeating the same mistake. During the debate, an SP woman MP emotionally said that Muslim sisters should be given equal rights. BJP immediately responded that all women deserve equal rights, so why separate them by religion? These statements suggest that SP intends to use Muslim women as a vote bank.

In Uttar Pradesh's 403 assembly seats, Muslim voters constitute about 18 percent, and the number of women among them is increasing. SP is using the parliamentary platform ahead of assembly elections to attract this group. BJP's strong opposition is also due to its desire to keep Hindu voters united. A BJP MP said in the House that if SP's bill is passed, it will lead to religion-based division in the country. SP replied that it is empowerment, not division. Political observers say that SP's statements lack factual basis, because Pasmanda Muslims fall under OBC categories and already receive benefits. BJP cited Supreme Court judgments stating that religion-based reservation cannot be implemented. This debate disrupted the proceedings of the Lok Sabha, with both sides shouting at each other for nearly two hours. After coming out of the House, an SP leader said that BJP has a narrow mindset and that they will fight for the rights of Muslim women. BJP rejected this, calling it an election stunt. The entire sequence indicates that SP is pursuing a strategy of Muslim vote polarization for 2027. In

previous assembly elections, SP received less than 40 percent of Muslim votes, and now it wants to improve this through women's issues. BJP is labeling it as communal in order to strengthen its Hindu vote bank. The Speaker had to adjourn the House multiple times. SP's statement also made other opposition parties uncomfortable, as BSP and others consider it contrary to their ideology. BJP took advantage of the situation and targeted SP on social media. Analysis suggests that SP's statements carry the smell of electoral gain, while BJP's statements appear based on constitutional arguments.

In the House, SP proposed that the bill should include a separate 5 percent quota for Muslim women. BJP tore it apart and said, "This will divide the country." This dramatic incident provided headlines for the media. SP's move differs from Mulayam Singh's legacy, as he never made religion-based demands. Akhilesh Yadav now represents a new generation of politics, where polarization of vote banks is a major tool. BJP Mahila Morcha attacked SP, saying that it is neglecting Hindu women. This debate has also affected the national Women's Reservation Bill, which remains pending. SP wants a special provision for Muslim women in the bill so it can use it in election campaigns in Uttar Pradesh. BJP raised the issue in a central cabinet meeting and planned to corner SP. Analysis suggests that SP's statements are emotional, while BJP's are logical. In the House, an SP MP said that Muslim women are under pressure and should be given reservation. BJP replied that all women are equal. This confrontation signals the coming political battle of the 2027 elections.

In Uttar Pradesh, SP's strategy is focused on Muslim-majority seats such as Saharanpur and Moradabad. BJP is emphasizing Hindu unity to counter this. This debate has increased the political temperature. SP believes that Muslim women may become a new vote bank, especially as they became active on issues such as triple talaq. BJP credited its own policies for this change. These statements have been recorded in the Lok Sabha records and could be cited in courts in the future.

SP's move could backfire, as some within the Muslim community themselves oppose religion-based reservation. BJP claimed to have conducted surveys showing that Muslims in Uttar Pradesh want development rather than separation. Thus, SP's demand may prove unsuccessful. Nevertheless, the debate has heated the political environment. A BJP leader said that SP's Muslim appeasement must stop. SP responded that it is justice. A deeper analysis of these statements suggests that SP is seeking electoral advantage through this move, while BJP is presenting itself as protecting national unity. Overall, this incident marks a new chapter in Uttar Pradesh politics.



AJAY KUMAR
Senior Journalist,
Lucknow (U.P.)

Chandra Shekhar's House: Where Politics Felt Like Family

The bungalow at 3 South Avenue Lane in Lutyens' Delhi had a deep emotional connection with the life of India's former Prime Minister Chandra Shekhar. He served as Prime Minister from 10 November 1990 to 21 June 1991, but during this period, he never shifted to the official Prime Minister's residence at 7, Race Course Road (now Lok Kalyan Marg).

Chandra Shekhar had resigned from the post of Prime Minister on 6 March 1991. He continued to hold the office until the next Prime Minister was elected on 21 June 1991. In total, he remained Prime Minister for just seven months.

His wife, Dujja Devi, and their two sons, Pankaj and Neeraj, spent their childhood in this bungalow at 3 South Avenue Lane. Both sons' weddings also took place here. The families of his two brothers also lived here for decades. Chandra Shekhar had moved into this bungalow in the late 1960s. Coincidentally, today marks his birth centenary. Across the country, his admirers and friends are celebrating his centenary year. According to some sources, he was born on 1 July 1927.

Why Didn't He Shift?

If Chandra Shekhar had wished, he could have easily obtained a government bungalow in prestigious areas like Akbar Road, Janpath, or Safdarjung Road. However, he chose to keep the modest bungalow at 3 South Avenue Lane as his residence until the very end.

This bungalow was one of those typically allotted to Members of Parliament. It reflected his simple lifestyle and deep connection with ordinary people. South Avenue Lane is located near Parliament House and other important government buildings, where official bungalows and flats are allotted to MPs and dignitaries.

The bungalow at 3 South Avenue Lane was a symbol of Chandra Shekhar's personality — plain, simple, and perfectly in tune with his socialist values. It belonged to the Type-V or Type-VI category of bungalows, featuring a small lawn, essential rooms, and basic amenities.

The Bungalow's Identity is Linked to Chandra Shekhar

In Lutyens' Delhi, some bungalows become identified with the towering personalities who lived there for long periods. The bungalow at 3 South Avenue Lane is one such example. Chandra Shekhar's son, Neeraj Shekhar, once shared, "His day used to begin at 4:30 in the morning. He would first do yoga and exercise, then read and write. He walked eight to ten kilo-

metres every day."

Chandra Shekhar passed away in 2007. His last journey began from this very bungalow. After his death, the same bungalow was allotted to his MP son, Neeraj Shekhar.

Dedication to Both Family and the People

Anil Atre, a writer who worked with Chandra Shekhar for a long time, says that despite being a major national leader with millions of supporters across the country, he had complete faith in the institution of family.

For decades, his own family and the families of his two brothers lived together in this bungalow. All of them ate their meals together. Here, he would meet his socialist colleagues, Janata Dal leaders, and common people without any formality. This bungalow vividly reflected his "Jan Nayak" (People's Leader) personality.

An Open Forum: 3 South Avenue Lane

Chandra Shekhar used his bungalow like an open platform, where political discussions, deliberations on social issues, and plans for the development of rural India were made.

He would sit in this bungalow with his colleagues and share the experiences he had gathered during his famous "Bharat Yatra" (1983). This 4,260-kilometre foot march from Kanyakumari to New Delhi gave him a deep understanding of rural India's problems and the aspirations of its people. C.S. Yadav from Ballia, who served as the caretaker of the bungalow from 1983 to 2007, says that this South Avenue bungalow became a symbol of the ideology that Chandra Shekhar adopted during his yatra and throughout his political life.

A Fortress of Political Activity

Ajit Dubey, a prominent figure in Delhi's Bhojpur community, visited Chandra Shekhar at 3 South Avenue Lane dozens of times. He recalls that in 1990, when the Janata Dal split and Chandra Shekhar formed the Samajwadi Janata Party, many important political decisions were taken in this bungalow. At that time, the Congress led by Rajiv Gandhi had extended support to Chandra Shekhar, which enabled him to become Prime Minister. Several policies and strategies of his short-lived government were decided in the meetings held in this bungalow.

However, Congress later withdrew support after accusing Rajiv Gandhi of being spied upon, and his government lasted only seven months. In his book 'India Arthaat Bharat', renowned writer Raj Khanna has written that Chandra Shekhar used to say

— "Congress used the pretext of the Intelligence Bureau to topple my government. It was an excuse to put pressure on me."

Memories of an Exclusive Interview

In 1993, I got the opportunity to conduct an exclusive interview with Chandra Shekhar at 3 South Avenue Lane for the Hindustan Times and Hindustan newspapers. Since it was a one-on-one interview with a veteran leader, I was naturally a bit nervous.

His supporters and petitioners were standing outside the bungalow. I was made to wait outside the interview room. After some time, I sat in front of Chandra Shekhar. Just as the interview began, former Haryana Chief Minister Om Prakash Chautala also arrived and sat on the sofa.

Chandra Shekhar was answering my questions in detail and smiling gently. When he started answering one question, Chautala ji began to speak in between. Chandra Shekhar immediately stopped him, saying — "You keep quiet."

After the interview ended, he briefly inquired about me and my family. As I stepped out of the room, I met senior Delhi Congress leader Ramesh Dutta, who considered Chandra Shekhar his guru. I remember that in the 1995 Delhi Municipal Corporation elections, Congress did not give a ticket to its sitting councillor Ramesh Dutta from the Minto Road seat. Ramesh Dutta contested as an independent candidate. Chandra Shekhar went to Minto Road in his support and, despite being a former Prime Minister, asked for votes for an independent candidate in a municipal election. Only Chandra Shekhar could have done that.

From South Avenue to Bhondsi Ashram

Chandra Shekhar's South Avenue bungalow was deeply connected to his Bharat Yatra Ashram located in Bhondsi (Gurugram, Haryana). Established in 1983, this ashram was dedicated to rural development and social work.

While living in Delhi, he would stay at the South Avenue bungalow but often spent time at the Bhondsi Ashram. This ashram was based on the experiences of his Bharat Yatra and served as an ideological centre for him. The South Avenue bungalow had become its urban extension.

He Didn't Leave the Bungalow Even After Losing

In the 1984 Lok Sabha elections, Chandra Shekhar lost from Raebareilly. At that time, he was the president of the Janata Party. There was a sympathy wave in fa-

vour of Congress after Indira Gandhi's assassination. Many senior leaders had lost in that wave.

Chandra Shekhar was supposed to vacate his bungalow, but he did not. Senior journalist Arvind Kumar Singh recalls that on Rajiv Gandhi's initiative, the government decided that leaders of parties who had lost the Lok Sabha elections did not need to vacate their government accommodation. Because of this decision, Chandra Shekhar continued to live at 3 South Avenue Lane.

What Happened with Ram Jethmalani?

After the 1989 Lok Sabha elections, it was decided that a Janata Dal government would be formed. In a meeting at Orissa Bhawan, it was agreed that Devi Lal would propose his own name for Prime Minister and then withdraw it in favour of Chandra Shekhar. However, in the meeting of MPs at the Parliament Annexe building, Devi Lal suddenly proposed the name of Vishwanath Pratap Singh. It was like a bolt from the blue for Chandra Shekhar.

In this atmosphere, Ram Jethmalani announced that if Chandra Shekhar did not accept Vishwanath Pratap Singh as the leader, he would sit on a dharna in front of his residence. Chandra Shekhar got him called on the phone, but the conversation did not happen. Finally, on 30 November 1989, Jethmalani sat on a dharna in front of 3 South Avenue Lane. Angry Chandra Shekhar supporters surrounded Jethmalani and showered him with Bhojpur abuses along with kicks and punches. Arvind Kumar Singh, who was an eyewitness to the incident, says that Jethmalani did not even file a police complaint about it.

The Legacy Lives On

Even today, small shopkeepers and people working in the nearby government bungalows around 3 South Avenue Lane still refer to this bungalow as "Netaji ka Bungalow."

This bungalow continues to keep alive the indelible legacy of Chandra Shekhar's simplicity, public service, and unbreakable connection with the common people.



VIVEK SHUKLA

Punishing progress: South CMs slam delimitation push as unfair, unjust

The Delimitation Bill and the Union Territories Laws (Amendment) Bill, introduced to operationalise the Women's Reservation law, have triggered strong push back from political leaders in southern states, particularly from the opposition camp, opening up a fresh front in the north-versus-south debate. Led by Tamil Nadu Chief Minister MK Stalin, along with Kerala's Pinarayi Vijayan, Karnataka's Siddaramaiah, and Telangana's A Revanth Reddy, southern leaders have argued that a population-based delimitation exercise would unfairly disadvantage states that have effectively implemented population control measures.

The leaders have termed the move a political manoeuvre by the NDA to expand representation in the Hindi heartland, where the BJP is traditionally stronger, thereby securing a long-term electoral advantage and undermining the federal structure. While the BJP and its allies maintain that no region will lose representation, describing it as a necessary, transformative reform.

MK STALIN LEADS THE CHARGE

Tamil Nadu Chief Minister MK Stalin escalated the protest by burning a copy of the Delimitation Bill and calling it a "black law", alleging that it would turn Tamil people into "refugees" in

their own land. He accused the Centre of attempting to reduce Tamil Nadu's representation under the guise of implementing women's reservation.

"Right now, Tamil Nadu has 39 Lok Sabha seats and Uttar Pradesh has 80, which is 41 more. If delimitation is introduced, the difference will become 61. Hence, the gap in seats between southern and northern states will rise, and through this, the BJP-led Centre is trying to muffle our voice in Parliament," he said.

TVK chief Vijay also urged the Centre to withdraw the Bills, calling them a "biased action" that would reduce the voice of southern states in Parliament. "If this happens, representation of southern states will decline while that of northern states will rise in matters such as lawmaking related to language, culture, and state rights," he said.

CONCERNS FROM KERALA

Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan joined the opposition, warning that delimitation based on the 2011 Census would adversely affect states and violate the principle of equitable justice. He also criticised the Centre for proceeding without adequate consultation. "States like Kerala will be directly affected by this. States that have acted responsibly by advancing in population control, education, healthcare, and women's empowerment are being penalised. Reduced representation and a lower share cannot be considered a just federal arrangement," the CPI(M) leader said. Congress leader KC Venugopal termed the move

as "dangerous", warning of its impact on India's federal structure. **REVANTH REDDY CALLS FOR UNITED FRONT** Telangana Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy called for a united opposition among southern states and wrote to his counterparts urging collective action. He proposed a "hybrid model" for increasing Lok Sabha seats, with 50 per cent allocated on a pro rata basis and the remaining 50 per cent based on Gross State Domestic Product (GSDP) and other performance indicators. "We must totally oppose the increase in seats using the pro rata method," he said, adding that while all states may gain seats in absolute terms, the relative gap would widen significantly. Reddy also alleged a "conspiracy" by the BJP to diminish the political influence of southern states.

KARNATAKA ECHOES CONCERNS

Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah echoed similar concerns, stating that the Women's Reservation Bill is a long-pending reform that should be implemented within the existing framework, without being tied to delimitation. "Any exercise that



reshapes political representation must be undertaken with utmost care. The Union government must engage all states in a transparent and consultative process, and ensure that fairness, federal balance, and consensus guide this critical decision," he said. Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar described the move as "political re-engineering at the cost of southern states". "The proposal to increase Lok Sabha seats from 543 to 850 will systematically reduce the voice of the South while rewarding unchecked population growth elsewhere. This is nothing but punishing progress and good governance," he said.

OPPOSITION FROM ANDHRA

Andhra Pradesh Congress chief YS Sharmila urged Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu, an NDA ally, to oppose the Bill in Parliament, citing potential adverse effects on the state's interests. "I appeal to you to oppose the Delimitation Bill, which will adversely affect the state's prospects. The Centre's neglect in sanctioning funds for projects like Amaravati and Polavaram could worsen," she said. Meanwhile, K Chandrashekar Rao-led

BRS supported women's reservation but opposed linking it to delimitation.

"Implement women's reservation immediately within the existing 543 Lok Sabha seats. Why create confusion by linking it to seat increases and delimitation?" asked party working president KT Rama Rao. **BJP, NDA ALLIES RALLY IN SUPPORT** The NDA allies and several opposition parties in the state assemblies said they do not see any conspiracy in the delimitation process and welcomed the move. AIADMK general secretary Edappadi K. Palaniswami countered MK Stalin's claims, saying Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Union Minister Amit Shah have already assured that the exercise will not adversely affect Tamil Nadu. He alleged that the DMK is raising the issue out of fear of electoral losses. "We from the AIADMK propose that the current 7.18 per cent share of MPs that Tamil Nadu has should not change," he said earlier. Senior AIADMK leader Kovai Sathyan added, "If the number of MPs is increased to 850, Tamil Nadu would get 61 MPs as per EP's suggestion. Why did the DMK hide this?" Telangana BJP president N Ramchander Rao alleged that Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy is indulging in divisive politics and asserted that "southern states would not suffer any injustice." "Southern states would not face injustice. PM Modi has said that there would be no injustice to any region in the country. As the president of a southern state unit of the BJP, I am saying there would be no injustice to southern states. We



Congress suspends 5 Haryana MLAs for cross-voting in Rajya Sabha polls

The Haryana Congress suspended five of its MLAs from the party's primary membership with immediate effect for cross-voting in last month's Rajya Sabha elections.

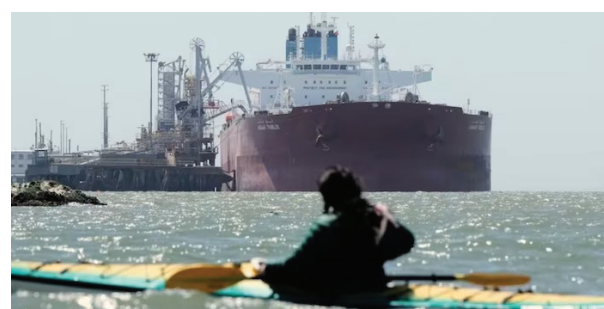
The Congress on Thursday suspended five of its MLAs in Haryana from the party's primary membership with immediate effect for cross-voting in last month's Rajya Sabha elections. The action was announced by Haryana Pradesh Congress Committee chief Rao Narender Singh, who said the move followed recommendations of the state disciplinary committee and was approved by party president Mallikarjun Kharge. He described the legislators' actions as a serious breach of organisational discipline and anti-party conduct.

The suspended MLAs - Shashi Chaudhary (Naraingarh), Renu Bala (Sadhaura), Mohammad Ilyas (Punahana), Mohammad Israil (Hathin) and Jarnail Singh (Ratia) - were accused of defying the party whip and voting in favour of BJP-backed Independent candidate Satish Nandal

during the March 16 Rajya Sabha polls. The party had earlier issued show-cause notices to the five legislators, seeking explanations for "deliberately not casting their votes" for the Congress's official nominee. The Disciplinary Action Committee, headed by Dharampal Malik, examined their responses before recommending suspension. The cross-voting dented the Congress's prospects in what was expected to be a comfortable contest. While BJP's Sanjay Bhatia secured one seat with ease, the Congress candidate Karamvir Singh Boudh managed to win the second seat in a tight race against Nandal. Adding to the setback, four Congress votes were also declared invalid during counting. Some of the suspended MLAs have denied the allegations, claiming they had voted in line with the party's directive and that their names were being unnecessarily dragged into the controversy. Singh stressed that the action sends a clear message of zero tolerance towards indiscipline, warning that any deviation from the party's official stance will invite strict consequences.

India Gets First Russian LNG Shipment Amid Energy Crunch

A cargo of liquefied natural gas from Russia's Portovaya plant on the Baltic Sea that is under US sanctions is on its way to India, LSEG shipping data showed on Wednesday.



If it reaches its destination, it would be the first such delivery to India since US President Donald Trump last year said Prime Minister Narendra Modi had assured him India would stop buying Russian energy. India has never publicly confirmed any such pledge and has said its buying decisions are guided by price, supply security and consumer interests. As one of the world's biggest energy importers, it is now greatly exposed to the disruption and price rises caused by the Middle Eastern war and the resulting closure of the Strait of Hormuz.

The small-scale Portovaya plant, which has a production capacity of 1.5 million tons of LNG per year, started operations in September 2022. Exports from the plant have been interrupted by addition-

al sanctions over the Ukraine war that were imposed in January 2025 to disrupt Russia's ability to produce and export LNG and reduce its revenue from the trade.

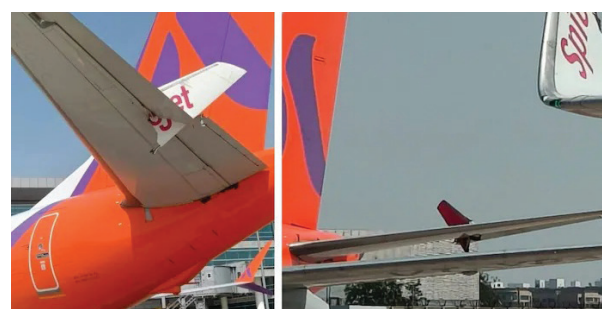
ANOTHER MARKET IN ADDITION TO CHINA?

So far Russia has supplied LNG under sanctions to China's port of Beihai from Portovaya and also from its Arctic LNG 2 plant. Earlier on Wednesday, Russian energy giant Gazprom GAZP.MMdelivered a second post-sanctions LNG cargo from Portovaya plant to China, LSEG data showed. If India is buying Russian LNG, that would provide another market as Russian President Vladimir Putin seeks to divert LNG from Europe before the European

Union enforces its import ban on Russia's LNG from 2027. Kumpeng, a 138,200 cubic metre tanker, is heading to Dahej LNG import terminal in western India, according to LSEG data. "The cargo, if delivered, would open up a second market for US-sanctioned Russian LNG, with all previous deliveries from sanctioned Russian terminals delivering to China's Beihai," said Martin Senior, head of LNG pricing at industry publication Argus. Before the sanctions, Portovaya shipped two cargoes a month on average during winter. Since March 2025, apart from the two shipments to China, it has been sending one cargo per month to the Russian western exclave of Kaliningrad.

Delhi Airport Mishap: SpiceJet Plane Hits Akasa Aircraft

A taxiing SpiceJet aircraft struck a stationary Akasa Air plane at Delhi airport on Thursday, damaging both jets and triggering an investigation into the ground incident. According to the Directorate General of Civil Aviation, the incident took place at Indira Gandhi International Airport when a SpiceJet Boeing 737-700 operating flight SG-124 from Leh was taxiing into its allocated parking bay at Terminal 1.



The regulator said the right-hand winglet of the SpiceJet aircraft (VT-SLB) hit the horizontal tail surface of an Akasa Air Boeing 737, which was positioned on the apron after pushback for a Delhi-Hyderabad flight. "Spicejet winglet of B-737-700 aircraft has hit Horizontal tail surface (HTS) of Akasa B-737 aircraft," the DGCA said. Due to the impact, the right-hand winglet of the SpiceJet aircraft and the tail section of the Akasa aircraft were damaged. **PASSENGERS SAFE,**

ALTERNATE ARRANGEMENTS MADE

Akasa Air said its aircraft, operating flight QP 1406 from Delhi to Hyderabad, was stationary when the incident took place. "Preliminary information indicates that Akasa's aircraft was stationary when another airline's aircraft made contact with it," an Akasa Air spokesperson said. The aircraft had to return to the bay following the collision. "All passengers and crew were safely disembarked, and our ground teams are making alternative arrangements to fly our passengers to Hyderabad at the earliest," the spokesperson said. "At Akasa Air, the safety and security of our passengers and crew remain our highest

PRELIMINARY REPORT SENT TO DGCA

Sources told India Today that a preliminary report on the ground occurrence has been submitted to the DGCA by the airline operator.



Noida violence linked to Pakistan-based X handles, probe finds

Fresh findings point to a cross-border social media trigger behind the Noida violence, with investigators tracing provocative posts to Pakistan-based handlers who allegedly used misinformation to spark unrest and chaos.

tion of the posts, tensions escalated on the ground. An aggressive crowd resorted to stone-pelting and attacked people present at the scene.

Vehicles were damaged, and both private and public property were vandalised and set on fire during the violence.

CASE REGISTERED, SECTIONS INVOKED

Police registered a case at Sector-20 police station in Gautam Buddha Nagar under case number 121/26.

The accused have been booked under several sections of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, along with provisions of the IT Act, including Section 66.

PAKISTAN LINK ESTABLISHED

During the investigation, authorities sought details of the account users from the social media platform and carried out technical analysis. The probe found that both X handles were being operated from Pakistan. Investigators also found that VPN services were used to conceal identities and mask the origin of the posts. Officials believe similar attempts to incite unrest had been made earlier through these handles. The findings have raised fresh concerns over the role of cross-border misinformation campaigns in triggering law and order situations in India.

VIOLENCE ERUPTS IN MULTIPLE AREAS

Following the circula-

Special Cleanliness Drive to be conducted in all Urban Local Bodies for two weeks from May 1: CM Nayab Singh Saini

CHANDIGARH, APRIL 16

CM interacts with members of newly constituted Ward Committees via video conferencing. Members to play a crucial role in maintaining urban cleanliness

Haryana Chief Minister Sh. Nayab Singh Saini announced that a special cleanliness drive will be conducted in all urban local bodies across the state for two weeks starting May 1, 2026. Apart from this campaign, ward committee members will play a vital role in maintaining cleanliness throughout the year.

with incentives. The Chief Minister was interacting with members of newly formed ward committees of urban local bodies through video conferencing from Chandigarh. Congratulating the members, Sh. Nayab Singh Saini said that an effective sanitation system is only possible with public participation. He emphasized that unless every individual takes personal responsibility for cleanliness, the mission cannot be accomplished. He urged committee members to coordinate with waste collection contractors in their respective areas and ensure proper route planning so that garbage collection vehicles reach every household



Haryana Chief Minister, Sh. Nayab Singh Saini interacting with members of newly constituted Ward Committees of Urban Local Bodies via video conferencing, at Chandigarh on April 16, 2026.

on time. He also encouraged members to provide suggestions for improving the cleanliness campaign, stating that good suggestions would be considered and implemented. Describing ward committee members as a bridge between the public and the govern-

ment, the Chief Minister said that if any official fails to address complaints related to waste collection, a helpline number will be provided at the state headquarters to resolve such issues. Sh. Nayab Singh Saini urged members to spread awareness about cleanliness among citizens. He advised them to educate and gently discourage people from littering at undesignated places, noting that gradual behavioral change would lead to greater public participation. He also suggested organizing street plays and other cultural activities to promote awareness. Calling upon members to fulfill the pledge of "Mera Ward, Swachh Ward," he said that officials have been directed to resolve their complaints on a priority basis. He also appealed to them to help maintain peace, harmony, and brotherhood among all communities in their respective areas. Additionally, he urged

members to bring to the notice of the administration and the government any shortcomings in basic amenities such as public parks, street lights, stadiums, and government hospitals, along with cleanliness issues. He also encouraged them to assist eligible citizens in availing the benefits of government schemes. On this occasion, Principal Secretary to the Chief Minister, Sh. Arun Kumar Gupta, Commissioner and Secretary of the Urban Local Bodies Department, Sh. Ashok Kumar Meena, Deputy Principal Secretary to the Chief Minister Sh. Yashpal, Mission Director of Swachh Bharat Mission (Urban), Sh. Shashwat Sangwan and other senior officials were present.

Yunus-era Charter, US trade treaty challenge Dhaka

New Delhi: Even before the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) assumed power in February, it looked like the July Charter and the United States trade treaty signed under the Muhammad Yunus-led interim government would pose a challenge in the coming days. Now, while the Charter is being invoked by Opposition parties as a binding roadmap for democratic reforms, the trade treaty has sparked fierce domestic protests, with critics branding it "unequal" and "anti-national". Together, they have created a volatile mix of internal political pressure and external diplomatic obligations that the Awami League-led government is struggling to balance. Meanwhile, the volatility in West Asia is adding to the economic strain already affecting Dhaka. On Friday, Prime Minister Tarique Rahman assured the country and asked people not to worry over the crisis.

SA opposition politician Malema sentenced to five years

Cape Town: South African opposition politician Julius Malema was sentenced on Thursday to five years in prison for firearm-related offences. Malema, the founding leader of the far-left Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF), is one of the most prominent politicians in South Africa. The lengthy sentence was delivered on Thursday morning at the Magistrate's Court in KuGompo City, formerly East London, in the Eastern Cape province. Large screens were set up outside the courthouse, where hundreds of EFF party supporters gathered to hear the fate of their political leader. Xinhua News Agency reported.

Trump announces ceasefire between Israel and Lebanon

NEW YORK

US President Donald Trump on Thursday announced a ceasefire between Israel and Lebanon aimed at bringing a temporary cooling-off along another front linked to the Iran conflict.

He said that after speaking with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Lebanon's President Joseph Aoun, the two sides agreed to a 10-day ceasefire beginning at 5 p.m. Washington time (2.30 a.m. Friday in India).

The ceasefire is expected to pause hostilities that escalated when Israel opened a new front targeting Iran-affiliated Hezbollah. Lebanon is not directly engaged in a formal war with Israel, but Hezbollah controls large parts of southern Lebanon and has carried out attacks on Israel, prompting retaliatory strikes. Unable to rein in Hezbollah, Lebanon has borne the brunt of Israeli retaliation.

The durability of the ceasefire is likely to depend on Hezbollah refraining from further



attacks. While Hezbollah is not formally part of the agreement, media reports indicated that the group may halt attacks if Israel also exercises restraint.

Meanwhile, Iran's Parliament Speaker Mohammad Bagher Ghalibaf endorsed the ceasefire, stating in a social media post: "For us, a ceasefire in Lebanon is just as important as a ceasefire in Iran."

Hezbollah had intensified its attacks on Israel following the

escalation of the Iran conflict.

The ceasefire follows a meeting between the ambassadors of Israel and Lebanon in Washington on Tuesday, facilitated by US Secretary of State Marco Rubio.

This marked the first direct diplomatic engagement between the two sides since the 1980s, when Israel launched a large-scale invasion of Lebanon. Earlier, when a 14-day ceasefire between Iran and the

US was announced on April 7, there was confusion over whether it included Lebanon.

Pakistan had indicated that it did, but both the US and Israel clarified that Lebanon was not part of that arrangement.

Trump said on Truth Social that he has asked "Vice President JD Vance and Secretary of State Rubio, together with the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Dan 'Razin' Caine, to work with Israel and Lebanon

to achieve a lasting peace".

He also said he would invite Netanyahu and Aoun to the White House to discuss a longer-term peace framework.

According to Lebanese authorities, more than 2,000 people have been killed and over a million displaced during Israeli strikes targeting Hezbollah positions. The attacks have extended into the capital, Beirut.

There are 642 Indian personnel serving in the UN peacekeeping force deployed in southern Lebanon along the border with Israel.

UN peacekeepers operating in the region have come under fire from both sides during the conflict. UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres welcomed the ceasefire, his spokesperson Stephane Dujarric said. "The United Nations, through its political and peacekeeping missions, remains ready to support these efforts," he said. The UN has urged both sides to work "towards a permanent ceasefire and a long-term solution to the conflict," he added.



' Hamas should be designated as terrorist organisation by India'

JERUSALEM

Israel's Minister of Foreign Affairs Gideon Sa'ar on Thursday stressed the importance of Hamas being designated as a terror organisation by India during his interaction with a group of distinguished Hindu leaders from around the world.

"I stressed the importance of Hamas being designated as a terror organisation by India. Hamas has ties with all other radical Islamist terror organisations, including Lashkar-e-Taiba," Sa'ar during the virtual interaction.

The Israeli Foreign Minister stated that he was honoured to brief the group of distinguished leaders.

"I spoke about the positive trends in the strengthening of Israel's relations with India, and the great importance we attach to this relationship. I also spoke about the historic campaign Israel had been forced to fight for the past 2.5 years against radical Islam. Their declared objective is the elimination of Israel, and they act to achieve that goal."

"Israel demonstrated on all fronts that it has the upper hand. It dramatically weakened the terror octopus of radical Islam, headed by the Iranian regime. This struggle has, and will have, implications beyond the Middle East," said Sa'ar.

The leaders Sa'ar interacted with included Abhishek Verma, Shiv Sena's Chief National Coordinator for NDA Alliance and Elections; global humanitarian leader Mohanji and spiritual leader Gauranga Das Prabhu. Earlier this

year, during his visit to Israel, Prime Minister Narendra Modi had expressed India's support for Israel in its fight against terrorism.

"I also carry with me the deepest condolences of the people of India for every life lost and for every family whose world was shattered in the barbaric terrorist attack by Hamas on October 7. We feel your pain. We share your grief. India stands with Israel firmly, with full conviction in this moment and beyond. No cause can justify the murder of civilians. Nothing can justify terrorism. India has also endured the pain of terrorism for a long time," PM Modi said in his address at the Israeli Parliament, Knesset, in February.

Israeli PM Benjamin Netanyahu had thanked PM Modi for standing by Israel after the Hamas attack in October 2023.

"There is another reason for the deep appreciation you receive here in this house and from the public in Israel, because immediately after the horrific massacre on October 7, immediately after that murderous attack, you stood up so clearly,

so morally, so sharply, you stood by Israel. We will never forget that. We know what we stood against. But many in the world, perhaps with momentary, initial sympathy, forgot very quickly. Israel stands, has stood, and continues to stand at the forefront of civilization against radical Islam," Netanyahu said in his speech at the special Knesset session in honour of PM Modi.

Nepal: Construction of health post begins with Indian assistance

KATHMANDU

A health post is being built in Badigad Rural Municipality-7 of Baglung district in Gandaki Province, Nepal, with financial assistance from the government of India.

Gandaki Thapa Adhikari, Chairperson of Badigad Rural Municipality, and Ajay Kumar Singh, Second Secretary at the Indian Embassy in Kathmandu, laid the foundation stone for the construction of the Bhimgithe Health Post in the area on Wednesday, the Indian Embassy said in a statement on Thursday.

According to the Embassy, approximately NPR 25 million will be spent on the construction of the health post. The project, categorised as a High



Impact Community Development Project (HICDP), will be implemented through Badigad Rural Municipality.

Local representatives and stakeholders expressed appreciation for India's continued developmental support, noting that the facility is expected to

significantly improve access to healthcare services in the area.

India and Nepal, as close neighbours, continue to engage in wide-ranging cooperation across multiple sectors.

"The implementation of such community-level projects reflects India's ongoing support

to Nepal's development efforts, particularly in strengthening infrastructure in priority sectors," the Embassy said.

The HICDPs programme has emerged as a key pillar of the India-Nepal development partnership, with funding under this scheme being used for grassroots development in Nepal.

Launched in 2003, the HICDPs were previously known as Small Development Projects. The initiative supports small-scale infrastructure and community projects across Nepal through local authorities. The programme focuses on priority sectors identified by the Government of Nepal,

including health, education, drinking water, sanitation and drainage, rural electrification,

hydropower, and river training works.

A total of 573 projects have been undertaken across the country so far, with a cumulative investment of approximately NPR 13.59 billion under this scheme, according to information available on the embassy's website.

Of these, 294 projects fall under the education sector, including the construction of 217 school buildings, making education the largest beneficiary, according to the Embassy's website.

In a significant boost to the initiative, a new agreement reached in January 2024 paved the way for an increase in the ceiling of Indian financial assistance to NPR 20 million per project from NPR 5 million.



Three Baloch men forcibly disappeared in overnight raids in Pakistan

QUETTA

Three Baloch young men have reportedly been forcibly disappeared in overnight raids in Pakistan, sparking fresh concerns over enforced disappearances, local media reported on Thursday. As per reports, Zubair Baloch, a Baloch student, was taken from his home in Dera Ghazi Khan area of Pakistan during the early hours of Wednesday, The Balochistan Post reported.

In a post on X, Baloch Student Council, Punjab, stated, "Zubair Baloch, son of Ghulam Fareed, former chairman of Baloch Students Council Bahawalpur and an MPhil graduate of The Islamia University of Bahawalpur, was forcibly disappeared last night at approximately 1:30 AM from his hometown in Bhutta Colony, Dera Ghazi Khan."

Family members have alleged that Zubair Baloch was taken from his home at around 1:30 am and moved to an undisclosed place. Since then, no information regarding his whereabouts has been provided, according to the family.

His family has called for his immediate release or details regarding his whereabouts. They urged authorities and human rights groups to intervene in the

matter. In a separate incident, two young men were taken from their homes during overnight raids in Jiwani area of Balochistan's Gwadar district, according to local sources. Two young men have been identified as Riaz Sayed from Kosar Bazaar and Jahanzaib, a resident of Solan Bazaar. Both men were taken to an unknown place after raids and families have been unable to contact them since then, The Balochistan Post reported. The latest incidents comes against the backdrop of a growing wave of enforced disappearances and extrajudicial killings in Balochistan. Meanwhile, a protest camp against enforced disappearances in Quetta city of Pakistan's Balochistan province entered its 6136th day on Thursday, the organisers said. The camp outside the Quetta Press Club has been set up by the Voice for Baloch Missing Persons (VBM). Several people joined the protest to express solidarity with the families of the missing persons. "Quetta Press Club: VBM's protest camp against enforced disappearances continues on its 6136th day Individuals from various schools of thought visited the camp and expressed solidarity with the families of the disappeared.

PM Modi, Macron agree on urgently restoring freedom of navigation in Strait of Hormuz

NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday received a phone call from French President Emmanuel Macron with both leaders discussing the situation in West Asia and agreeing on the need to urgently restore safety and freedom of navigation in the Strait of Hormuz.

The two leaders had earlier spoken on March 19 regarding the situation in West Asia and the urgent need for de-escalation and return to dialogue

and diplomacy. "Received a phone call from my dear friend President Emmanuel Macron. We discussed the situation in West Asia and agreed on the need to urgently restore safety and freedom of navigation in the Strait of Hormuz. We will continue our close cooperation to advance peace and stability in the region and beyond," PM Modi posted on X after the phone call on Thursday.

External Affairs Minister (EAM) S Jaishankar had called on President Macron during



his visit to Paris, last month. In February, the French President had paid an official visit to India which focused on strengthening the strategic

partnership between India and France. Both leaders had inaugurated the India-France Year of Innovation 2026 and later attended the AI Impact Sum-

mit 2026 in New Delhi. Earlier this week, Prime Minister Modi had received a call from US President Donald Trump with the two leaders reviewing the substantial progress achieved in bilateral cooperation across various sectors and expressing commitment to further strengthening the Comprehensive Global Strategic Partnership in all areas. We also discussed the situation in West Asia and stressed the importance of keeping the Strait of Hormuz open and secure," PM Modi wrote on X after his conversation with the US President.

ceived a call from my friend President Donald Trump. We reviewed the substantial progress achieved in our bilateral cooperation in various sectors. We are committed to further strengthening our Comprehensive Global Strategic Partnership in all areas. We also discussed the situation in West Asia and stressed the importance of keeping the Strait of Hormuz open and secure," PM Modi wrote on X after his conversation with the US President.

Rising child abuse cases in Pakistan showcase system's failure to protect vulnerable: Report

ISLAMABAD,

The rising number of child abuse cases in Pakistan showcase not only a disturbing increase in violence but also an equally troubling shift in public response. Each case in Pakistan highlights personal tragedy and failure of the system made to protect vulnerable people, a report has detailed.

The cases of abuse or murder of children have been reported in Pakistan at an alarming frequency, however, they are briefly mentioned in the news and then recede into silence. According to the latest data released by Sahil, 3,630 cases of child abuse were reported in 2025, marking an eight per cent increase from the previous year.

Although the figures are alarming, the cases have not led to sustained national debate or policy scrutiny. Instead, they have largely been absorbed into the background of news cycle, showcasing a pattern where severe incidents



cause momentary outrage before fading from attention.

"The increase in reported cases suggests a growing crisis that extends across regions and demographics. Child abuse in Pakistan encompasses a range of offences, including physical violence, sexual exploitation and neglect. Each case represents not only a personal tragedy but also a failure of the systems designed to protect vulnerable individuals. Despite the scale of the issue, public

reaction has remained limited in duration and intensity," a report in European Times mentioned.

"Social media platforms often amplify individual cases, generating widespread attention for a brief period. However, this attention rarely translates into sustained engagement or systemic accountability. The cycle repeats itself with each new incident. Initial shock gives way to expressions of grief and anger, followed by

a gradual return to normalcy. This pattern has contributed to an environment in which even severe cases struggle to maintain visibility," it added.

A significant number of abuse cases involve individuals known to the victim. Offenders are often neighbours, acquaintances or even immediate family members, a reality which complicates both detection and response. Abuse that takes place within familiar environments is less likely to

be reported immediately and victims may face more barriers in seeking help.

The involvement of trust people in the abuse challenges societal assumptions about safety, highlighting the need to analyse the dynamics within households and communities. The reported figures, while alarming, may not fully capture the extent of the problem. Experts have mentioned that child abuse is underreported in Pakistan, mainly due to social stigma and cultural barriers.

"Families may choose not to report incidents to avoid public exposure or social repercussions. In some cases, victims themselves may be discouraged from speaking out, either due to fear or pressure from those around them. This culture of silence limits the visibility of the issue and hinders efforts to address it effectively. The reluctance to confront abuse openly also affects the broader societal response," the report in European Times stated.

Nepal Deputy Speaker vows to boycott weddings involving dowry transactions

KATHMANDU

Nepal's newly-elected Deputy Speaker of the House of Representatives, Rubi Kumari Thakur, has announced that she will not participate in any wedding where dowry transactions are involved.

Thakur, 26, was elected Deputy Speaker on April 9, becoming the youngest person ever to hold the position, as the country's politics witnessed a generational shift. She was elected to the lower house through the proportional representation system from the Shram Sanskriti Party, a newly formed political party.

After being elected as a lawmaker, she had said she would work against the dowry system, which has been a source of domestic violence against women, particularly among the Madhesi community in Madhes Province, from where she hails.



SWELECT Unveils Off-Grid Solar Cooking Solution on Tamil New Year

CHENNAI, APRIL 16, 2026:

SWELECT Energy Systems Limited, a leading player in solar energy solutions, on Wednesday announced the launch of its latest innovation — an Off-Grid Solar Cooking system — coinciding with the auspicious occasion of Tamil New Year.

The newly introduced clean-energy cooking technology enables households to operate regular induction stoves entirely on solar power, eliminating the need for both grid electricity and cooking gas. The launch comes at a time when LPG prices are witnessing a sharp rise and supply uncertainties continue to affect households, positioning the solution as a sustainable and self-reliant alternative for daily cooking needs. The Off-Grid Solar Cooking system developed by SWELECT leverages solar photovoltaic (PV) panels to directly power standard induction stoves. By doing so, it allows users to prepare meals using only solar energy, bringing energy independence

into everyday kitchen use. Speaking on the occasion, Dr. Arulkumar Shanmugasundaram, Managing Director and CEO of the company, said the initiative was aimed at providing a meaningful solution to households. He noted that the innovation reflects SWELECT's commitment to making clean energy practical and accessible, adding that the company's engineering team has developed a unique proprietary system with intellectual property rights within a short timeframe. He also invited households across the country to adopt solar-powered cooking as the company scales up its operations.

According to the company, the technology enables standard induction stoves to function entirely on solar energy without relying on grid power or LPG. It is designed to shield households from fluctuations in fuel prices and supply disruptions, while also offering long-term savings by reducing monthly energy expenses. Additionally, the solution ensures zero emissions at the point of use, contributing to cleaner indoor air and a more sustainable environment.

ICICI Lombard Q4 Profit Rises, Combined Ratio Improves

MUMBAI, APRIL 16, 2026:

ICICI Lombard General Insurance Company Ltd on Wednesday reported an improvement in its combined ratio for the fourth quarter of FY2026, alongside steady growth in premium income and profitability, even as industry growth trends remained mixed.



The company's combined ratio for Q4 FY2026 stood at 101.2 per cent on a 1/n basis, compared to 102.5 per cent in the corresponding quarter of FY2025, driven by strong growth in Gross Direct Premium Income (GDPI), which rose 18.2 per cent during the quarter, outpacing the industry growth of 10.9 per cent.

For the full financial year FY2026, GDPI on a 1/n basis stood at ₹287.12 billion, compared to ₹268.33 billion in FY2025, registering a growth of 7.0 per cent, lower than the industry growth of 9.2 per cent. However, excluding Crop and Mass Health segments, GDPI growth was higher at 10.2 per cent, compared to the industry growth of 13.3 per cent.

During Q4 FY2026, GDPI rose to ₹73.40 billion from ₹62.11 billion in Q4 FY2025, marking an 18.2 per cent increase. Excluding Crop and Mass Health, the company recorded a growth of 18.4 per cent, again outperforming the industry growth of 13.3 per cent during the quarter.

The combined ratio for FY2026 on a 1/n basis was reported at 103.4 per cent, compared to 102.8 per cent in FY2025. On an n basis, the combined ratio stood at 102.4 per cent in FY2026, marginally improving from 102.6 per cent in FY2025. For the fourth quarter, the combined ratio on an n basis improved significantly to 100.5 per cent from 102.1 per cent in the year-ago period. Profitability metrics showed steady growth during the year. Profit before tax (PBT) on a 1/n basis increased by 10.2 per cent to ₹36.59 billion in FY2026, compared to ₹33.21 billion in FY2025. For Q4 FY2026, PBT rose 7.5 per cent to ₹7.18 billion from ₹6.68 billion in the same quarter of the previous year. Profit after tax (PAT) on a 1/n basis grew by 10.5 per cent to ₹27.72 billion in FY2026, compared to ₹25.08 billion in FY2025. On an n basis, PAT increased by 14.1 per cent to ₹27.61 billion from ₹24.19 billion in the previous year. In Q4 FY2026, PAT on a 1/n basis rose by 7.3 per cent to ₹5.47 billion from ₹5.10 billion in Q4 FY2025.

On an n basis, PAT recorded a stronger growth of 15.6 per cent, reaching ₹5.39 billion compared to ₹4.66 billion in the year-ago quarter. The Board of Directors has proposed a final dividend of ₹7.00 per share for FY2026, subject to shareholder approval at the upcoming Annual General Meeting. Including the proposed final dividend, the total dividend for FY2026 stands at ₹13.50 per share, compared to ₹12.50 per share in FY2025. Return on Average Equity (ROAE) on a 1/n basis stood at 17.8 per cent for FY2026, compared to 19.1 per cent in FY2025. For Q4 FY2026, ROAE was reported at 13.3 per cent, down from 14.5 per cent in the corresponding quarter of the previous year. Excluding the impact of the wage code amounting to ₹0.55 billion, ROAE for FY2026 stood at 18.1 per cent. The company's solvency ratio was reported at 2.67 times as of March 31, 2026, compared to 2.69 times as of December 31, 2025, and 2.69 times as of March 31, 2025. The ratio remained significantly above

the regulatory minimum requirement of 1.50 times. The solvency position was impacted by 14 basis points due to mark-to-market losses on the equity portfolio as of March 31, 2026.

Operating Performance (₹ billion, 1/n basis):

- GDPI rose from ₹62.11 billion in Q4 FY2025 to ₹73.40 billion in Q4 FY2026 (up 18.2%), while annual GDPI increased from ₹268.33 billion in FY2025 to ₹287.12 billion in FY2026 (up 7.0%).
- PBT increased from ₹6.68 billion to ₹7.18 billion in Q4 FY2026 (up 7.5%), and from ₹33.21 billion to ₹36.59 billion annually (up 10.2%).
- PAT rose from ₹5.10 billion to ₹5.47 billion in Q4 FY2026 (up 7.3%), and from ₹25.08 billion to ₹27.72 billion for the full year (up 10.5%).

Key Ratios (1/n basis):

- ROAE (annualised) declined from 14.5 per cent in Q4 FY2025 to 13.3 per cent in Q4 FY2026, and from 19.1 per cent in FY2025 to 17.8 per cent in FY2026.
- Combined Ratio improved from 102.5 per cent to 101.2 per cent in Q4, while it increased from 102.8 per cent to 103.4 per cent for the full year.

The company's performance reflects a combination of improved underwriting discipline in the quarter, steady premium growth, and continued focus on profitability, despite market volatility and sectoral challenges.



Sensex, Nifty end off highs as bank, auto stocks drag

MUMBAI, APRIL 16

Benchmark equity indices Nifty and Sensex ended off their intra-day highs on Thursday as selling pressure in banking and auto stocks capped gains. However, investors also remained cautious ahead of further clarity on upcoming negotiations between the US and Iran. At the closing bell, the Sensex was at 77,988.68, down by 122.56 points or 0.16 per cent. Nifty followed suit and closed at 24,196.75, down by 34.55 or 0.14 per cent.

Commenting on Nifty technical outlook, experts said that the near-term sentiment remains uncertain, as the index failed to decisively clear the 24,300 resistance level. "However, if it moves above 24,300 with conviction in the next session, a sustained rally could unfold in the near term," an analyst stated. "Otherwise, a sharp bout of profit booking may emerge, potentially dragging the index towards 24,000," a market expert mentioned.

Shares of HDFC Bank, Oil and Natural Gas Corporation, and HDFC Life Insurance Company were among the top laggards in the Nifty index. Despite the weakness in front-

line indices, broader markets showed resilience and outperformed the benchmarks. The Nifty MidCap index ended 0.63 per cent higher, while the Nifty SmallCap index gained 0.83 per cent. On the sectoral front, metal and IT stocks led the gains, with the Nifty Metal and Nifty IT indices emerging as the top performers. In contrast, rate-sensitive sectors such as private banks and financial services witnessed selling pressure, with the Nifty Private Bank and Nifty Financial Services indices closing as the top losers. Market participants are expected to remain watchful in the near term, tracking global cues and developments around geopolitical tensions, particularly the US-Iran talks, which could influence investor sentiment and market direction.

"Going forward, the sustainability of the trend will depend on earnings clarity, stability in crude prices, and continued improvement in global risk sentiment," an analyst stated. Meanwhile, after four sessions of weakness, the Indian rupee gained ground as renewed risk-on sentiment prompted foreign institutional investors to return to the domestic equity markets.

10-year yield may dip below 7 pc as GDP seen at 7.1 pc: Report

NEW DELHI, APRIL 16

India's benchmark 10-year government bond yield could ease below the 7 per cent mark by June, even as near-term volatility persists due to global and domestic factors, a report said on Thursday. As per the analysis of Crisil Intelligence, bond yields witnessed significant volatility in March, driven by a sharp rise in crude oil prices and heightened geopolitical tensions, which pushed the benchmark yield to its highs for the current financial year. However, easing inflationary pressures, supportive liquidity conditions, and policy expectations are likely to help stabilise yields in the coming months, it said. The report added that, in its base case, India's gross domestic product (GDP) growth is expected at 7.1 per cent in the current



fiscal, supported by healthy private consumption and steady investment growth. Export growth is also expected to benefit from lower US tariffs, although disruptions to global trade due to the West Asia conflict and slower global growth may act as a drag. It further noted that government measures to cap retail fuel prices could support consumption. On inflation, Crisil projected CPI inflation to average 4.5 per cent in fiscal 2027. It said domestic liquidity remains comfortable, which is expected to act as a

cushion against external shocks, even as global uncertainties continue to weigh on sentiment. The report also highlighted that crude oil prices and geopolitical developments, particularly in West Asia, remain key risk factors for the bond market. Elevated oil prices could stoke inflation concerns and limit the pace of any decline in yields, it said. At the same time, global cues, including movements in US Treasury yields and the US Federal Reserve's policy trajectory, are expected to play a crucial role in shaping the direction of Indian bond yields. On the domestic front, the Reserve Bank of India's (RBI) liquidity management measures and policy stance will be closely watched, with the central bank expected to play a stabilising role amid volatile conditions.

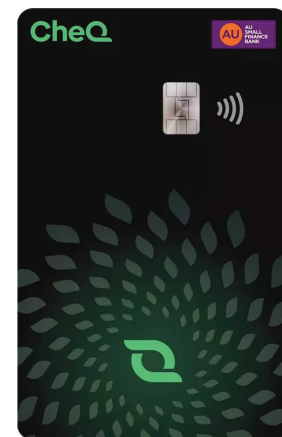
CheQ, AU Small Finance Bank Launch India's First Co-Branded LED Credit Card

HYDERABAD, APRIL 16, 2026:

CheQ, a leading credit management platform, on Wednesday announced the launch of the CheQ AU Credit Card in partnership with AU Small Finance Bank, the country's largest small finance bank. The co-branded offering introduces India's first credit card with LED-powered tap-to-pay functionality, aimed at enhancing payment visibility and user experience while simplifying rewards and credit usage.

A key highlight of the CheQ AU Credit Card is its LED-enabled tap interaction. The card features an embedded LED that lights up during tap-to-pay transactions, offering instant visual confirmation powered by the POS terminal's NFC field, without requiring any battery. This feature aims to make transactions more intuitive, visible, and engaging at checkout.

Aditya Soni, Founder and CEO of CheQ, said the initiative reflects the company's effort to rethink everyday credit card usage by focusing on real user behaviour. He noted that while the LED feature adds a visible and intuitive layer to transactions, the underlying system has been designed to align with modern spending patterns and deliver simplified, usable rewards. Sanjay Agarwal, Founder, MD and CEO of AU Small Finance Bank, said the partnership represents a step forward in delivering customer-centric innovation. He added that the LED credit card is designed to engage digitally savvy, high credit-worthy customers with a differentiated value proposition, combining innovation, rewards, and design while supporting the bank's broader goal of serving a digitally



confident India.

Unified rewards ecosystem

The CheQ AU Credit Card integrates all rewards into a single ecosystem within the CheQ app, eliminating fragmentation. Cardholders can earn up to 12 per cent rewards on purchases of Apple products powered by Unicorn, as well as on platforms such as Amazon, Flipkart, Zomato, BigBasket, CheQ Travel, and bill payments made via the CheQ app. In addition, users can earn 5 per cent rewards on everyday categories such as food delivery, online shopping, quick commerce, and travel; 2.5 per cent rewards on CheQ UPI transactions enabled through the RuPay card

network; and 1 per cent rewards on all other spends. All rewards are credited as CheQ Points, a unified rewards currency that can be redeemed seamlessly across the CheQ ecosystem. Cardholders can use these points for gift cards across more than 40 leading Indian brands, for bookings on CheQ Travel, or towards credit card and utility bill payments. The integrated CheQ Travel platform allows users to book flights and hotels within the app, offering instant redemption and a lowest price guarantee.

Integrated payment experience

The card has been designed to function across multiple payment scenarios by integrating global and domestic networks. It uses Visa for international acceptance and online transactions, while RuPay enables UPI-based payments and everyday spending needs. This allows users to make payments via QR codes, online platforms, or traditional card swipes using a single product.

Availability and pricing

Applications for the CheQ AU Credit Card will open on the CheQ app from April 28, 2026. The card carries an annual fee of ₹499, which is

waived upon annual spending of ₹3 lakh. Customers will also receive a welcome benefit worth ₹695 in the form of an EazyDiner membership.

An additional one-time fee of ₹999 applies for the LED-enabled version of the card; however, this fee will be waived until May 31, 2026, for CheQ customers.

About CheQ

Founded in 2022 by Aditya Soni, CheQ is a credit management platform focused on simplifying and democratising credit access. The platform, which began as a credit card bill payment solution, has evolved into a full-stack credit ecosystem serving over 4 million users. Its offerings include credit card management, bill payments, loan products, wallet services, travel bookings through CheQ Travel, and AI-powered credit insights via Wisor. With more than 15 million credit cards registered on its platform, CheQ provides deep insights into consumer credit behaviour in India. The company plans to further expand its ecosystem with the upcoming launch of CheQ UPI, aimed at extending credit benefits to everyday transactions and enhancing rewards even for small-value payments.

HDFC AMC Q4 profit slips 19 pc sequentially; declares Rs 54 dividend

MUMBAI, APRIL 16

HDFC Asset Management Company on Thursday reported a 19 per cent quarter-on-quarter (QoQ) decline in its consolidated profit for the March quarter (Q4 FY26), with earnings coming in at Rs 622.66 crore. The asset

management firm posted a Rs 769.42 crore net profit in the December quarter (Q3 FY26), according to its stock exchange filing. However, on yearly basis, the profit dropped 2.5 per cent compared to Rs 638.46 crore in the same period previous financial year (Q4 FY25). The com-

pany's consolidated revenue from operations rose nearly 17 per cent year-on-year to Rs 1,051.51 crore in the March quarter, up from Rs 901.36 crore in Q4 FY25. However, on a quarter-on-quarter basis, revenue slipped 2.2 per cent from Rs 1,075.10 crore, as per its regulatory filing.

The launch marks CheQ's entry into the credit card issuance segment, expanding its role from a credit card bill payment platform to a broader ecosystem encompassing card issuance and rewards-driven commerce. The product has been developed based on insights from over 15 million credit cards and more than 4 million users, addressing challenges such as fragmented rewards systems, complex redemption processes, and evolving consumer spending patterns.

LT Foods Appoints Ritesh Sud as CMO

NEW DELHI, APRIL 16, 2026:

LT Foods Ltd, a leading billion-dollar global FMCG company in the consumer food space, on Wednesday announced the appointment of Ritesh Sud as Chief Marketing Officer — India & Far East, reinforcing its strategic focus on accelerating brand-led growth, strengthening consumer relevance, and advancing its transformation into a future-ready, consumer-centric organization.

In his new role, Sud will provide strategic leadership to reinforce the compa-

ny's market position, expand its footprint in high-growth categories, and translate brand strategies into measurable business outcomes across India and the Far East. His mandate includes building strong, differentiated, and scalable brands, enhancing brand equity, driving premiumisation, and unlocking new growth opportunities across categories and consumer segments.

He will also focus on innovation-led go-to-market strategies and improving marketing effectiveness across multiple consumer touchpoints. Working close-

ly with regional leadership teams and cross-functional stakeholders, Sud will report to Ritesh Arora, Chief Executive Officer — India & Far East, LT Foods.

An MBA graduate from the Institute of Management Technology, Ghaziabad, Sud brings over two decades of diverse experience in the FMCG sector. He has led several well-known consumer brands in India, including Tata Tea, Himalayan, Happydent, Centre Fruit, and Alpenliebe Just Jelly.

Prior to joining LT Foods, Sud served as Vice President (Marketing) — National



Brands, Packaged Beverages at Tata Consumer Products

Limited, where he played a key role in driving portfolio growth and led award-winning, industry-first Artificial Intelligence (AI)-driven campaigns. Earlier, he worked as Associate Director — Marketing at Perfetti Van Melle, where he was instrumental in managing and scaling several iconic confectionery brands. His notable contributions include the national launch of Alpenliebe Just Jelly and helping shape the jelly candy category in India. Welcoming the appointment, Ritesh Arora said the company is entering a pivotal phase of growth and

that Sud's expertise in building purpose-led brands, along with his strong understanding of digital-first and innovative marketing strategies, will play a critical role in strengthening LT Foods' marketing capabilities and accelerating its next phase of growth. Commenting on his appointment, Ritesh Sud said he is pleased to join LT Foods at a time when the company is well-positioned to capitalise on emerging opportunities across categories and markets. He added that his priority will be to align brand strategy closely with business outcomes, drive

execution excellence, and create sustained momentum across key growth drivers.

About LT Foods Limited

LT Foods Ltd. (NSE: LT-FOODS, BSE: 532783) is a leading global FMCG company in the consumer food segment and a prominent player in the specialty rice and rice-based foods business for over 70 years. The company delivers quality food products to consumers in more than 80 countries, including India, the United States, the United Kingdom, Europe, the Middle East, and the Far East.

Its flagship brands include Daawat, one of India's most widely consumed basmati rice brands, and Royal, a leading brand in North America. The company is

also expanding into emerging food preferences by offering organic products in global markets and supplying organic food ingredients to businesses worldwide.

LT Foods reported a consolidated revenue of approximately ₹8,773 crore as of FY25, with a five-year revenue CAGR of 16 per cent and a profit-after-tax CAGR of 21 per cent. The company operates an integrated "farm-to-fork" model supported by a well-established distribution network, global supply chain hubs, and advanced processing units located in India, the United States, and Europe. It also has a robust global distribution network comprising over 2,000 distributors.

What is cholesterol?

Cholesterol is a natural fatty substance, external. It's produced in the liver, but can also be found in some of the foods we eat. We all need some cholesterol in our bodies to keep our cells healthy and help us make certain hormones and vitamin D – vital for bone, teeth and muscle health. Cholesterol is also used to make a digestive fluid called bile, which helps to absorb dietary fat. Cholesterol travels through the blood on proteins called lipoproteins, external. The two main types, external are high-density lipoprotein (HDL)

cholesterol, often known as 'good' cholesterol, and non-high-density lipoprotein (non-HDL), sometimes called 'bad' cholesterol. Too much non-HDL can lead to a build-up, external of fatty deposits inside the walls of blood vessels, making them narrower or causing blockages. This makes it harder for blood to flow around the body and increases the risk of health problems like heart disease and stroke. Some foods naturally contain cholesterol, like eggs, some shellfish (prawns and crab, for instance) and offal such as liver, but it's not the cholesterol in them that significantly increases our cholesterol levels, external.

How to lower cholesterol

While some risk factors can't be controlled (think aging, external, ethnicity, external, genes, external and family history), diet and lifestyle changes can be really helpful in lowering cholesterol. Choose fat sources wisely. We all need fats and a small amount can form part of a healthy balanced diet. They can help provide us with energy and essential fatty acids, as well as facilitate the absorption of fat-soluble vitamins (vitamins A, D, E and K), external. But we should be mindful of the type of fats in our diet. Too much saturated fat is associated with higher levels of 'bad' cholesterol in the blood. The UK government recommends

men and women should eat no more than 30g and 20g respectively of saturated fat a day, external. Saturated fat is often found in animal products like butter, ghee, lard, meat and dairy. This means foods that are made with these ingredients (think cakes, biscuits and pastries) can also be high in saturated fat. This is not to say these foods should be completely avoided; we should just try to eat them less to help lower cholesterol. There's good evidence that swapping saturated fats with some unsaturated fats can help to maintain healthy cholesterol levels, external. Unsaturated fats include avocado, olive oil, rapeseed oil and seeds (like flaxseeds and sunflower seeds).

How to lower cholesterol through diet

Results from the most recent NHS Health Survey, external revealed that almost half (48%) of people living in England have high cholesterol levels. Because this condition doesn't usually come with symptoms, it's possible you could be one of them and not even know it. But if it's not managed, it can increase the risk of developing serious health problems, external.



Eat more high-fibre foods..

There are two main types of fibre in our diet, soluble and insoluble, external. Both are important for cholesterol management as well as general health. Insoluble fibre moves through the digestive system intact. It's found in nuts, seeds, wheat bran and fruits and vegetables with skins and pips. Soluble fibre dissolves in water to form a gel-like substance, and is found in fruits, vegetables, oats, barley and pulses like chickpeas. Oats and barley contain a special type of soluble fibre called beta-glucan, which has been shown to lower cholesterol levels. That's because once it becomes a gel, it binds with cholesterol-rich bile acids in the gut to stop them being absorbed in the body. It's suggested that adding three grams of beta-glucan to your diet each day, external can help to lower cholesterol levels. You can get this by eating three servings of beta-glucan rich foods including: A bowl of porridge (using 30g porridge oats) or one serving of oat-based breakfast cereal flakes (30-35g), One oat biscuit, 75g cooked pearl barley that can be added to stews, soups, salads or risottos. Although soluble fibre is considered to have a greater impact in lowering cholesterol compared

to insoluble fibre, it's best to have a variety of fibre-containing foods as most of us are not meeting the recommended intake of 30g a day. Add plant stanols or sterol products including foods with added plant stanols and sterols in your diet, such as fortified spreads and yoghurts, external, has been shown to help lower cholesterol levels in people with high cholesterol, external. Studies have shown that eating foods enriched with 1.5 to 2.4g of plant sterols/stanols a day, external, combined with a healthy, balanced diet, can reduce levels of 'bad' cholesterol by 7-10%. That said, they're not a substitute for a healthy diet or cholesterol-lowering medication, and these intakes are only recommended for people which high cholesterol – not the general population.



Ever Had Cactus Fruit? Here's How To Cut And Eat It Safely

Brightly coloured and covered in sharp spines, cactus fruit can look more intimidating than inviting. Also known as prickly pear, this fruit grows on the nopal cactus and

is eaten in many parts of the world. Beneath its tough, spiky skin lies a soft, juicy flesh with a mild sweetness. Many people avoid trying it simply because they are unsure how

to handle it. The good news is that it is perfectly safe to eat when prepared correctly. With a little care and the right technique, cactus fruit can be easily enjoyed at home.

What Is Cactus Fruit And What Does It Taste Like

Cactus fruit comes in shades of green, yellow, pink and deep purple. The flesh inside is moist, lightly sweet and refreshing, often compared to a mix of watermelon and berries. It contains small edible seeds that add a gentle crunch. Apart from its taste, cactus fruit is known for its fibre content, vitamin C and antioxidants, making it both nourishing and hydrating, especially during warm weather.

Why Cactus Fruit Has Spines And Why Handling Matters

The spines on cactus fruit act as a natural defence mechanism for the plant. Along with visible thorns, the skin also carries tiny hair-like glochids that are difficult to see but can easily stick to the skin. These can cause irritation or discomfort if touched directly. For this reason, it is important to handle the fruit carefully and avoid bare-hand contact before it is peeled.

What You Need Before Cutting Cactus Fruit

Before you begin, gather the following items to make the process safe and easy:

- A sharp knife
- A sturdy chopping board
- Kitchen tongs or thick gloves
- A clean bowl for the peeled fruit
- Using tongs or gloves allows you to handle the fruit without coming into contact with the spines.

How To Cut And Peel Cactus Fruit Safely: Step By Step

Step 1: Rinse the fruit well

Place the cactus fruit on the chopping board and hold it firmly using tongs or gloves. Rinse it under running water, gently rubbing the surface to remove any loose spines.

Step 2: Cut off the ends

Using a sharp knife, carefully slice off the top and bottom ends of the fruit. This helps create clean edges and makes peeling easier.

Step 3: Make a lengthwise slit

Make one shallow cut along the length of the fruit, slicing only through the skin and not deep into the flesh.

Step 4: Peel away the skin

Slide the knife tip or your fingers under the slit and gently pull the thick skin away from the flesh. The peel should come away in one or two large pieces.

Step 5: Discard the peel safely

Throw away the skin immediately to avoid accidental contact with any remaining spines. Once peeled, the fruit is completely safe to handle with bare hands.

How To Eat Cactus Fruit

Once peeled, cactus fruit is very easy to eat and use. Its soft texture and subtle sweetness make it suitable for a variety of preparations.

1. Eat it fresh and plain

Slice the peeled fruit into wedges or rounds and enjoy it as it is. The flesh is juicy and cooling, making it a refreshing snack. The seeds are edible and add a mild crunch.

2. Add it to fruit salads

Cut the fruit into bite-sized cubes and combine it with citrus fruits, berries or melon. It blends well without overpowering other flavours and adds vibrant col-

our to the bowl.

3. Blend it into smoothies or juices

Cactus fruit blends smoothly into drinks. Combine it with chilled water, coconut water or citrus juice. If you prefer a smoother texture, strain the mixture to remove the seeds.

4. Use it in chilled desserts

The fruit works well in sorbets, popsicles or lightly sweetened puddings. Its naturally high water content makes it ideal for summer desserts.

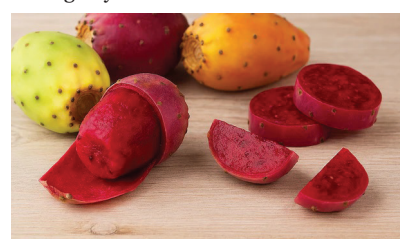
5. Try it in savoury dishes

In some cuisines, cactus fruit is added to fresh salsas or served alongside mildly spiced foods. Its gentle sweetness helps balance heat and acidity.

Tips To Buy And Store Cactus Fruit

Choose cactus fruits that feel firm but give slightly when pressed. Very hard fruits are often under ripe, while overly soft ones may be past their best. Once peeled, store the fruit in an airtight container in the fridge and consume within two days for maximum freshness.

Cactus fruit may look fierce at first glance, but once you know how to handle it, it is surprisingly simple to prepare. With its refreshing taste and nutritional benefits, this unique fruit is well worth adding to your diet.



The vital nutrient nearly a third of us aren't getting enough of..

In the UK, 18% of adults are deficient in vitamin D, external. Come winter, this rises to 31%. Given the nutrient's vital role in keeping muscles, bones and teeth healthy, how can we make sure we get enough? Studies show, external that very low levels of vitamin D can cause our bones to become soft and weak. This is called rickets in children, and osteomalacia in adults. There's also research that says adequate vitamin D levels can help prevent inflammatory diseases like rheumatoid ar-

thritis, external and reduce the risk of acute respiratory tract infections, external. The vitamin is also linked to a lower risk of some cancers, external. The problem? Vitamin D is only found in a small number of foods. Our bodies make most of it themselves, using sunlight. That's why deficiency rates increase in winter in the UK. It's pretty much impossible for our bodies to produce the recommended 10 micrograms (mcg) a day between October and March, because the sun isn't strong enough.

How to tell if you're low on vitamin D

When Kay Niknam from Bristol started experiencing bone aches and muscle weakness, she didn't think to seek help initially. "I had been struggling increasingly with joint pain for several weeks, possibly months, when I went to see the GP. "I was no longer able to carry my two-month-old daughter in a sling. Some days I struggled to walk because of the pain." It turned out Kay's vitamin D levels were very low, so her GP prescribed high-strength vitamin D capsules. "I noticed improvements in the first week, and after a few weeks was able to do all my normal activities again."

Should you be taking a vitamin D supplement?

Some foods naturally come with vitamin D, such as: Oily fish (this is the main food source of vitamin D), Egg yolk, Meat and offal. Other foods and drinks are fortified with vitamin D, meaning it gets added during the production process. These include: Infant formula, Some breakfast cereals, Plant-based milks, Fruit juices. But, unfortunately, it's very difficult to get enough vitamin D from food and drink alone. This is why the NHS, external recommends everyone over the age of five consid-

ers taking a daily supplement during winter months (it advises children under five and people at risk of deficiency should take supplements year-round). But some experts have concerns about regularly taking vitamin D supplements – especially if people take excessive amounts. The NHS advises that taking more than 100mcg of vitamin D a day could be harmful, external. One worry is that because vitamin D is fat-soluble, it can build up in the body. This could lead to vitamin D toxicity, and in turn damage the heart, kidneys and bones. So if you decide to supplement, be sure to check the dosage, as many vitamin D supplements contain more than you need. Remember, it's difficult to know how much vitamin D you are getting from other sources in addition to a supplement.

Who is most at risk of vitamin D deficiency?

Some people are more at risk of vitamin D deficiency than others. Risk factors include: Dark skin pigmentation, Obesity, Old age, Multiple pregnancies with short gaps in between, Wearing clothes that cover every part of your body, Malabsorption, Lack of sun exposure.

Choosing the right vitamin D supplement

Supplements tend to contain either vitamin D3 or D2. Bahee Van de Bor, dietician and British Dietetic Association, external (BDA) media spokesperson, explains, "Research, external suggests that vitamin D3 is better absorbed, although both D2 and D3 are absorbed well by the body. "Vitamin D3 (cholecalciferol) comes from animal sources such as oily fish. Our skin is also able to make D3. D2 (ergocalciferol) is the plant version of the vitamin. If you are following a plant-based diet, D2 is still a reliable form of vitamin D supplement." What might matter more than the type of vitamin D supplement you take, is how you take it. "It's absorbed best when taken alongside a meal consisting of fat," says Van de Bor. So it's best to take it when you're going to eat. That said, it doesn't matter which meal it is, or the time of day. Just find a regular time that works for you. All content within this article is provided for general information only, and should not be treated as a substitute for the medical advice of your doctor or any other health care professional. Always consult your GP if you're concerned about your health.





Prabhsiman, Iyer fifties help PBKS thrash MI as De Kock ton goes in vain

MUMBAI

Prabhsiman Singh and Shreyas Iyer struck their second successive half-centuries and shared a 139-run partnership for the third wicket as Punjab Kings cruised to a seven-wicket win with 21 balls to spare against the Mumbai Indians in Match 24 of Indian Premier League (IPL) 2026 at the Wankhede Stadium in Mumbai on Thursday.

Iyer read the pitch correctly and inserted MI in to bat first on a wicket that had a slight tinge of grass and some help for the pacers. With Mumbai deciding to rest Rohit Sharma for the hamstring injury he suffered in the previous match, Quinton de Kock stepped into the opener's role and carried his bat through for his first century of IPL 2026. He smashed 112 not out off 60 balls, and with Naman Dhir contributing 50 from 31 balls, helped Mumbai Indians reach 195/6 after slumping to 12/2 in the third over.

But their heroics were topped by Prabhsiman and Shreyas as they batted beautifully to help PBKS to victory.

Prabhsiman and Shreyas Iyer had scored half-centuries to help PBKS beat Sunrisers Hyderabad a couple of days back, and on Thursday, they mastered another chase with the former hammering 80 not out of 39 balls and the latter scoring 66 off 35 as PBKS reached 198/3 in 16.3 overs.

While Prabhsiman scored his second fifty of IPL 2026, Iyer hammered his third successive half-century in the tournament, but this one would be more satisfying for him as it came at his home ground and against a team that had three members of the T20 World Cup-winning Indian team, for which he was not considered.

With this win, PBKS surged to the top of the points table with nine points, while the Mumbai Indians remained on two points from one win and four defeats. Chasing a challenging target of 196, the Punjab Kings were off to Priyansh Arya (15) and Cooper Connolly (17) with 45 runs on the board. Impact Substitute AM Ghazanfar accounted for both of them to raise hopes for Mumbai.

But Prabhsiman and Iyer rescued them from the difficult position to put them on course to victory, sharing a massive partnership. They seem to have picked up from where they left off against Sunrisers Hyderabad, and the Mumbai Indians pay for their fielding lapses, three dropped catches.



Prabhsiman was in brilliant form as he played shots all around the ground, timing the ball sweetly and kept the chase going. He had a slice of luck early on when Jasprit Bumrah dropped an easy chance off Hardik Pandya.

Prabhsiman started with back-to-back fours off Chahal in the first over, followed that up with a six and four off the pacer in the eighth over; hammered Hardik Pandya for successive boundaries in the 10th over and struck the MI captain four and six in the 14th over. Ghazanfar and Shardul Thakur, too, were treated for boundaries as he reached his fifty off 23 balls as PBKS cruised towards the target.

Iyer, who picked a sensational catch to dismiss his counterpart, played able foil to his partner early on before blazing some brilliant shots towards the

end of his knock, reaching his half-century in 31 balls, hitting five fours and two sixes.

With PBKS needing 35 runs from 36 balls, Iyer struck Bumrah for a couple of boundaries before smashing Shadru Thakur for sixes off successive balls in the 16th over after being dropped by Naman Dhir in deep once. Shardul and Dhir had the last laugh when they ended Iyer's sensational knock. Dhir picked a superb catch to make up for his earlier mistake, but the match was as good as over by that time. Iyer scored 66 off 35 balls, smashing five fours and four sixes.

Earlier, asked to bat first, Mumbai rode on a brilliant innings by De Kock and looked to score in excess of 200 before PBKS pulled things back a bit.

With Rohit Sharma missing the

match after failing to fully recover from a hamstring injury he suffered in the previous match against Royal Challengers Bengaluru, the Mumbai Indians were off to a poor start, slumping to 12/2 with Arshdeep Singh landing twin blows off successive balls, sending back Rickelton and India T20 captain Suryakumar Yadav for a first-ball duck. Rickelton (2) was the first to go, smashing a length-ball on his pads straight down the throat of Shashing Singh at deep backward square leg. He was Arshdeep Singh's 100th victim in the IPL 87th match. The lanky left-arm medium pacer made it 101 wickets when he swung one off the length, and Suryakumar Yadav drove it straight to Yuzvendra Chahal.

De Kock took over after that and, with Naman Dhir playing an able foil, capitalised on the short boundaries. They exploded into action in the last over of the Power-play and maintained the tempo thereafter.

The seasoned South African, who had lost out to his compatriot Rickelton and missed the first four matches, scored a brilliant century off 53 balls, hitting seven boundaries and as many sixes, reaching his century in his first match for the Mumbai Indians.

De Kock was the more adventurous against Yuzi Chahal and made the most of the run-out opportunity that Shreyas Iyer missed, unable to execute a direct hit. QDK, who started with a superb six off the first ball he aced, reached his fifty off 28 balls. He was quite severe on Chahal, smashing him for a couple of sixes.

Alexander Zverev beats Diallo to reach quarters in Munich

MUNICH

Alexander Zverev delivered a strong performance to defeat Gabriel Diallo 6-1, 6-2 and move on to the quarter-finals in Munich. He now faces a crucial match against Francisco Cerundolo.

The World No. 3 completely controlled the match against Diallo, quickly winning the first set and maintaining his advantage in the second. The Canadian needed treatment for a back issue late in the first set. As the match progressed, his struggles became more apparent. Zverev took advantage, breaking Diallo in the sixth game of the second set after the Canadian sent a routine forehand long.

After the match, Zverev recognized Diallo's physical problems but felt pleased with his own performance. "I think he had some issues with the back and was not serving fully in the second set," he said during his on-court interview. "But I am happy with the win and happy to get an easier match today."

This victory marks Zverev's 113th tour-level quarter-final, putting him among the most reliable players on the circuit. A three-time champion in Munich, he is aiming for his first title since winning



this event last year. However, the upcoming match against Cerundolo poses a serious challenge. The Argentine has a 3-0 record against Zverev on clay, including victories in Madrid and Buenos Aires. Still, Zverev leads their overall head-to-head 4-3. Cerundolo reached the quarter-finals with a dominant 6-3, 6-0 win over Botin van de Zandschulp and has shown strong form on clay this season. Off the court, Zverev had a memorable night supporting his favorite football club, Bayern Munich, as they won their European quarter-final against Real Madrid. Several Bayern players recip-

roated by attending his match in Munich. "It is great for the stars to come out," Zverev said. "Amazing for them to get the win at home and I was there watching. It was very, very special. I took the kids down to the locker room after, and they were very nice to the kids, signing autographs."

In other news, Alex Molcan reached his first ATP 500 quarter-final since 2022 with a tough 6-4, 7-6(10) win over Daniel Altmaier, saving three set points in a tense second set. He will next play Denis Shapovalov, who advanced with a 7-6(4), 6-2 victory against Fabian Marozsan.

Need to go back and see where we are lacking, says Hardik after MI suffer another defeat

MUMBAI

Mumbai Indians captain Hardik Pandya said they will go back to the drawing board and see what they are lacking as the five-time champions suffered their fourth successive defeat in Match 24 of the Indian Premier League (IPL) 2026 against Punjab Kings at the Wankhede Stadium on Thursday. Quinton de Kock smashed a sensational unbeaten 112 off 60 balls (8x4, 7x6) and, with Naman Dhir (50 off 31 balls, 3x4, 3x6), shared a 123-run partnership for the third wicket to rescue the team from 12/2. But MI failed to capitalise on their efforts and could manage to post only 195/6, falling short of the chal-



lenging total by 20 runs. PBKS easily chased the target, riding on half-centuries by Prabhsiman Singh (80*, 39b, 11 x4, 2x6) and Shreyas Iyer (66, 35b, 5x4, 2x6) to reach 198/3 and win the match by seven wickets with 21 balls to spare.

Pandya said he didn't have

much to say after his team was outplayed by an opponent that produced better efforts in batting, bowling and fielding. "To be honest, I don't have much to say. We need to go back and see where we're lacking - if it's individuals, groups or planning and work it out," he said.



Arunachal CM highlights sports, education reforms, and youth opportunities

ITANAGAR

Arunachal Pradesh Chief Minister Pema Khandu on Thursday said the state has significantly improved its sports performance over the past decade, including securing the fifth rank nationally and emerging as the top performer in the Northeast during the Khelo India Tribal Games.

Inaugurating three major infrastructure facilities at Dera Natung Government College in Itanagar, the Chief Minister encouraged students to actively participate in sports, emphasizing that sports instil discipline and leadership qualities and promote a healthy lifestyle.

Khandu also informed students about the state government's scholarship initiative for those securing admission to the world's top 150 universities, under which the government provides full sponsorship. He urged students to take full advantage of the scheme and pursue opportunities for global exposure.

Highlighting the government's priorities, the Chief Minister said that the education and healthcare sectors have consistently received focused attention, with sustained efforts

to bridge infrastructure gaps across educational institutions.

He reaffirmed the government's commitment to supporting the future needs of Dera Natung Government College, assuring that any emerging infrastructure requirements, including additional classrooms for newly introduced departments, would be addressed in a timely manner.

Paying tribute to the late Dera Natung, former Education Minister and a prominent leader of the Nyishi community, the Chief Minister said the institution named after him continues to uphold his vision of empowering youth through quality education.

He congratulated the Principal and faculty for maintaining strong academic growth, noting that the college currently caters to over 4,600 students across Arts, Science, and Commerce streams, supported by 14 academic departments.

Emphasising the importance of sports infrastructure, Khandu stated that the newly inaugurated Badminton-cum-Judo Hall and Recreation Hall would play a crucial role in promoting students' holistic development.

Speaking on education re-

forms, he highlighted the rollout of "Mission Shikshita Arunachal 2029," aligned with the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020. He said the government is simultaneously upgrading infrastructure and implementing academic reforms to align education standards with global benchmarks.

The Chief Minister also underscored the growing importance of technology, artificial intelligence, and machine learning in education, urging students to adopt technological advancements responsibly. He informed that Artificial Intelligence initiatives and Vidya Samiksha Kendras have already been introduced to enable real-time monitoring and improvement of educational outcomes.

Announcing further initiatives, Khandu said that two science centres with planetariums will be established in Namsai and Dirang, with approvals already granted, to promote scientific curiosity and learning among students. Emphasising skill development, he highlighted emerging opportunities in sectors such as hydropower, micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs), startups, and entrepreneurship.

Rishabh Pant is getting himself out, says Navjot

MUMBAI

As Lucknow Super Giants slumped to another defeat, losing to defending champions Royal Challengers Bengaluru (RCB) by five wickets in the Indian Premier League (IPL) 2026, their skipper Rishabh Pant's injury and subsequent dismissal have turned the spotlight on the wicketkeeper-batter. Former India opener and commentator Navjot Singh Sidhu feels Pant's problems are of his own making, as he is getting himself out rather than the bowlers taking his wicket.

"I don't think bowlers are getting Rishabh out; more often, he is getting himself out. He has the talent and ability, and if he gives himself time, he can turn it around. At the moment, both their batting and bowling seem to be struggling," JioStar experts Navjot Singh Sidhu said speaking on Star



Sports' Amul Cricket Live'.

In the match against RCB, Pant was struck on his left elbow as he attempted to pull a shortish delivery from Josh Hazlewood and retired hurt. He came back to bat with his team in dire straits, but fell for only one run when he tried to whip a low full toss from Bhuvneshwar Kumar, but was caught

superbly by Phil Salt, running to his left from deep square-leg boundary.

In five matches, the wicketkeeper-batter has scores of 7, 68*, 10, 18, and 1, the half-century against Sunrisers Hyderabad being the only worthwhile contribution.

On Wednesday, LSG batters were rattled by a superb spell of fast bowl-

ing by Josh Hazlewood while Bhuvneshwar Kumar bagged 3-27, and Rasikh Salam grabbed 4-24 as the pacers made hay on a two-paced pitch. LSG had slumped to 83/4 before they recovered to post 146 thanks to vital contributions by Ayush Badoni (38) and Mukul Choudhary (39). Sidhu analysed LSG's problems and said their top order is not firing, which is leading to them struggling to put up a fight.

"There is a lot of soul-searching that needs to be done. Their problems have persisted, especially with the top order not firing. They have been heavily dependent on their top three, but the returns haven't come. When you look at players like (Aidan) Markram, (Nicholas) Pooran, (Mitchell) Marsh, and Rishabh Pant, there is immense potential, but the partnerships are missing. Even a 50-run stand at the top has been rare," said Sidhu.

India A exposure after last year's IPL made me a better cricketer, says Nigam

NEW DELHI

Delhi Capitals spinner Vipraj Nigam said the time between last year's IPL and the ongoing season has been transformative for his development as a cricketer, where he featured in a full domestic campaign for Uttar Pradesh and had exposure to India A matches. Nigam had a mixed time in his first IPL stint with Delhi Capitals last year - starting brightly with seven wickets in his first five innings at an economy rate of 8.9 before having a dip by picking six wickets in his next nine games at 9.4 runs per over. With his leg-spin, Nigam was notably more effective against left-handers, striking every 16 balls compared to 25.7 against right-handers, with five of his 11 wickets coming against the southpaws.

Captain Bernardo Silva confirms Manchester City exit at end of season



MANCHESTER

Captain Bernardo Silva confirmed on Thursday that he will leave Manchester City at the end of the ongoing season, bringing an end to a remarkable nine-year association with the Premier League side. The 31-year-old playmaker, who joined City in 2017, has made 451 appearances for the club and played a pivotal role in

what is widely regarded as the most successful period in the club's history. During his tenure, Silva has lifted 19 major trophies, including six Premier League titles, one UEFA Champions League crown, two FA Cups, five League Cups, three Community Shields, as well as a FIFA Club World Cup and a UEFA Super Cup.

Silva most recently captained the side to the 2026 Carabao Cup triumph.

In addition to his trophy haul, the Portuguese player has contributed 76 goals and 77 assists, highlighting his consistent impact in midfield. He also recently moved into the top 10 of Manchester City's all-time appearance makers, surpassing notable names such as David Silva, Paul Power, and Willie Donachie.

In an official statement, Man City said that, "Silva will now focus on finishing the season strongly, with Pep Guardiola's side still competing for both the Premier League and FA Cup titles." Silva confirmed his decision in a heartfelt message posted on Instagram, thanking the club, fans, and his teammates for their support over the years.

"Cityzens, when I arrived nine years ago, I was following a dream of a little boy, wanting to succeed in life, wanting to achieve great things.

"This city and this club gave me much more than that, much more than I ever hoped for. What we won and achieved together is a legacy that will forever be cherished in my heart."

ALLU ARJUN GIVES GREEN SIGNAL TO DIL RAJU?



Top producer Dil Raju is currently planning his future projects in a careful way. After working on several big-budget films in recent years, he has decided to slow down for a short time and focus on selecting the right stories. However, he is already preparing a strong lineup of films for the coming years especially targeting 2027. For now Dil Raju has a few interesting projects in hand. These include films with Devi Sri Prasad, Vijay Deverakonda and young actor Ashish. He is trying to balance medium and big films while planning something bigger for the future. One of the most exciting updates is about his connection with Allu Arjun. The two share a long and successful relationship. They worked together in popular films like Arya, Parugu, and Duvvada Jaganadham. It is being reported that Dil Raju has been trying to collaborate again with Allu Arjun for a long time. But the actor is currently very busy with multiple big projects. He is working on a film with director Lokesh Kanagaraj after his upcoming film Raaka. He also has a commitment to work with his home banner Geetha Arts.

Despite his busy schedule, Allu Arjun has promised Dil Raju that they will work together again. This project is likely to happen around 2028. Dil Raju is now searching for the right director and story for this film. He wants everything to be perfect before making an official announcement, which may come in 2027. There were also plans to bring Prashanth Neel on board for this project. But the director is currently busy with other commitments, so the plan did not move forward.

Meanwhile Allu Arjun is busy with Raaka. Bollywood superstar Shah Rukh Khan is expected to make a special appearance in the film. The movie stars Allu Arjun and Deepika Padukone. This cameo could mark Shah Rukh Khan's first appearance in a Telugu film, making the project even more special for fans.



Shraddha Srinath Serves Bold Vibes in Striking Mirror Selfie

Actress Shraddha Srinath recently shared a confident black-and-white mirror selfie, looking stylish in a black bikini paired with a floral print kimono-style robe. With her hair casually tied up and a poised expression, the photo highlights her fitness and effortless charm.

Shraddha Srinath, born on 29 September 1990 in Udhampur, Jammu & Kashmir, made her acting debut in the Malayalam film Kohinoor (2015). She gained widespread acclaim and the Filmfare Award for Best Actress - Kannada for her powerful performance in the thriller U Turn (2016), which became her breakthrough. She has since established herself as a versatile talent across South Indian cinema with standout roles in Vikram Vedha (2017), Jersey (2019), Nerkonda Paarvai (2019), Chakra (2021), and Irugapatru (2023). Her filmography also includes Operation Alamelamma, Aaraattu, Saindhav, and Mechanic Rocky.

In recent years, she appeared in Daaku Maharaaj (2025) as Nandini Thakur. Ongoing and upcoming projects include Aaryan (Tamil, 2025), Kaliyugam (bilingual), and Bro Code (Tamil, filming for 2026 release). She has also ventured into digital content with series like The Game. Known for her natural acting and strong screen presence, Shraddha continues to impress audiences with her choice of meaningful roles across languages.

Dashing Director's Film Stuck Due To..

The once celebrated director of Telugu cinema, Puri Jagan, has quietly wrapped up his next, "Slumdog" featuring Vijay Sethupathi in the lead. Shoot done, post-production reportedly locked, but still, no release date or any other sign of this film so far. As the news started spreading, some alarming pieces of information is getting out now.

In today's market, a film getting delayed after completion usually points to one thing: business is not closed. Despite Vijay Sethupathi being a reliable performer and Puri Jagan being a celebrated star director long back, this film hasn't closed the OTT deal yet. As per inside talk, Slumdog is

yet to finalize its digital partner. And that's becoming a roadblock. Earlier, theatrical release used to drive everything. Now, OTT has equal, if not bigger, say in the decision-making. With Puri Jagan being the producer of the film as well, surely it's going to be quite a headache until the release now.

Puri, after back-to-back setbacks, would definitely want to play it safe. Vijay Sethupathi's presence adds value, but that alone is not enough in the current scenario. Given some of the latest creative films like Double Ismart from the director, it looks like even OTT platforms want to take a final call only after the movie's release. Even the buyers are not queuing up for theatrical rights of the movie, like once they used to. Hope Slumdog resolves all things soon.



Yash's Toxic: A 'Sinners' Like Raw Gangster Film?

Yash has shared exciting insights about his upcoming film Toxic, calling it a unique and ambitious project that stands apart from the current trend of franchise-driven cinema. The KGF actor revealed that Toxic will be an original gangster film, something fresh and distinctive in today's market.

Drawing a comparison, Yash said the film has a tone similar to Sinners, emphasizing that it is not built around a franchise

but instead focuses on originality and strong storytelling. "These days, we all tend to think in terms of business and franchises, but Toxic is something very different," he stated.

Yash also spoke about the responsibility that comes with success. "The audience has given me success not to celebrate, but to do something better and bigger every time," he said, underlining his commitment to raising the bar with each project.

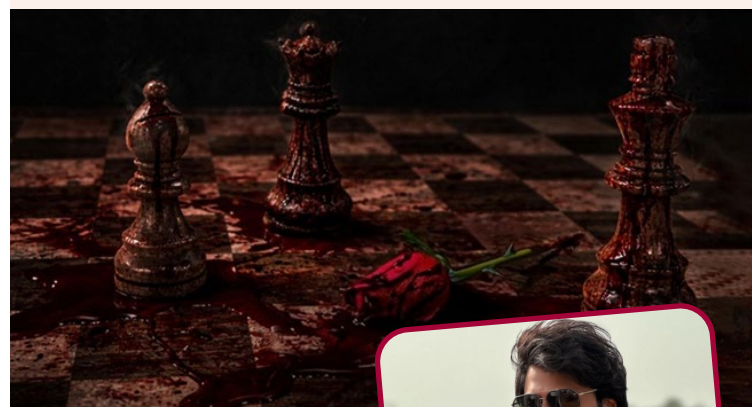
Toxic is being mounted on a grand scale, and the actor described it as one of the most ambitious films of his career. With high expectations riding on the project, Yash seems determined to deliver a cinematic experience that goes beyond routine commercial elements.

As anticipation builds, fans are eager to see whether Toxic lives up to its promise of being a truly unique gangster drama. Stay tuned for more.

SK, Chaitanya, 70 mm's Power Peta: Love, Honour, Politics

70 mm Entertainments, known for making content-rich movies, announced their new project. Produced on a massive scale by Vijay Chilla and Shashi Devireddy, the movie stars Sundeep Kishan and will be directed by Krishna Chaitanya. This combination alone generates in-

terest for Power Peta is equally noteworthy. Music director Mani Sharma, cinematographer Madhie, and National Award-winning editor Sreekar Prasad bring significant expertise. Production designers Ramakrishna and Monika and sound designers Sachin Sudhakaran and



quisitiveness.

The movie gets an impactful title Power Peta. The title announcement was accompanied by a striking poster. It sees a gritty depiction of a blood-drenched chessboard, with shattered and fallen pieces suggesting themes of strategy, conflict, and loss.

A wilted rose crushed among the tiles adds a contrasting emotional weight, reinforcing the film's thematic trio- Love, Honour, and Politics. The poster clearly aims to signal a narrative built on high stakes, moral dilemmas, and complex interpersonal dynamics. The technical team assembled



Hariharan complete the film's core crew.

Krishna Chaitanya reportedly penned a first-of-its-kind story to present Sundeep Kishan in a never-seen-before avatar. The actor indeed will undergo a new makeover for his character. The movie will go on floors soon, as the pre-production works are presently underway.

Yetta Yetta from Lenin: An Electrifying Dance Number

The upcoming film Lenin, starring Akhil Akkineni and Bhagyashree Borse, is set to hit screens on June 26, 2026. Directed by Murali Kishore Abburu, the film gained good buzz with the chartbuster first single. It continues to build anticipation with its second single, "Yetta Yetta," a track that celebrates love with a mass vibe. This upbeat melody is rooted yet sounds so catchy. What sets "Yetta Yetta" apart is its organic texture. Unlike glossy urban dance numbers, the song embraces a more grounded sound. The visuals amplify the song's impact. Penned by Bhaskarabhatla, the lyrics echo everyday expressions of love in villages, enhancing relatability. Akhil Akkineni showcases a more mass-oriented dance style, stepping into a space that blends charisma with raw energy. Bhagyashree Borse complements him with lively screen presence, making their pairing feel vibrant and natural. This peppy melody is a treat to both eyes and ears. Thaman delivers another chartbuster with his mass beats.



Swayambhu Ra Ra Dheevara: Nikhil captivates with his valor and dance

Nikhil Siddhartha is commanding the spotlight like never before with his upcoming Magnum Opus, Swayambhu. The movie has garnered huge hype, buzz with promotional material released till date and now, the makers have released first single Ra Ra Dheevara, an absolute powerhouse of a song. Helmed by the visionary director Bharat Krishnamachari, the film boasts the glamorous presence of leading ladies Samyuktha and Nabha Natesh.

Producers Bhuvan and Sreekar have left no stone unturned, passionately mounting this ambitious project on a canvas of monumental proportions. Ra Ra Dheevara is destined to rule the charts, thanks to an unforgettable, high-octane composition by the sensational Ravi Basrur. His

masterful tune perfectly complements the heavy, heroic, and soul-stirring words written by the illustrious Ramajogayya Sastry.

Adding a tremendous layer of fierce energy, Santhosh Venky delivers a sensational vocal rendition that gives listeners instant goosebumps, making the song an unstoppable force. The sheer scale and visual majesty of Ra Ra Dheevara are completely mind-blowing. Every frame is a painting, packed with breathtaking cinematography, towering sets, and unparalleled production values that seamlessly transport viewers to a glorious era.

The makers have spectacularly captured the film's massive grandeur. At the very center of this grand visual feast is Nikhil, whose remarkable commitment is visible in every second.