

# HYDERABAD HEADLINES

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## GREAT CAREERS IN IRELAND IN 2026

Career Opportunities in Ireland are abundant for international students and skilled professionals. The country has a strong demand in sectors like Tech (IT, Cybersecurity, Software), Pharma and Biotech, Engineering (Renewable Energy, Chemical, Software), Finance, and Healthcare, offering roles for accountants, engineers, nurses, and tech specialists, making it an attractive destination for those planning a Masters in Ireland.



## PANT AND LSG: HIGH DRAMA AND A HAPPY ENDING

STADIUM 11

## Janhvi Kapoor recalls seeing her morphed images on porn site: There is no morality



BOX -OFFICE 12

FOCUS POINT 10

### SHORT TAKES



Film insulting Vijay won't even last a day, warns TVK leader  
TVK leader Aadhav Arjuna on Saturday alleged that the DMK and BJP were behind an upcoming film that he claimed was aimed at insulting party chief Vijay, warning that such a movie "will not last even a day" in theatres. Speaking to reporters, Arjuna said attempts to degrade their leader through cinema were part of a political ploy and questioned who had given filmmakers the authority.

NEXT DOOR 05

## Singareni being destroyed by Govt incompetence, Kavitha slams Congress

- **₹13,000 Crore deals under scanner, Kavitha demands white paper**
- **Inquiry drama to cover corruption, not justice - Kavitha**
- **Govt betrayal pushes Singareni into crisis, ₹47,000 Cr dues exposed**
- **20-Day ultimatum, Agitation Inevitable if Govt fails**
- **Touch workers, face consequences, strong warning to Govt**
- **CAG flags massive losses in Singareni operations**
- **Corruption trail in Coal, Power & Lithium deals alleged**

HYDERABAD

Telangana Jagruti President Kalvakuntla Kavitha issued a stern



warning to the government, stating that if it interferes with the recruitment of dependent workers in Singareni, it will face serious consequences. She expressed strong anger over the recent statement made by Deputy

Chief Minister Bhatti Vikramarka in the Assembly about ordering vigilance and ACB inquiries into worker recruitments. Challenging the government, she asked, "Are you ready to order an inquiry into your own corruption instead of targeting workers' jobs?"

Kavitha alleged that ever since the corruption in the Naini coal block was exposed, Bhatti Vikramarka has developed resentment toward Singareni workers. She accused the government of initiating inquiry proceedings as a political vendetta, calling it a "drama" aimed at settling scores with workers.

She was speaking at the "Save Singareni" round table meeting held at the Telangana Jagruti office in Banjara Hills on Sunday, where she strongly criticized the Congress government's approach toward Singareni.

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## New HC to be a democratic icon for oppressed: Revanth

HYDERABAD

Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy stated that the new High Court of Telangana will serve as a symbol and a vital support for both society and democracy. It is envisioned as a venue where the marginalised and disadvantaged can seek justice, he said.

During the foundation-laying ceremony for High Court Zone-II in Rajendranagar, located in the Rangareddy district on Sunday, the Chief Minister emphasised that over the next century, individuals who are impoverished, vulnerable, voiceless, and oppressed will come to this esteemed institution in pursuit of justice.

"Today, as we lay the foundation for zone 2 comprising residential buildings. We will aim to finish this structure in record time by December next year. Similarly, we are working on several new projects for 49 courts and many residential quarters in various towns and districts in Telangana," he said. The Chief Minister believe that it is the duty of the executive to provide the infrastructure to judiciary so they can help give fastest, best justice.

"We believe all pillars must work with mutual respect and avoid confrontations. Hence,



## CM pays floral tributes to 'Babuji,' recalls his service to marginalised

Hyderabad: On the occasion of the 119th birth anniversary of freedom fighter and former deputy prime minister Dr. Babu Jagjivan Ram, Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy paid tributes to the great leader's portrait at his residence in Jubilee Hills on Sunday. On the occasion, the Chief Minister lauded the efforts undertaken by Babu Jagjivan Ram for the welfare of the downtrodden sections and the working class in the country. Revanth Reddy recalled that Dr. Babu Jagjivan Ram fought against caste discrimination and untouchability, and dedicated his entire life to upholding the rights of Dalits. The Chief Minister stated that, inspired by Babuji, the state government in Telangana is striving to ensure social justice and the well-being of all sections of society. (NSS)

we give highest respect not only to all verdicts and judgments, but to various observations and feedback," Revanth Reddy said.

He stated that many governments and Chief Ministers in the past could have taken up this project but for some rea-

son, it was left for his government to undertake this noble task. "It is a great opportunity for me, maybe of a lifetime, that my government could initiate the project to build a new High Court complex for Telangana," Revanth Reddy said.

## Jubilee Hills Housing Society Elections Cancelled

- **Telangana High Court's Sensational Verdict**
- **Setback to BR Naidu Group**

HYDERABAD

The ongoing disputes in the prestigious Jubilee Hills Co-operative Housing Society have taken a decisive turn with the Telangana High Court's judgment. The High Court

issued striking orders cancelling the entire election process that was scheduled to be held this month.

This verdict has come as a major and unexpected setback to the current ruling group, particularly the faction led by TTD Chairman and TV5 head BR Naidu. It is noteworthy that Ravinder, son of BR Naidu, is currently serving as the president of the Jubilee Hills Housing Society

committee. The court's decision appears to have put a brake on the alleged unilateral decisions and violations of rules that had been ongoing in the society.

### High Court's Anger Over Misuse of Power

The High Court strongly remarked that the current ruling group completely violated rules in conducting

the elections. The court found serious irregularities at every stage—from preparation of the voter list to cancellation of memberships. It particularly highlighted violations of principles of natural justice and misuse of authority. The court took serious note of the unilateral disqualification of hundreds of existing members without

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## Eatala Rajendar refutes reports of leaving BJP

HYDERABAD

For the past few days, rumors have been circulating that BJP MP Eatala Rajendar is planning to switch parties. Eatala Rajendar addressed these rumors during a media conference held on Sunday and categorically refuted the reports that he intends to leave the party.

"It has been five years since KCR unceremoniously ousted me from the party. Back then, the situation was such that no matter what we said, we were effectively barred from speaking out publicly. It was under those circumstances that I joined the BJP. Now, rumors are being spread that



I am leaving the BJP. Posters to this effect are being put up in Karimnagar and shockingly, even members of my own party are sharing them. I am not the kind of person, who switches the parties easily. In fact, I have stated myself that changing the parties is not as simple as changing one's clothes. There is currently a discussion underway suggesting that KCR made a mistake by losing Eatala Rajendar, and speculation is rife that I might return. I want to make it clear that such a situation will never arise," Eatala Rajendar asserted.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2 >

## BJP bags Khanapur municipal chairperson's post

**NIRMAL:** The suspense surrounding the election for the Khanapur Municipal Chairperson in Nirmal district has finally ended on Sunday. BJP candidate Ankam Mounika was elected as the Chairperson. The Councilors from both the BJP and BRS parties raised their hands in her favor. The BRS party candidate Mohammed Shoab was elected as the Vice-Chairperson. The Khanapur Municipality comprises a total of 12 municipal councilor seats. In the recent elections, the BRS party won 4 seats, the BJP won 4, the ruling Congress party won 3 and one seat was secured by an independent candidate. With the support of the independent candidate and the ex-officio vote, the Congress party's strength rose to five. However, the BRS party declared its support for the BJP. Consequently, seven members from the BRS and the BJP raised their hands in support of the BJP candidate ensuring her smooth victory.

## KTR highlights Telangana's growth story at Columbia Business School

HYDERABAD

Former minister and BRS working president KT Rama Rao highlighted Telangana's remarkable growth journey during the BRS rule, describing it as the 'most successful startup state of independent India. Addressing students, entrepreneurs, and global investors at the 21st Annual India Business Conference at Columbia Business School in New York, USA, KTR said the Telangana - born out of a long struggle - has emerged as a trendsetting model of governance, innovation, and economic growth under the leadership of its first Chief Minister K Chandrashekar Rao. Speaking about the 'Telangana Decade', he said Telangana's journey represents dignity, aspiration, and progress, emphasising that the state did not wait for opportunities but instead built institutions, infrastructure, and investor confidence to attract growth proactively. He noted that as India approaches 80 years of independence in 2027, Telangana stands out for achieving significant economic transformation within just a decade of its formation.



CONTINUED ON PAGE 2 >

## Rs 650 crore worth illicit cash, liquor seized in poll-bound States; nearly half from West Bengal

NEW DELHI

Enforcement authorities across the four poll-going states and Puducherry have seized over Rs 650 crore worth of illicit cash, drugs and liquor meant to allure voters, the Election Commission said on Sunday in a Press Release. According to data shared by the poll authority, Rs 319 crore of illicit cash, drugs, liquor and valuable metals have been seized from West Bengal, followed by Rs 170 crore in Tamil Nadu. Over 5,173 flying squads have been deployed to ensure that the complaints

are attended to within 100 minutes. Besides this, over 5,200 static surveillance teams (SSTs) have also been deployed for setting up surprise nakas (broadly, barricades) at different locations, the poll authority said. While Kerala, Assam and Puducherry go to the polls on April 9, voting in West Bengal will be in two phases on April 23 and 29. Tamil Nadu will have assembly polls in a single phase on April 23. Assembly bypolls will also be held in eight seats across six states on April 9 and 23. The data, EC said, has been collated from the Electronic Seizure Management System.

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Give without keeping score... life notices.

- Some people give only when they expect something in return — like life is a scoreboard.
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- Give freely, without treating it like a loan.
- Show respect without waiting for it first.
- Do the right thing, even when no one is watching.
- Act not for others, but for the person you are becoming.
- Those who don't keep score think and act differently.
- Life quietly rewards such grace and selflessness.

- Collected by  
**Venna Srinivasa Reddy**



# ASRHMC and UARDT Expand Rural Diagnostic Missions

**Mega Free Bone Health Screening for 300 Patients Announced**

By Dr Suneelkumar Yandra

TADEPALLY GUDDEM

On the fifth day of World Homoeopathy Week 2026, ASRHMC Homoeopathic Medical College (ASRHMC), in collaboration with the Umar Alisha Rural Development Trust (UARDT), conducted high-impact medical awareness and diagnostic screening camps in the villages of Uradallapalem and Undrajavaram. These camps continue the institutional mission of bringing Tangible Science to rural doorsteps through evidence-based homoeopathic care.

## Clinical Leadership and Village Outreach

The Day 5 clinical missions were spearheaded by senior medical faculty and supported by a dedicated team of interns, students, and trust volunteers. At Uradallapalem, services were rendered by Prof. Dr. Ananda Kumar Pingali, Dr. K. L. Janaki, and Dr. T. Rajya Lakshmi, who provided expert consultations and screenings. In Undraja-

varam, the medical drive was led by Dr. P. Manoj and Dr. R. Priyanka, focusing on metabolic health and community counseling.

## Combatting Silent Metabolic Epidemics

A primary focus of today's camps was providing awareness and screening for chronic metabolic conditions, including Thyroid disorders, Obesity, Hypertension, and Diabetes. The medical teams emphasized that these conditions often remain asymptomatic in the early stages. By offering free diagnostic tests, ASRHMC aims to facilitate early detection, which is key to successful homoeopathic intervention and long-term health restoration.

## Special Focus : The Science of Bone Health and BMD Screening

Today's program highlighted a critical public health concern: bone fragility. Doctors explained that bone weakness due to Vitamin D and Calcium deficiencies is a primary cause of early degeneration and fractures. Bone Mineral Density (BMD) tests are essential for detecting early bone loss before a fracture occurs, stated Principal Dr. Ananda Kumar Pingali. Early screening allows us

to improve bone strength through scientific homoeopathic protocols. Our goal is to ensure the public remains mobile and healthy by addressing bone weakness at its root.

## Announcement of Mega Free BMD Drive for 300 Patients

Supported by Fourrts Herbo Minerals, the ASRHMC-UARDT partnership is launching a massive screening campaign to provide Free BMD Tests for 300 patients. The schedule for these specialized camps is as follows: April 6th Attili, Umar Alisha Trust - Near MRO Office, April 7th ASRHMC Homoeopathic Medical College, Prathipadu, Tadepalligudem. Time 9:00 AM to 3:00 PM on both days.

## A Public Appeal for Health Participation

ASRHMC appeals to the residents of Attili, Tadepalligudem, and surrounding villages to utilize these specialized diagnostic facilities. By combining advanced screening technology with homoeopathic treatment, ASRHMC is committed to managing metabolic and bone diseases effectively and without side effects. Community members are encouraged to participate in these free camps to secure their health and wellness.

# DGM Trinadha Rao Degala Pledges Quick Action on Water Sewers and Billing

Samudrala Kiran, Correspondent

MEDCHAL-MALKAJGIRI

In a landmark meeting that brought together homeowners and city water officials, KPHB Colony 7th Phase Residents Welfare Society united with all residential owners to press for practical relief, long-term sustainability, and equitable services. The focal point of discussions with HMWSSB Deputy General Manager, Trinadha Rao Degala was a request to extend the current one-hour water window to two hours, coupled with an expectation of maximum water pressure and a personal on-site inspection to ensure delivery. Trinadha Rao responded with a decisive pledge to resolve the issue with immediate effect and offered clear guidance on conservation, including the installation of water harvesting pits within individual premises. In addition, the group raised concerns about sewerage infrastructure, billing fairness, and the need for consistent service timings.

The meeting unfolded as a spirited, solution-oriented dialogue that highlighted both the immediate needs of residents and the imperative of responsible resource use. The welfare group emphasized several pragmatic priorities: first, improving sewerage reliability by addressing pending or regularly choked lines with larger diameters to prevent bottlenecks; second, establishing a consistent daily timing regime for KPHB Colony 7th Phase so residents can plan workloads and routines with confidence; and third, moving toward billing based on actual consumption rather than the number of kitchens, ensuring fairness for households of varying sizes.

Neighborhood leaders including KPHB Colony 7th Phase Residents Welfare Society President Pratap, General Secretary Anji Babu, and active members Vasireddy Lakshmi Narayana, Hari Babu, Anil, Venkat, and other stakeholders presented a united front. Their collective aim was to relieve dai-



ly pressures on households while safeguarding the reliability of water supply through smarter management, targeted infrastructure upgrades, and equitable service practices.

Trinadha Rao's involvement marked a turning point. Acknowledging the community's requests, he pledged swift action to extend the water window and emphasized a hands-on approach by promising a personal inspection. His stance on water use was unequivocal: residents should not waste a precious resource, and every household should consider installing a water harvesting pit to promote reuse and reduce demand. The proposal aligns with broader municipal strategies that reward conservation with improved reliability of service, especially during peak usage periods.

On the sewerage front, Rao acknowledged the urgency of upgrading aging lines and promised to relay the submitter's concerns to the appropriate departments for assessment and action, aiming to minimize overflows and maintenance downtime. The KPHB Colony 7th Phase Residents Welfare Society stressed the importance of ensuring sewer networks keep pace with population growth to safeguard public health and the urban environment.

The billing discussion spoke to a cornerstone of residential equity: moving toward consumption-based billing rather than charging by the number of kitchens. This approach would reflect actual water use, incentivize conservation, and align charges with household footprint and usage patterns.

This development signals a constructive collaboration between resi-

dents and the HMWSSB, anchored by a shared commitment to both immediacy and sustainability. The promise of a two-hour window, if implemented, could significantly ease daily routines for families and local enterprises, while Rao's on-site commitment promises faster diagnostics and quicker remedies. The call to adopt water harvesting pits provides a tangible, scalable measure residents can execute promptly, reinforcing a culture of stewardship at the micro-level.

Looking ahead, the 7th Phase community stands at a crossroads of relief, resilience, and reform. If the extended timing is realized and the on-ground checks materialize, residents can expect a smoother, more reliable supply coupled with smarter water use practices. The sewerage upgrade commitments, paired with consistent timings and fair billing reforms, could position the neighborhood as a model for holistic urban utility management in a growing city. The partnership with HMWSSB underscores the potential for public-private synergy in urban utilities, where responsive governance meets organized civic action.

The KPHB Colony 7th Phase Residents Welfare Society continues to serve as the coordinating voice for homeowners and renters, channeling feedback to HMWSSB agencies and mobilizing residents toward practical solutions. As more households consider installing water harvesting pits, and as sewer and billing reforms unfold, the neighborhood could emerge as a model for balanced water and utility management in a rapidly evolving urban landscape.

CONTINUATION FROM PAGE 1

# Singareni being destroyed by Govt incompetence, Kavitha slams Congress

FROM PAGE 1

Kavitha pointed out that during the united state period, the previous government had provided jobs to around 20,000 workers with certain relaxations to compensate for past injustices. Questioning the current move, she asked how an inquiry can now be ordered on policies implemented by a previous government. She further criticized the Congress government, stating that it lacks emotion, commitment, and understanding toward Singareni, which she described as the lifeline of Telangana. She remarked that this is the reason why the government is indifferent to the problems faced by workers. "Are you ready for an inquiry into Solar and Lithium deals?"

Telangana Jagruti President Kalvakuntla Kavitha exposed what she described as a series of corruption and irregularities by the Congress government in Singareni.

She stated that Singareni had entered into an agreement worth ₹11,000 crore with the Rajasthan government for solar power, alleging that the deal was structured at nearly three times the actual cost per megawatt, raising serious concerns of large-scale financial misconduct.

Further, she alleged that a ₹2,250 crore agreement was signed with a small company, Altmin, for a lithium refinery project. Questioning the legitimacy of the deal, she asked how a company with revenues as low as ₹27 lakh could be entrusted with such a massive contract.

Kavitha alleged that both agreements are riddled with blatant corruption and demanded that the government release a white paper. She also called for the disclosure of the influential individuals allegedly behind these deals.

She criticized Deputy Chief Minister Bhatti Vikramarka for claiming that workers' salaries are a burden on the company, and countered that it is actually the government's incompetence that is pushing Singareni toward collapse.

Highlighting financial irregularities, she pointed out ₹250 crore diesel scam, over ₹1,000 crore losses due to failure in collecting additional charges, ₹24 crore losses due to leakages, ₹74 crore losses due to violations. She emphasized that these findings were not mere allegations but were reflected in reports of the Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG).

Kavitha demanded that the government first conduct inquiries against OB contractors, political leaders, officials, and those who looted coal resources in Singareni, before targeting workers.

## \*Failure to clear dues pushing Singareni into crisis\*

Telangana Jagruti President Kalvakuntla Kavitha stated that the ongoing difficulties faced by Singareni are solely due to the government's inefficiency and failure to act responsibly.

She pointed out that the government owes nearly ₹47,000 crore to Singareni and asserted that the non-payment of these dues has placed a severe financial burden on the organization. She said that if the government clears these pending dues, even the interest generated from that amount would be sufficient to keep the company running smoothly.

Questioning the government's priorities, she asked, "What is wrong in sharing profits with workers who toil day and night and drive Singareni towards profitability?"

Kavitha further alleged that coal production in Singareni was reduced immediately after Union Minister G. Kishan Reddy held discussions with the state government, raising suspicions about the intentions behind such decisions.

She criticized the government, stating that it lacks commitment, concern, and understanding when it comes to Singareni and its workforce, and is completely disconnected from the problems faced by workers.

## Key demands raised

Kavitha demanded immediate action on several pending issues like protection of dependent employment opportunities, resolution of "alias names" issues, continuation of the old VRS scheme, immediate establishment of a medical board, posting of 350 candidates who have already cleared medical tests, filling of vacant clerk posts without delay.

She also demanded income tax exemption for Singareni employees, highlighting that they work in a high-risk sector.

Recalling her earlier efforts, Kavitha noted that she had already raised this issue in Parliament back in 2015.

\*Five key resolutions passed at "Save Singareni" round table meeting\*

At the "Save Singareni" round table meeting, Telangana Jagruti President Kalvakuntla Kavitha announced that five major resolutions were adopted to safeguard the interests of Singareni and its workers.

## The resolutions are as follows:

1. The state government must write to the Centre stating that it will not implement the four controversial labour codes, and also pass a resolution to this effect in the Assembly.

2. A medical board should be constituted immediately with a humanitarian approach, and all pending cases must be resolved without delay.

3. The issue of "alias names" should be resolved. She stated that legal barriers do not apply in this matter and that the problem can be solved if there is sufficient political will.

4. A white paper must be released on the ₹2,250 crore agreement between Singareni and the Altmin company.

5. All new coal blocks, including Naini and Tadicherla, must be operated exclusively by Singareni.

Kavitha stated that these resolutions will be formally submitted to the state government in the form of a letter and demanded an immediate response.

Referring to national developments, she pointed out that West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee has already refused to implement the central labour codes in her state, and she expressed her appreciation for that decision.

She further noted that states like Kerala, Tamil Nadu, and Maharashtra have also resisted implementing these labour laws. Questioning the Telangana government, she asked why it has failed to take a similar stand despite being under Congress rule.

Kavitha demanded that the government respond immediately to the five resolutions and act in the interest of Singareni workers.

## Ready for another movement

Telangana Jagruti President Kalvakuntla Kavitha declared that Singareni is the lifeline of Telangana and asserted that it will be protected at any cost.

She made it clear that they are fully prepared to launch another Movement (mass movement) if necessary. She warned that within the next 20 days, they would emerge as a strong political force, and if the government fails to resolve Singareni's issues within this timeframe, they will take the agitation directly to the coal mines and intensify protests.

Kavitha stated that they will demonstrate a new style of people-centric politics in Telangana and will not hesitate to fight for the rights of workers.

## Government will not be spared

HMS General Secretary Riyaz Ahmed warned that the Congress government, which is allegedly destroying Singareni, will not be spared under any circumstances. He stated that if required, another Movement will be launched to protect the organization.

# Jubilee Hills Housing Society Elections Cancelled

FROM PAGE 1

following due process, stating that this was not merely a technical lapse but a deliberate violation of rules.

## Major Irregularities in Voter List

One of the most controversial aspects of the case was the inclusion of new members. Despite existing stay orders from the court, records were allegedly manipulated to include 271 new members in the voter list. The court expressed strong displeasure over allegations that these memberships were granted with backdated entries. Even though earlier orders clearly stated that those who became members after 24-10-2024

should not be included in the election process, these directions were ignored. The court noted that pressure was exerted on officials to alter the

voter list, thereby infringing upon the rights of genuine members.

## Violation of Law and Rules

The High Court clarified that the election process did not follow Section 21(3) of the Telangana Co-operative Societies Act, 1964, and Rule 22 of the Telangana Co-operative Societies Rules, 1964.

It stated that authorities failed in issuing proper election notification and in addressing objections raised by members. The court considered the petitioners' argument that the current committee attempted to manipulate the law to retain power. Due to these flawed actions, the entire election process was deemed "vitiated," and hence the court decided to cancel it.

## Political and Moral Blow to BR Naidu Group

The strategies of the BR Naidu group did not hold up in court. Analysts believe that the court's criticism of the commit-

tee led by his son Ravinder is both a political and moral setback for the group.

With contempt cases also being filed, the court expressed displeasure over the conduct of officials. The verdict strengthens allegations that attempts were made to influence a democratic election process in favor of a particular group.

With the latest orders, the ongoing election process has been completely halted. While this temporarily resolves the confusion within the society, the court has given important directions to the Cooperative Department for future action. A fresh and transparent voter list must now be prepared, and elections must be conducted strictly according to rules. This judgment serves not only as a turning point for the Jubilee Hills Society but also as a strong warning to cooperative societies across the state against political interference and violation of rules. For now, it remains to be seen how the BR Naidu group recovers from this legal setback.

# Eatala Rajendar refutes reports of leaving BJP

FROM PAGE 1

He said that Only he knew the depth of the pain he endured back then. "At that time, there was nothing KCR didn't do to harass and torment me. I am not a person, who craves or chases after the political posts. When the right moment arrives, the world will realize who, Eatala Rajendar truly is," he remarked.

Rajendar claimed that Public sentiment against Chief Minister Revanth Reddy was growing intensely negative and added that Much like KCR, he had stifled the media to prevent critical voices from being heard," Eatala Rajendar alleged. He claimed that the Revanth government appears to be adopting KCR's attitude regarding fee reimbursement—specifically, the stance that they will not pay it and he warned the CM Revanth Reddy that he was destined to meet the very same fate that befell KCR.

Noting that they currently have three MPs representing the GHMC region, he said that Excluding the two Union Ministers, there are six of the BJP MPs and added that they would fight for the people's issues in the days to come.

# KTR highlights Telangana's growth story at Columbia Business School

FROM PAGE 1

"Clarity of purpose in leadership builds credibility and accelerates progress, even in a diverse country like India. The best way to predict the future is to create it," the BRS leader said. Highlighting India's federal strength, KT Rama Rao stressed that the country's rise will come from states leveraging their unique strengths rather than uniform policy approaches. He compared India's potential to a Formula 1 grid with 28 engines, where each state contributes to national progress through competitive development.

"India's growth will not come from sameness - it will come from regions playing to their strengths," KTR said. He pointed out that while national leadership attracts global attention, investment decisions are ultimately made at the state and city levels.

Sharing key statistics, KTR said Telangana's technology ecosystem witnessed rapid expansion between 2014 and 2023 with IT exports increasing from Rs. 57,000 crore to Rs. 2.72 lakh crore and technology sector employment growing from 3.23 lakh to nearly 10 lakh jobs. He emphasized that Hyderabad became a preferred destination for global technology majors due to speed of governance and strong eco-



system support. KTR highlighted that Hyderabad today hosts major global campuses of leading multinational corporations. He noted that Amazon's largest campus globally is in Hyderabad and companies such as Google, Apple, Meta Platforms, Salesforce, Uber, and Micon Technology have major operations in the city. He credited the BRS government's policy clarity, rapid approvals, and ecosystem readiness for attracting global investments.

# Grand Graduation Ceremony at Lotus Lap Public School

HYDERABAD (BODUPPAL)

The Grand Graduation Ceremony of young students was celebrated with great enthusiasm at Lotus Lap Public School, Boduppal branch, on Saturday. The convocation, themed "Gradivo - From Students to Leaders," marked the transition of students from PP-2 to Grade 1 and from Grade 5 to Grade 6.

The school campus was filled with joy and pride as parents, relatives, and friends gathered in large numbers to celebrate this important milestone in the students' lives.

The event was graced by the Chairman of the group, Dr. Lion Komatireddy Gopal Reddy, as the Chief Guest. Director Komatireddy Abhishek Reddy, Vice Principal Gangadhar, In-charges Shanu and Manjula, along with teachers, were also present.

Students captivated the audience with their vibrant dance performances, confident speeches, and melodious songs. Their enthusiasm, talent, and confidence reflected the holistic development imparted by the school.

On this occasion, students who completed their pre-primary and primary education were awarded medals and certificates, along with special prizes.

Addressing the gathering, Chairman Dr. Gopal Reddy congratulated the students and emphasized the importance of nurturing skills through the Early Entrepreneur Program. He expressed his vision of shaping students into fu-



ture leaders and nation builders.

Director Abhishek Reddy appreciated the students' performances and encouraged them to achieve greater heights in the future. Vice Principal Gangadhar also congratulated the students and wished them continued success.

Parents of Grade 5 students shared their experiences, expressing happi-

ness over the growing confidence in their children. They appreciated the school for introducing SSC-level concepts at an early stage. It was noteworthy that Grade 5 students appeared for SSC-pattern public examinations in Telugu, Hindi, English, and Social Studies under parental invigilation. Some siblings appearing together for the exams brought immense joy to

their families. Parents expressed their gratitude to the school management and teachers for their dedicated efforts. They also appreciated the Early Entrepreneur Program for instilling a sense of initiative and business mindset among children.

The event concluded on a joyful note, paving the way for a bright and promising future for the young graduates.

# SCR successfully completes Kavach Field trials for 487 Rkm during 2025-26

HYDERABAD

The special thrust was given by the Zone towards safety enhancement measures and in this direction, steps were taken for installation of Kavach 4.0 across SCR network during the last

Financial year 2025-26. Accordingly, the Zone has successfully completed field trials for a distance of 487 Route Kms by surpassing the Railway Board's target of 402 Route kms. The meticulous planning and effective implementation has resulted in this stupendous achievement.

The Zone has also commissioned Automatic Block Signalling in different sections between Kazipet - Balharshah, Vijayawada - Duvvada & Wadi - Renigunta for a distance of 479 Rkms. Automatic Block Signalling is a system of train working in which movement of the trains is controlled by the automatic stop signals. These signals are operated automatically by the passage of trains. ABS operation is designed to allow trains operating in the same direction to follow each other in a safe manner without risk of rear-end collision. It reduces railways costs, helps in improving the capacity of the



section and also in increasing the average speed of the trains. This system is initially being commissioned in the High density & Grand Trunk routes of SCR network. Sanjay Kumar Srivastava, General Manager, SCR has complimented the Signal & Telecommunications Wing officials at both the Zonal and Divisional levels for their extraordinary contribution which helped the Zone to achieve the record commissioning of Automatic Block Signalling and Kavach filed trials. General Manager also stated that Kavach and ABS will be taken up with top priority during the current financial year also to strengthen safety.

# Babu Jagjivan Ram is a Lifelong Champion of Social Justice: Union Minister Bandi Sanjay Kumar



KARIMNAGAR,

Union Minister of State for Home Affairs Bandi Sanjay Kumar on Sunday lauded Babu Jagjivan Ram as a towering figure in Indian political history—a leader who fought tirelessly for social justice throughout his life and a true gem of the Dalit community. He noted that Babu Jagjivan Ram, who served as a Union Minister for 29 years, regarded national service as his supreme duty and demonstrated

this commitment through his actions.

On the occasion of Babu Jagjivan Ram's birth anniversary, Union Minister Bandi Sanjay Kumar paid homage to him by garlanding his statue located at Mancheril Crossroads in Karimnagar. The commemorative celebrations held on this occasion were attended by the District Collector Chitra Mishra, Choppadandi MLA Medipalli Satyam, City Mayor Kolagani Srinivas, Deputy Mayor Sunil

Rao and several corporators. Subsequently, Union Minister Bandi Sanjay Kumar issued a statement to the media. "Jagjivan Ram was a leader, who confronted and fought against caste discrimination right from his childhood. He was a leader, who dedicated his entire life, until his very last breath, to the welfare of the 'untouchables.' One must overcome hardships to rise in life." "Jagjivan Ram was a leader, who embraced three core slogans," he stated.

He recalled that Jagjivan Ram, who served as a Member of Parliament continuously from 1952—the year of independent India's first elections—until his passing in 1986, also served as a Union Minister for 29 years.

He noted that Jagjivan Ram, who stood steadfastly by Gandhi's side during the nation's freedom struggle, emerged as a figure without enemies within the Indian political and social spheres. He opined that today's youth need to take inspiration from the ideals Jagjivan Ram upheld and the path of reform he demonstrated.

## Inaugurates Mayor's Camp Office

Meanwhile, Bandi Sanjay Kumar inaugurated the Mayor's Camp Office—established by Mayor Kolagani Srinivas—at Teegalaguttapalli in Karimnagar. On this occasion, BJP activists and leaders honored the Union Minister with a Gajamala (garland of honor). The inauguration ceremony was attended by a large gathering of the BJP functionaries, including the District President Gangadi Krishna Reddy, Deputy Mayor Sunil Rao, BJP Corporators and numerous party activists.

# BJP chief Ramachandra Rao pays tributes to Babu Jagjivan Ram

HYDERABAD

On the occasion of the birth anniversary of Babu Jagjivan Ram—a freedom fighter, social reformer and a distinguished statesman—BJP Telangana State President N. Ramchander Rao paid floral tributes to his portrait. Dares sing media persons later, He stated that, on this birth anniversary, they were commemorating the invaluable services rendered to the nation by the illustrious Babu Jagjivan Ram. He remarked that Babu Jagjivan Ram's role in nation-building was exceptional and added that his efforts towards achieving the social justice remain exemplary.

He announced that training sessions were being conducted across the state to enhance ideological awareness among the BJP workers. He revealed that, out of approximately 900 mandals in the state, these training programs had already been successfully completed in

over 600 mandals. He added that the programs would soon be concluded in the remaining mandals as well.

He criticized the Congress party in Telangana by stating that it had completely failed to implement the 6 Guarantees and 420 Promises it had pledged. He pointed out that the promises such as farm loan waivers and other welfare assurances had not been fulfilled and alleged that the state government continues to function while deceiving the public. He strongly condemned Chief Minister Revanth Reddy for engaging in false propaganda during the recent election campaigning in Kerala—claiming that "all promises were being implemented in Telangana"—even while failing to fulfill those very guarantees within his own state. He demanded that the state government prioritize and fulfill the promises made to the people of the state without further delay. It was alleged that whenever elec-

tions are held anywhere in the country, the Congress party utilizes the public funds from Telangana for its own self-serving interests. Criticizing this severely, it was pointed out that the same pattern occurred previously in Bihar and was currently unfolding in Kerala, asserting that the Congress party is treating Telangana merely as a "financial resource."

It was stated by Rao that the Congress government had failed across all sectors within the state and added that no section of society remains satisfied. He criticised that while corruption is on the rise under Congress rule, the government was simultaneously demolishing the homes of the poor as well as the premises of small businesses.

Ramchander Rao stated that despite prevailing global tensions involving nations such as Iran, Israel and the United States, India remains secure and free from any crisis under the leadership of Prime Min-

ister Narendra Modi. He condemned the false propaganda being disseminated by the Congress party regarding shortages of petrol and gas, clarifying that there is an adequate supply within the country and that the public has no need to panic.

He demanded that the state government take action against those engaging in false propaganda—which creates misconceptions regarding issues such as gas shortages and potential lockdowns—and insisted that legal cases be registered against individuals who are attempting to instill fear among the public.

It was announced that the BJP would contest independently in the state—ranging from GHMC elections to Assembly elections—and noted that public confidence in the party was steadily growing. Confidence was expressed that the BJP would emerge victorious in the upcoming elections and subsequently form the government.

# Weekend-Special Drunk & Drive Checking's by Cyberabad Traffic Police

HYDERABAD

Cyberabad Traffic Police (CTP) has conducted a special drunk driving enforcement drive over the weekend, resulting in the apprehension of 205 offenders. The total cases booked 170 two wheelers, 8 three wheelers and 27 four wheelers. Based on the

Blood Alcohol Concentration (BAC) levels, 116 offenders had BAC levels ranging from 36 mg/100 ml to 200 mg/100 ml, 15 offenders had BAC levels ranging from 201 mg/100 ml to 300 mg/100 ml, 07 offenders had BAC levels ranging from 301 mg/100 ml to 550 mg/100 ml All the offenders will be

produced before the Court. Cyberabad Police reiterate that driving under the influence of alcohol is a serious offence. If anyone is found to be driving in an inebriated condition and causes a fatal accident, such individuals will be booked under Section 105 of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023 (Culpable

Homicide Not Amounting to Murder). The maximum punishment under this section is 10 years of imprisonment along with a fine. In the last week (March 30 to April 4), a total 47 drunk driving cases were disposed in the courts, 46 persons got fine only and one person got fine and social service.

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## SHORT TAKES

### One-way traffic trial run commences around KBR Park under H-CIT project

**HYDERABAD:** As part of the Hyderabad City Innovative & Transformative Infrastructure (H-CIT) project, construction work for a steel flyover and underpass is underway within the jurisdictions of Banjara Hills and Jubilee Hills traffic police stations. In this context, a one-way traffic trial run was conducted around KBR Park on Sunday, which was personally inspected by Hyderabad Commissioner of Police V.C. Sajjanar. The Commissioner visited the junctions along with Joint CP (traffic) D. Joel Davis, and other senior officials, covering the route from KBR main gate to Basavarakam Hospital, Agras Junction, Film Nagar, and Road No. 45 up to Jubilee Hills Check Post to monitor vehicle movement. This one-way traffic trial run was conducted only for Sunday. Regular traffic movement will be restored and allowed as usual from Monday. The observations and necessary improvements identified during today's trial run will be analysed and shared with GHMC officials shortly for further action. Based on the feedback and improvements, another trial run for the one-way system will be conducted in the future after providing prior information to the public. The Hyderabad city police expressed regret for any inconvenience caused during these infrastructure developments and seek public cooperation for safety and progress.

## 9-storey Rajagopuram... Temple Tank in the Northeast



### HYDERABAD:

The historic Basara Gnana Saraswati Temple—South India's only shrine dedicated to Goddess Gnana Saraswati and a revered destination for Aksharabhyasam—is set for a massive transformation. The Telangana government has sanctioned ₹225 crore for reconstruction works, to be carried out with the approval of the Sringeri Peetham. Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy will perform the groundbreaking ceremony on Monday.

### A Temple of Great Heritage

Located on the banks of the Godavari, often called the Dakshina Ganga, Basara holds immense spiritual significance. According to legend, Sage Veda Vyasa, seeking peace after the Kurukshetra war, stayed here and is believed to have installed the idols of Goddess Saraswati, Maha Lakshmi, and Maha Kali using Godavari sand—making Basara the sacred abode of the three deities.

### Hub of Learning

Each year, thousands of children are brought to the temple for Aksharabhyasam. Festivals like Vasantha Pan-

chami draw huge crowds. However, with rising footfall and limited infrastructure, devotees have long faced difficulties, prompting the government to initiate comprehensive development.

### Sringeri Peetham's Guidance

Before finalizing the master plan, the Endowments Department sought the approval of Sringeri Peetham. Their guidance shaped the designs for the Garbhagriha, Archa Mandapam, Rajagopuram, peripheral gopurams, Mada streets, and temple tank.

### Expanded Temple Complex

The redevelopment project aims to create a spacious, traditional, and future-ready temple environment:

- Sanctum and Archa Mandapam: expansion from 2,000 sq. ft. to 5,000 sq. ft.
- Rajagopuram: 9-storeyed structure on the north side
- Gopurams: 7-storeyed towers on the remaining three sides
- Mada Streets: 33-foot-wide passages encircling the temple
- Temple Area: expansion from 20,000 sq. ft. to 62,000 sq. ft.

### Stone Architecture and Modern Amenities

All major structures will be built in stone, maintaining traditional aesthetics while improving capacity and convenience. Key facilities include:

- Queue complexes (70,000 sq. ft.) for 6,000 devotees, with feeding rooms, food stalls, and restrooms
- Meditation hall for 200 persons
- Kitchen and dining space (20,000 sq. ft.)
- Prasadam distribution center
- Temple tank in the northeast
- Decorative arches and information center in the east
- Road improvements on northern and eastern sides
- Underpass, solar-roof parking, internal gardens, and future large-tree plantation
- Health center near the entrance

### Ready for Pushkaralu

With Godavari Pushkaralu scheduled for next June, the upgraded facilities will help manage the expected lakhs of devotees arriving for the holy dip. Officials affirmed that the works will preserve the temple's sanctity while ensuring a comfortable experience for visitors.



## Congress leaders grabbing 373 acres of govt land worth ₹7,000 crore: Harish

### HYDERABAD

Former Minister and BRS Deputy Floor Leader Harish Rao alleged that a significant illegal acquisition of 373 acres of government land valued at nearly ₹7,000 crore is currently taking place in Nadargul, Rangareddy district, allegedly with the support of individuals affiliated with the ruling party.

Addressing the media at Telangana Bhavan on Sunday, Harish Rao said the land is located in Survey No. 613 (new survey No. 119) in Nadargul and he accused senior Congress leaders and politically connected companies of trying to illegally take control of it.

He said poor farmers are being attacked and blocked from entering lands despite clear High Court rulings declaring the land as government property. The BRS MLA demanded immediate action from the government and warned that BRS leaders would visit the site if authorities fail to act by tomorrow morning.

Harish Rao said that since the Congress government came to power, lands belonging to Dalits, weaker sections, and poor cultivators are being systematically targeted, either under the guise of industrial activity or through outright land grabbing.

He alleged that in this case, the protectors themselves have become predators, and said the scam could not have proceeded without

political patronage from the highest levels of the state government. Harish Rao said that during the entire ten-year BRS government, these lands were carefully protected, but after the Congress came to power, the land was allegedly targeted within days.

Harish Rao specifically referred to women farmers such as Kausalya and Mamatha, saying they have depended on these lands for over 40 years, but are now being pressured to leave with token compensation offers of ₹5 lakh or ₹10 lakh. He said borewells and fencing have been damaged, and that women are being threatened by private musclemen while the police stand with the powerful instead of the poor.

The BRS MLA said this was a clear example of how the Congress government is treating the poor. He remarked that while earlier Congress governments used to at least claim to support cultivation by the poor, the present government is using hired men to dispossess them. He also attacked HYDRAA, asking why the same authority that swiftly demolishes poor people's houses on weekends is now remaining silent when a ₹7,000 crore land grab is happening in full public view. Harish Rao questioned Chief Minister Revanth Reddy, who often claims to protect lakes and public lands, asking why the government is blind to the encroachments in Nadargul.

## Photojournalism is the Eyes of Democracy: Former Vice President M. Venkaiah Naidu

### HYDERABAD

Former Vice President M. Venkaiah Naidu on Sunday stated that if journalism were a mighty tree, photojournalists would be its very life force. He remarked that the photojournalism serves as the eyes of democracy and urged everyone to protect and preserve it. The '23rd Best Photojournalist - 2025 Awards Presentation Ceremony', organized under the aegis of the Telangana State Photojournalists Association (TSPJA), was held on Sunday at the auditorium of the Telangana State Media Academy office in Nampally.



(The Hans India daily, Hyderabad) and the Third Prize to G. Balaswamy (Sakshi daily, Hyderabad). Additionally, ten other photojournalists—N. Rajesh (Sakshi daily, Hyderabad), G. Srinivas (Namasthe Telangana daily, Hyderabad), A. John (Sakshi daily, Hyderabad), R. Raju (Sakshi, Khammam), P. Vasu Prasad (Sakshi, Warangal), M. Srinivas (The Hans India, Nalgonda), G. Venugopal (Sakshi, Jangaon), M. Anil Kumar (Andhra Jyothy, Hyderabad), Veeragoni Rajinikanth Goud (Namasthe Telangana, Hyderabad), and A. Jwala Koteswara Rao (Andhra Jyothy, Hyderabad)—presented their work.

On this occasion, awards were presented to photojournalists, who demonstrated exceptional talent in the field of the photography. The First Prize was awarded to Indu Srinivas (Enadu daily, Nizamabad), the Second Prize to A. Krishna

Speaking on this occasion, Venkaiah Naidu remarked that while a reporter wields the pen, a photojournalist captures the essence of art. He noted that he had shared a close association with photojour-

nalists since 1964, when he served as the State Secretary of the ABVP. He pointed out that while there may be countless languages in the world, the photography was the only medium that transcends all linguistic barriers. He described a photograph as being worth a hundred words by adding that a single image can convey an emotion or sentiment that an entire article might fail to express.

Speaking on the occasion, State Press Academy K. Srinivasa Reddy observed that the journalism had undergone significant changes when compared to the past. He noted that current 'AI technology' had proven immensely beneficial across various sectors—particularly in the medical field—where it has ushered in transformative changes. He suggested that the photojournalists should also organize a dedicated meeting to discuss strategies on how to navigate and advance within the evolving landscape of AI technology?

Former Minister Ponnala Lakshmaiah, in his address, described the photojournalism as the vital medium that breathes life into the written truth.

Speaking on the occasion, IJU Steering Committee member Devulapalli Amar remarked that the naturalness inherent in direct photographs was something that artificially created images can never possess.

## Telangana as a Global Sports Hub



- \* Gachibowli Stadium with International Standards
- \* Aim to make the country a role model in sports
- \* Chief Minister Revanth Reddy at the Sports Hub Board Meeting

### HYDERABAD

Chief Minister Revanth Reddy stated that efforts should be made to develop Telangana into a global sports hub. On Sunday, a Sports Hub Board meeting was held under his leadership at a hotel in Banjara Hills. During the meeting, the Chief Minister discussed

the master plan for the development of Gachibowli Stadium with board members. He suggested that the stadium should be developed as an integrated sports complex so that Hyderabad becomes a destination for international sporting events.

He emphasized that Gachibowli Stadium should be equipped with state-of-the-art, world-class infrastructure for both indoor and outdoor sports, along with modern training facilities.

He also proposed the construction of athletics and football stadiums meeting international standards, and the establishment of training centers for various sports. The Chief Minister explained the master plan in

detail to the board members. He appealed to business leaders to come forward and contribute through CSR funds for the grand development of Gachibowli Stadium. He said their support would help make it the best model in the country. The government is also willing to allow branding opportunities for those who invest in the stadium's development.

The Chief Minister stated that Hyderabad should be developed as a role model for the country in sports. He instructed that an action plan be prepared by June 2. He also suggested that all world-class facilities, including a helipad, should be set up at Gachibowli Stadium, enabling sportspersons to travel directly from the airport to the sta-

dium by helicopter. He added that plans would be made in advance to ensure there are no financial issues in managing the stadium in the future. He mentioned that an architect has already been appointed for the stadium's development and that the board has been given full freedom in this regard.

The Chief Minister further said that the government is working with a long-term vision for the development of sports in Telangana.

The meeting was attended by Sports Hub members Konidela Upasana, Kavya Maran, Sanjiv Gonenka, C. Shashidhar, Special Chief Secretary (Sports) Jayesh Ranjan, Sports Authority of Telangana MD Soni Bala Devi, and others.

## Vivek pledges strict enforcement of Gig worker rights in Telangana

### HYDERABAD,

Gig workers, union leaders, and their family members met Labour and Mines Minister Dr. G. Vivek Venkatswamy at his residence in Somajiguda, Hyderabad on Sunday and expressed their gratitude to the State government for enacting a historic law for gig workers. The Telangana Platform-Based Gig Workers (Registration, Social Security and Welfare) Act, 2026 was recently passed in the Assembly during the Budget Session, marking a significant milestone in protecting the rights and welfare of gig workers.

The delegation conveyed their heartfelt appreciation to the Minister and the Chief Minister for their proactive leadership and commitment in ensuring the passage of this progressive legislation. They also acknowledged the dedicated efforts of Labour department officials whose extensive groundwork made this

achievement possible.

Speaking on the occasion, the Minister stated that the Congress government has always stood by the poor and the real heroes who form the backbone of the economy. He emphasized that gig workers play a vital role in the rapidly evolving platform-based economy driven by aggregator companies. The Minister further noted that continuous efforts are required to strengthen the implementation and enforcement of the law in the coming days. Reaffirming the government's commitment, he said that no section of society will be left behind, and welfare schemes will reach every last person.

The gig workers' delegation was led by Telangana Gig and Platform Workers Union President Shaik Salaudhin, who thanked Chief Minister Revanth Reddy and the Minister for introducing this landmark legislation. He stated that lakhs of families will benefit from the Act.

## Telangana on the Path of Equality Inspired by Jagjivan Ram's Ideals

### Congress committed to Dalit dignity

### 30 crore Jagjivan Ram Bhavan in Kachiguda

### Ambedkar Knowledge Park to be built at Lower Tank Bund

### Welfare Minister Adhuri Laxman Kumar

### HYDERABAD

Welfare Minister Adhuri Laxman Kumar stated that the birth anniversary celebrations of Jagjivan Ram should not be limited to remembrance alone but should be turned into a day of resolve to carry forward the Dalit self-respect movement. He emphasized that the Telangana government is moving forward on the path shown by the great leader—equality, justice, and self-respect.

Speaking at the event held on the occasion of the 119th birth anniversary of Jagjivan Ram, the minister said that the Congress party has always stood by Dalits, the poor, and marginalized sections. He noted that the state government's decision to con-



duct the celebrations in a grand manner reflects its respect for Dalits.

He described Jagjivan Ram as a Great leader who stood as a symbol of Dalit dignity and said his struggle against caste discrimination remains an inspiration to present and future generations.

The minister announced that a Dr. Babu Jagjivan Ram Bhavan is being constructed at Nimbole Adda in Kachiguda with a budget of ₹30 crore. He also revealed that a Dr. B.R. Ambedkar Knowledge Park with no less than ten floors will be established at Lower Tank Bund, thanking Chief Minister Revanth Reddy for approv-

ing the project.

He praised Jagjivan Ram as a rare leader who stood for the oppressed even while being in power and proved through his actions that "given an opportunity, a Dalit can rise to the highest leadership."

The minister stated that the Indian National Congress not only brought independence to the country but also laid the foundation for social equality. He added that constitutional rights and reservations for SC and ST communities were achieved through the Congress vision. He also highlighted Congress efforts in land reforms and expanding educational opportunities

for the poor.

Under the leadership of Chief Minister Revanth Reddy, governance in the state is being carried out transparently, with a clear commitment that "Dalit development is a priority," the minister said. He emphasized that the goal is not just welfare but also ensuring participation in power.

He announced that steps are being taken to provide strong support for Dalit students in higher education and that special coaching centers for competitive exams like IAS, IPS, and Group 1, 2, 3, and 4 will be launched soon. The government is also focusing on employment opportunities, skill development, and self-employment for youth.

The minister revealed plans to construct a 10-storey Ambedkar Tower near Hyderabad Tank Bund at a cost of ₹100 crore. He also mentioned that a new hostel building with modern facilities will be constructed at Nimbole Gadda.

He said special plans are being implemented at the village level for Dalit development and that women's empowerment is being given priority. The government is adopting a people-centric approach and supporting every weaker section.

"Dalit vote is not important—Dalit dignity is what matters to Congress. Under Congress rule, there is not fear but assurance," the minister said. He reiterated that the goal is to ensure development reaches the last person and to build a discrimination-free Telangana.

In conclusion, he raised slogans: "Victory to the ideals of Jagjivan Ram, Dalit unity is our strength, social justice is Congress's duty." He affirmed that the government is committed to ensuring dignity for every Dalit family and opportunities for every youth, adding, "We will realize Jagjivan Ram's dream of India in Telangana."

Former Governor Dattatreya, Ministers Vivek Venkatswamy and Damodara Rajanarasimha, MP Mallu Ravi, former MP V. Hanumantha Rao, MLC and Council Whip Addanki Dayakar Rao, MLAs Kavvampalli Satyanarayana, Mandula Samuel, Nagaraju, former IPS officer R.S. Praveen Kumar, Professor Kasim, SI Corporation Chairman Preetham, JB Raju, Medi Papayya, festival committee leaders, and several Dalit leaders attended the event and paid rich tributes to Jagjivan Ram. Songs rendered by noted artist Epurri Somanna captivated the audience.

## Andhra cop suspended over alleged role in honour killing case

AMARAVATI, APRIL 5

A police officer in Andhra Pradesh's Palnadu district has been suspended for his alleged involvement in an honour killing case. Circle Inspector T. Venkataramana was suspended on Sunday by District Superintendent of Police Krishna Rao following allegations that he accepted money from the parents of a 22-year-old woman and handed her over to them despite her having entered into a love marriage. This act by the police officer is alleged to have directly contributed to her subsequent killing. The woman, Chowdeswari, was allegedly strangled to death by her father in Macherla town.

She died on March 18, 2026, and the case was initially suspected to be a suicide. However, the post-mortem report, which came out on April 4, indicated that it was not a suicide.

Chowdeswari, a resident of Yadava Bazar in Macherla town, fell in love with Nagaraju from Jammalamadaka in the same district. However, her family opposed the relationship as they had fixed her marriage with another person. On March 4, she escaped from her home and reportedly married Na-



garaju. The woman's father, Chandra Sreenu, lodged a missing complaint with the Macherla police. Her family members had also staged a protest in front of the police station, alleging inaction in tracing the missing woman. The newly-wed couple was subsequently summoned by the police and, during the enquiry, Chowdeswari told the police that she was a major and that the marriage had been performed with her consent. When community elders tried to counsel her, she said she wanted to go with her husband and live with him. However, the police reportedly sent the woman with her parents. On March 18, Chandra Sreenu, along with another person, allegedly strangled his daughter to death while she was asleep. They then attempted to project it as a case of suicide. Following the post-mortem report, the police took Chandra Sreenu into custody and launched an investigation.

## Andhra town tense as temple row escalates; several detained

AMARAVATI, APRIL 5

Tension gripped Akividu town in Andhra Pradesh's West Godavari district on Sunday as police took leaders of some organisations into custody while they were heading to the town to demand construction of a temple at a structure that houses a local deity. Police stopped leaders and workers of Hindu groups marching towards the town from various places and took them into custody. Additional forces have been deployed in the town in view of the call given by Hindu organisations for a rally amid the dispute between sections of Hindus, and Dalits. Prohibitory orders have been imposed in the town to prevent any gathering. Police made it clear that there is no permission for any rally or public meeting. Police officers warned that strict action would be taken against anyone violating the prohibitory orders. Police set up a checkpoint near the town to check every vehicle entering the area. Buses of the Road Transport Corporation (RTC) were also being checked to ensure that outsiders do not enter the town to create disturbances. Actress Karate Kalyani



was stopped and detained by police at Kaikalur in Eluru district as she was heading to Akividu in support of the demand for construction of a Ram temple. Kalyani was placed under preventive detention to stop her from reaching Akividu. She condemned the police action. In a video message to her supporters, she appealed to them not to lose hope and said she would visit Akividu one day. Last week, the convoy of Deputy Speaker K. Raghurama Krishna Raju came under attack from a group of people after he garlanded an idol of Lord Ram at a temple in the Pedapeta area of Akividu on the occasion of Sri Ram Navami. Local Dalits had urged the Deputy Speaker not to garland the idol. However, after he did so and got into his car, some people raising 'Jai Bhim' slogans attacked the convoy with stones and sticks, injuring three persons.

## Film insulting Vijay won't even last a day, warns TVK leader

TVK leader Aadhav Arjuna said attempts to degrade their leader through cinema were part of a political ploy and questioned who had given filmmakers the authority to make a movie targeting Vijay.



TVK leader Aadhav Arjuna on Saturday alleged that the DMK and BJP were behind an upcoming film that he claimed was aimed at insulting party chief Vijay, warning that such a movie "will not last even a day" in theatres. Speaking to reporters, Arjuna said attempts to degrade their leader through cinema were part of a political ploy and questioned who had given

filmmakers the authority to make a movie targeting Vijay. Referring to Jananayagan, he asked how a politically driven film could be allowed for release if Vijay's own film was facing hurdles. Though he said he was unaware of the movie's content, Arjuna claimed he had received information suggesting both the BJP and DMK were operating

behind the scenes. He asserted that the audience response to Vijay's films, with teasers drawing 10 to 15 crore views, reflected the leader's mass appeal and said any film made against him would fail to sustain even for half a day. Earlier, Actor-turned-politician and TVK chief Vijay has come under scrutiny after discrepan-

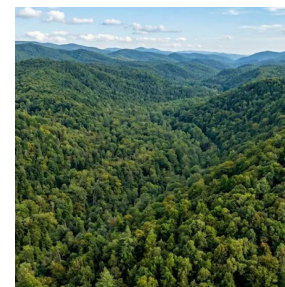
cies surfaced in his election affidavits regarding pending criminal cases, raising questions over disclosure norms ahead of the upcoming Tamil Nadu Assembly polls.

According to documents reviewed by India Today TV, Vijay's affidavit filed from Perambur stated that there are no pending cases against him. However, his affidavit from Tiruchirappalli (East) mentioned two cases as pending.

The mismatch has triggered concerns over the accuracy and completeness of his declarations. Legal experts indicated that the only corrective course available in such a situation is the submission of a revised affidavit clarifying the discrepancies.

## Kerala techie goes missing during trek in Karnataka, no trace of her for 4 days

A tourist from Kerala went missing inside a forest in Karnataka's Kodagu district earlier this week during a trek in the Tadiandamol hills there. A major search operation, involving drones, has been initiated to locate the woman. GS Sharanya, a 36-year-old IT professional, was on a solo trip and stayed at a private homestay in Kakkabe village, according to news agency PTI. Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan on Sunday wrote to his Karnataka counterpart, Siddaramaiah, urging him to personally intervene to strengthen the search efforts. Noting that Sharanya has been missing since Thursday, April 2, he also expressed the Kerala government's "anxiety" about the development. "It is understood that a search is being conducted to trace her. I request your kind personal intervention in the matter," Vijayan said in his letter addressed to Siddaramaiah. The Kerala CM added, "Directions may be issued to augment the strength of the search teams so that Saranya is traced at the earliest and brought home safely (sic)."



Meanwhile, Karnataka Forest Minister Eshwar Khandre said additional personnel and drones have been pressed into action to track the missing woman. He said that CM Siddaramaiah expressed concern about Sharanya's disappearance and instructed that the search operations be intensified, per PTI. News reports suggested that Sharanya originally sought permission from local forest authorities to trek the Tadiandamol hills alone. However, the forest personnel reportedly dismissed the request and asked her to join a group of other trekkers due to the threat posed by wild elephants in the area. Reports say that while Sharanya did join those trekkers, she was found to be missing when they returned to the foothills in the evening after exploring the trail.

## Neutrality of polls can't be assured if EC dependent on contestants: Justice Nagarathna

NEW DELHI, APR 5:

Neutrality of elections cannot be assured if those who conduct polls are dependent on the contestants, Justice BV Nagarathna of the Supreme Court has said, in a veiled admonishment of the Election Commission. The apex court judge raised a critical concern regarding the structural independence of those tasked with overseeing the ballot while delivering the Rajendra Prasad Memorial Lecture at the Chanakya Law University in Patna on Saturday. Citing a 1995 verdict where the Supreme Court recognised the Election Commission as a constitutional authority of high significance, entrusted with ensuring the integrity of elections, she said, "The concern, once again, was structural: if those who conduct elections are dependent on those who contest them,



the neutrality of the process cannot be assured."

Justice Nagarathna said elections are not merely periodic events but a mechanism through which political authority is constituted. "Our constitutional democracy has amply demonstrated smooth changes in government due to elections being held on a timely basis. Control over that process is, in effect, control over the conditions of political competition itself," she said. The Supreme Court judge said that power is not exercised only through formal insti-

tutions but also through the processes that sustain them, including elections, public finance and regulation. "A constitutional structure that seeks to restrain power must therefore go beyond its classical forms and address these fourth-branch institutions. "A set of institutions, while not always fitting within the classical tripartite scheme, is nonetheless central to the maintenance of constitutional order," she said. Justice Nagarathna said the unmistakable lesson of history is that constitutional-collapse occurs

through the disabling of its structure, and the violation of rights merely follows. "The dismantling of structure, in turn, occurs when institutions stop checking each other. At that moment, elections may continue, courts may function, laws may be enacted by Parliament, and yet, power is effectively not restrained because the structural discipline no longer exists," she said. The apex court judge also urged the Centre to view states as "coordinates and not subordinates" and asserted that the separation of powers was a "constitutional arrangement of co-equals."

Justice Nagarathna also called for keeping aside "inter-party differences" in the matter of "Centre-state relations", underscoring that governance must not depend on "which party may be ruling the Centre and which other party may be ruling at the state level."

## 3 held after toxic liquor kills three in UP's Bahraich

MEERUT (UP): (APR 5)

Police have arrested three people, including a woman, after three men drank alcohol from the same bottle and died, officials said on Sunday, adding that their suspected foul play. According to police, the three victims -- Baburam (60), a grocery shop owner, Jitendra (35), who worked at his shop and Ankit alias Daulat (40) -- purchased liquor from a government-licensed country liquor outlet on Friday evening and began drinking at the spot. However, soon after, they began vomiting and complained of abdominal pain. They were rushed to a hospital where Jitendra and Ankit were declared dead, and Baburam passed away during treatment.

## 'Winds of change blowing in Kerala': Kharge predicts UDF sweep

IDUKKI (KERALA), APRIL 5

Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge said on Sunday that winds of change are blowing in Kerala and the Congress-led United Democratic Front is sure to form the government after the April 9 elections. "Change is coming. You be ready, and if you all support, definitely Congress will come... 100 per cent this time," he said, adding: "Today, after our strong victory in local body elections across Idukki, it is clear the people are shifting towards the UDF." Addressing an election meeting here, Kharge predicted that the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) will not be a single assembly seat, saying the people of Kerala are aware and educated enough to understand the BJP's communal and divisive designs. The Congress president alleged a hidden pact be-



tween the ruling Left Democratic Front and the BJP and said that they are two sides of the same coin. He said Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan is following the path of Prime Minister Narendra Modi. He said Kerala has always been a beacon of progressive thinking, social justice and education, but during the last 10 years under the Left Democratic Front rule, the state had slipped from the path of progress. Kharge said the state debt has touched Rs 6 lakh crore, while the unemployment rate reached 30 per cent, the highest in the country. The youth,

he said, were being forced to move to different places in search of jobs. He alleged that the LDF government is plagued by corruption scandals ranging from gold smuggling to scams in infrastructure development, the Sabarimala gold theft case and the Cochin Minerals financial deal. He said farmers, fishermen, small traders and many others feel abandoned. "Welfare schemes are either delayed or poorly implemented," he noted, adding that "rising debt, visionless governance and shrinking opportunities have pushed the state into uncertainty and hopelessness". Referring to the proposed amendments to the Foreign Contribution Regulation Act, Kharge said PM Modi's intention is not reform but to target Christian institutions that have served the nation in education, healthcare and charity for decades.



## Vote for Change - The Future Lies with Congress

"We will implement the Telangana model in Kerala" - Revenue Minister Ponguleti Srinivasa Reddy

HYDERABAD:

Telangana State Revenue, Housing, Information & Public Relations Minister Mr. Ponguleti Srinivasa Reddy stated that if the UDF government comes to power in Kerala, every promise made to the people will be implemented just like the welfare schemes being carried out by the Congress government in Telangana. He conducted election campaigning on Sunday in support of UDF candidate Mutharaj in the Mavelikkara Assembly constituency. Speaking on the occasion, the minister said that after the Congress government came to power in Telangana, it has upheld people's trust by implementing the six guarantees in a transparent and efficient manner. Similarly, he assured that if a UDF government is formed in Kerala, the five guarantees will be fully implemented. He criticized the LDF government, stating that its rule over the past

ten years has disappointed the people of Kerala. He said the LDF government has completely failed in key areas such as development, employment opportunities, and attracting investments. "The people of Kerala are seeking a clear change this time. They should put an end to ten years of ineffective governance and hand over power to the UDF for development and transparent administration," the minister urged. He also stated that there is no place in Kerala for the BJP, which he accused of promoting divisive politics and creating differences among people across the country. He emphasized that the UDF is the only real alternative for the people in the state. "This is not an ordinary election... it is an election that will decide the future of Kerala. The people will make the right decision, overthrow the LDF government, and form a UDF government," Minister Ponguleti Srinivasa Reddy expressed confidence.

# PM Modi terms Bengal polls as 'bhay vs bharosa'

Cites Malda gherao to brand TMC rule as 'Maha Jungle Raj.. Addresses first rally in Bengal at Cooch Behar

COOCH BEHAR, APR 5:

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday made the Malda gherao of judicial officers the centrepiece of the BJP's campaign on lawlessness in West Bengal, alleging it reflected the TMC's "sponsored maha jungleraj" and framing the assembly polls as a battle between the "bhay" (fear) spread by the ruling party and the BJP's "bharosa" (trust). Addressing his first rally in Bengal after the election schedule was announced, Modi used the Malda incident to sharpen the BJP's twin campaign planks of collapsing law and order and alleged demographic change, while also invoking issues like Sandeshkhali, infiltration, corruption and unemployment to attack the Mamata Banerjee government. Modi cast the coming

election as a battle for Bengal's future and warned that "chun chun ke hisab hoga (all atrocities will be accounted for)" for the alleged atrocities committed by TMC goons once the results are declared on May 4. Striking a note of certainty amid allegations of poll-time intimidation, Modi said he had "full faith" in the Election Commission and predicted that Bengal would witness a free and fearless election this time. "The pot of TMC's sins is now full. The people want change. Today's rally reflects the mood of Bengal. Bengal wants a BJP government," the PM said. "This cruel government is staining democracy with blood every day on the sacred soil of Bengal. It does not care for any constitutional institution," he alleged. Two or three days ago, the whole country saw how judicial of-

ficers were held hostage in Malda, Modi said. The PM was referring to Wednesday night's incident at Malda's Kaliachak, where seven judicial officers, including three women, were gheraoed for hours by a mob during hearings on names marked "under adjudication" in the draft electoral rolls prepared during the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) exercise. "What kind of government is this? What kind of system is this where even judges and the constitutional process are not safe? How can such people ensure the safety of Bengal's common people?" Modi said. "What happened in Malda was not merely the arrogance of the TMC. It was the sponsored maha jungleraj of this cruel government. Whenever the noose of justice tightens around the TMC, it tries to strangle constitution-



al institutions," he alleged. He claimed that the situation had become so grave that even the Supreme Court had to intervene and accused the ruling party of being "bent on carrying out the funeral procession of law and order" in Bengal. Modi also sought to frame the contest in binary terms. "On one side, there is the 'bhay' (fear) of the TMC, and on the other side, you have the BJP's

'bharosa' (trust). On one side is the fear of TMC's cut money and corruption, and on the other side is the BJP which accelerates development," he said. The PM also contrasted the fear of infiltration and settling foreigners in Bengal with the BJP's confidence in stopping infiltration and driving infiltrators out. "On one side is the fear of losing freedom on one's own land because

of changing demography. On the other side is BJP's confidence of living with pride on one's own soil, and head held high," he said. Seeking to consolidate Hindu refugee and Matua votes in the border districts, Modi accused the TMC of opposing the SIR and the Citizenship Amendment Act to protect infiltrators. "The TMC is opposing SIR and CAA to protect infiltrators. It does not want Hindu refugees to get citizenship and that is why it is opposing CAA. During 15 years of TMC rule, there has been a dangerous change in demography in Bengal's border areas. These infiltrators get direct protection from the TMC syndicate. In this politics of appeasement, Bengal's identity is being changed," he alleged. Modi also referred to the "Lal Ishthihar" issued before the 1905 communal ri-

ots in undivided Bengal and alleged that the ruling party was playing a "dangerous game of appeasement". "You must have seen that the TMC recently released its manifesto. They did not even give it a Bengali name. Instead, they are calling it an 'Ishthihar'. Just think how they are trying to change Bengal's identity," he said. Modi promised that after May 4, every alleged act of corruption and violence under the TMC would be accounted for. "After May 4, the law will take its course. Every one of their sins will be accounted for. Chun chun ke hisab hoga. No matter how powerful the criminal may be, justice will be done this time," he said. Once India's showpiece state in trade, industry, art and culture, Bengal had lost its sheen under the successive "eclipses" of the Congress, the Left and

now the TMC, Modi claimed, alleging that a state whose average citizen once earned more than the national average had now slipped below it. "Earlier, people in Bengal earned more than the national average. Today their income is below the national average. Other states are moving ahead, but the TMC has pushed Bengal backwards. Factories are leaving Bengal. Earlier, people came here for jobs. This government has turned Bengal into a centre of migration," he alleged. The TMC dismissed Modi's remarks as "desperate election rhetoric", alleging that the BJP was distorting the Malda incident and trying to communalise the campaign. Polling for the 294-member West Bengal Assembly will be held in two phases on April 23 and April 29, with counting scheduled for May 4.

## Girl chained, beaten over guava theft; video shocks

A shocking case of alleged child abuse has surfaced from Una district in Himachal Pradesh, where a minor girl was reportedly tied up and beaten by a retired Army personnel for plucking guavas from a tree outside his house. According to information, the victim is the daughter of a migrant family. Her alleged "offence" was that she had plucked guavas from a tree near the accused's residence. Police said the accused allegedly took the girl inside his house, tied her to a staircase with a chain and assaulted her. A local young man working in the merchant navy recorded a video of the incident, which has since surfaced online. In the video, the child can be seen crying and pleading with the person recording to save her, while the accused is heard justifying his actions, saying she had stolen guavas. The person filming is also heard questioning the accused over the assault. The witness, identified as Rohit, said he alerted the child helpline and police about the incident. According to him, the accused later apologised to the victim's family and admitted his mistake. Taking cognisance of the incident, police questioned the retired Army man, recorded statements of the victim's family and conducted a medical examination of the girl.

## Fake IT officers held for targeting UP shopkeepers

Fake I-T raid in Ghazipur: Traders later filed a complaint at Shadiyabad police station, demanding a thorough investigation and strict action against the culprits. A gang posing as Income Tax officials has been busted in Uttar Pradesh after shopkeepers in Ghazipur's Shadiyabad market alerted police to an extortion attempt. The shopkeepers caught three members of the gang and handed them over to the police, while the gang leader escaped. Confirming their arrests, Ghazipur City SP Rakesh Mishra said teams have been formed to arrest the mastermind - Sars Kumar Gupta. Shopkeepers in Shadiyabad and Saidpur markets had been complaining about extortion by a gang for several days. The gang members posed as income tax officials, conducted fake raids on shops, and intimidated shopkeepers into handing over large sums of money. The problem reached a tipping point when a group of shopkeepers informed Ikramul Haq, president of the Industrial Trade Board, about the "income-tax raids" in Shadiyabad market. They had turned suspicious about these raids following their interaction with the gang members.

## TMC, BJP move EC over hate speeches against Mamata, Shah

KOLKATA: (Apr 5) The TMC and the BJP on Sunday moved the Election Commission against each other over alleged threats, hate speeches and abusive remarks in the latest flash-point of an increasingly venomous battle weeks ahead of the 2026 West Bengal assembly polls. At the centre of the row is the BJP's Panihati candidate, the mother of the RG Kar hospital doctor who was raped and murdered last year, and TMC MP Kalyan Banerjee, whose provocative comments against Union Home Minister Amit Shah have now triggered a counter-complaint by the saffron camp.

# "Ideology is the strength of the BJP"

KARIMNAGAR, APRIL 05

Union Minister of State for Home Affairs Bandi Sanjay Kumar stated that the main reason for the Bharatiya Janata Party coming to power three consecutive times and emerging as the largest party in the world is the strength of its ideology. He said that the BJP follows the Antyodaya principle, which aims to deliver development and welfare benefits to the poorest of the poor, and praised Prime Minister Narendra Modi as a great leader who is implementing these principles with precision. Following the BJP's call, Bandi Sanjay Kumar hoisted the party flag at his residence this morning. On the occasion of the BJP Foundation Day tomorrow (April 6), he issued a statement to the media extending greetings to all party

**"The BJP's ideology is to ensure that even the poorest of the poor receive the benefits of development and welfare."**  
**"Our goal is to make India the world's leading nation by 2047.": Union Minister Bandi Sanjay Kumar**  
**Union Minister hoisted the party flag at his residence on the occasion of the Bharatiya Janata Party Foundation Day**  
**Bandi Sanjay extended Foundation Day greetings to all BJP workers**



workers. He said: "The BJP's journey, which began with just 2 seats, is today continuing uninterrupted governance at the Centre for 12 years under the leadership of Narendra Modi. The very parties that mocked what could be achieved with 2 seats have disappeared over time due to the rise of the BJP. The reason for this is the

ideological strength and nationalist spirit of the BJP. The Modi government is implementing Pandit Deendayal's Antyodaya philosophy, which aims to deliver government schemes to the last person in society."  
**Highlighting Prime Minister Narendra Modi's governance achievements, he said:**  
"With the abrogation of Article 370, freedom was ensured for the people of Kashmir. The construction of the Ram Temple in Ayodhya fulfilled the aspirations of millions of Hindus. The Modi government also took revolutionary steps such as abolishing

triple talaq, implementing the CAA, and passing amendments to the Waqf Board. Through operations like 'Operation Sindoor' and surgical strikes, Modi demonstrated strong leadership that instilled fear in enemy nations."  
He further praised Modi, stating that he has lifted 250 million people out of poverty and implemented numerous welfare schemes for the people of the country. He expressed hope that everyone would become a partner in the efforts being made by the Modi government with the firm determination to make India the number one country in the world by 2047.



## 800 tourists stranded in Sikkim's Lachen after road breach

Around 800 tourists are stranded at Lachen in Sikkim's Mangan district as the road connecting it to Chungthang has been closed due to a breach, officials said on Sunday. The breach occurred near the Tarum Chu bridge on the Lachen-Chungthang Road, they said. The Mangan district administration has issued a public advisory announcing the temporary closure of the road near Tarum Chu Bridge, leaving the 800 tourists stranded in Lachen, they said. According to officials, all tourists currently in Lachen have been instructed to remain where they are and avoid any movement for the night due to unsafe weather conditions and potential risks along the route. Authorities have planned an evacuation operation for stranded tourists on Monday morning, subject to improvement in weather conditions and successful snow clearance along the Dongkya La axis. The evacuation route is expected to pass through Lachen-Dongkya La-Lachung-Gangtok. The district administration is working in close coordination with multiple agencies, including police, ITBP, Border Roads Organisation (BRO), and the Indian Army, to ensure a safe and timely evacuation. Officials stated that road restoration and snow clearing efforts are being carried out on a war footing. However, the exact timing of the evacuation will depend on real-time assessments of weather and road safety.

## NFR strengthens connectivity

by extending and operating special train services  
MALIGAON, 05 APRIL, 2026

To clear the additional rush of passengers, the services of weekly special train no. 06571/06572 (Yesvantpur Jn. - Katihar - YesvantpurJn.) has been extended to operate for another 15 (Fifteen) additional trips each in both directions. The extension of this train will help clear additional passenger rush and strengthen connectivity between Southern and Eastern parts of the country, benefiting passengers from Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Odisha, West Bengal and Bihar, along with improved access for travellers from the Northeast. Additionally, it has been decided to operate a special train no. 08047/08048 (Santragachi - Naharlagun - Santragachi) for 12 (Twelve) trips. Operations of this special train will help passengers in travelling towards their destination for different purposes like summer holidays, exams, medical etc. Also, waiting listed passengers of other trains in these routes can avail the facility.



Train No. 06571 (Yesvantpur Jn. - Katihar) weekly special has been extended to run on every Tuesday from 07th of April 2026 to 14th of July 2026. In return direction, train no. 06572 (Katihar - YesvantpurJn.) weekly special has been extended to run on every Friday from 10th of April 2026 to 17th of July 2026. This train will operate with the existing schedule of service, timings, composition and stoppages. Special train no. 08047 (Santragachi - Naharlagun), will depart from Santragachi on every Friday at 18:00 hours from 10th of April 2026 to 26th of June 2026 to reach Naharlagun at 20:50 hours on the next day. Similarly, Special train no. 08048 (Naharlagun - Santragachi), will depart from Naharlagun on every Saturday at 23:55 hours from 11th of April 2026 to 27th of June 2026 to reach Santragachi at 04:15 hours of Monday. Enroute, it will halt at important stations including Bardhaman, Malda Town, Siliguri Jn., Kokrajhar, Rangiyand Rangapara North, among other stoppages. The train will run with a composition of AC 2-tier, AC 3-tier and Sleeper Class coaches for the convenience of passengers. The operation and extension of these special train services will significantly benefit passengers by providing additional travel options and easing congestion on busy routes. The details of stoppages and timings of these trains are available at IRCTC website and social media platforms of N. F. Railway. Passengers are requested to verify the details before undertaking their journey.

# Under the aegis of the NARSA, a farewell and felicitation was organized on April 4, 2026

GORAKHPUR, APRIL 04, 2026:

Under the aegis of the North Eastern Railway Sports Association (NARSA), a farewell and felicitation was organized on April 4, 2026, at the Railway Officers' Club, Gorakhpur, on the occasion of the transfer of the General Secretary / NARSA and outgoing Chief Public Relations Officer, Shri Pankaj Kumar Singh, to the post of Senior Divisional Engineer (Coordination) in the Lucknow Division. On this occasion, Chief Administrative Officer (Construction) and President/NARSA Shri Abhay Kumar Gupta, Secretary to the General Manager Shri Anand Rishi Srivastava, Chairman/Railway Recruitment Cell (RRC) Shri Rajesh Kumar Gupta, Deputy Chief Vigilance Officer (Stores) and Secretary/Handball Shri Krishna Chandra Singh, Treasurer/NARSA Shri Sudhir Srivastava, Assis-



tant Sports Officer Shri Chandra Vijay Singh, along with coaches of various sports, a large number of and sports enthusiasts were present. During the event, Chief Administrative Officer (Construction) and President/NARSA Shri Abhay Kumar Gupta extended his to Shri Pankaj Kumar Singh for his new responsibilities and wished him a bright future and a happy life. The was conducted by Shri Asif Zaheer, while Assistant Sports Officer Shri Chandra Vijay Singh welcomed the guests and delivered the vote of thanks. In addition, at a farewell function held in the Public Relations Office, outgoing Chief Public Relations Officer Shri Pankaj Kumar Singh was given an emotional farewell, and the newly appointed Chief Public Relations Officer of North Eastern Railway, Shri Sumit Kumar, was accorded a grand welcome. Shri Sumit Kumar honored Shri Pankaj Kumar Singh with a memento on behalf of the Public Relations

Department and extended his best wishes for his new role. Inspectors and staff of the Public Relations Department were present on this occasion. Shri Sumit Kumar stated that Shri Pankaj Kumar Singh had performed commendably during his tenure as Chief Public Relations Officer. He added that Shri Singh made valuable contributions in the field of sports in North Eastern Railway and ensured that all events were conducted in a highly organized manner. He also extended his for his new assignment. Outgoing Chief Public Relations Officer Shri Pankaj Kumar Singh remarked that new challenges arise every day in the Public Relations Department, which can be handled with patience and firm determination. He also shared his experiences and expressed gratitude to all officers and staff of the department for their continuous

support. While conducting the program, Advisor/Public Relations Shri Chandra Prakash Chauhan highlighted Shri Pankaj Kumar Singh's personality and achievements. He said that Shri Singh took charge as Chief Public Relations Officer on June 10, 2019, and soon emerged as an efficient media manager. He had a deep interest in sports. Considering his administrative capabilities, under his supervision, the Indian Railways badminton team visited Poland, where it won all matches and secured victory in a world-level tournament. He further mentioned that Shri Singh undertook several initiatives for the Public Relations Department, including the establishment of an archive in 2019 and the construction of a studio in the auditorium, from where podcasts of North Eastern Railway were launched.

# Mechanical Department powers NFR's growth with key milestones and innovations

MALIGAON, 04 APRIL, 2026:

The Mechanical Department of Northeast Frontier Railway (NFR) recorded significant achievements during FY 2025-26, with a strong focus on safety, modernization and capacity enhancement. Operationally, NFR strengthened its maintenance capabilities, expanded train services and augmented coach capacity, enhancing overall efficiency and ensuring a safer, more reliable and passenger-centric travel experience. The improvements in onboard safety



systems have significantly upgraded fire safety standards, while advancements in maintenance practices and infrastructure have contributed to better reliability and service quality. Key milestones such as the overhaul of specialized assets and modernization of coaching stock have further improved operational readiness, passenger comfort and hygiene, reinforcing NFR's commitment to safe, efficient and customer-focused railway services. In terms of operational expansion and modernization, NFR achieved several firsts. Maintenance of the Vande Bharat Sleeper Train has been initiated at Kamakhya Coaching Depot. Additionally, maintenance of eight Amrit Bharat trains has begun in the zone. Infrastructure augmentation included commissioning of two new Self-Propelled Accident Relief Medical Equipment (SPARME) at New Bongaigaon and New Guwahati. To cater to growing demand, 22 coaches were augmented

across 21 trains. A Test Rake has also been commissioned in the Rangiya division to enhance the accuracy of weightment in Electronic In-Motion Weigh Bridge (EIMWB), further strengthening operational efficiency. In a major safety initiative, 3416 Aerosol-based fire suppression systems have been installed in electrical panels across coaches, while manual Fire Detection and Suppression Systems in all pantry and power cars have been successfully upgraded to automatic systems, significantly improving onboard safety standards.

and Jind-Bhiwani roads (RD 5-375 to 5-567; road ID 10121). The Chief Minister also laid the foundation for widening and strengthening of the Nirjan approach road, and the Kandela route via Safidon—covering Haibatpur, Khokhri, Bohatwala and Dalamwala villages—from Parshuram Chowk to the bypass. These works will be undertaken at a cost of Rs. 4 crore 56 lakh 90 thousand. Under the CRIF scheme, foundation stones were laid for the four-laning, widening and strengthening of the Panipat-Safidon (State Highway-11) and Safidon-Jind (State Highway-14) corridors, involving an expenditure of Rs. 56 crore 61 lakh 4 thousand. Further, the Chief Minister initiated the construction of an Integrated Sainik Sadan by the District Sainik and Ardh Sainik Welfare Department at a cost of Rs. 9 crore 98 lakh

# CM unveils Rs 253 crore projects in Jind

major fillip for irrigation, roads, health and water supply

CHANDIGARH, APRIL 5

Haryana Chief Minister, Sh. Nayab Singh Saini on Sunday unveiled development projects worth Rs. 253 crore at a 'Dhanyawad Evam Vikas Rally' in Jind, signalling a major push to infrastructure and public services in the district.



The Chief Minister laid the foundation stones of 12 projects worth Rs. 140 crore 87 lakh 8 thousand and inaugurated three projects with a combined cost of Rs. 112 crore 14 lakh 10 thousand. Among the key inaugurations is the reconstruction of Jind Distributary No. 4, completed by the Irrigation and Water Resources Department at a cost of Rs. 16 crore 28 lakh 30 thousand. Also inaugurated were modern micro-irrigation systems at the village level, solar-powered irrigation facilities, and a balancing reservoir for water storage in Intal Khurd village, developed at a cost of Rs. 39 crore 49 lakh 80 thousand. The Chief Minister also dedicated the Dr. B.R. Ambedkar Library building at Chaudhary Ranbir Singh University, built at a cost of Rs. 56 crore 36 lakh. Furthermore, stepping up infrastructure push, the Chief Minister on Sunday laid the foundation stone of projects spanning agriculture marketing, housing, roads, health, drainage and water supply, including a purchase centre at Manoharpur village by the Haryana State Agricultural Marketing Board at a cost of Rs 3 crore 18 lakh 81 thousand, 56 residential units for revenue officers in Officers' Colony to be constructed by the Public Works Department (B&R) at Rs 16 crore 61 lakh 4 thousand, special repair of the Dalamwala-Jeevanpur-Nagura and Dariyawa-Barasola road, and widening and strengthening of the bypass connecting the Jind-Hansi

and Jind-Bhiwani roads (RD 5-375 to 5-567; road ID 10121). The Chief Minister also laid the foundation for widening and strengthening of the Nirjan approach road, and the Kandela route via Safidon—covering Haibatpur, Khokhri, Bohatwala and Dalamwala villages—from Parshuram Chowk to the bypass. These works will be undertaken at a cost of Rs. 4 crore 56 lakh 90 thousand. Under the CRIF scheme, foundation stones were laid for the four-laning, widening and strengthening of the Panipat-Safidon (State Highway-11) and Safidon-Jind (State Highway-14) corridors, involving an expenditure of Rs. 56 crore 61 lakh 4 thousand. Further, the Chief Minister initiated the construction of an Integrated Sainik Sadan by the District Sainik and Ardh Sainik Welfare Department at a cost of Rs. 9 crore 98 lakh

40 thousand. In the health sector, a Community Health Centre will be set up at Kandela village at a cost of Rs. 9 crore 90 lakh 83 thousand. To improve drainage infrastructure, the Manoharpur drain excavation project has also been taken up by the Irrigation and Water Resources Department at a cost of Rs. 1 crore 9 lakh 19 thousand. The Chief Minister also laid the foundation for Public Health Engineering Department projects worth Rs. 35 crore 76 lakh 25 thousand. These include three canal-based water supply schemes in Jalalpura Kalan, Intal Kalan and Intal Khurd villages, along with the expansion of two existing schemes. Under these works, water supply will be provided to Sangatpura, Jajwan and Dhanda Kheri villages through a common pumping station and the laying of DI pipelines.

## Liquor policy case: Kejriwal to argue in court on Monday, seeks judge's withdrawal

In a fresh development in the alleged Delhi excise policy case, Arvind Kejriwal and several other former accused have moved an application before the Delhi High Court seeking the recusal of Justice Swarn Kanta Sharma from the matter. According to the Aam Aadmi Party's legal team, Kejriwal is expected to appear in court tomorrow and will present his arguments in person. The High Court is scheduled to hear the Central Bureau of Investigation's (CBI) plea challenging the discharge of Kejriwal, Manish Sisodia, and others in the Delhi excise policy case. Meanwhile, in proceedings related to the Enforcement Directorate's (ED) petition, Kejriwal and Sisodia have been granted more than a fortnight's additional time to file their reply. The High Court has given them a final opportunity to submit their response by April 22, 2026. The ED's peti-



tion pertains to the removal of what it described as "unnecessary observations" made by the special CBI-ED court against investigative agencies. In its application, the ED argued that the lower court's remarks were irrelevant to the CBI case and were made without hearing the agency. It further contended that these observations violate the principles of natural justice and have caused irreparable damage to its credibility. The High Court has also cautioned that failure to respond to its notice could lead to the curtailment of the respondents' rights in the matter.



## Dhaka gas lighter factory fire kills five

Fatal fire at gas lighter factory near Dhaka claims five lives. The bodies couldn't immediately be identified. A fire broke out at a factory manufacturing gas lighters near Bangladesh's capital on Saturday afternoon, leaving at least five people dead, authorities said. The blaze broke out in the Kadamtali area of Keraniganj near Dhaka, according to the fire service and civil defense. Seven firefighting units were deployed to extinguish the blaze, which started in the afternoon, the fire department said. It took several hours to bring it under control. Firefighters recovered five bodies by the evening and they couldn't immediately be identified. The cause of the fire was under investigation.



## 45 dead, including 23 children, in NW Pakistan rain havoc

PESHAWAR: (APR 5)

At least 45 persons have lost their lives and 105 sustained injuries in rain related incidents across Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province in northwest Pakistan over the last 10 days, the PDMA said Sunday. In a report that covers damages caused by persistent rains since March 25, the Provincial Disaster Management Authority (PDMA) said that among the total 45 fatalities, 23 are children, 17 men and 5 women while the injured comprised 45 men, 16 women, and 44 children. The heavy rainfall resulted in roof and wall collapses in multiple districts of the province, the PDMA report said, highlighting widespread human and material losses across the province.



## Nepal's ruling RSP leader Aryal elected as Parliament Speaker

BY SHIRISH B PRADHAN

KATHMANDU: (Apr 5) Leader of the ruling Rastriya Swatantra Party (RSP), Dol Prasad Aryal, on Sunday, was elected as the Speaker of Nepal's Parliament. President Ramchandra Paudel administered the oath of office and secrecy to the newly elected Speaker of the Parliament, Aryal, at a special function at his office on Sunday afternoon. Aryal, also the Vice President of RSP, was elected unopposed during a meeting of the members of the House of Representatives (HoR), the lower house of the Federal Parliament, according to a notice issued by the Parliament secretariat.

# Will blow up everything, take over Iran's oil: Trump says can reach deal by Monday

Donald Trump said a breakthrough could come within hours, just ahead of the expiry of his 48-hour ultimatum for Iran to reopen the Strait of Hormuz. The comments also come before a scheduled military briefing at the White House.

US President Donald Trump is talking deal -- and threatening destruction in the same breath -- saying negotiations with Iran are underway while warning of severe consequences if no agreement is reached. He said a breakthrough could come by Monday, just ahead of the expiry of his 48-hour ultimatum for Iran to reopen the Strait of Hormuz. In remarks shared by phone to Fox News corre-

spondent Trey Yingst, he said, "If they don't make a deal, and fast, I'm considering blowing everything up and taking over the oil." He US President said that Iranian negotiators involved in the talks have been granted limited amnesty. However, he also warned of severe consequences if an agreement is not reached. Trump said he could consider drastic action, including destroying key assets and taking control of Iranian oil resources if talks fail. He also made a striking claim that the United States had earlier sent weapons intended for Iranian protesters through Kurdish channels, but suggested those arms may not have reached their intended recipients. Trump said he believes Kurdish groups may have retained



the weapons. **TRUMP REPEATS THREAT TO HIT IRAN INFRASTRUCTURE** His latest hint at a breakthrough comes just hours after he threatened to strike Iran's power plants and bridges this Tuesday if the Strait of Hormuz remains closed to marine traffic. In an ex-

plained post, Trump promised they would be "living in Hell" if the waterway isn't opened.

"Tuesday will be Power Plant Day, and Bridge Day, all wrapped up in one, in Iran. There will be nothing like it!!! Open the Fu\*\*\*ng Strait, you crazy ba\*\*\*rds, or you'll be living in Hell - JUST WATCH! Praise be to Allah. President DONALD J. TRUMP

Meanwhile, Tehran has shown no signs of stepping back. Iran launched new strikes on energy infrastructure across the Gulf on Sunday, hitting facilities in Kuwait, the UAE and Bahrain. The group had warned that strikes on US economic interests in the region would intensify if attacks on civilian targets inside Iran continued.

## TRUMP'S 48-HOUR DEADLINE LOOMS

A day earlier, Trump doubled down on his stance, giving Iran 48 hours to act and warned that the situation could quickly escalate if nothing changes.

Iran, however, has brushed aside the warning and shown no signs of giving in. Iran's central military command's General Aliabadi said Trump's threat was a "helpless, nervous, unbalanced and stupid action". Ebrahim Zolfaghari, a spokesperson for Khatam al-Anbiya Central Headquarters, added: "If hostility escalates, the entire region will turn into hell for you; the illusion of defeating the Islamic Republic of Iran will become a quagmire into which you will sink."

# US destroys own warplanes during pilot rescue op, Iran shares pic of wreckage

A US Air Force officer whose fighter jet was shot down in Iran was successfully rescued in an audacious night-time mission. While President Donald Trump bragged that there was no loss of life during the op, it wasn't, however, without sacrifices. US forces had to reportedly blow up their own aircraft while retreating.



the stranded crew member. "WE GOT HIM!" a jubilant Trump posted on Truth Social following the successful extraction. He said the airman was rescued "in the treacherous mountains of Iran", calling it unprecedented. "This is the first time in military memory that two US pilots have been rescued, separately, deep in enemy territory," Trump said. The rescued officer, whom the US President identified as a colonel, was the weapons-systems officer on the downed warplane.

for the rescue of the stranded airman in Iran and suspended its own attacks in the area to aid the effort.

## IRAN CLAIMS MORE US LOSSES

Meanwhile, Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) said several US aircraft were destroyed during the rescue operation, according to Iranian media reports. "During a joint operation (Aerospace, Ground Force, Popular Units, Basij and Police command), enemy aircraft were destroyed," the IRGC said, after Iran's police command announced that an American C-130 transport plane had been downed in southern Isfahan. A spokesperson for Khatam al-Anbiya Central Headquarters, the unified command of Iran's armed forces, said the aircraft lost included a C-130 military transport plane and two Black Hawk helicopters.

According to a US official who spoke to the Wall Street Journal, two MC-130J transport planes, used for covert infiltration and extraction behind enemy lines, were involved in the operation. The aircraft appeared to have become stuck during the mission, without going into how this happened. It became necessary to destroy the two planes to

prevent them from falling into Iranian hands, the official said. Mocking Washington, Iranian Parliament Speaker Ghalibaf shared a photo on X of the smoldering remains of the destroyed warplanes. "If the United States gets three more victories like this, it will be utterly ruined," he wrote. The rescued officer was the second of two crew members

aboard an F-15E fighter jet that Iran said it had brought down with its air defences on Friday. Reuters reported that the first crew member had already been retrieved, while both Iran and the US launched a frantic search for the remaining airman. Trump said the US military "sent dozens of aircraft, armed with the most lethal weapons" to retrieve

ter-productive. According to media reports, Trump's threat to strike Iran's power plants could spur Tehran to attack the energy infrastructure of Gulf nations. Moreover, Iranian media on Friday listed key Gulf bridges as potential targets after US-Israeli strikes destroyed the bridge in Karaj. In fact, Iran has been targeting energy infrastructure in the Gulf since the conflict began on February 28, when US-Israeli airstrikes killed the former Iranian Supreme Leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei. The US targeting bridges and power plants is also likely to come under scrutiny following Secretary of State Marco Rubio statement

that the Iranians are no longer enriching uranium. US experts also fear that targeting civilian infrastructure could alienate the Iranian people, many of whom had protested against the regime a few months back. Sarah Yager of Human Rights Watch told the Wall Street Journal that Trump's threat to strike power plants is alarming as they are vital for civilian life. "Even when there may be a military rationale, the law requires extreme caution around places like power plants, water systems & hospitals," she said. According to the 1949 Geneva Conventions, civilian infrastructure is protected against attacks.

# US eyes Iran power plants, bridges as targets: report

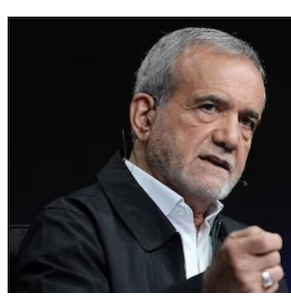
According to a Wall Street Journal report, top aides of Trump have convinced him to strike Iran's power plants and key bridges to cripple the country's military capabilities.

Defence Secretary Pete Hegseth is believed to have told Trump that attacking roadways could hamper Iran's ability to use them to move missiles and materials for making drones, while a senior White House official reportedly told the US president to consider targeting electric plants to complicate Tehran's path to acquiring a nuclear device. Trump has al-

ready warned of severe attacks in the coming days if there is no deal with Tehran, specifically saying that bridges and electric power plants would be legitimate targets of the US. In fact, his warning came hours after the US struck an Iranian bridge connecting Tehran to the city of Karaj. "The bombing will continue to degrade not just the regime, but the nation, until Iran itself starts to come apart," Gregory Brew, a senior analyst on Iran at the Eurasia Group told the publication.

## TARGETING CIVILIAN INFRASTRUCTURE COULD BE COUNTER-PRODUCTIVE

However, the plan to attack bridges and power plants pre-



sents legal and humanitarian challenges, which could complicate matters for the White House. Several current and former military officials, as per the WSJ report, have cautioned that destroying Iran's infrastructure to pressurise the country to come to the negotiating table could prove coun-

# Iran hits energy sites in UAE, Kuwait, warns of more strikes on US assets in Gulf

Iran launched fresh strikes on energy infrastructure across the Gulf on Sunday, hitting facilities in Kuwait, the UAE and Bahrain, as tensions escalated sharply ahead of US President Donald Trump's 48-hour deadline for Tehran to reopen the Strait of Hormuz or face severe consequences.

Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) on Sunday claimed responsibility for attacks targeting petrochemical and energy facilities in the UAE, Kuwait and Bahrain, signalling a widening of the ongoing conflict between the US, Israel and Iran. The group warned that strikes on US economic interests in the region would intensify if attacks on civilian targets inside Iran continued.

The escalation comes as US President Donald Trump hardened his stance on Tehran. On Saturday, he renewed



a threat to intensify attacks on Iran's energy infrastructure, giving it 48 hours to reopen shipping lanes in the Strait of Hormuz -- a vital conduit for around a fifth of the world's oil and natural gas supply that has been largely shut. In an explosive-laden social media post on Sunday, Trump warned Iran to open the Strait "or you'll be living in Hell - JUST WATCH!"

firm Kuwait Petroleum Corporation reporting fires and "severe material damage" at several operating units. The company said emergency teams were working to contain fires at its affiliates, including the Petrochemical Industries Company and National Petroleum Company.

In a separate incident, a drone attack triggered a fire at the Shuwaikh oil sector complex, which houses the oil ministry and KPC headquarters. Kuwaiti state media also reported that a government ministries' office complex was hit, causing significant

damage but no casualties. Two power generation units were taken out of service after drones targeted power and water desalination plants, disrupting critical infrastructure. Authorities said no injuries were reported.

## STRIKES WIDEN ACROSS GULF STATES

The attacks extended beyond Kuwait, with the UAE reporting fires at petrochemical facilities in Abu Dhabi after debris from intercepted drones fell on industrial sites, halting production. Iran also launched drone strikes on petrochemical plants in Bahrain and Abu Dhabi, underlining its ability to hit US allies in the Gulf. The IRGC said it had targeted petrochemical plants across Kuwait, the UAE and Bahrain, indicating a broader focus on economic assets in Gulf states hosting US-linked infrastructure.

## ISRAEL SIGNALS FURTHER ESCALATION

Adding to tensions, a senior Israeli defence official said

Israel, which struck a major petrochemicals facility on Saturday, was preparing further attacks on Iranian energy infrastructure within the next week and was awaiting approval from Washington.

Despite weeks of US and Israeli strikes causing heavy damage to its military and civilian infrastructure, Iran has shown no indication of backing down, leveraging its control over the Strait of Hormuz as a strategic pressure point.

## CONFLICT ENTERS SIXTH WEEK

The conflict has now entered its sixth week, with Iran continuing missile and drone attacks on Israel while expanding its operational reach to Gulf states hosting US military installations. Tehran has framed the latest strikes as retaliation and reiterated that more attacks would follow if civilian targets within Iran are hit, raising fears of a broader regional escalation with further implications for global energy supplies.

# If India tries to...: Pakistan minister warns of striking Kolkata in future war

Pakistan's Defence Minister Khawaja Asif on Saturday warned that any future conflict would not stay near the border and could reach deep inside India, naming Kolkata as a potential target.



"If India tries to stage any false flag operation this time, then God-willingly, we will take it to Kolkata," Asif said while speaking to reporters in Sialkot. He claimed there were indications of a possible "false flag" plot involving "their own men or Pakistanis in their detention", suggesting bodies could be planted and blamed on terrorism. He did not offer any evidence.

## 'WE WILL ENTER THEIR HOMES'

Asif did not stop at Kolkata. Raising the pitch, he said the next round of conflict would go much further. "If they try again, they will face even greater humiliation than last year. This time, the conflict will not remain limited to 200 to 250 km. We will enter their territory and strike them inside their own homes," he said. The remarks mirror earlier warnings from Pakistan's establishment about expanding the theatre of conflict eastwards, though without clarity on what has changed on the ground. Pakistani Defence Minister Khawaja Asif has issued another threat, specifically mentioning Kolkata. The warning follows a blunt message from Defence Minis-

ter Rajnath Singh, who said any "misadventure" would draw an "unprecedented and decisive" response. Speaking in Kerala, Singh pointed to India's response after the April 2025 Pahalgam terror attack that killed 26 people. "I would like to tell you the operation is not over yet. If such dirty actions are repeated by Pakistan, our armed forces will give a befitting reply which they would not forget ever," he said. The tensions trace back to April 22, 2025, when the Pahalgam attack triggered a four-day military escalation between the two countries. India launched Operation Sindoor, targeting terror infrastructure across Pakistan and Pakistan-occupied Kashmir with missile and drone strikes. Pakistan responded with artillery, drones and missiles, widening the scope of the conflict. A ceasefire followed on May 10, 2025, after direct talks. Earlier, former Pakistan High Commissioner to India Abdul Basit days back made controversial remarks about targeting Indian cities in a hypothetical scenario. "If America attacks Pakistan we have to attack India, Mumbai, New Delhi, without a second thought.

# Nepal implements 2-day weekly off to tackle fuel crunch amid Iran war

Nepal has announced a two-day weekly holiday for government offices in response to a shortage of petroleum products linked to Iran war, officials said on Sunday. Under the new decision, Saturday and Sunday will now be observed as weekly holidays for government offices, a shift from the earlier system where only Saturday was a day off. Government spokesperson Sasmitha Pokharel said the decision also sets new working hours for government offices, which will now function from 9 AM to 5 PM. Pokharel added that the move has been taken due to an uncomfortable situation arising from disruptions in petroleum supply. The new arrangement will come into effect from Monday. The spokesperson further said that government offices and educational institutions will remain closed on both Saturday and Sunday. However, a Cabinet meeting decided that the 9 am to 5 pm



working hours will apply to government offices excluding educational institutions. Until now, government offices in Nepal operated from 10 am to 5 pm. With the revised schedule, working hours have been extended by one hour in the morning. Earlier, Nepal increased aviation fuel prices by up to 117.4% for international flights, effective after midnight on Tuesday. State-run Nepal Oil Corporation (NOC) said increases of 84.7%, 116.2% and 117.4% for international flights from Kathmandu, Pokhara and Bhairahawa, respectively, were needed to make payments to Indian Oil Corporation on time and avoid further supply disruptions.

# We got him: Trump says missing pilot of downed F-15 safely rescued from Iran

The second US pilot shot down over Iran has been rescued and is now safely out of the country, a top official told Al Jazeera on Sunday, capping one of the most complex search-and-rescue missions carried out by American forces in enemy territory in decades.



"We got him," US President Donald Trump announced on Truth Social, confirming that the second crew member from the downed F-15E fighter jet has been rescued and is "safe and sound". "My fellow Americans, over the past several hours, the United States Military pulled off one of the most daring Search and Rescue Operations in US History, for one of our incredible Crew Member Officers, who also happens to be a highly respected Colonel," he wrote. Iranian officials had claimed that the US military's F-15E Strike Eagle was brought down by its air defences on Friday, in the first such incident since the war

began five weeks ago. Both the American and Iranian military launched a frantic search to find the crew members: the former aiming to bring them to safety, and the latter hoping to use them as leverage. While one pilot was quickly rescued, the search for the other, a weapons systems officer, continued. The F-15E crew member's survival hinged on evading capture in hostile terrain, even as Iranian authorities tracked his location. To make matters worse, Tehran had offered a reward of \$60,000 to anyone who captured him alive. A US government official told Al Jazeera on Sunday that the missing airman was located overnight after evading Iranian authorities for two days. According to the official, Iranian authorities had known where the US believed the crew member was, adding urgency to the operation.

EDITORIAL

ASSET SEIZURES AND OPACITY:  
THE TROUBLING EVOLUTION OF  
FOREIGN FUNDING LAWS

The Centre wants to restrict foreign contributions to individuals and organisations in India, but intends to do so in a selective and opaque manner. A fresh set of amendments to the Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Act, or FCRA, now temporarily stalled due to protests, is an attempt by the Centre to empower itself to arbitrarily take control of assets owned by recipients of foreign contributions. Introduced in the Lok Sabha on March 25, 2026, the Bill to amend the FCRA proposes a comprehensive statutory framework for a new “designated authority” to seize, manage, and dispose of assets of organisations that lose their FCRA licence. Cloaked in the rhetoric of national security and foreign interventions, the move smacks of bad faith, or even worse, a devious scheme to snatch assets built through legal means. Once an FCRA registration ceases to exist, the designated authority can take control of assets built using foreign funds — schools, hospitals, places of worship — and use them. This process is proposed to be automatic and instantaneous upon the discontinuation of the FCRA status, requiring no judicial determination or adjudicatory process. In effect, the Centre that grants FCRA permission can decide to withdraw that permission, and benefit from its own decision. This is unfair in both principle and procedure, and Christian groups that run numerous health and educational institutions are particularly concerned, given that they may have received contributions from abroad

The Bill has been postponed for now, but the government has no plans to abandon it. The FCRA was first enacted in 1976, and reenacted in 2010 during the UPA regime and amended in 2020 under Narendra Modi — progressively tightening the receipt and use of foreign funds. It is notable that state policy seeks foreign money in a range of domains — from infrastructure to technology, and entertainment to real estate. Regulatory regimes can be credible only when they are transparent and even-handed. That is not the case with the FCRA restrictions. Rajya Sabha MP John Brittas said his parliamentary questions regarding FCRA cancellations, non-renewals, and related data had been disallowed since 2024. That leaves one with the reasonable assumption that the government allows only some to receive foreign funds. That built-in favouritism apart, the design of the proposed legislation violates the principles of natural justice. The assets built legally with foreign funds before an organisation loses its FCRA clearance cannot justly be subject to seizure under any subsequent regulatory action. The Centre must rethink its approach on this issue and ensure that any regulations on foreign funds it introduces are fair, transparent, and steer clear of what exists on the ground.

| The Last Straw:

A Small Habit with  
Big Health Risks

BY VIVEK SHUKLA

How often do you grab a straw for your cold coffee, nimbu pani, or Coke—without a second thought? They feel convenient, clean, and harmless. But this everyday sip is quietly releasing microplastics into your body. And dumping billions of non-recyclable pieces into India’s rivers, oceans, and landfills every year. It’s time to uncover the hidden truths—and discover a truly sustainable sip.

How often do we use a straw to sip our favourite drinks—cold coffee, a refreshing glass of Nimbu pani, or a Coke? Even if we don’t count, the truth is we use straws without a second thought. They feel convenient, clean, and harmless. But what if this tiny, everyday item is quietly affecting both our health and the environment?

Straws are sold in the millions in India alone—and likely in the billions worldwide.

It’s easy to ignore straws because they are small and used for only a few minutes. Yet globally, billions are used every day. They are among the most common items found during beach and ocean clean-ups.

Because of their size and lightweight nature, straws are rarely recycled. Instead, they end up in rivers, oceans, and landfills, where they can remain for hundreds of years. “In India, with our large population and growing café culture, the use of straws is increasing rapidly. This makes the problem even bigger,” says GurSevSingh Chawla, a Delhi-based environmentalist and entrepreneur.

Straws represent a larger issue—our habit of using and discarding items without thinking about their long-term impact.

A few years ago, plastic straws began to be banned in many parts of the world, a move that people widely welcomed. Soon after, paper and PLA (corn-based plastic) straws entered the market and were promoted as “eco-friendly” alternatives. However, there is a gap between what people believe and what is actually true.

Chawla explored this issue in depth. What he discovered was surprising—and in some cases, worrying. His journey led him to start a company called CarmaPacks, which produces straws made from sugarcane waste. More importantly, it led him to raise awareness about the hidden truths behind the straws we commonly use today.

“Many paper straws, for example, contain chemicals known as PFAS, often called ‘forever chemicals.’ These do

not break down easily and can remain in the environment and our bodies for a long time. PLA straws, on the other hand, are said to be compostable. However, they require special industrial conditions to break down—conditions that are rarely available in most Indian cities,” says Dr. Vinay Agarwal, former president of the Indian Medical Association (IMA).

Why Plastic Straws Are Harmful

Plastic straws are one of the most commonly used single-use items. When exposed to heat, sunlight, or acidic drinks like lemon water, they can release tiny particles called microplastics.

Microplastics are extremely small pieces of plastic that can enter our bodies through food and drinks. Plastics also contain chemicals that may interfere with our hormones and lead to health issues over time.

One straw may seem harmless. But when used daily, the exposure adds up and becomes a serious concern. This shows that simply replacing plastic with another material is not enough—the alternative must be truly safe and sustainable.

A Better Option: Sugarcane Bagasse Straws

This is where sugarcane bagasse straws come in. Bagasse is the dry, fibrous material left after extracting juice from sugarcane—a resource widely available in India. Bagasse is a byproduct of the country’s large sugar industry. It is extensively utilized for manufacturing eco-friendly, biodegradable, and compostable tableware, packaging, and paper, with suppliers and manufacturers located across the country.

Straws made from bagasse offer several advantages

They are completely plastic-free and non-toxic

They do not contain harmful chemicals

They are naturally biodegradable and can break

down at home

They are made from agricultural waste, turning something unused into something useful

These straws are also strong enough for everyday use and do not release harmful substances into drinks.

Can This Work on a Large Scale?

The good news is yes. Production of bagasse-based products is already growing. With increasing demand for eco-friendly solutions and stricter rules on single-use plastics, many businesses are beginning to adopt such alternatives.

The global market for biodegradable tableware is expected to grow significantly in the coming years. India, with its strong agricultural base, is well positioned to lead this change.

Hotels, cafés, and restaurants often worry about cost, durability, and supply. While plant-based straws may be slightly more expensive than cheap plastic ones, they are comparable to premium paper or PLA options.

More importantly, today’s consumers are becoming more aware. Many prefer brands that genuinely care about sustainability. For businesses, switching to safer alternatives can improve trust and brand image. Government policies also play a key role. Banning plastic alone is not enough. Clear standards must define what qualifies as “safe” and “compostable.” Misleading claims should be regulated, and industries using agricultural waste should be supported.

For consumers, the message is simple: do not blindly trust labels. Ask questions and make informed choices for your health and the environment. For businesses, the time for half-measures is over. True sustainability is not about appearances but about honest materials and responsible practices.

A straw may seem like a small thing. But small changes, when made by millions of people, can create a big impact. It is time to move from convenient choices to conscious ones—one sip at a time.

FM THE GIRL CHILD — THE PRIMORDIAL SHE



They call her “a girl child” yet that is no name only a note; not a label, but a living resonance that trembled through existence before language found its tongue. They call her “a responsibility” yet she is no burden, but a blazing becoming; like the earth that secretly cradles its seasons, she carries entire futures in a womb of silent fire. In her seed—she gathers the sky; in her syllable—she summons the infinite. Her birth is not a word resting upon lips—but a question creation itself has feared to utter. Look in her eyes, time dissolves into quivering fragments of light; in her footsteps, beginnings awaken, braiding themselves with ancient origins. They confine her within thresholds, yet command her to touch the horizon what paradox is this? what tenderness wears the mask of cruelty? Whose arithmetic dares to measure the sky with the narrow grammar of walls? When she is born blessings bloom like festivals of light; as she grows

those blessings harden into burdens, words sharpen into trials, and gazes calcify into judgment. “Speak softly... walk gently...” they whisper, weaving veils of caution do these settle as scars upon her spirit, or kindle as invisible flames? Her laughter a river in unrestrained motion; yet the hands that seek to still it rise as dams against her becoming. Then tell me is she the river? or the deluge that remembers no barrier? Within a single tear of hers dwells an unmoving light within her silent scream stands an unyielding justice. Her cry—crimson with resistance her silence—a furnace where destinies are forged. “We must protect her,” they say—but what if protection is merely a more delicate prison? They draw her boundaries but what if limits themselves are the language of loss? Then she is not a boundary, but a becoming; not a line, but a roar waiting for its own echo. Once if she speaks her own name, definitions fracture into dust. Once if she takes a step as herself, obstacles dissolve into alphabets that rewrite destiny. She is not fire, but the birth of flame; not nectar, but the wellspring of immortality. She is not to be understood but that through which understanding itself transforms. In the end a girl child is neither body nor mere force She is the breath before sound, the pause before creation, the light before time remembers itself the origin... the dissolution... the eternal becoming She.

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

The Sword of Oil and the Shield of Diplomacy:  
India’s Trial by Fire in the West Asia Crisis  
The Indian Economy Under the Heat of War

YOGESH KUMAR GOYAL

Decades ago, wars were fought over borders and pieces of land. However, the year 2026 stands as a witness to a new reality—modern conflicts are driven less by sovereignty and more by control over resources. Bullets and missiles are no longer just aimed at territories; they now target energy pipelines and oil tankers. The ongoing triangular conflict in West Asia between Iran, Israel, and the United States is not merely a territorial dispute but a battle for control over the lifeline of the global economy—energy supply.

For India, this crisis extends far beyond rising petrol and diesel prices. It has emerged as a serious national security challenge, creating the looming threat of an invisible “energy lockdown.” When the Prime Minister compared this situation in Parliament to the horrors of the COVID era, he did not mean physical confinement, but the global uncertainty that could, at any moment, halt the wheels of India’s economic growth. If the Strait of Hormuz were to be blocked, nearly 60% of India’s oil and LNG supply would be disrupted, pushing the nation toward a severe energy lockdown.

Blockade of Hormuz On the world map, the Strait of Hormuz is a narrow yet critical waterway through which nearly 20% of the world’s crude oil and a significant portion of LNG passes. Any disruption by Iran in this region effectively means choking the global energy supply. Since the conflict began in late February 2026, crude oil prices have surged from \$85 to over \$110 per barrel within just five weeks. India meets nearly 40% of its LPG demand from Qatar. Attacks on Qatar’s Ras Laffan LNG facilities have not only reduced production but have also driven up the cost of cooking gas for Indian households. The mathematics is simple and harsh—every \$10 increase in crude oil prices raises India’s current account

deficit by approximately \$12–15 billion. This situation clearly warns that energy security dependent on external sources can collapse at any time.

Strategic Petroleum Reserves: Are a Few Days Enough?

One of India’s biggest vulnerabilities in energy security is its limited strategic petroleum reserves. Developed nations like the United States, Japan, and China maintain reserves for up to 90 days, whereas India’s current capacity—spread across Visakhapatnam, Mangaluru, and Padur—totals about 5.33 million tonnes, sufficient for barely 9 days. Although expansion plans in Chandikhol and Bikaner aim to extend this to 60–65 days, progress has not been at the urgency required. Alarmingly, about 36% of the existing storage capacity remains unfilled. If India had a 90-day reserve today, it could pursue a more assertive and independent foreign policy. A 30-day disruption in Hormuz could push India’s economy onto a “ventilator.” Therefore, expanding reserves is no longer optional—it is an urgent necessity.

Diplomatic Constraints and the Crisis of Strategic Autonomy

India’s strategic autonomy is under severe strain due to its heavy dependence on imported oil. This dependence is not just an economic burden but also a diplomatic constraint. India has been compelled to distance itself from long-time partner Iran and align more closely with Israel and US-backed Gulf nations. The safety of nearly 9 million Indians living in Gulf countries and the remittances they send back form the backbone of India’s economy. As long as India depends on imports for 85% of its energy needs, its foreign policy will remain influenced by external powers. Developments in Washington or Tehran will continue to dictate concerns in New Delhi. True sovereignty, therefore, lies not just in territorial defense but in energy self-reliance.

Rumors, Panic and Government Damage Control

Amid the conflict, rumors of a lockdown in India have triggered panic. However, Union ministers Nirmala Sitharaman, Kiren Rijju, and Harddeep Puri have reassured citizens that the country is secure. The government claims that diversified energy sources ensure adequate supply and that there is no need for panic. While these assurances provide short-term relief, they also raise a critical question—will India continue to rely on damage control during crises, or will it build long-term resilience?

Alternative Energy: Not a Choice, but a Necessity

In the face of rising import dependence and global uncertainty, alternative energy is no longer optional—it is a national imperative. Energy self-reliance forms the foundation of true independence. Initiatives such as rooftop solar and free electricity schemes are not just welfare measures but pillars of a self-reliant India. With 330 million LPG consumers dependent on imported fuel, shifting toward induction cooking and ethanol-based alternatives can significantly reduce costs and import burdens. Cooking with electricity at approximately ₹8 per unit is more economical than LPG, while ethanol from agricultural residue can transform farmers into energy producers. Electrification of the transport sector is equally crucial, as it accounts for the largest share of oil consumption. Expanding electric mobility can save billions in foreign exchange. Solar energy and green hydrogen offer a pathway toward a clean, secure, and sustainable energy future.

Changing Pattern of Electricity Consumption

In India, about 42% of electricity is consumed by industry and 17% by

agriculture. With rapid urbanization, demand from commercial sectors is rising. India must gradually shift from coal-based power—which still dominates—to nuclear, solar, and wind energy. India’s annual oil import bill of \$143 billion (2025 data) is a deep economic wound. While the country has abundant solar and wind resources, the pace of investment and implementation remains insufficient.

The Road Ahead: Energy Security is National Security

The Iran-Israel conflict serves as a stark warning for India. Any disruption in the Strait of Hormuz would not remain a regional issue but could trigger a global economic crisis, impacting fertilizers, fuel, semiconductors, and entire supply chains. India must act decisively. First, strengthening strategic reserves to at least 90 days within the next 24 months should be a national priority. Second, aggressive energy diversification through long-term agreements with Russia, Central Asia, and Africa is essential. Third, investments in nuclear energy, solar power, and green hydrogen must be accelerated on a war footing. Ultimately, while global peace may not be in our control, ensuring our energy security certainly is. Self-reliance is no longer just a slogan—it is a condition for survival. If decisive steps are not taken today, the darkness of the future will be a consequence of our own inaction.



YOGESH KUMAR GOYAL

(Author is a senior journalist with 36 years of experience)

## Liuyang, China, Illuminates the World With Fireworks

**New Delhi:** Nearly two-thirds of the world's fireworks originate in a single county in south-central China – a fact seemingly belied by the sleepy vistas that unfolded as we drove from downtown Liuyang to the nearby town of Dayao. It was a rainy spring morning, and mist still clung to the low-slung hills that fringed this corner of the country. The view from the car window unfolded like any other semi-rural stretch of inland China. Farmland spread out in patches, interspersed with agglomerations of concrete buildings; some relatively flashy, adorned in the bathroom-style exteriors considered haute chic in small towns; others only half-formed structures of exposed brick and cement.



But the hoardings that punctuated the highway with rhythmic regularity revealed the explosive goings-on behind the surface calm. Arrows pointed in every direction for factories ranging from small workshops to export-oriented behemoths: "Ouda Fireworks," "Qingtai Fireworks," "Pyro Liuyang." A red banner, splashed across with large characters, stated, "Number 1 town of fireworks in the world."

This was not hyperbole. Liuyang – a 5,000-square-kilometre area along the eastern border of Hunan province – accounts for about 60% of China's domestic firework market and 70% of its fireworks exports. China in turn supplies close to 90% of the world's pyrotechnics.

The county is emblematic in many ways of China beyond the big cities: places with populations of over a million that almost no one outside the country has ever heard of and that even most Chinese would struggle to locate on a map. Yet, for the last three decades, they have functioned as hubs of world-dominating manufacturing, accounting for huge proportions of global supplies – from buttons to sex toys. These centers once thrived on large pools of low-cost labour and economies of scale. In their contemporary iterations, they are busy climbing the high-tech value chain: innovating materials, deploying drones and embracing the ruling authority's obsession du jour – Artificial Intelligence.

But Liuyang's dominance is not just industrial – it is civilisational. There is one figure who quite literally towers over everything else in the town: Li Tian, the local son and semi-mythical ancestor to whom the invention of the firecracker is credited. In Dayao, the Liuyang Fireworks Museum is located across the road from an enormous bronze statue of this legendary character. Flowing Mandarin robes, hair gathered in a topknot – Li Tian has the look of a celestial demi-god who has just handed humanity the magic of the stars themselves.

Wei, a guide at the museum en-

thusiastically recounted the most common version of the origin story of firecrackers according to which Li Tian helped cure a Tang-dynasty emperor of a mysterious malady by scaring away the evil spirits that plagued him. He did this by stuffing bamboo husks with saltpeter and sulphur – a rudimentary gunpowder stumbled upon by Daoist alchemists in their quest for the elixir of immortality – and tossing them into a fire. They exploded with thunderous bangs, sending the malevolent beings fleeing and restoring the emperor to health.

The truth behind legends might be dubious, but what is certain is that gunpowder, the key ingredient of firecrackers, was invented in China. A plaque in the museum noted how the technology travelled along the Silk Road: to India, on to West Asia, eventually reaching Europe by the 13th century.

Liuyang's current dominance of global fireworks owes much to this heritage, here, gunpowder was first put to work not on battlefields but for play and ritual. Baozhu, literally, "exploding bamboo," the earliest kind of firecrackers evolved into the aerial spectacle of fireworks, or yan-hua, literally "smoke flowers."

With Liuyang, as the dominant production centre, the use of firecrackers gradually spread across China to become a widespread cultural practice. They were used both to drive away evil spirits and welcome good fortune. Major life milestones like weddings, births and funerals involved bursting firecrackers as did the celebrations around Chinese New Year.

The 20th-century fortunes of Liuyang's firework industry were a roller-coaster, mirroring the violent swings of fortune that China endured more broadly. By the early decades of the century, some

300,000 people in the area were involved in firecracker production. Mid-century wars, however, put a damper on the industry. And the Cultural Revolution (1966–1976) dealt an even harsher blow. Mao Zedong's campaign to eradicate the "Four Olds" – Old Customs, Old Habits, Old Ideas and Old Culture – banned the bursting of firecrackers, given their association with superstition, ritual and traditions.

Deng Xiaoping's Reform and Opening up policy allowed the industry to once again sputter into life from the 1980s on. By the early years of the new millennium, Liuyang County had coalesced into a fully integrated industrial cluster – production, logistics, operations and R&D all under one roof. This was a model replicated in scores of towns across China, as the country cemented its status as the world's factory not just of fireworks, but of the entire gamut of light manufacturing.

Today, Liuyang lights up celebrations in more than 100 countries. The statistics are staggering: 99% of the fireworks that explode across the United States, for example, originate in China. During the 2019 US-China trade war, President Trump, even in the midst of his first-term tariff battles, exempted Chinese fireworks from punitive duties. Without them, the Fourth of July would have fizzled.

Wen Jing, an official with the Liuyang Fireworks Service Centre, a local government bureau, reeled off a series of startling statistics. The county is home to 430 fireworks manufacturers. Some 60% of the 1.45 million strong population in the area is involved in the industry. In 2025, Liuyang exported 6.29 billion RMB (880 million USD) worth of firecrackers. Its domestic sales were worth an eye-watering 22.86 billion RMB (3.2 billion USD).

She stressed that the industry is now entering a new epoch in its development, a far cry from the days that firecrackers were assembled in the back rooms of family homes. The government is now supporting innovation by encouraging manufacturers to adopt new technologies like digital ignition systems and smokeless launching techniques. In October last year, a massive firework display in Liuyang set two Guinness World Records that underline Wen's point: the most fireworks carried by a drone formation in flight and the largest number of drones simultaneously launched and controlled by a single computer. The spectacle saw 7,496 drones igniting fireworks in perfect synchronicity, while nearly twice that number traced the shapes of flowering trees in shifting constellations of light.

It was a blending of the ancient grammar of celebration with a new syntax of code and circuitry – the direction that Liuyang, in step with central government dictates, is steadily embracing. Fireworks in Liuyang today have moved well beyond the high-volume, low-cost export of crackers. An entire tourism economy is taking shape around them, transforming what was once a backcountry-hardscrabble – one that people left in search of better prospects – into a destination drawing millions of visitors. The statistically minded Wen informed us that since 2023, 146 large-scale firework displays have been held in Liuyang, attracting 7 million visitors and generating 20 billion RMB (2.8 billion USD) in revenue.

It was still raining when we pulled up at the display store for Liuyi Toy Fireworks Company, part of a cluster of identikit firecracker showrooms located in and around the Dayao International Firework Trade Mall. Colourful packages of catharine wheels, sparklers and rockets lined the shelves. The company's founder, Wang Xian Feng, is a serial entrepreneur and former director of the Liuyang Fireworks Industry Development Centre. He talked about how far safety regulations in firecracker production have come within a relatively short period of time.

Explosions and fires in the early 2010s used to cause scores of deaths annually. But in the intervening years the authorities restricted production to designated counties, formalised licensing and cracked down on illegal workshops. Regulatory oversight now stretches across the supply chain – from production and storage to transport and retail – banning excessive stockpiling, limiting sales in unauthorised areas and tightening inspection at sales outlets. While occasional accidents still happen, the top-down tightening of rules has shifted the industry from dispersed, informal production towards a more centralised,

surveilled and risk-averse mode.

Wang is now focused on exporting low-smoke, sulphur-free firecrackers using a patented technology. "India is the perfect market," he said enthusiastically, elaborating his vision for pollution-free Diwali celebrations. Until a decade ago, the air in Chinese cities was as contaminated, if not worse, than Indian cities are today. As part of the campaign against urban air pollution, many city governments imposed comprehensive bans on the sale and bursting of fireworks within core urban areas, even though this went against cultural traditions of celebration, especially during Chinese New Year.

In India too firecracker bans have been attempted, although they have often proved ineffective in the face of popular backlash. Wang said his technology could help ameliorate the tension between "fun" and environment by significantly reducing cracker-pollution. Using single-base powder, plant-fiber materials and specially designed catalysts, Chinese-developed technology can reduce the post-combustion residue of firecrackers by as much as 80%. Sulphur dioxide emissions, one of the main pollutants, is close to zero.

As elsewhere in China, talk of AI was inescapable. Local governments are channeling subsidies toward firms experimenting with open-source automation systems and AI-driven production tools. Wang told me he had recently signed an agreement with the Liuyang authorities that would partially underwrite his use of "OpenClaw" technology – an emerging platform he is deploying to collect production data and refine product design. This push is not unique to fireworks.

Across China, artificial intelligence has become a central priority of the current Five-Year Plan, with local officials now evaluated less on the volume of foreign investment they attract and more on their ability to cultivate homegrown tech ecosystems. The result: even an industry built on gunpowder is being rewired by algorithms.

Yet for all the circuitry shaping its future, Liuyang's essence remains elemental. Fireworks still draw on the same alchemy that once drove off the spirits tormenting a Tang emperor: the visceral jolt of light and sound. The scale, precision and ambition of the industry is certainly evolving, but ask the average Chinese and they will still equate the crackle of a simple string of firecrackers with joy. Fireworks endure because they momentarily rupture order – even in a regulation-heavy society like China's, because they are loud, exuberant and just a little out of control.

PALLAVI AIYAR  
Journalist

## Market valuation of six of top-10 firms declines by over Rs 64,000 Cr

NEW DELHI, APRIL 5

The combined market valuation of six of the top-10 most valued firms declined by Rs 64,734.46 Crore last week. Bharti Airtel taking the biggest hit, reflecting the broader weakness with its market valuation eroding by Rs 29,993.07 Cr. to Rs 10,20,420.26 Cr. In a holiday-shortened last week, the BSE benchmark Sensex declined 263.67 points, or 0.35 per cent, and the NSE Nifty fell 106.5 points, or 0.46 per cent.

In a rank-wise analysis, Reliance Industries remained the most valued firm, followed by HDFC Bank, Bharti Airtel, State Bank of India, Tata Consultancy Services Ltd, ICICI Bank, Infosys, Bajaj Finance, Larsen & Toubro and Hindustan Unilever. The market valuation of Reliance Industries gained Rs 3,518.45 Cr. to Rs 18,28,034.07 Cr.

ICICI Bank's valuation tanked by Rs 12,845.81 Cr. to

Rs 8,70,705.49 Cr. while the market capitalisation (mcap) of HDFC Bank dropped by Rs 7,822.79 Cr. to Rs 11,56,195.90 Cr. State Bank of India's market capitalisation diminished by Rs 553.84 Cr. to Rs 9,41,015.31 Cr. Bajaj Finance lost Rs 11,169.36 Cr. from its market valuation, which stood at Rs 5,14,226.12 Cr. Mcap of Hindustan Unilever declined by Rs 2,349.59 Cr. to Rs 4,85,190.60 Cr. and that of Larsen & Toubro added Rs 6,575.43 Cr. to Rs 4,97,111.62 Cr. The market valuation of Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) surged by Rs 22,359.78 Cr. to Rs 8,87,028.43 Cr. while the mcap of Infosys soared by Rs 12,374.76 Cr. to Rs 5,27,409.43 Cr.

On Friday, stock markets ended on a positive note in a highly volatile session on Thursday with Nifty closing above 22,700. Market was supported by IT stocks after the Indian rupee posted its biggest gain in over a decade.

## Moody's cut down India's economic growth for current fiscal to 6pc

NEW DELHI, APR 5

Amid the ongoing Middle East War leading to the blockage of Strait of Hormuz and affecting the global economy at large, Moody's Ratings has slashed India's economic growth estimates for the current fiscal to 6 per cent from 6.8 per cent earlier.

It said the ongoing conflict in West Asia will moderate growth momentum and raise inflation risks.

Moody's said prolonged disruptions, particularly LPG shipments due to the conflict, would lead to near-term household shortages, higher fuel and transport costs, and spillovers to food inflation through India's reliance on imported fertilisers. The region accounts for around 55 per cent of crude oil imports and over 90 per cent of liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) supplies to India.

"While inflation remains contained for now, geopolitical risks have tilted the inflation outlook to the upside," Moody's said while projecting inflation to average 4.8 per cent in FY27, up from 2.4 per cent in FY26.

With inflation risks re-emerging and growth remaining robust, policy rates are likely to be held steady or raised gradually in fiscal 2026-27, depending on the duration of geopolitical tensions and their pass-through to food and fuel

prices, Moody's said.

The report further said that "In light of India's economic exposure to the ongoing military conflict in the Middle East, we expect real GDP growth to moderate to 6 per cent in fiscal 2026-27 from 6.8 per cent earlier, driven by subdued private consumption, softer industrial activity and a weakening in the momentum of gross fixed capital formation amid elevated prices and higher input costs."

Earlier, EY has also said that India's real GDP growth for FY27 could erode by around 1 percentage point, while retail inflation could rise by about 1.5 percentage points from their baseline estimates if the West Asia conflict persists through 2026-27.

On the other hand, ICRA expected the growth to moderate to 6.5 per cent in FY27, owing to the adverse impact of elevated energy prices and concerns around energy availability amid the West Asia conflict.

Amid the ongoing crisis, the central government has said it will come up with a new credit guarantee scheme which will be on similar lines as it did during the Covid pandemic times.

The proposed scheme aims to ease funding access for companies facing higher input and logistics costs. The scheme is likely to provide guarantees up to Rs 2-2.5 lakh crore, and will be unveiled in two weeks.

# Time for industry to lead economic resilience

The ongoing crisis in West Asia has once again reminded us of a defining feature of the global economy today: shocks are no longer rare events. They are frequent, multi-dimensional and often simultaneous. In this context, India's response to the current crisis has been timely and reassuring. The Government has acted swiftly to stabilise the situation, focusing on ensuring energy availability, supporting exports, maintaining supply chains and protecting vulnerable households.

However, public policy can only go so far. The next phase of the response must come from industry itself.

The first responsibility before industry is to support price stability. When the Government takes steps to moderate fuel costs and logistics pressures, it creates an opportunity for firms to pass on these benefits across the value

chain. Doing so is not only fair to consumers, it also helps anchor inflation expectations and sustain demand.

Equally important is the responsibility to protect livelihoods. The current disruption is external and, in many cases, temporary. It should not translate into permanent job losses. Firms that are able to manage costs through internal efficiencies and operational flexibility can play a crucial role in maintaining employment stability. This is particularly important in labour intensive sectors, where the ripple effects of job losses are wide and immediate.

A third area is in supporting MSME partners. Smaller enterprises often operate with limited buffers and are more vulnerable to disruptions in cash flow and logistics. Timely payments, better credit terms and clearer visibility on orders from larger firms can help sustain entire supply chains.

### Stocking critical materials

The crisis has also highlighted the need for stronger supply chain resilience. Diversifying sourcing strategies, building alternative corridors and maintaining prudent inventory buffers for critical inputs are no longer optional strategies. Closely linked to this is the need to build strategic reserves. Traditionally, stockpiling of critical materials has been seen as a public sector function. That approach needs to evolve. Industry has both the capability and the incentive to participate in building distributed buffer systems for key inputs, fuels and intermediates. A collaborative model, where Government and industry share information and infrastructure, can significantly enhance national preparedness.

Energy resilience is another area where industry action

will be decisive. Accelerating investments in renewable energy, improving industrial energy efficiency and exploring viable alternatives such as green hydrogen will not only reduce costs over time, but also strengthen long term competitiveness. Where feasible, a gradual shift from LPG to natural gas and increased electrification of processes can further improve stability.

Even smaller operational decisions can add up. Businesses that operate large kitchens and institutional facilities can adopt more energy efficient cooking systems, explore alternative fuels and optimise consumption patterns. These may appear incremental changes, but at scale, they contribute meaningfully to national energy conservation.

At the same time, companies must strengthen their internal risk management frameworks. This includes better insurance coverage, more robust logistics plan-

ning, disciplined receivables management and prudent foreign exchange practices.

Technology will play an increasingly important role in this transition. Investments in data systems, supply chain visibility tools and real time monitoring can help firms respond faster and more effectively to disruptions. Digital capabilities can significantly reduce the lag between a shock and the corresponding business response.

Finally, there is a need for continuous and constructive engagement between industry and Government. Real time feedback on bottlenecks, shortages and emerging risks can help shape more responsive policy interventions. This two way communication is essential for ensuring that policy measures remain aligned with ground realities.

The writer is Director General, CII



# GREAT CAREERS IN IRELAND IN 2026



Career Opportunities in Ireland are abundant for international students and skilled professionals. The country has a strong demand in sectors like Tech (IT, Cybersecurity, Software), Pharma and Biotech, Engineering (Renewable Energy, Chemical, Software), Finance, and Healthcare, offering roles for accountants, engineers, nurses, and tech specialists, making it an attractive destination for those planning a Masters in Ireland. Beyond these, there are opportunities in logistics, construction, and hospitality, all supported by Ireland's growing economy and English-speaking work environment. Ireland's stay-back option under the Graduate Scheme is a major advantage for international students. It provides valuable time to gain work experience and transition into long-term career opportunities.

## Top In-Demand Jobs in Ireland for Indians

Ireland's job market in 2026 is thriving, especially for Indian professionals. There's strong demand for skilled talent in IT, healthcare, finance, engineering, and life sciences, and employers are keen to hire. Salaries are competitive, and being an English-speaking country, Ireland offers a friendly

SECTOR	IN-DEMAND ROLES	APPROX. SALARY (EUR / INR per year)
IT & SOFTWARE	Software Engineer, Data Analyst, Cybersecurity Specialist	€45,000-65,000 / ₹40-58 Lakh
HEALTHCARE	Nurse, Medical Technologist, Healthcare Assistant	€35,000-50,000 / ₹31-45 Lakh
FINANCE	Accountant, Auditor, Financial Analyst	€40,000-60,000 / ₹36-54 Lakh
PHARMA & BIOTECH	Research Scientist, QA Specialist	€45,000-70,000 / ₹40-63 Lakh
ENGINEERING	Renewable Energy Engineer, Civil Engineer, Chemical Engineer	€40,000-65,000 / ₹36-58 Lakh
DATA & AI	Machine Learning Engineer, Data Scientist	€55,000-75,000 / ₹49-68 Lakh
CLOUD & DEVOPS	Cloud Engineer, DevOps Specialist	€50,000-70,000 / ₹45-63 Lakh
CYBERSECURITY	Security Analyst, Ethical Hacker	€50,000-68,000 / ₹45-61 Lakh
CONSTRUCTION & INFRASTRUCTURE	Project Manager, Site Engineer	€40,000-60,000 / ₹36-54 Lakh
HOSPITALITY & LOGISTICS	Hotel Manager, Supply Chain Specialist	€30,000-45,000 / ₹27-40 Lakh

and accessible work environment for international workers.

## Eligibility and Requirements for Indians to Work in Ireland (2026)

To work legally in Ireland, Indian professionals must meet certain conditions set by the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment (DETE) and the Irish Naturalisation and Immigration Service (INIS).

**Valid Job Offer:** You must secure a confirmed job offer from an Irish employer before applying for a work permit.

**Employment Permit:** Depending on your role, you'll need either a Critical Skills Employment Permit or a General Employment Permit.

**Minimum Salary Thresholds:** For Critical Skills, salaries typically range between €32,000-€64,000 (₹29-58 lakh). For General Employment Permits, the minimum is €30,000 (₹27 lakh).

**Qualifications:** Your degree, diploma, or professional certification must be recognized in Ireland.

**English Language Proficiency:** Strong communication skills are essential, especially in healthcare and customer-facing roles.

**Health Insurance:** Non-EU nationals must show proof of private medical insurance, which usually costs €500-1,000 per year (₹45,000-90,000).

**Clean Background:** A police clearance

certificate may be requested during the application process.

## How to Apply for Jobs in Ireland from India

For Indians aiming to work in Ireland in 2026, the application process is competitive but well-structured. Most employers prefer online applications, and highlighting skills in IT, healthcare, finance, or engineering increases your chances. A strong CV, tailored cover letter, and proof of qualifications are essential.

**Job Portals:** Platforms like IrishJobs.ie, Glassdoor, and LinkedIn list thousands of openings across IT, healthcare, and finance.

**Company Career Pages:** Multinationals such as Google, Meta, Pfizer, Accenture, and Microsoft advertise directly on their websites.

**Recruitment Agencies:** Local agencies in Dublin and Cork specialize in connecting international talent with employers.

**Networking:** Alumni groups, LinkedIn connections, and professional associations often lead to interviews and referrals.

**Graduate Pathways:** International students can use the Third Level Graduate Scheme to stay back for up to 2 years and apply for jobs after studies.

**Visa Considerations:** Skilled professionals may qualify for the Critical Skills Employment Permit or General Employment Permit, which streamline the hiring process.

## Work Permits and Visa Options for Indians in Ireland

To work in Ireland in 2026, Indian professionals need the right visa or employment permit. Ireland offers several pathways depending on your skills, job type, and whether you studied locally. Choosing the correct permit is crucial for securing long-term employment and residency.

**Critical Skills Employment Permit:** Designed for highly skilled roles in IT, engineering, healthcare, and finance. It offers faster residency options and is valid for 2 years initially.

**General Employment Permit:** Covers jobs not listed under the Critical Skills category. It is valid for 2 years and renewable, but requires a Labour Market Needs Test in most cases.

**Third Level Graduate Scheme:** Allows international students (including Indians) to stay back for up to 2 years after completing a master's degree or 1 year after a bachelor's degree to seek employment.

**Intra Company Transfer Permit:** For employees of multinational companies relocating to Ireland from their Indian offices.

**Dependent / Spouse Permits:** Family members of permit holders may also be eligible to work, depending

## TOP JOB PORTALS in IRELAND

YOUR GATEWAY TO CAREER OPPORTUNITIES

JOB PORTAL	FOCUS AREAS	WHY IT'S USEFUL
<b>indeed</b>	All industries, global reach	Largest job site in Ireland, with thousands of listings updated daily.
<b>IrishJobs.ie</b>	IT, finance, healthcare, engineering	One of Ireland's oldest and most trusted portals, widely used by employers.
<b>JobsIreland.ie</b>	Government-supported, all sectors	Official portal run by the Irish government to connect job seekers and employers.
<b>PublicJobs.ie</b>	Civil service, public sector	Best for those seeking government and public administration roles.
<b>glassdoor.ie</b>	Corporate jobs, company reviews	Useful for job listings plus insights into company culture and salaries.

**FIND THE RIGHT JOB. BUILD YOUR FUTURE.**  
*Your Next Opportunity Starts Here!*

on the type of permit.

## Top Job Portals to Find Work in Ireland

Ireland's job market in 2026 is highly digital, with most opportunities advertised online. Using the right portals can significantly improve your chances of finding work, whether in IT, healthcare, finance, or engineering.

## Tips for Using These Portals:

**Set up alerts:** Get notified when new jobs match your profile.

**Tailor your CV:** Irish employers value concise CVs (2 pages max).

**Check company reviews:** Glassdoor helps you understand workplace culture before applying

## Best Cities in Ireland for Career Growth (2026)

Ireland's employment landscape in 2026 is shaped by multinational hubs, regional innovation clusters, and government investment. Each city offers unique advantages for Indian professionals depending on their sector and career goals.

## Why These Cities Stand Out:

**Dublin:** Ireland's capital and global business hub, offering the highest salaries and fastest career progression.

**Cork:** Known as the "pharma capital," ideal for healthcare and biotech professionals.

**Galway:** A vibrant student city with strong medtech and AI research opportunities.

**Limerick:** Engineering and manufacturing powerhouse, with growing aviation and aerospace roles.

**Waterford:** Smaller but rising in pharma and life sciences, offering niche opportunities.

## Conclusion

Ireland in 2026 offers some of the best career opportunities in Ireland for Indians, with thriving sectors in IT, healthcare, finance, pharma, engineering, and AI. Competitive salaries ranging from €35,000-75,000 (₹31-68 lakh), combined with English-speaking workplaces and a welcoming environment, make Ireland a top choice for professionals and students alike.

Beyond immediate employment, Ireland provides clear pathways to long-term settlement through the Critical Skills Employment Permit, General Employment Permit, and the Third Level Graduate Scheme for students. With strong job demand, world-class universities, and structured PR options, Ireland is not just a destination for work but a place to build a secure and rewarding future.

## Iran Awaits FIFA Response on 2026 World Cup Venue Shift



**Tehran:** Iran on Sunday said it is still waiting for security guarantees from FIFA regarding its participation in the 2026 World Cup, reiterating that its request to shift matches from the United States to Mexico remains active. Iran, which has qualified for the expanded 48-team tournament and is placed in Group G, is currently scheduled to play its matches in Los Angeles and Seattle. However, concerns over security and political tensions have prompted officials to seek relocation.

Iran's Sports Minister Ahmad Donyamali stated that no response has yet been received from FIFA. He added that approval of the request would ensure Iran's participation in the tournament. Until then, uncertainty remains.

Despite the situation, Donyamali confirmed that the national team continues its preparations. He noted, however, that the final decision on participation will rest with the government. The minister also criticised remarks by Donald Trump, who had warned about safety concerns for Iran playing in the US. Donyamali described Trump's statements as "contradictory" and questioned the feasibility of guaranteeing security within a short timeframe. He stressed that, as per FIFA regulations, host nations must ensure the safety of all participating teams.

He further warned that if such guarantees are not provided, the likelihood of Iran playing its matches in the US would be "very low." However, he left the door open for participation if adequate assurances are given.

The 2026 FIFA World Cup, jointly hosted by the United States, Mexico, and Canada, is scheduled to take place from June 11 to July 19. Donyamali also raised broader geopolitical concerns, pointing to what he described as "double standards" in international sports. He referenced the bans imposed on Russia following the Ukraine conflict and contrasted them with the lack of action against Israel, alleging bias due to US support.

He criticised global organisations, including the UN Security Council, accusing them of failing to act impartially. According to him, such inconsistencies undermine the credibility of international institutions.

The minister also highlighted the impact of ongoing regional conflicts, claiming that Iranian sports facilities and civilian infrastructure have been targeted. He vowed that Iran would rebuild and strengthen its infrastructure despite such challenges.

Referring to a recent friendly match against Nigeria in Turkey, Donyamali said Iranian players wore black armbands and carried schoolbags to symbolise children affected by war. He added that the gesture aimed to raise global awareness.

He concluded by expressing appreciation for Turkey's support and emphasized that Iran would continue its stance until sanctions are lifted and its conditions are met.



**He held firm with an innings of restraint to calmly help his team get over the line against SRH**

## PANT AND LSG: HIGH DRAMA AND A HAPPY ENDING

**A**fter Lucknow Super Giants (LSG) lost their opening game of IPL 2026 to Delhi Capitals, visuals of the LSG owner talking to his captain on the field went viral. Surely not again, and not so soon? KL Rahul had parted ways with the LSG franchise at the end of IPL 2024, after getting a dressing down from the owner that was broadcast around the world following a chastening defeat against Sunrisers Hyderabad.

### NOW RISHABH PANT WAS IN THE HOT SEAT

Though the interaction wasn't as overt as the one with Rahul, it spread like wildfire on social media. LSG tried to control the narrative by putting out what they called an unedited video on their socials of the same people and the same discussion. But that raised a whole new set of questions. It is with this noise that Pant went into LSG's second game and noise is the one thing cricketers can't stand. Particularly one who had plenty of other challenges to deal with. Pant is approaching 10 years as an international cricketer but is only assured of a place in the Indian Test team.

A batter who is known for such unorthodox strokeplay was supposed to cash in on the T20 game but it just never happened. Pant had one amazing IPL in 2018 when he scored 684 runs at a strike rate of 173.60. But otherwise he was skirting a little too close to the middle of the pile.

Nobody seemed to know what his best batting position was. His success in Test cricket comes from his fearlessness, combined with the fact that the field tends to be up, which he exploits because he's the kind of batter who finds it almost easier to play an attacking

shot than a defensive shot. Not to say he can't knuckle down - the Gabba Test is evidence there - but there are stories. He lost his wicket once and got angry at Cheteshwar Pujara for telling him to tone down his strokeplay; for confusing him and leaving him vulnerable.

Pant began this IPL opening the batting, hoping that the field restrictions plus his uncanny ability to hit over the top even without being properly balanced at the crease would equal plenty of runs. And it might have if he hadn't been run out at the non-strikers' end when a straight drive flicked the bowler's hand and hit the stumps. On Sunday, chasing 157 against Sunrisers Hyderabad, he came out at No. 3. Statistically, it's been his best position, 626 runs at an average of 52.16 and a strike rate of 167.82. This, however, pushes a batter with even greater pedigree at No. 3 - Nicholas Pooran - further down the order, and it has become very clear that that diminishes him a bit. His worst IPL season in 2021 came when he batted six of his 11 innings at No. 5 and his best IPL season came when he batted No. 3 in 12 out of 14 innings. Pooran has made 8 and 1 in his two matches for LSG in 2026 and his dismissal left the game against SRH extremely tense.

There were still 52 runs needed off 42 balls and the last recognised batting pair was at the crease. Next man in, Mukul Chaudhary, was a 21-year-old playing his first season of IPL. It was excruciatingly clear that Pant will have to take the team home. Pant, who has still not sorted out his T20 game. Pant whose career has panned out in such a way that the probability of him being out there when the winning runs are scored is down at 0.13 (61 chases, eight not outs). Pant who was made to feel responsible

for the previous game ending in a loss.

To that external pressure came the perils of batting on a slow pitch. Pant needed 12 balls to get his first boundary and plenty more to settle into his innings. He was still playing his shots. There was a pull against Harshal Patel that went to deep third instead. There was a cut off Shivang Kumar that was stopped just short of the boundary. There was a slice off Eshan Malinga that only just cleared mid-off. This wasn't turning out like an innings that he would be telling his grandchildren.

But he persevered. A small target helped him focus. Staying out there despite the struggle meant he eventually got a bad ball that he could put away. Jaydev Unadkat lost his line down the leg side and forgot to hit the pitch with one of those balls and Pant helped himself to two boundaries in the 16th over. Forty-three off 30 became 29 off 24, then 15 off 12, and finally 9 off 6.

Pant pre-empted Unadkat trying to go yorker and took guard deep in his crease. That gave him leverage to open the final over with a boundary. The bowler went pace off and into the wicket. Pant, frantically backing away from the ball, flat-batted it over mid-off and fell over off balance.

He was on his knees when the dug-out rose in applause. A little later, he slumped all the way over and laid back on the outfield all on his own. He is definitely going to tell his grandchildren about this game. And he has earned the right to embellish it like hell. Most of Pant's best work involves a child-like belief that the impossible is possible. This one was all about being grown-up enough to suck it up and do what was necessary.

## Drugs and Cyber crimes are big challenge before police



**Hyderabad, April 05:** Honourable Chief Minister Shri A Revanth Reddy has said that increasing drug menace and cyber crimes posed the biggest challenge before police.

The Chief Minister emphasized that the responsibility of curbing emerging crimes lies with police forces. The nature of crime has now undergone a transformation and the Artificial Intelligence (AI) has emerged as a double-edged sword.

Expressing serious concern over increasing drug abuse by the educated youth, the CM said that the government was making efforts to encourage the youth to divert their attention to sports by stopping them from visiting pubs and drug culture. Unfortunately, some bright students are falling prey to drugs. The youth are drifting away from sports. Abandoning the playing fields is the biggest mistake committed by the youth.

The Chief Minister also said that the most worrying factor is youth addicted to drugs in Punjab state which once provided valiant freedom fighters for India independence, CM Revanth Reddy said resolved Telangana will not turn into another Punjab. The Chief Minister underscored the need every one should contribute to the nation and warned that India will face consequences if the youth goes in the wrong direction.

Remembering the invaluable contribution of Hyderabad football players during the 1950s and 1960s, the CM said that popular football player Lionel Messi was invited to Hyderabad and provided an opportunity to the sport aspirants mainly from SC and ST communities to play with Messi. There were 7 Hyderabad players in the Indian football team who displayed their sport spirit in the 1956 Olympics. Hyderabad was known as the "Nursery of Indian Football."

The Chief Minister spoke out about India's poor performance in the Olympic games. With a population of 1.4 billion, India failed to win even a single gold



medal. South Korea with just 40 million population secured over 30 medals. A single young woman from South Korea also won two gold medals. During his visit to Korea, the CM said that the sports university in that country was equipped with advanced sports infrastructure.

Aiming to win medals in the next Olympics, CM Revanth Reddy said that the government was establishing Young India Sports University at international level. This university was being set up through a Public-Private Partnership (PPP) model. Prominent sports persons and industrialists were already appointed on the governing board.

The Chief Minister stated that the government was giving government jobs and cash awards to the sports persons who excelled. World boxing champion Nikhat Zareen was appointed as

Group-1 officer along with a cash award of ₹2 crores. India Cricket player Siraj failed his 10th-grade examinations and did not technically meet the eligibility criteria for a Group-1 post. The government relaxed the rules and appointed him as a Deputy Superintendent of Police (DSP). Also, we awarded a Group-1 post to Deepthi Jurungi for winning a medal in the Paralympic games.

Congratulating the winners in the police football championship, the CM said that 34 teams displayed exceptional sporting talent in the all India tournament. The Chief Minister also remembered B.N. Mullik, who was also called as a Spy Master, contribution in strengthening the Intelligence agencies.

## Tim David, Rajat Patidar inflict bruising defeat on CSK



**R**oyal Challengers Bengaluru 250 for 3 (David 70\*, Paddikal 50, Patidar 48\*, Dube 1-30) beat Chennai Super Kings 207 (Sarfraz 50, Veer 43, Bhuvneshwar 3-41, Abhinandan 2-30) by 43 runs. Defending champions Royal Challengers Bangalore razed Chennai Super Kings' attack and the record books, in front of their beloved fans at the Chinnaswamy Stadium.

After being on 91 for 1 in ten overs, RCB nearly tripled that in the last ten, pushing the limits of T20 power-hitting. RCB's 250 for 3 was their third-highest total in the IPL and the highest ever by any team against CSK in the league. In response, CSK lost their top three inside three overs and eventually slid to their third successive defeat in IPL 2026.

The Chinnaswamy surface was tacky in the early exchanges, according to Devdutt Padikkal who scored 50 off 29 balls, and the outfield was unusually slow, with quite a few strong hits plugging in the outfield. While the surface settled later in the innings, the outfield remained slow. Tim David and Rajat Patidar didn't feel the need to hit the ball into the outfield, especially when they had the power to keep launching the ball into the night sky. David and Patidar faced 44 balls between them and sent 14 of those disappearing over the boundary. The entire CSK batting lineup could manage only 11 sixes.

### The calm

After being asked to bat, RCB needed 20 balls for the first boundary of the day. Both Matt Henry and Khaleel Ahmed hit hard lengths and made scoring hard for Phil Salt and Virat Kohli. It was Anshul Kamboj who provided CSK with the opening breakthrough when he had Kohli caught by Shivam Dube at long-on for 28 off 18 balls. Dube redeemed himself after dropping Kohli on



7 at mid-on off Khaleel Ahmed in the third over.

With the ball not coming onto the bat, Salt laboured to 15 off 16 balls. A brace of swatted fours off Kamboj then freed him up, but Shivam Dube, bowling for the first time in this season, struck with his third ball to stop Salt on 46 off 30 balls with a cutter that was banged into the pitch. Padikkal, who had dashed out the blocks on the opening day of the season, wasn't allowed to do so on this track. He started slowly as well - he was on 17 off 16 balls at one point - but then put the pedal to the floor and converted it into a 28-ball half-century. It was his second successive fifty, but it certainly wasn't the story of the day.

### The storm

David and Patidar came together at 151 for 3 at the start of the 15th over after Overton had knocked Padikkal over by cranking it up to 148kph. The carnage created by David and Patidar turned out to be the story of the day. With only 35 balls left in the innings, David took strike for 25 of those and crashed an unbeaten 70. Only one other batter has scored as many or more without facing a ball in the first 14 overs of a T20 innings (where ball-by-ball data is available).

David was particularly brutal on Overton, taking him for a sequence 6,4,6,6,6 in the 19th over that yielded 30 runs. All of those hits had the Chinnaswamy in a frenzy. One of those even had Kohli off his seat in the dressing room and

applauding David. The last of that sequence was a 106-metre monster six that disappeared out of the ground.

At the other end, Patidar had the best seat to this six-hitting show. He didn't face a single ball for almost three overs between overs 17 and 20. In all, he faced just five balls since the 16th over. Prior to that, he had played some special shots of his own. Like the pumped six off Noor Ahmad in the 12th over. Like the sliced six over the same region off a near yorker from Khaleel four overs later. Patidar finished with an unbeaten 48 off 19 balls.

### CSK go down swinging

After seeing David thump one six after another, Bhuvneshwar Kumar "wasn't sure whether I should be happy or sad". He had 200 reasons to be happy when he had Ayush Mhatre flapping a catch to mid-off for 1 by hitting an awkward, in-between length. It was his 200th wicket in the IPL; only Yuzvendra Chahal has more wickets than him in the league. Jacob Duffy ensured that RCB didn't feel Josh Hazlewood's absence once again, having both Sanju Samson and Ruturaj Gaikwad caught in the slips. From 30 for 3, CSK went down swinging and were dismissed for 207 in 19.4 overs.

By the end of the powerplay, CSK were 77 for 3, with Sarfraz Khan scoring 50 of those in 24 balls. Next ball, however, Krunal Pandya had Sarfraz struck. Prashant Veer then showed some spark during his 43 off 29 balls after going two matches without bowling a single ball. His shovelled four between deep midwicket and wide long-off off a Krunal dart showed why franchises were locked in a bidding war for Veer at the auction. Overton also made some quick runs, but his cameo could not offset the damage caused by the sixes he had conceded to David.



## Prabhas's Fauzi team issues warning after set pics surface online

Amid the ongoing shoot of Prabhas's upcoming film Fauzi, the makers of the film have issued a strict warning after some set photos surfaced on social media. The team stressed that sharing leaked content could spoil the experience audiences are meant to have in theatres. In an official statement released on X, the makers wrote, "It has come to our attention that certain accounts are circulating leaked images from the sets of #Fauzi. Please treat this as a strict warning - any such content will be reported, and necessary action will be taken against those involved."

They further explained, "These leaks compromise the experience we are carefully building. What's coming on the big screen will be far bigger and worth the wait. We urge everyone to refrain from sharing or engaging with leaked content."

Director Hanu Raghavapudi also appealed to fans, explaining that the team has poured their hearts into Fauzi to deliver something truly special and urged everyone not to spoil the experience with leaks, emphasising that the film is meant to be enjoyed together in theatres.

plaining that the team has poured their hearts into Fauzi to deliver something truly special and urged everyone not to spoil the experience with leaks, emphasising that the film is meant to be enjoyed together in theatres.

### About Fauzi

Fauzi is the first collaboration between Prabhas and the director of Sita Ramam. The film presents a fictionalised take on historical events and will release in two parts, with the second film serving as a prequel. The first look of Prabhas was unveiled on his birthday, October 23, with the tagline "A battalion who fights alone."

Produced by Mythri Movie Makers, the film is slated for a 2026 release across all South Indian languages and Hindi. Prabhas was last seen in The Raja Saab, which hit theatres in January and received mixed reviews. He will also be seen in Spirit, directed by Sandeep Reddy Vanga, releasing next year.

## Rashmika marks 30th birthday with fierce new poster from Mysaa



Actor Rashmika Mandanna celebrates her 30th birthday today, marking her first major celebration since marrying Vijay Deverakonda. To mark the occasion, the production team of her upcoming film Mysaa released a new poster showing her in a rugged, battle-worn look, highlighting the transformation she undergoes for her role.

The poster presents Rashmika with her face covered in soot, grime, and blood, along with visible cuts on her nose and forehead. The look reflects the physical challenges of her character while signaling the intensity of her role in the film.

### Rashmika's Character in Mysaa

Set in the traditional landscape of the Gond tribes, Mysaa features Rashmika as a warrior woman, a significant shift from her previous rom-com and commercial entertainer roles. The role shows her taking on more serious and grounded performance demands, emphasising both emotional depth and action. Mysaa is directed by debutant Rawindra Pulle and produced by Unformula Films. The ensemble cast includes Eshwari Rao, Guru Somasundaram, and Rao Ramesh. With shooting currently ongoing, the film is scheduled for a multi-language release in 2026.



## Adivi Sesh Explains How A Hero Mocked Him Down!



Talented actor Adivi Sesh, known for handling multiple aspects of his films, is gearing up for the release of Dacoit on April 10. Co-starring Mrunal Thakur, Sunil, and Anurag Kashyap, the film is being actively promoted through interviews.

During one such interaction, Sesh revealed that a Tier-2 hero mocked him at a producer's birthday party in Hyderabad, comparing their film budgets and claiming Sesh had reached his "range." Though Sesh laughed it off at the moment, he later questioned the obsession with comparing budgets and status among actors.

He remarked that instead of internal comparisons, actors should aim higher—competing with legends like Rajinikanth and Chiranjeevi, and even global stars. Despite not having massive box-office numbers, Sesh emphasized that his films are known for quality and lasting impact.

## Janhvi Kapoor recalls seeing her morphed images on porn site: There is no morality

Actor Janhvi Kapoor revealed a disturbing experience from her teenage years, sharing that she came across a morphed image of herself on a porn site when she was just 15. While she initially tried to rationalise it as part of being online, the incident has had a long-lasting impact, especially as AI-generated images of her continue to circulate even today.

Speaking with Raj Shamani, Janhvi recounted the moment she first encountered the image. "I don't know if it was a deepfake, but it was something like that. I saw a picture of me on a porn site," she said.

She recalled that it happened during school IT classes, explaining, "We had IT class in school and boys used to go on those sites for fun. My pictures were on there. And this was in school. So that was a weird experience."

At the time, Janhvi said she tried to rationalise the situation. "At some point, I was like -- this is the cost you have to pay. There is no morality in a lot of these things with social media," she said. However, she added that her perspective has changed, and these AI-generated images continue to affect her today.

The actor admitted that she is "not at peace" with the situation. She explained that AI-generated visuals of her are circulating online, sometimes even shared by official news pages. These images depict her in outfits she has never worn or in poses she has never taken.

On the work front, Janhvi was last seen in Sunny Sanskari Ki Tulsi Kumari, directed by Shashank Khaitan. The film also stars Varun Dhawan, Sanya Malhotra, and Rohit Saraf.

## Kangana Ranaut's Queen Sequel Gets New Title And It's Not Queen 2? Here's What We Know

Kangana Ranaut's Queen sequel news has been gaining attention. And the latest report suggests that the much-awaited sequel has finally found its title—but it may not be what fans were expecting.

The film is unlikely to be called Queen 2. Instead, makers are reportedly leaning towards a fresh and more fitting title: Queen Forever.

Bollywood Hungama reported that Kangana Ranaut's Queen sequel will not be known as Queen 2. "The makers had several options for the film's title, and the one that really caught their eye is 'Queen Forever.' If all goes well, this will be what the film will be called. The makers feel Queen Forever is the apt title and that it suits the film's subject," the portal mentioned.

### Kangana Ranaut set to start shooting for Queen 2

According to Mid-Day, the sequel will not directly continue the 2014 hit's storyline, but is expected to build on its core themes of self-discovery and independence. Kangana's character will be seen as a city girl in Queen 2. A source told the portal, "In Queen 2, Kangana's Rani will be a city girl unlike the small-town girl in the original. She will be smart, strong, and quirky, but a plot point will send her on the road of self-discovery. It will show how she conquers life through her individuality, self-realisation, and courage. While the first one saw her travelling to Paris and Amsterdam alone, this journey will take her across cities in India."

The report also suggests that no actors from the original cast are expected to return apart from Kangana Ranaut. Director Vikas Bahl has reportedly chosen a fresh lineup, with several theatre artists being considered for key supporting roles in the second instalment. The source further added, "The unit will kick off the project in a Mumbai studio, where a set reflecting a North Indian city and another depicting the protagonist's home will be built. After the Mumbai leg, they will move to other metro cities. The film will be completed in a start-to-finish schedule of three months."

### Rajkumar Rao On Working With Kangana Ranaut In Queen

In one of his recent interviews, Rajkumar Rao was asked about his experience of working with Kangana Ranaut in the comedy adventure movie Queen, released in 2013. In reply, Rao praised Ranaut and reflected on their shooting days together. "It was fun, I think it was a lot of fun. She is, of course, undoubtedly one of the finest talents that we have in the country. Immensely talented, and it was a lot of fun," he fondly told Instant Bollywood. FYI: Rao played the role of a supporting character titled Vijay in the all-time favourite movie, Queen, starring Kangana Ranaut in the lead role.

