

# HYDERABAD HEADLINES

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### Gill's silken 86 keeps KKR winless after six games

STADIUM 11

### Jacqueline Agrees to Become Approver



BOX -OFFICE 12

### TG aims to emerge as strategic aerospace hub: Sridhar Babu



Hyderabad, April 17: Minister for IT and Industries Duddilla Sridhar Babu stated that Telangana is positioning itself as a strategic hub for the country's future aerospace requirements by building an ecosystem centred on research and development, advanced manufacturing, certification and compliance. Addressing a national conference on "Changing Scenario in

Aerospace: R&D, Manufacturing and Certification", organised by the Hyderabad chapter of The Aeronautical Society of India at the Engineering Staff College of India in Gachibowli here on Friday, the Minister said only those countries and States that successfully integrate these three pillars would emerge as global leaders in aerospace. **CONTINUED ON PAGE 2 >**

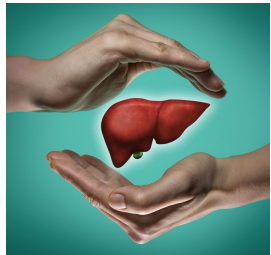
SHORT TAKES



### Tamil Nadu fought and won: MK Stalin

Tamil Nadu Chief Minister and the DMK Supremo, MK Stalin, congratulated the people of Tamil Nadu after the women's quota bill was defeated in the Lok Sabha, as the centre had fallen short of the majority mark.

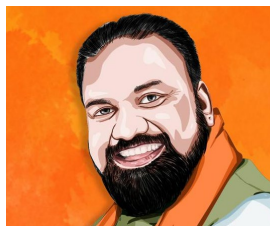
NEXT DOOR 05



### Is Your Liver Older Than You?

STAR Hospitals has unveiled a landmark preventive intelligence initiative: "The Endangered Organ" Liver Rulebook. Built on insights from thousands of real patient journeys, this framework redefines how India detects and protects the liver before it's too late.

MONEY MATTER 09



### Will 'Samrat' be able to uphold Nitish's legacy of trust?

Reaching the pinnacle of power in Bihar's politics is difficult, but sustaining oneself there and proving universal acceptance is an even greater challenge. The rise of Samrat Choudhary as the 24th Chief Minister marks the beginning of a new political era in the state.

OPINION 06



"THE DEFEAT OF THE WOMEN'S RESERVATION BILL SHOWS A MINDSET AGAINST BOTH WOMEN AND THE NATION, DENYING THEM THEIR RIGHTFUL 33% REPRESENTATION IN LEGISLATURES."  
— AMIT SHAH



"THEY USED AN UNCONSTITUTIONAL TRICK TO BREAK THE CONSTITUTION IN THE NAME OF WOMEN... THIS IS NOT A WOMEN'S BILL BUT AN ATTEMPT TO CHANGE INDIA'S ELECTORAL STRUCTURE."  
— RAHUL GANDHI



"UNDER THE LEADERSHIP OF RAHUL GANDHI AND MALLIKARJUN KHARGE, A NATIONAL CALAMITY WAS THWARTED. TODAY WILL BE REMEMBERED AS A GOLDEN DAY IN THE HISTORY OF THE NATION."  
— REVANTH REDDY

# Numbers Fall Short

## Women's Reservation Bill Fails 2/3rd Majority Test

NEW DELHI, APRIL 17

In a significant political development, the Constitution (131st Amendment) Bill proposing 33% reservation for women in legislatures starting 2029 was defeated in the Lok Sabha on Friday, dealing a major setback to the government.

The bill secured 298 votes in favour and 230 against, falling short of the required two-thirds majority mark of 352 votes out of 528 members present and voting. The proposed legislation also aimed to increase the strength of the Lok Sabha from 543 to 816 seats following a delimitation

exercise based on the 2011 Census, in order to operationalise women's reservation.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Home Minister Amit Shah, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, and Leader of Opposition Rahul Gandhi were present during the voting.

Following the defeat, Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla adjourned the House for the day. The special three-day session, convened from April 16 to 18, had been scheduled to secure parliamentary approval for the bill.

Parliamentary Affairs Minister Kiren Rijiju subsequently announced that the government would not proceed with the

Delimitation Bill and the Union Territories Laws (Amendment) Bill, as both were linked to the defeated legislation.

Despite the setback, the government reaffirmed its commitment to women's reservation. Rijiju stated that the effort to ensure representation for women would continue, while Shah criticised opposition parties—including Congress, TMC, DMK, and Samajwadi Party—for blocking the bill. Shah also argued that delimitation was necessary to ensure equal representation, highlighting disparities in voter distribution across constituencies. He dismissed concerns regarding regional imbalance and clarified that reservation

based on religion is not permitted under the Constitution.

Earlier, Modi had urged MPs to support the bill, appealing to their conscience and emphasizing the need to empower women in decision-making processes.

Opposition leaders, however, maintained that the bill was not genuinely aimed at women's empowerment. Rahul Gandhi described it as an attempt to alter the electoral structure under the guise of reservation, calling it "an attack on the Constitution."

The defeat marks the first instance of a government bill failing in Parliament during the Modi administration.

### CM Revanth urges centre to procure 30 LMT of boiled rice



- Telangana ready to supply boiled rice with a 5 per cent broken rice content
- Appeals to Union Minister to release pending arrears of Rs 1,468.94 Crores
- Resume distribution of fortified rice
- CM Revanth Reddy and Civil Supplies minister N Uttam Kumar Reddy submits memorandum to union minister Pralhad Joshi today.

New Delhi, April 17: Chief Minister Shri A. Revanth Reddy and Civil Supplies minister N Uttam Kumar Reddy urged Union Minister for Food and Public Distribution Pralhad Joshi to procure 30 lakh metric tonnes (LMT) of boiled rice from Telangana in the Yasangi ( Rabi ) season. The Chief Minister and Civil Supplies minister brought to the attention of Pralhad Joshi that the Paddy harvested during the rabi season is suitable for milling of boiled rice.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2 >

### CONG MINDSET AGAINST WOMEN EXPOSED IN PARLIAMENT: NRR

Hyderabad, Apr 17 : Telangana state BJP President N Ramchander Rao said defeat of Nari Shakti Vandan Adhiniyam in parliament has testament of Congress and its INDI alliance against women empowerment in the country. Rao , in a statement, strongly condemned historical mistake committed by Congress party and said politics blocked reforms and Congress mindset against women has been exposed.

Congress does not wanted to see a woman holds a top position and it has never ever interested for women empowerment since beginning, he blamed and alleged that Congress party is a dynasty and never supported a woman outside Gandhi family since the regime of Jawaharlal Nehru. When a bill was introduced in parliament to empower women and provide them with 33 percent representation in legislative bodies for the nation's development, the Congress party opposed it and blocked the progress of women, Rao alleged.

# Severe Heatwave Alert Issued: Temperatures May Touch 55°C

APRIL 18

Authorities have issued an urgent heatwave warning for the period between April 19 and May 31, cautioning citizens to take strict precautions as temperatures are expected to soar between 45°C and 55°C in several regions.

According to weather reports, intense ultraviolet (UV) radiation levels may also rise significantly, with up to 70% direct exposure reaching the earth during peak hours.

Officials have strongly advised people to avoid stepping outdoors, especially in open areas, between 10:00 AM and 3:00 PM, when heat intensity is expected to be at its peak.



Residents are urged to remain hydrated and consume cooling beverages such as curd, buttermilk, and lemon juice to prevent heat-related illnesses.

The Civil Defense depart-

ment has warned that hot winds may lead to breathing difficulties in some areas. Citizens experiencing symptoms such as breathlessness or sudden illness are advised to seek

immediate medical attention.

**Safety Measures Issued**  
Authorities have listed several precautions to minimize risks during the extreme heat:

- ❖ Avoid leaving items like gas materials, lighters, carbonated drinks, perfumes, and batteries inside parked vehicles.
- ❖ Keep car windows slightly open to allow ventilation.
- ❖ Refuel vehicles preferably during evening hours and avoid completely filling fuel tanks.
- ❖ Do not overinflate vehicle tires during travel. Avoid unnecessary travel, particularly during peak heat hours.

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## Amit Shah tears into Cong, its allies as bill to amend women's quota law fails LS test



NEW DELHI, APR 17

Slamming the Congress and its allies for the defeat of a Constitution amendment bill to implement 33 per cent women's quota in legislative bodies before the 2029 Parliamentary polls, Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Friday said their mindset is neither in the interest of women, nor the country.

The Congress and its allies did not allow the passage of the essential bill, which would have given 33 per cent reservation to women in Lok Sabha and state/UT assemblies, he said.

"Rejecting the bill that would grant 33 per cent reservation to women, celebrating it, and raising victory cries over it was truly reprehensible and beyond imagination," Shah said in a message on X after the Constitution (131st Amendment) Bill failed to secure two-third majority during voting in the Lok Sabha on Friday night.

"Today, a very strange scene unfolded in the Lok Sabha as the Congress, TMC, DMK, and the Samajwadi Party did not allow the passage of the essential Constitution amendment bill, the 'Nari Shakti Vandan Adhiniyam'.

"Now, the women of the country will not get 33 per cent reservation in the Lok Sabha and state assemblies,

which was their right. The Congress and its allies have done this, not for the first time but repeatedly. Their mindset is neither in the interest of women, nor the country," Shah said in the message in Hindi.

The home minister also warned the Congress and other parties which opposed the bill that this insult to "Nari Shakti" will travel far and wide.

"The opposition will have to face the wrath of women, not only in the 2029 Lok Sabha elections but at every level, in every election, and at every place," Shah said.

When put to vote in the Lower House, 298 members voted in support of the bill, while 230 voted against it.

Out of the 528 members who voted, the bill required 352 votes to secure a two-third majority required for the passage of a Constitution amendment bill in the Lok Sabha.

According to the bill, Lok Sabha seats were to be increased to a maximum of 850 from the current 543 to "operationalise" the women's reservation law before the 2029 parliamentary polls, following a delimitation exercise based on the 2011 Census. Seats were also to be increased in states and UT assemblies to accommodate 33 per cent reservation for women.

## CS calls for seamless EV ecosystem across urban, rural areas

HYDERABAD, APRIL 17

Chief Secretary K. Ramakrishna Rao held a review meeting on the electric vehicle (EV) charging infrastructure mandate at the Secretariat on Friday. Senior officials from various departments participated in the meeting, which focused on strategies to scale up EV infrastructure across the state. During the meeting, the Chief Secretary underscored the urgent need to accelerate the adoption of electric vehicles in line with sustainability goals and the transition towards clean energy. He emphasised that a strong and widespread charging network is critical to instill confidence among EV users and to support the growing demand for electric mobility.

The Chief Secretary directed officials to develop a comprehensive and forward-looking plan for establishing EV charging infrastructure, leveraging both government initiatives and private sector participation. Stressing the importance of coordinated efforts, he called for the creation of a seamless ecosystem that ensures accessibility, reliability and efficiency of charging facilities across urban and rural areas. The Chief Secretary also instructed that a centralised, real-time dashboard be developed to map and monitor EV charging infrastructure in the state. This dashboard will serve as a critical tool for planning, tracking progress, and ensuring transparency in the deployment of charging stations.

## Friday Dryday Drive: Kukatpally Circle Officials and Residents Unite to Combat Mosquito Breeding

SAMUDRALA KIRAN  
CORRESPONDENT

**Medchal-Malkajgiri, April 17:** Aimed at curbing the nuisance and health risks posed by mosquitoes. On the guidance of the Cyberabad Municipal Corporation, Kukatpally Circle, organized a proactive Friday-Dryday program at KPHB Colony 7th Phase and Balaji Nagar. The initiative centers on water safety and larval control, urging residents to inspect and clean water storage containers once a week to prevent mosquito breeding.

The event brought together a diverse group of participants led by the Cyberabad Municipal Corporation, with leadership from the Kukatpally Circle and Kukatpally Zone. Deputy Executive Engineer Ramesh, Ward Entomology Supervisors P Mahender Reddy and B Umarani, Entomology Staff, and Resource Persons facilitated the awareness drive, while residents from the 7th Phase—Anji Babu, Vasireddy Lakshmi Narayana, Hari Babu, Podugu Appa Rao, Anil, Venkat, Narasimha—and the Sanitary Field Assistant Nagaraju contributed to the on-ground outreach. The session also featured the collaboration of colony volunteers who joined



hands to reinforce practical steps for vector control. Ward Entomology Supervisor B Uma Rani led the program, explaining the stages of mosquito breeding and providing actionable guidance on preventing mosquitoes both inside homes and within the wider community.

Mosquitoes remain a public health concern due to their role as vectors for various diseases. By interrupting the breeding cycle at the larval stage, the program seeks to significantly reduce population numbers and the associated transmission risk. The initiative empha-

sizes simple, repeatable actions that residents can practice weekly, transforming awareness into sustained, everyday habits that strengthen community health.

During the session, participants were guided through practical steps: identifying potential breeding sites such as uncovered water containers, coolers, flower pots, discarded tires, and any stagnant water around homes; implementing a weekly cleaning routine that involves emptying, scrubbing, rinsing, and drying water storage containers to disrupt development; and adopting

water management practices that include tightly covering storage containers, using brimful lids for tanks and drums, and elevating containers off the ground where feasible. Residents and volunteers were encouraged to monitor larval presence and report persistent breeding sites to the local entomology team, ensuring targeted interventions. The on-site demonstrations and clear explanations provided by ward supervisors and RP staff helped translate guidelines into practical, everyday actions, with residents actively participating and asking questions.

The program fostered a sense of communal responsibility as residents listened to concise explanations about the mosquito life cycle and the importance of larval control. The emphasis on straightforward household practices and neighborly collaboration resonated with participants who appreciated the hands-on guidance and the opportunity to contribute to a healthier, safer neighborhood. As Friday Dryday continues to gain momentum, the initiative invites more residents to adopt the weekly cleaning routine and to propagate the knowledge within their circles, thereby creating a ripple effect that strengthens the community's resilience against vector-borne diseases.

Looking ahead, the Friday Dryday initiative in Kukatpally stands as a model of community-driven vector management. By combining expert guidance with grassroots participation, the program aims to sustain lower mosquito populations, improve local health outcomes, and foster a culture of proactive water management. Residents seeking more information or wishing to participate in upcoming sessions are encouraged to contact the Kukatpally Zone office or visit the local ward entomology desk for details.

## Meridian School Kukatpally Posts Perfect CBSE Class 10 Result

- ❖ Sets New Benchmark in Academic and AI Excellence
- ❖ All 68 students clear the board examination; school records an 87.3% average, topper Sai Aditya Sha scores 97.8%, while 48 students secure a perfect 100 in Artificial Intelligence.

SAMUDRALA KIRAN |  
CORRESPONDENT

**Hyderabad, April 17:** Meridian School, Kukatpally has delivered an exceptional performance in the CBSE Class 10 examinations, securing a 100% pass rate and once again reinforcing its reputation for academic distinction and future-ready education.

All 68 students who appeared for the examination passed successfully, with the school recording an impressive overall average of 87.3%. The result marks a significant academic milestone for the institution and reflects a culture of disciplined preparation, sustained effort and holistic learning.

Sai Aditya Sha emerged as the school topper with an outstanding 97.8%, scoring 489 out of 500 marks. He was followed by Pranav Dronamraju, who secured 96.6%,

while Kalabarigi Harini and Samvi Danthuluri shared the third position with 95.6% each, Mihika Varma 95.4%, Srivansh Kamtam 95%, Sai Vedank 95%, Deeksha Chava 95%, Tejal Lokhande 94.4%, Medathi-Hansuja 94.2%. The performance of the toppers, along with the strength of the overall results, underlines the depth of talent and consistency among the students.

The school recorded commendable and balanced performances across subjects. In English, students demonstrated remarkable language proficiency, with the highest score reaching 99 and the average standing at 90%. In the second language segment, comprising Hindi and Telugu, the highest score was 98, while the averages stood at 80.02% in Hindi and 82.9% in Telugu.

In Mathematics, students displayed steady progress and problem-solving ability, achieving a highest score of 95 with an average of 68.4%. Science results reflected strong conceptual clarity and application skills, with the top score at 98 and the average at 82%. Social Science too saw an impressive outcome, with students securing a highest score of 99 and an average of 85%, highlighting sound analytical and interpretative abilities.

A defining highlight of this year's results was the school's extraordinary performance in Artificial Intelligence. Meridian School recorded

a remarkable average of 97.8% in the subject, with 48 students scoring a perfect 100. The feat stands as a strong testament to the school's commitment to integrating contemporary, skill-based learning into its academic framework and preparing students for an increasingly technology-driven world.

Congratulating the students on their remarkable achievement, Aakrushi Bellaney, Principal of Meridian School, Kukatpally, praised their hard work, determination and spirit of excellence. She said, "Heartiest congratulations to all our students on this splendid achievement. These results are not merely

marks on a score sheet, but a reflection of your discipline, perseverance and commitment to excellence. As you move forward into the next stage of your academic journey, remember that true success lies not only in how much you score, but in how deeply you learn, how humbly you grow and how responsibly you use your knowledge. Dream big, remain curious, stay grounded in values and approach every opportunity with courage and confidence. The future belongs to those who combine knowledge with integrity, compassion and purpose, and I am certain each one of you is capable of creating a meaningful impact in the world."

The school management also expressed immense pride in the students' success and acknowledged the unwavering dedication of teachers and the constant support of parents. The results, the management noted, are the outcome of structured academic planning, committed mentoring and a nurturing environment that inspires both achievement and all-round development.

With a flawless pass record, impressive subject-wise performance and exceptional success in Artificial Intelligence, Meridian School, Kukatpally has not only celebrated a landmark result, but has also delivered a powerful statement of academic excellence and future-focused education.

CONTINUATION FROM PAGE 1

## CM Revanth urges centre to procure 30 LMT of boiled rice

FROM PAGE 1

CM Revanth Reddy briefed the union minister about the supply of Custom Milling Rice (CMR) with statistical data over the past 6 Yasangi seasons and boiled rice.

The Chief Minister and Civil Supplies Minister met with Union Minister Joshi at his residence in Delhi on Friday morning.

During the meeting, the CM and Uttam Kumar Reddy reminded the Union Minister that the officials of the ministry of Food and Public Distribution suggested to increase boiled rice supply in view of the growing demand across the country. The Chief Minister informed Joshi that 90 LMT (Lakh Metric Tonnes) of Paddy is expected to be produced in Telangana during the current Yasangi season and the harvested crop is suitable for milling into

parboiled rice.

CM Revanth Reddy said that Telangana is ready to supply a total of 30 LMT of parboiled rice (with 5 per cent over the past 6 Yasangi seasons) and 5 LMT of raw rice (with 10 per cent broken rice content) from the Yasangi harvest.

In a quick response, Union Minister Pralhad Joshi approved in-principle the proposal of supply of boiled rice submitted by the Chief Minister and Uttam Kumar Reddy in the meeting.

Further, CM Revanth Reddy and Civil Supplies minister appealed to Pralhad Joshi to immediately release outstanding dues of ₹1,468.94 crore, pertaining to the procurement of additional levy from the 2014-15 Kharif (monsoon) season. The CM and the State Minister apprised the Union Minister that Telangana is the largest Paddy producing state

and also deposited money in the farmers accounts within 48 hours of the procurement of paddy.

In view of financial challenges facing by the state Civil Supplies department, the CM requested the Union Minister to expedite the release of pending arrears. Pralhad Joshi was also requested to resume the distribution of Fortified Rice Kernels (FRK) immediately. The fortified rice was distributed through schools, hostels and ICDS centers to prevent anemia and nutritional deficiencies among children. The CM said that the scheme was stopped recently. State Government Special Representative in Delhi A.P. Jithender Reddy, Secretary (Coordination) Advait Singh, and officials from the Union Ministry of Food and Public Distribution were present in the meeting.

FROM PAGE 1

He said the State government was developing an ecosystem capable of responding to the rapid changes and challenges confronting the global aerospace sector. "Aerospace is no longer confined to manufacturing aircraft and machines. It has become a reflection of a nation's strategic capability, technological strength and confidence," Sridhar Babu said.

The Minister noted that while the sector was once dominated by the United States, Russia and Europe, India was now playing an increasingly important role in the global aerospace supply chain.

Referring to UNESCO estimates, he said India had one of the world's largest pools of scientists and engineers. However, Sridhar Babu expressed concern that, according to a McKinsey report, less than 30%

of research conducted in laboratories was translated into commercial manufacturing.

"The State government is committed to bridging this gap and converting research into products," he said. Citing the Deloitte Global Aerospace and Defence Survey, Sridhar Babu said 74% of aerospace chief executives now prioritised resilient supply chains and manufacturing capability over low-cost production.

He said Boeing and Airbus had estimated that the world would require around 42,000 new aircraft over the next two decades. Telangana, particularly Hyderabad, is preparing to tap this opportunity by strengthening its precision engineering base, defence manufacturing network and micro, small and medium enterprises ecosystem, Sridhar Babu said.

The Minister said India con-

tinued to depend on foreign countries for aerospace testing and certification, leading not only to higher costs but also delays of 18 to 24 months in bringing products to market.

He urged the Union government to support the development of a world-class aerospace certification ecosystem in Hyderabad, which, he said, possessed all the necessary advantages.

Sridhar Babu said emerging technologies such as drones, reusable rockets, AI-enabled avionics, 3D printing and advanced materials would shape the future of aerospace and that Telangana was preparing itself accordingly. He said more than 1,500 MSMEs in Hyderabad were already supplying components to global aerospace companies, taking the "Made in Telangana" brand to international markets.

## Severe Heatwave Alert Issued..

FROM PAGE 1

**Household Precautions** Residents are also advised to take safety measures at home:

- ❖ Keep doors and windows open for proper ventilation. Avoid placing gas cylinders under direct sunlight.

- ❖ Do not overload electricity meters and use air conditioners only when necessary. Maintain indoor AC temperatures between 24°C and 25°C when outside temperatures exceed 45°C.

- ❖ Additionally, people are cautioned to remain alert as snakes and scorpions may enter homes in search of cooler environments.

- ❖ Health experts recommend drinking plenty of water, taking rest for at least 30 minutes every 2-3 hours, and minimizing mobile phone usage to prevent overheating or damage.

- ❖ Authorities have urged the public to stay cautious, follow advisories strictly, and share the information to ensure community safety during the extreme heatwave period.



## Digitalization Key to Building an Inclusive Viksit Bharat by 2047: Experts

**Samudrala Kiran, Correspondent**

**HYDERABAD**

The two-day National Seminar on "Harnessing Digitalization for a Viksit Bharat @ 2047: Innovations, Challenges, and Roadmap" concluded on Friday at Government Degree College for Women, Hussaini-alam, Hyderabad, with educationists, scholars, and students highlighting the growing role of digital transformation in shaping India's future.

The valedictory session was attended by eminent academicians, with Prof. Mohd Abdul Azeem, Head, Department of Management and Commerce, MANUU, gracing the occasion as Chief Guest. In his address, he underscored the transformative potential of digitalization in building an inclusive, sustainable, and progressive India by 2047. He also appreciated the depth of academic discussions held during the seminar and noted that digital advancement must be aligned



with national development goals.

Guest of Honour Prof. Sreenivas Murthy, Director, IPE, emphasized that technology must be effectively integrated with education, governance, and economic development to realize the vision of Viksit Bharat. Distinguished guest Prof. M. Ramulu also shared his insights and congratulated the organizers for conducting the seminar successfully with active participation from academicians and research scholars.

The seminar brought together faculty members and research scholars from different colleges and institutions,

Shobha Rani acknowledged the support and collective effort of the organizing team in ensuring the seminar's success.

The seminar was conducted under the guidance of Principal and Chief Mentor Prof. CH. Appiya Chinamma, with the dedicated efforts of Organizing Secretary Prof. Prasanna Khadkikar, Convenor Dr. K. Shobha Rani, Co-Convenors Mrs. Farzana Begum and Sadia Sutana, along with the organizing committee.

The report highlighted four technical sessions that reflected the broad scope of digitalization in national development: Digital Infrastructure and Connectivity, Digital Economy and Financial Inclusion, E-Governance and Public Service Delivery, and Digital Transformation in Education and Skill Development. These themes provided participants with an educational and practical understanding of how digital tools are reshaping public services, economic participation, and learning systems in India.

## BJP Responsible for Failure of Women's Reservation Bill: BRS working president KTR

**HYDERABAD**

Bharat Rashtra Samithi (BRS) Working President K. T. Rama Rao (KTR) strongly criticised the BJP over the failure of the Women's Reservation Bill in Parliament, holding the ruling party entirely responsible for the setback.

KTR stated that the Bill failed primarily because the BJP deliberately linked it with the contentious issue of delimitation, thereby derailing its passage. He pointed out that all political parties, including the BRS, had extended support to women's reservations, but the BJP's political approach ensured the Bill did not succeed.

He alleged that by unnecessarily tying the Bill to delimitation, the BJP created avoidable complications and denied women their rightful representation. KTR said that the reservations could have been implemented immediately within the existing 543 Lok Sabha seats, but the BJP chose to politicise the issue.

KTR further accused the

BJP of attempting to disadvantage southern states by linking women's reservations with delimitation, ignoring the concerns raised by several parties. He said this approach has led to the loss of a historic opportunity for women's empowerment.

KTR said the people of the country have witnessed the BJP's political drama in the name of women's reservations. He alleged that the party used the issue for electoral gains and has now betrayed women across the country.

He demanded that the BJP immediately bring a fresh Women's Reservation Bill without linking it to delimitation and ensure its implementation from the upcoming elections to prove its sincerity.

**Call for wider Consultations on Delimitation**

KTR stated that delimitation is a complex issue and warned that the current approach could reduce the representation of southern states in Parliament. He urged the Centre to hold wide consulta-

tions and discussions before proceeding further.

He said the developments in Parliament should serve as a lesson for the BJP against pushing unilateral decisions on sensitive national issues.

**Demand for Telangana's assembly Delimitation Rights**

KTR reiterated that increasing the number of Assembly seats in Telangana, as per the Andhra Pradesh Reorganisation Act, is the state's right. He questioned why the Centre has increased seats in Jammu & Kashmir and Assam without linking them to nationwide delimitation, while ignoring Telangana.

He demanded that the Centre introduce a separate Bill in the current Parliament session to increase Telangana Assembly seats before 2028, without linking it to national delimitation.

KTR concluded by urging the BJP to correct its approach and ensure women's reservations without political conditions.

## Historic Achievement and Proud Moment for South India: Er. Vedakumar Manikonda Elected to INTACH National Executive Committee

**NEW DELHI**

the INTACH Headquarters, New Delhi, Er. Vedakumar Manikonda, who was recently elected to the Governing Council of INTACH for a three-year term (2026-2029), has now been further elected to the prestigious National Executive Committee of INTACH for a period of three years.

The announcement was made by INTACH Chairman Shri Ashok Singh Thakur in the presence of Member Secretary Mr. Ravindra Singh, Retd. IAS.

This distinguished honour reflects continued recognition of his leadership, experience, and long-standing commitment to heritage conservation. His elevation



to this key body demonstrates the immense confidence reposed in his abilities to contribute effectively to the governance and functioning of the organization.

This achievement marks a historic milestone, as Er. Vedakumar Manikonda is among the few from South India to be elected to the National Executive Committee of INTACH for a three-year term. This recognition highlights not only his

individual contributions but also the growing representation and importance of South India in national heritage initiatives.

With decades of dedicated service in the fields of cultural heritage, conservation, and academic engagement, his presence in the Executive Committee is expected to further strengthen INTACH's mission and expand its outreach across the country.

## Prarambh 2026: Awareness Program on the New Income Tax Act

**HYDERABAD**

An Awareness Program 'Prarambh 2026' on the new 'Income Tax Act, 2025' on the theme "Understanding the New Tax Provisions" on 16th April 2026 at KLN Prasad Auditorium, FTCCI (Chamber of Commerce), Hyderabad was conducted by the office of Pr. Commissioner of Incometax - 1, Hyderabad. The awareness program was widely attended by more than 400 eminent Chartered Accountants, CFOs, Finance Managers and Accountants from business enterprises, and representatives of trade associations.

Shri Shivraj B. Morey, IRS, Pr. CIT-1, Hyderabad delivered the key note address. The technical sessions were conducted by Shri Mookambikeyan S., IRS, Addl. CIT - Range 1, Hyderabad, Ms. Reema Yadav, IRS, Addl. CIT -



Range 6, Hyderabad, Shri Mathivanan S. A., JCIT, TDS Range 1, and Shri Ravi Kiran, IRS, DCIT Circle 3(I),

who addressed practical aspects relevant to professionals, pertaining to the transition provisions between the old Act of 1961 and new Act of 2025. Valuable insights were also given by the Chairman of Hyderabad Branch of SIR of the Institute of Chartered Accountants of India (ICAI), Sri Giridhari Lal Toshniwal, and its Secretary Sri Kumar Pal Tated.

## Massive Protests Erupt in Hyderabad Schools Over Fee Hike



**Parents Demand Government Intervention**

**HYDERABAD**

Parents across Hyderabad staged strong protests against steep fee hikes and additional charges imposed by private schools, alleging financial burden and lack of transparency by school managements.

At Hyderabad Public School, Ramanthapur, parents gathered in large numbers and protested in front of the school, demanding justice over increased fees. Similar protests were also reported yesterday from private schools in the Old City and Kukatpally, where parents raised concerns over arbitrary fee hikes and additional charges.

The most intense protest was witnessed at Hyderabad Public School (HPS), Ramanthapur, where hundreds of parents demonstrated against what they termed an "excessive and unilateral" fee hike. According to the parents' committee, school fees have increased by nearly 14% over the past four years, rising from around ₹83,630 in 2021 to over ₹2,01,628 in 2025.

Frustrated by prolonged discussions with no resolution, parents took to the

streets demanding that the current fee structure be frozen for the next five years. They also collectively decided to withhold first-term fee payments until the school management provides a written assurance of no further increase.

Parents from the HPS Begumpet branch extended their support, and both branches jointly announced a "fee strike" against the management.

Apart from fee-related issues, parents highlighted several concerns, including declining academic standards, poor quality of facilities such as food and sports infrastructure, and lack of transparency in financial matters. They alleged that the school administration has failed to share audited accounts or justify the significant fee increase.

The protesting parents also demanded the immediate formation of a legally mandated Parent-Teacher Association (PTA) and called for the removal of the Principal.

Parents have urged the government to intervene and take strict action against private school managements. They warned that if immediate steps are not taken, protests will intensify and spread to more schools across the city.

**SOUTH CENTRAL RAILWAY**  
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Details of the Tender Notices of S.C Railway can be seen on our website : www.scr.indianrailways.gov.in

**Open e-Tender Notice No. B/E.EGS/01/2026-27 Dt. 15.04.2026**

For and on behalf of the President of India, the undersigned invites e-Tender for the following works up to 15-00 hours on the date mentioned below:

**1. e-Tender No. : B/E.29/1/EGS/01/26-27 Dt.14.04.2026 Name of work: (I) BZA Division- Improvement of damaged wiring and replacement of over aged non-standard lights with 16W 24 V DC 3 directional type cat walk lights of Pit lines and corroded/damaged cable termination boxes & pre cooling points at coaching depots over BZA Division. (ii) BZA Division-Provision for extension of 750V, AC power supply arrangements for maintenance of LHB Coaches at LV-2, LV-3 & New IOH Shed at Vijayawada. Period of completion: 6 months Tender value : (₹) 1,99,37,829.56 E.M.D./Bid Security : (₹) 3,98,800 Cost of Tender document : Nil Date of closing : 06.05.2026**

**2. e-Tender No. : B/E.29/1/EGS/02/26-27 Dt.14.04.2026 Name of work: BZA Division: Provision for Air conditioning to TTEs rest houses for GTL, SC & Southern Railway TTEs at Vijayawada Railway station. Period of completion: 5 months Tender value : (₹) 76,82,621.44 E.M.D./Bid Security : (₹) 1,53,700 Cost of Tender document : Nil Date of closing : 06.05.2026**

1) Tender conditions/other particulars such as the details of Name of work in full, the similar nature of the above works, eligibility criteria etc., are available in the Tender documents published in website at [www.ireps.gov.in](http://www.ireps.gov.in).

2) The prospective tenderers are advised to visit website [www.ireps.gov.in](http://www.ireps.gov.in) before the date of tender closing to note any changes/corrigenda for any tender.

3) The Tender Notice is also displayed in the Notice Board located in the office of Sr. Divisional Electrical Engineer, Maintenance, S. C. Railway, Vijayawada, which can be seen.

4) The Railway reserves the right to cancel the tender without assigning any reason thereto.

**Divisional Railway Manager (Electrical), Vijayawada.**

**Tender Notice No. : C/E.29/1/ T/ Tender Notice/02/26-27.**

Senior Divisional Electrical Engineer/Traction/Guntakal acting for and on behalf of The President of India invites E-Tenders for the following works:

**1. Tender No. : GTL-TRD-29-eTN-02/2026-27 Name of Work : GTL div. Replacement of Leaning/critical and less contact wire height OHE structures due to raising of track with new OHE structure in connection with safety in RU-GY-DMM section. Approximate Value : (₹) 1,66,77,604/- EMD : (₹) 3,33,600/-**

**2. Tender No. : GTL-TRD-29-eTN-03/2026-27 Name of Work : GTL div. Upgradation of earthing station, battery sets and PSI equipment to view of reliability and safety over GTL division. Approximate Value : (₹) 1,27,22,645.22/- EMD : (₹) 2,54,500/-**

**Tender Closing date & time: 08.05.2026 at 15.00 hrs**

Note: 1. Tender Document may be downloaded from [www.ireps.gov.in](http://www.ireps.gov.in) by tenderers, free of cost.

For Bidding the tender and other details login to <http://www.ireps.gov.in> Corrigendum if any will be issued online only.

**Sr. Divisional Electrical Engineer, Traction, Guntakal.**

**NOTICE INVITING e-TENDER (through http://ireps.gov.in)**

Dy.CEE/GS/SC, Secunderabad invites e-tender on behalf of the President of India for the following works in Single packet system of tendering.

**1. NIT No. : CE-29-GSU-ELEC-01/2026-27 Name of work: Tender No. CE-29-GSU-ELEC-01-2026-27 Dt.10.04.26.** 1)Provision towards OHE modifications in connection with ROB at HSP-OPL station (LC-12), 2) Provision towards OHE modifications in connection with ROB at OPL-JMKT station ( LC-18), 3) Provision towards OHE modifications in connection with ROB at JMKT-BGSF station(LC-23), 4) OHE modifications in connection with ROB at BGSF-PTPK station (LC-27), 5) Chertalappi trip maintenance, advance inspection center for inspection and maintenance activity of electric locos with OHE modification, 6) Sanathnagar trip maintenance/ advance inspection center for inspection and maintenance activity of electric locos with OHE modification.

**Tender Cost: (₹) 2,85,08,173.8**

**Completion period: 9 Months Date of closing: 06.05.2026 at 15:00 hrs**

1) For bid document and other details, please login to website <http://ireps.gov.in>

2) Tenderers should participate through e-tendering only and no manual offers may be considered.

3) Tender conditions/other particulars are available in the Tender documents on IREPS website at [ireps.gov.in](http://www.ireps.gov.in) which can be downloaded, can be participated and can view any modifications if any.

4) All the prospective tenderers are requested to pay EMD through online payments only.

5) Tenderer should watch for any Corrigenda (issued online only) upto the date of commencement of the Tender submission period.

**Dy. Chief Electrical Engineer/GS/ Secunderabad**

**Principal Chief Materials Manager/Secunderabad**

For further tender conditions / details and for downloading the tender documents, Please visit website at <https://www.ireps.gov.in> or [www.scr.indianrailways.gov.in](http://www.scr.indianrailways.gov.in)

**Tender No: 06-OEW-26-27-Sr.DEE-M-HYB.**

Sr.DEE/MHYB acting for and on behalf of The President of India invites E-Tenders against following Tenders Closing date. 14-05-2026, 15:00 hrs Bidders will be able to submit their original/revised bids up to closing date and time only. Manual offers are not allowed against this tender, and any such manual offer received shall be ignored.

**1. Description of work : Tender No. 06-OEW -26-27-Sr.DEE-M-HYB: Hyderabad Division: Replacement of 11KV HT OH lines with UG cables, Replacement of Transformers and HT Augmentation Works. Approx. Cost : (₹) 5,90,37,084/- EMD : (₹) 11,80,800/- Completion period: 12 Months Date of Closing : 14-05-2026**

**Website particulars:www.ireps.gov.in**

**Sr. Divisional Electrical Engineer, (M)Hyderabad**

**TENDER NOTICE No: 03/2026 Dt. 17.04.2026**

**SUPPLY OF STORES ITEMS e-Procurement Tender Notice**

The Following Tenders Have Been Floated Online. Tenders Are Requested To Visit The Website [www.ireps.gov.in](http://www.ireps.gov.in) And Submit Their Offers Online. The Tender Description, Qty, EMD, SD May Be Seen In Website. Offers Submitted Manually Will Not Be Accepted. Offers By Post Will Not Be Entertained. Tender Closing Time Is 14.30 Hrs Of The Due Date Of The Tender. "For All Indigenous Offers, EMD Will Be Accepted Only Via Online System As Available On [www.ireps.gov.in](http://www.ireps.gov.in)."

Tender No.	Brief Description
62261275	Stainless Steel pipe 25mm
30263524	Face plate for Buffer plunger
25264617A	AOH Replacement Kit for Single Bottle VCB
33261155	Flexible joint
38261193	Knuckle Thrower
38263708	OH, Kit for EL-60 Valve
67265001	MIG-MAG and MMA inverter-based welding machine
67245003B	Supply, Erection, commissioning and testing of EOT crane 15 T
60265488	Procurement of special Rubber pads of different variants.
67245014B	Design manufacturing, supply & installation. Commissioning of 15 T Capacity EOT Crane
52265006	Supply of on Hand Terminal Tablet for SMMS Applications.
66265675	Procurement of LORAM make spares for Track Machines
67245020B	Design manufacturing, supply, installation. Commissioning of 15/5 Tons Capacity EOT Crane
6026PT012	Supply of fitting (galvanised) for steel channel sleeper to RDSO Drg.No.B.1636/R2 and 1636/2
30261322	Head stock Arrangement
38261025	Top Side Bearer Liner

**Note:-Due dates of Tender**

**Opening: S.L.No. 01 on dt.05.05.2026. S.L.No. 02 on dt.07.05.2026. S.L.No. 03 & 04 on dt.08.05.2026. S.L.No.05 to 08 on dt.11.05.2026. S.L.No.09 to 12 on dt.13.05.2026. S.L.No.13 on dt.18.05.2026 S.L.No.14 on dt.25.05.2026. S.L.No.15 on dt.01.06.2026. S.L.No.16 on dt.04.06.2026.**

**Beside Above Mentioned Tenders There Are Other Tenders Having Value Above Rs.50 Lakhs. For Details, Please Visit Railway Website Above.**

**Principal Chief Materials Manager/Secunderabad**

For further tender conditions / details and for downloading the tender documents, Please visit website at <https://www.ireps.gov.in> or [www.scr.indianrailways.gov.in](http://www.scr.indianrailways.gov.in)



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## SHORT TAKES

### PM Modi has created history by introducing the Nari Shakti Vandan Adhiniyam

**HYDERABAD:** BJP State President N Ramchander Rao today asserted that it was Prime Minister Narendra Modi's firm resolve that women should not remain just as voters, but should rise as leaders who guide the nation. He was speaking as chief guest at Sand Art Event at Pallavi College by MLC Malka Komuraiah and the BJP Telangana State Mahila Morcha in support of Nari Shakti Vandan Adhiniyam. Expressing gratitude to Prime Minister Narendra Modi on behalf of women of Telangana, Rao remarked that the previous UPA government merely used "women power" as a vote bank, never truly intending to grant them priority or power in legislative bodies. PM Modi has created history by introducing the "Nari Shakti Vandan Adhiniyam," a law that guarantees 33 per cent reservation for women in legislatures and the move as a significant victory for the self-respect and dignity of women across the country, he emphasized. Rao said the Nari Shakti Vandan Adhiniyam, which became law in 2023, was being processed through a constitutional amendment to ensure it comes into effect starting from 2029.

### Telangana appoints Army expert to lead Kaleshwaram barrages restoration

**HYDERABAD:** The Telangana government has accelerated efforts regarding the restoration of three key barrages constructed under the Kaleshwaram Lift Irrigation Scheme. The government has initiated a massive exercise to undertake repairs and explore permanent solutions for the Medigadda, Annaram, and Sundilla barrages. As part of this initiative, the government has taken a pivotal decision to constitute a high-level steering committee to coordinate and oversee these works. The committee has been constituted with Colonel Parikshit Mehra, a retired Army officer and an expert in irrigation and tunneling, serving as its convener. The committee's mandate is to coordinate the restoration works of the three barrages and to bring the project back into operation within the stipulated timeframe. The committee will meet twice a week to review the progress. The government has issued directives requiring the submission of daily progress reports regarding the work undertaken each day. The government has imposed a deadline to complete critical inspections before the onset of the monsoon season. Orders have been issued to complete geo-technical and geo-physical tests by May 30 to assess the structural integrity of the barrages' foundations.

# Small mistakes can cost families their biggest support



**Transport Minister Ponnampalapati Prabhakar in Nagole...**

### DGP B. Shivadhar Reddy in Karimnagar and Siddipet

**HYDERABAD**

As part of the 99-day action plan under the state government's prestigious "Praja Palana - Pragati Pranalika" program, the "Arrive Alive" Road Safety Week celebrations were held grandly across the state on the fifth day.

At the Babu Jagjivan Ram Driving Center in Nagole, Hyderabad, Transport Minister Ponnampalapati Prabhakar inaugurated a free eye-checkup camp. Speaking on the occasion, he emphasized that awareness of road safety is extremely important in life and expressed concern that many families are being devastated due to small mistakes. He instructed officials to strictly implement the "4E" principle for road safety—Education, Engineering, Enforcement, and Emergency Care.

He also stated that the government is offering the "Rahaveer

Award," which includes a cash prize of ₹25,000, to those who save lives by ensuring accident victims are taken to hospitals within the "Golden Hour." He called upon everyone to pledge to follow traffic rules.

Director General of Police B. Shivadhar Reddy participated in seminars held at Mahathi Auditorium in Karimnagar and Gajwel, where he guided motorists. He pointed out that accidents happen in a split second, leaving no reaction time, and stressed the need for constant alertness.

He advised drivers to always travel in the left lane on highways, use the right lane only for overtaking, and then return immediately to the left. He emphasized using low beams at night when vehicles approach from the opposite direction, and even while passing through villages.

He expressed concern that while 800 people died due to murders in the state last year, about 7,500 people lost their lives in road accidents, calling for it to be addressed as a social movement. He stressed the importance of fastening helmet straps properly and wearing seat belts for both

front and rear passengers in cars. He also advised pausing for a minute and checking before entering highways from rural roads and ensuring that heavy vehicles have reflective stickers.

At a helmet awareness rally held in Suryapet district headquarters, DG of Prisons Dr. Soumya Mishra participated and spoke. She stated that accidents can be prevented only by following road safety rules and emphasized the need for public awareness. She appreciated village-level resolutions where people voluntarily commit to following traffic rules. She added that installing warning boards at black spots and increasing awareness can help achieve road safety goals. MLA Padmavathi, Collector Tejas Nandalal Pawar, SP Narasimha, and others attended the event.

"Arrive Alive" programs were also actively conducted in other districts across the state. In Nizamabad, Police Commissioner P. Sai Chaitanya made an innovative announcement offering free IPL match viewing for helmet-wearing motorists.

In Vikarabad, Additional DGP Swati Lakra, Collector Deepak Tiwari, and SP Sneha Mehra created

awareness on road safety and anti-drug campaigns.

In Miryalaguda (Nalgonda), MLA Battula Laxma Reddy and SP Sharath Chandra Pawar explained the importance of the "Golden Hour." In Khammam, drivers were given CPR training across 15 police stations under the supervision of Additional DCPs.

In Bhadrachalam, IGP Chandrashekar Reddy and Collector Ankit distributed helmets to tribal youth. In Wanaparthy, IGP Gajraju Bhupal, and in Sircilla, IGP Ramesh Naidu supervised eye checkups and CPR training for drivers.

In Ramagundam, awareness was created through a symbolic portrayal of Yamadharm Raja (the god of death), while in Adilabad, SP Akhil Mahajan personally participated in CPR practical training.

Similar innovative awareness campaigns were conducted in districts like Mahabubnagar, Jagtial, Sangareddy, Kamareddy, and Gadwal under the leadership of Collectors and SPs, successfully spreading road safety awareness among the public on the fifth day of the "Arrive Alive" program.



## Assurance for the Future of Underprivileged Girl Students: Laptops Distributed by KTR

**HYDERABAD**

A heartening and inspiring programme was held at the residence of BRS Working President and former Minister Shri K. T. Rama Rao (KTR) in Nandimarri, Banjara Hills, under the aegis of the Touch A Life Foundation, which works towards the educational empowerment of underprivileged girl students.

Led by former corporator Dr. Samala Hema, the foundation's founders Ms. Vibhuti Jain and Ms. Reena Hindochha, along with the students, met KTR. Interacting with the students, KTR enquired about their academic progress and encouraged them to aim for greater heights in life.

As part of the initiative, KTR personally distributed laptops to the students to enhance their digital skills and support their academic growth.

He emphasized that technology plays a crucial role in today's world and is key to achieving self-reliance. He advised the students to believe in themselves and work hard towards a bright future. The beneficiaries who received laptops—Namala Reshma, Salikanti Srivani, Chintagutta Vedasri, Dhulla Rajeswari, Atika Bari, Sana Sultana, and Karre Aarthi—expressed

their happiness and gratitude on the occasion. Speaking on the initiative, foundation founders Vibhuti Jain and Reena Hindochha stated that they are identifying girl students from slums and marginalized communities across Telangana and providing them with scholarships, mentorship, and continuous guidance. They emphasized that their goal is not just financial support, but also to build confidence and leadership qualities among the students.

KTR appreciated the grassroots efforts of the foundation and lauded its role in building an inclusive society. He assured continued support for such initiatives in the future and reiterated his commitment towards girls' education and empowerment. He highlighted that no girl should be deprived of education due to poverty and termed the initiative as highly commendable. He also assured that he would soon hold a dedicated meeting with the foundation representatives.

KTR also appreciated the efforts of former corporator Dr. Samala Hema for coordinating the programme. Foundation representatives noted that the interaction filled the students with enthusiasm and would serve as a strong motivation for them to achieve their dreams.

## STRIKE CALLED OFF

### Deputy CM orders talks with CMD

### Statement by Electricity Department Artisans JAC Chairman Satish Reddy

**HYDERABAD**

The Electricity Department Artisans Joint Action Committee (JAC) Chairman Satish Reddy announced that the strike has been called off immediately following directions from the Deputy Chief Minister to hold discussions with the Transco CMD regarding their issues.

On Friday morning, JAC leaders met the Deputy CM at Praja Bhavan in Hyderabad. JAC Convener Sailu expressed heartfelt gratitude to the Deputy CM for responding positively to their concerns and permitting discussions with senior officials. "Employees Must Work to Win Public Confidence" – Deputy CM Bhatti Vikra-



marka Mallu Deputy Chief Minister Bhatti Vikramarka Mallu stated that employees should carry out their duties in a manner that earns public appreciation. He pointed out that despite a ban on strikes, and at a time when electricity demand peaks during summer, going on a sudden strike is not appropriate.

He emphasized that issues can be resolved only through

dialogue. The government, he said, will consider the artisans' concerns from a humanitarian perspective. He assured that the government is always open to discussions with electricity unions and will work towards resolving their problems.

The Deputy CM further stated that the Transco CMD will hold discussions with the Artisans JAC to resolve

issues that can be addressed without imposing financial burden, and efforts will be made to find solutions.

The meeting was attended by Transco CMD Krishna Bhaskar, MLC Addanki Dayakar, Artisans Co-Chairmen Chandra Reddy, Sridhar Goud, Chander Singh Thakur, Vice Chairman Santosh, Treasurer Prashanth, and others.

## Is the BJP Not in Favour of Telangana State Formation?

### The BJP continues to spew venom on the Telangana-AP bifurcation at every opportunity.

**HYDERABAD**

Dr. G. Chinna Reddy, Vice Chairman of the State Planning Board, expressed outrage stating that the BJP never wanted Telangana state to be formed, and that is why it spews venom on the Telangana-AP bifurcation whenever it gets a chance.

He said BJP MP Tejasvi Surya comparing the Telangana-AP bifurcation to the India-Pakistan partition is an unpardonable offence, and such remarks insult the parliamentary system.

Chinna Reddy stated that the BJP has no respect for democracy or the parliamentary system, which is why BJP leaders shamelessly spew venom on Telangana state formation repeatedly.

"As the one who started the second phase of the Telangana movement, my blood boils seeing the current attitude adopted by the BJP," Chinna Reddy said.

He explained that people, employees, students, leaders from various parties rising above politics, people's organisations, and intellectuals all agitated for a separate Telangana state. Respecting these movements, Congress Party chief Sonia Gandhi democratically granted Telangana state with Parliament's approval, he said.

Even before that, explaining the necessity of Telangana state formation, he collected signatures of 41 Congress MLAs and met Sonia Gandhi in the year 2000 itself. After that, the second phase of the Telangana movement gained momentum, Chinna Reddy noted.

He criticised that when BJP MP Tejasvi Surya made dis-

paraging remarks about Telangana state bifurcation, the two Union Ministers and the remaining six BJP MPs representing the state sat as mute spectators instead of opposing him. He questioned what connection Tejasvi Surya from Karnataka has with the Telangana issue and why there was any need to mention Telangana.

He recalled that Prime Minister Narendra Modi also spoke against the Telangana bifurcation in the past, saying "the mother was killed to separate the child." This proves once again that the BJP is definitely anti-Telangana, Chinna Reddy said.

Chinna Reddy demanded that BJP MP Tejasvi Surya immediately tender an unconditional apology to the people of Telangana in Parliament itself, and that the BJP must clarify its stance towards Telangana state.

## GITAM Hosts 'Sadhana-2026' Showcasing Student Talent in Fine and Performing Arts

**HYDERABAD**

The Department of Fine and Performing Arts at the GITAM School of Humanities and Social Sciences, Hyderabad, organized 'Sadhana-2026', a vibrant showcase of talent by students enrolled in Minor and Open Elective courses in Carnatic Music, Bharatanatyam, Kuchipudi, Theatre, and Fine Arts. The event was held at the university's Dance Studio on Friday.

As part of the semester-end practical examinations, students presented captivating performances, reflecting their learning and artistic growth. Continuing this tradition, participants from Kuchipudi, Bharatanatyam, and Theatre Arts delivered impressive stage

performances as part of their academic evaluation.

The Kuchipudi segment was guided by Dr. Y. LalithaSindhuri and Vaishnavi Prativadi, while Bharatanatyam performances were mentored by Anju Aravind. Theatre Arts presentations were led by Dr. Shyam Prakash, and the Carnatic Music students were trained under the guidance of Mruduravali Darbha. The performances were further enriched by live musical accompaniment, with Chandrakanth on the Mridangam and Vasu on the Violin.

The event received an enthusiastic response from the audience, with each performance earning widespread appreciation for its artistic excellence and expressive depth.



## CS held a review on the electric vehicle charging infrastructure

**HYDERABAD**

Chief Secretary K. Ramakrishna Rao held a review meeting on the electric vehicle (EV) charging infrastructure mandate at the Secretariat today. Senior officials from various departments participated in the meeting, which focused on strategies to scale up EV infrastructure across the state.

During the meeting, the Chief Secretary underscored the urgent need to accelerate the adoption of electric vehicles in line with sustainability goals and the transition towards clean energy. He emphasized that a strong and widespread charging network is critical to instill confidence among EV users and to support the growing demand for electric

mobility. He directed officials to develop a comprehensive and forward-looking plan for establishing EV charging infrastructure, leveraging both government initiatives and private sector participation. Stressing the importance of coordinated efforts, he called for the creation of a seamless ecosystem that ensures accessibility, reliability and efficiency of charging facilities across urban and rural areas.

The Chief Secretary also instructed that a centralized, real-time dashboard be developed to map and monitor EV charging infrastructure in the state. This dashboard will serve as a critical tool for planning, tracking progress, and ensuring transparency in the deployment of charging

stations. Special Chief Secretary (Energy) Navin Mittal informed that the Energy Department is in the process of formulating a policy to mandate the installation of EV charging points in the basements of apartment buildings. This initiative aims to facilitate convenient home charging options and encourage wider adoption of electric vehicles among urban residents.

Transport, Roads & Buildings Special Chief Secretary Vikas Raj, Planning Secretary Gaurav Uppal, TGRCT MD Nagireddy, Transport Commissioner Ilambarthi, TGIC VC & MD Shashanka, GHMC Commissioner Karnan, TGREDCO MD Anila Vavilla and OEM Representatives attended the Meeting.

## BJP has deceived women

### By linking the women's reservation bill with the delimitation bill, it failed in the Lok Sabha.

### OBCs should be counted in the 2027 census, and women's reservations should be provided based on those figures.

### — Telangana Jagruthi President Kalvakuntla Kavitha

**HYDERABAD**

It has once again been proven that the BJP lacks sincerity regarding the women's reservation bill in legislative bodies.

Even though they clearly knew that the opposition would resist, the BJP conspiratorially brought both bills together before Parliament. By tying the women's quota bill with the delimitation bill, all opposition parties united and caused the bill to fail in the Lok Sabha. The BJP made this attempt purely for political gain. At the time of inau-



gurating the new Parliament building, they introduced and passed the women's reservation bill and linked it to the census.

Now, claiming to introduce the bill based on the 2011 census, they have once again deceived people.

Women of Telangana and Andhra Pradesh, recognize this deception by the BJP.

In West Bengal, a woman is leading the state. Inform your friends there to defeat this deceptive BJP and ensure that the woman leader wins.

## Oppn has done 'great disservice' to nation: Chandrababu Naidu on Women's Bill

AMARAVATI, APRIL 18

Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu said on Friday that by blocking the Women's Reservation Bill, the Congress-led Opposition has denied India a historic step towards women's empowerment. "This is not just political obstruction, it is a betrayal of millions of women who deserve equal voice and rightful representation in Parliament. The nation will remember," he posted on 'X'. In another post, the Telugu Desam Party (TDP) president said that by defeating the Delimitation and Constitutional Amendment Bill, the Opposition parties have done a great disservice to the nation. He wrote that with the freeze under Article 81 set to end after the first Census conducted post-2026, the forthcoming census exercise will reset seat distribution purely on population, potentially leading to a steep



decline in representation for Southern, North-Eastern, and smaller states. Naidu added that the National Democratic Alliance's proposal was a sincere effort to preserve federal balance, protect the voice of Southern, North-Eastern, and smaller states, and ensure 33 per cent representation for women. He said it recognised that states which have performed well on key development indicators should not be penalised in the democratic structure. "It is unfortunate that political agendas have prevailed over long-term national interest. Those celebrating this outcome must introspect; we have lost an

opportunity to secure a fair and constitutional safeguard for rightful representation," he noted. Meanwhile, Deputy Chief Minister Pawan Kalyan slammed the Opposition parties, saying they have squandered a golden opportunity to enhance women's empowerment within legislative bodies. He said that had the Opposition also supported the Women's Reservation Bill, they too would have earned respect. He expressed hope that, in the days to come, women will secure their rightful place in the legislature.

As Jana Sena Party president, Kalyan added, "As a partner in the National Democratic Alliance, the Jana Sena Party welcomes the initiative taken by the Honourable Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi, in bringing this Bill before the Lok Sabha. Had this Bill been passed, women across the length and breadth of India would have rejoiced immensely."

## Andhra: Jagan questions Opposition over Bill defeat

AMARAVATI, APRIL 17

Former Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister and YSR Congress Party president Y. S. Jagan Mohan Reddy said the parties which opposed the bill to amend the Women's Reservation Act in Parliament should question themselves on what they have achieved. After the Constitution (131st Amendment) Bill, 2026, failed to get a two-thirds majority in the Lok Sabha, Jagan Mohan Reddy took to 'X' to pose a question to the parties that voted against it. He voiced apprehension that if delimitation is undertaken based on the 2026 census, the situation would be worse for the South. He posted, "Opposing parties should seriously question themselves; what have they achieved? While the reality is that the numbers would



come down for the South, the women's reservation bill has been postponed! Justice is rendered neither to the South nor to the women! If the 2026 census were to come, the situation would be worse off for the South, further penalised for being disciplined in the matters of family planning." Andhra Pradesh Congress Committee president Y. S. Sharmila Reddy said in her reaction that the BJP's deceptive ploy in the name of women's reservation has failed. She alleged that the conspiracy to push through illegiti-

mate laws by using women's issues as a smokescreen has not succeeded. She posted, "The BJP's machinations, aimed at undermining the spirit of federalism under the guise of empowerment, have proven futile. The INDIA alliance's righteous battle has triumphed over the NDA's unrighteousness. Democracy has prevailed. This is a victory for the people of India. This truly marks the final curtain call for the BJP's politically malicious agenda. It serves as a resounding slap in the face to Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who engaged in petty politics in the name of women, and to the BJP, with its religious fanaticism." The Congress leader clarified that what collapsed was merely the "ill-conceived and directionless" Delimitation Bill, not the Women's Reservation Bill itself. She said the

Opposition never opposed the Women's Reservation Bill. "What was actually introduced under the banner of 'Nari' (Women) was nothing but a Delimitation Bill. What was defeated today was specifically the Bill to redraw constituencies. What the Opposition successfully thwarted was solely the conspiracy to alter the Constitution," she said. She added, "The Women's Reservation Bill was, in fact, approved back in 2023. Instead of continuing to sling mud at the Opposition, the BJP must now, at the very least, immediately implement the Women's Reservation Bill of 2023. The BJP must prove, once and for all, that it possesses genuine sincerity regarding women's issues. The 33 per cent reservation must be implemented immediately across all 543 parliamentary seats."

## Woman Officer Seeks CM Help Over Harassment

FIROZABAD (UP): (APR 17)

A woman tehsildar here has leveled serious allegations of harassment and undue pressure against the district magistrate, even as no official response from the latter was available till Friday. Tehsildar Rakhi Sharma, posted in Tundla, accused District Magistrate (DM) Ramesh Ranjan and his office of pressuring her to manipulate an inquiry report related to alleged corruption. Addressing reporters, Sharma claimed she was asked by the DM, his officer on special duty (OSD) and other staff to present the inquiry report in a particular manner. "When I refused to comply, I was subjected to harassment," she alleged, adding that the harassment has been continuing for the past nine months.

## "Why are you silent when injustice is happening to the state"?

VIJAYAWADA, APRIL 17

CPM State Secretary V. Srinivasa Rao criticized that linking the delimitation bill with women's reservation would cause severe injustice to the state as well as to SCs and STs, and would harm social justice. Despite this, he said that TDP and YSRCP are not speaking up on the issue. He spoke at a press conference held in Vijayawada on Friday along with party central committee member D. Ramadevi and state secretary member V. Rambhoopal. He expressed anger that while states like Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Kerala, and Telangana are opposing delimitation, AP MPs, TDP, and YSRCP are remaining silent, calling it shameful and a betrayal of the people who elected them. He said both TDP and YSRCP have acted against the interests of the state. Instead of questioning the injustice, YSRCP is proposing that seats be equally distributed across regions, which he criticized. He also accused the coalition government, despite being part of the NDA, of not questioning the issue and instead tying the Chief Minister's hands by writing letters to

### CPM State Secretary V. Srinivasa Rao questions TDP and YSRCP Bill brought only for elections in Bengal and Tamil Nadu Samajwadi Party MP spoke about the loss to AP. 25 MPs remained silent BJP is the reason for not implementing women's reservations in 2024



opposition parties. He warned that if MPs fail to raise the issue in Parliament, Andhra Pradesh will have no future. He criticized the Chief Minister for lacking the courage to question the Centre if states are not consulted in the process. He also said the main opposition party YSRCP is acting unfairly. He pointed out that although the women's reservation bill was already passed earlier, bringing another bill for its implementation and presenting it as new is an attempt to mislead people. He said MPs from the

state will be held accountable before the public. He alleged that the BJP deliberately delayed implementing the 2023 law in the 2024 elections and is now raising concerns about reservations after remaining inactive for three years. He noted that the 131st Constitutional Amendment proposed a minimum of 816 seats, while Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman clarified that 816 is the maximum, meaning there is no guarantee that AP will get 38 seats. He criticized leaders like Chandrababu and Amit Shah for

spreading misinformation about provisions not present in the law. He said increasing seats based on population would disadvantage southern states that followed population control, while benefiting northern states like Uttar Pradesh. He said the lack of clarity on seat increases is unjust. He added that Left parties had introduced the women's reservation bill as early as 1996, and though it was passed in the Rajya Sabha in 2010, it was blocked in the Lok Sabha. Even after being passed in 2023, it has not been implemented and has been delayed under the pretext of census data. He explained that the bill mixes separate issues like women's reservation, delimitation, and constituency formation. He accused the Prime Minister of misleading states despite claiming responsibility. He warned that using 2011 census data now would harm SCs and STs, as their population has increased and they would get fewer seats if old data is used.

He alleged that various conspiracies were made to satisfy BJP MPs. He emphasized that delimitation should be carried out comprehensively by forming a committee and consulting states, but instead, the process is being done arbitrarily. He accused the Centre of making misleading statements to cover up injustice to southern states. He demanded that women's reservations be implemented independently of delimitation, and that the delimitation bill be withdrawn and finalized only after consulting all stakeholders. CPM Central Committee member D. Ramadevi also said that despite calling it a women's reservation bill, the Centre did not consult political parties or state governments. She said the bill was initially linked to the 2026 census but is now being tied to 2011 data, calling it deceptive. She demanded immediate implementation of one-third reservation for women in Parliament and state legislatures.

## Gottipati Ravi Kumar Launches ₹27 Cr Solar Scheme

RAYADURG:

State Energy Minister Gottipati Ravi Kumar announced that the PM Surya Ghar - Muft Bijli Yojana will play a vital role in promoting environmental protection while significantly reducing the electricity burden on households and ensuring uninterrupted power supply. The scheme was formally launched on Friday at Nemakallu village in Bommanahal mandal of Rayadurg constituency, marking a major step toward expanding renewable energy usage at the grassroots level. Addressing the gathering, the Minister stated that the scheme has been jointly designed by the Central and State Governments with a strong focus on benefiting economically weaker sections. Under this initiative, free solar power systems are being provided to 2,400 SC and ST beneficiaries in Rayadurg constituency at an estimated cost of ₹27 crore. He emphasized that the governments are fully bearing the cost of ₹1.25 lakh per unit for SC and ST households, ensuring complete financial relief to marginalized communities. The Minister further ex-



plained that the scheme also extends substantial subsidies to other sections, with OC beneficiaries receiving ₹78,000 and BC beneficiaries ₹98,000 as financial assistance. He highlighted that this inclusive approach ensures wider access to clean energy while encouraging self-reliance in electricity generation. The initiative is expected to empower households to produce and utilize their own power, thereby reducing dependence on conventional energy sources. Reaffirming the government's commitment to strengthening the power sector, the Minister revealed that 6 lakh free Surya Ghar connections have been sanctioned across the state. He noted that the official machinery is working intensively to ensure that all these connec-

tions are made operational by the upcoming summer. In addition, three new substations have been sanctioned for Rayadurg to address persistent low voltage issues and to guarantee stable and high-quality power supply to residents. The Minister also elaborated on infrastructure improvements being carried out under the RDSS scheme, including the installation of new transformers and replacement of outdated electric poles. These efforts are aimed at modernizing the electricity distribution network and improving efficiency. Special focus is also being given to the agricultural sector, with steps underway to ensure uninterrupted power supply to farmers and to make all agricultural electricity services fully functional by the next season.

## Supreme Court Allows Review of Religious Practices

In September 2018, a five-judge Constitution bench, by a 4:1 majority verdict, lifted the ban that prevented women between the ages of 10 and 50 from entering the Sabarimala Ayyappa temple and held that the centuries-old Hindu religious practice was illegal and unconstitutional. The nine-member bench made these observations while hearing the Sabarimala temple entry case. The apex court is reviewing its 2018 verdict that had lifted the prohibition on

women between the ages of 10 and 50 years from entering the temple. Senior advocate Rajeev Dhavan, appearing for an intervenor, said the case goes beyond Hindu practices or the Sabarimala issue and deals with the constitutional framework governing all religions and matters of conscience. "The concern is to lay down the law for everybody, every belief and every matter of conscience," Dhavan said, adding that the court's endeavour must be to harmonise when there are divisions in

society. He argued that an individual can question a religion, but it must be in a respectful manner. At this juncture, Justice Nagarathna asked Dhavan, "Are you saying conscience is something larger than religion? Should conscience take the colour of religion?" Justice Amanullah asked him: "Are you suggesting that judges should not equate religion with conscience, and must rise above personal beliefs to balance them with the Constitution and see the bigger picture?" Dhavan replied that it

is the apex court's discretion to interpret conscience in a manner in which they deem it appropriate.

### WHAT SABARIMALA PETITIONERS ARGUED TODAY

Senior advocate V. Giri, appearing for Sabarimala Achara Samrakshana Samiti, submitted that there is collectively a wisdom that has been followed for years and years in exclusion of women aged between 10-50 not being allowed in Sabarimala temple. Giri submitted

that every temple has its own distinct characteristic and the maintenance of those characteristics is part of the worship. "One cannot completely jettison the principle of essential religious practice in deciding whether the right under Article 25(1) is protected or violated if such a practice is upheld and followed. "My fundamental right under Article 25(1) is to practise the religion to which I belong, in this case Hinduism, which includes idol worship," Giri said.

## Tamil Nadu fought and won: MK Stalin after women's quota bill fails Lok Sabha test

Tamil Nadu Chief Minister and the DMK Supremo, MK Stalin, congratulated the people of Tamil Nadu after the women's quota bill was defeated in the Lok Sabha, as the centre had fallen short of the majority mark. Celebrating the moment, Stalin, an active figure against the Centre's proposed delimitation push, wrote on 'X', "TN fought, TN won. Delimitation is about representation, about who gets a voice in India's democracy. It must strengthen the Union, not weaken its balance. Guided by Periyar, inspired by Anna, and strengthened by Kalaigalar, Tamil Nadu has always stood for justice, dignity, and federalism. The South stood united and made its voice heard. Democracy prevailed." In addition to this, the stalwart in Tamil Nadu politics said that the DMK government never opposed the delimitation process; however, it wanted a 'fair process through consultation'



that would ensure a proper representation of the state in the national political arena. "This is our resolve: every time Tamil Nadu's rights are challenged, every time its identity or culture is questioned, and every time the federal spirit of India is tested, Tamil Nadu will rise united and unwavering." Stalin further wrote, expressing his gratitude to all the opposition parties that voted against the bill in the parliament. Days before, Stalin burnt a copy of the Delimitation Bill as part of a statewide protest against the

government's proposed drive. **RED LETTER DAY IN INDIAN HISTORY, SAYS REVANTH REDDY** Apart from MK Stalin, Telangana Chief Minister Revanth Reddy also hailed the failure of the women's quota bill in the Lok Sabha. Taking to 'X', Reddy wrote, "Today will be remembered forever as a Red-Letter Day in Indian History, when under the leadership of Shri @RahulGandhi Ji, Leader of Opposition, Lok Sabha, and Shri Mallikarjun @kharge Ji, united all democratic forces and opposition leaders in averting a national disaster." He also thanked all the parties who voted against the bill. Meanwhile, Bharat Rashtira Samithi (BRS) Working President KT Rama Rao (KTR) strongly criticised the BJP over the failure of the women's quota bill in Parliament, holding the ruling party entirely responsible for the setback.

## Grand AYOJANA of the 69th and 70th Annual Distinguished Railway Service Award Ceremony-2026 at Bareka

VARANASI:

On April 17, 2026, the 69th and 70th Annual Distinguished Railway Service Award Ceremony was held with great grandeur at the auditorium (cinema hall) of Banaras Locomotive Works (Bareka), under the guidance of General Manager Ashutosh Pant. The program began with Chief Personnel Officer Lal Ji Chaudhary welcoming the General Manager by presenting a plant. This was followed by the formal inauguration through the lighting of the ceremonial lamp by the General Manager and heads of major departments. In his welcome speech, Mr. Chaudhary congratulated all award-winning officers and employees. Cultural performances added enthusiasm to the event. High-



lights included Krishna Raas Ragini (a Kathak-style devotional performance), a ghazal—"Ye Daulat Bhi Le Lo Ye Shohrat Bhi Le Lo," and a lively Dedhiya folk dance, which captivated the audience. The Public Relations Department then screened a documentary showcasing Bareka's achievements, including its history, locomotive manufacturing, green energy initiatives, and key accomplishments. On this occasion, the General Manager

and departmental heads also released a magazine related to the awards. As the main highlight, 31 officers and employees who delivered outstanding work during 2024 and 2025 were honored with commendation certificates by Mr. Pant. Several sections of Bareka also received team awards for excellent performance in 2025.

**Major awards included:** Light Machine Shop and Block Division - Best House-keeping

- Truck Machine Shop - Best Work System
  - Progress Loco - Best Safety Performance
  - Maintenance Area-3 - Best Service
  - F-51 and M-60 - Best Stocking (First Place)
  - TOT-47 - Second Place Purchase Sections 04 and 06 - First and Second Prizes
- In his address, Mr. Pant said the ceremony celebrates dedication, excellence, and nation-building. He highlighted that under the "Make in India" initiative, Bareka achieved its highest-ever production of 572 locomotives in FY 2025-26, about 20% higher than the previous year. He expressed confidence that employees would continue to achieve new milestones and congratulated the awardees as an inspiration

to others. The program concluded with the National Anthem. Impressed with the (event), the General Manager also announced awards for the event organizers. Several senior officials were present, including Chief Electrical Engineer Manoj Kumar Gupta, Chief Materials Manager Alok Agrawal, Financial Advisor Muktesh Mittal, Chief Engineer Shailendra Kumar Singh, Chief Medical Officer Dr. Devesh Kumar, Chief Security Commissioner Devaraj Kumar Maurya, Chief Vigilance Officer Ankur Chandra, Deputy General Manager Sagar, along with other officials, employee representatives, and staff. The event was conducted by Senior Clerk Shailendri, and the vote of thanks was delivered by Deputy Chief Personnel Officer (HQ) Sameer Pal.

## Life Sentence for Congress MLA, Seat at Risk

The case dates to June 15, 2016, when Gowda, a BJP zilla panchayat member, was hacked to death by hired assailants at his gym in Dharwad. Vinay Kulkarni, who was a minister at the time, was later named the principal conspirator. A People's Representatives Special Court in Bengaluru on Friday sentenced 16 individuals, including Congress MLA

and former minister Vinay Kulkarni, to life imprisonment for the murder of BJP leader Yogesh Gowda. In addition to the life sentences, the court imposed a fine of Rs 30,000 on each of the 16 convicts. Another accused in the case received a seven-year prison sentence. Kulkarni, who represents Dharwad Assembly constituency, is likely to face disqualification as an

MLA. Judge Santhosh Gajanan Bhat on Wednesday had convicted Kulkarni and others of criminal conspiracy and murder. While the CBI had sought a life sentence without remission for Kulkarni, the MLA's advocate appealed for a minimum sentence, citing his social services, political background and responsibilities towards his children and other family members.

EDITORIAL

THE LETHAL INERTIA OF INDUSTRY:  
STRUCTURAL FAILURES AND  
THE MYTH OF 'ACCIDENTAL'  
BOILER BLASTS

A fundamental engineering reality that underpins the recent surge in industrial boiler catastrophes is that these pressure vessels almost never experience catastrophic failure instantaneously. Instead, such disasters are typically the culmination of chronic overpressure, internal scaling, improperly managed water levels, or the mechanical stress associated with revival cycles—risks that accumulate incrementally over long periods of time. The devastating boiler explosion in Sakti, Chhattisgarh, which resulted in the loss of twenty lives, mirrors several critical failures observed during the Visakhapatnam gas leak of 2020 and the thermal power station blast in Neyveli that same year. In the Visakhapatnam instance, safety protocols and monitoring systems had remained inactive or improperly calibrated following a post-lockdown resumption of service, while a flawed plant restart sequence directly triggered the detonation at the Neyveli facility. Similarly, the Sakti plant had been recently acquired and commissioned, and was operating significantly below its designed capacity when the blast occurred. Within these inherently unstable operating regimes, mechanical failures frequently emerge from transient thermal imbalances and pressure fluctuations.

However, in practical application, neither the prevailing national boiler inspection protocols nor the broader regulatory frameworks mandate heightened surveillance during these high-risk transitional phases. Currently, safety certification remains valid for a full calendar year, despite the fact that the physical condition of a boiler can fluctuate dramatically on a daily basis. The existing regulatory structure further complicates matters by effectively penalizing facility downtime rather than discouraging hazardous operations or incentivizing necessary maintenance shutdowns. The horrific events at Sakti serve as clear evidence that the regulatory framework's preoccupation with fabrication standards, rather than continuous digital instrumentation and real-time auditing, is fundamentally inadequate. Furthermore, the Central government's aggressive push for "ease of doing business" has increasingly prioritized self-certification and pre-scheduled third-party audits over the more rigorous tradition of unannounced government inspections. While the Boiler Accident Inquiry Rules were finally notified in 2025, it remains highly uncertain whether they will successfully bridge these deep-seated structural deficiencies.

The rapid expansion of India's industrial manufacturing capacity is placing unprecedented strain on aging infrastructure, forcing more plants to operate dangerously close to their physical limits. Consequently, flaws in safety management are being increasingly exposed by heightened media scrutiny and political discourse. It is entirely plausible that these industrial facilities have subjected their employees to hazardous working conditions for decades, suggesting that the ensuing crises are not entirely accidental in nature. Contractual labor remains the demographic most vulnerable to these hazards. A significant and growing percentage of the industrial workforce consists of migrant laborers hired through complex layers of subcontractors, who often engage in a cycle of mutual blame with the primary operator following a disaster.

Furthermore, essential safety signage and technical manuals are frequently unavailable in the native languages of the workers. Investigators documenting the Pune industrial belt since 2021, and analyzing the explosions in Sangareddy in 2024 and 2025, have reported that workers are often entirely unaware of the specific names or hazardous properties of the chemicals present in their immediate workplace. The Occupational Safety, Health and Working Conditions (OSHW) Code of 2020 exacerbates this by failing to explicitly hold the principal employer criminally liable for safety violations within contractor-led operations, instead qualifying liability based on a vague threshold of employer negligence. These represent long-standing grievances regarding the systemic devaluation of labor in India. Until this pervasive industrial culture is dismantled, the incentives of firms and regulators, along with prevailing labor arrangements and factory-floor shortcuts, will continue to treat these preventable "accidents" as an acceptable overhead cost of doing business.



GOODNESS —  
THE SILENT WITNESS

Goodness  
the first vibration in the  
womb of silence,  
a root no eye has known,  
yet bearing the weight of  
being.  
Not the adornment of  
speech,  
but the engraving upon the  
inner stone—  
a hidden scripture  
through which a human  
becomes human.  
A smile—  
a shard of dawn piercing  
the fabric of night;  
a small act—  
time's chisel shaping eter-  
nity in passing breath.  
A glance may awaken  
what language has long  
abandoned;  
an outstretched hand—  
the first syllable of hope.  
Compassion—  
a lamp that argues not, yet  
reveals all paths;  
giving—  
a sacred fire consuming  
unseen griefs.  
Courage—  
the still axis of a trembling  
soul;  
dharma—  
the pulse where justice  
learns to breathe in time.  
Love—  
a river widening into the  
sky within;  
ego—  
a wave collapsing upon its  
own illusion.  
The heart that shelters  
another  
becomes a vessel of the  
infinite;  
the act that lifts the fallen  
raises a dwelling within  
the self.  
To feel another's wound  
as one's own unspoken  
ache—  
there begins  
the fragrance of the sac-  
red.

For only what is shared  
ripens into meaning.  
Not name, nor throne, nor  
gold—  
but the weary heart that  
chooses to care  
is the only crown of being.  
Integrity—  
a star that burns unseen;  
purity—  
the silence where joy for-  
gets its form.  
Faith—  
a river that never remem-  
bers retreat;  
and life finds its fullness  
only in losing itself  
through service.  
Time erases all stories,  
yet lets compassion remain  
as light;  
forgiveness—  
the only armor unstained  
by the world.  
In the labor of quiet deeds  
glimmers a radiance deep-  
er than fame;  
and in a single tear  
a poem is born without  
language.  
To remain human—  
one must return, again  
and again,  
to the heart.  
Not sweetness of speech,  
but truth of being is the  
measure.  
To refuse silence before  
wrong—  
this is the soul's austerity;  
to stand beside the break-  
ing—  
this is wisdom made flesh.  
Goodness—  
the silent witness of our  
passing breath,  
the fragrance that outlives  
the body.  
On the unseen scroll of  
time  
only one truth endures  
the one who lived in good-  
ness  
is never gone.

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

Analysis

Will 'Samrat' be able to  
uphold Nitish's legacy of trust?

The elevation of Samrat Choudhary as the 24th Chief Minister of Bihar on April 15, 2026, represents a seismic shift in the state's political landscape. For the first time in its 46-year history in the state, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) has assumed the role of the "elder brother" with its own leader at the helm. Following the 2025 Assembly elections and Nitish Kumar's subsequent move to the Rajya Sabha, Choudhary faces the monumental task of establishing an independent identity while managing a complex coalition.

Reaching the pinnacle of power in Bihar's politics is difficult, but sustaining oneself there and proving universal acceptance is an even greater challenge. The rise of Samrat Choudhary as the 24th Chief Minister marks the beginning of a new political era in the state. This is not merely the elevation of an individual; it signifies the formal emergence of the Bharatiya Janata Party as the 'elder brother' in Bihar politics—a role its cadre has awaited for decades. Following Nitish Kumar's move to the Rajya Sabha, the responsibility of filling the resulting political vacuum now rests on Choudhary's shoulders. The key question is whether he can step out of Nitish Kumar's long shadow, which has defined Bihar's politics for nearly two decades. This will be the true test of his leadership.

Samrat Choudhary's rise is not accidental. It is the result of his father Shakuni Choudhary's legacy, his own aggressive political struggle, decades of experience, strategic patience, and timely decisions. Born on November 16, 1968, in Lakhnapur, Munger, he tasted power early—becoming one of the youngest ministers in the Rabri Devi government in 1999. His journey to the Chief Minister's chair has been marked by ideological shifts and strategic moves. After working with regional forces like Rashtriya Janata Dal and Janata Dal United, his decision to join the BJP in 2017 proved to be the turning point of his career. The BJP saw in him a strong OBC leader capable of energizing the organization and countering RJD's 'MY' (Muslim-Yadav) equation with the NDA's 'Luv-Kush' social combi-



nation. Coming from the Kusbaha community, Choudhary emerged as a crucial figure for social balance within the party. His appointment as state president reflected the party's confidence in his leadership—confidence that has now culminated in his elevation as Chief Minister.

His appointment also marks a rare political coincidence: after Karpuri Thakur, he is only the second leader to have served as Deputy Chief Minister before becoming Chief Minister. While this enhances his stature, it also brings towering expectations. Nitish Kumar was not just a politician; he had become an institution for Bihar. His nearly two-decade-long tenure redefined governance with focus areas like women's safety, roads, electricity, and prohibition. For Samrat Choudhary, the biggest test will be whether he presents himself merely as an alternative to Nitish Kumar or creates a new identity that blends Nitish's development model with the BJP's ideological assertiveness.

Most political analysts agree that achieving Nitish Kumar's level of universal acceptance overnight is unlikely. His appeal cut across all sections—Mahadalits, Extremely Backward Classes, and women. Choudhary currently enjoys strong

organizational backing and the support of the BJP's top leadership, but he must now transform his 'aggressive image' into 'administrative restraint.' As Chief Minister, every decision he makes will be compared with Nitish Kumar's benchmarks. Can he safeguard the interests of marginalized communities with the same sensitivity? Can he clearly articulate his stance on complex issues like prohibition? The answers to these questions will likely emerge within the first hundred days of his tenure.

Challenges are not limited to the opposition; they also exist within the alliance. With Nitish Kumar's shift to the Rajya Sabha, questions about the future of JD(U) and the possible political entry of Nishant Kumar have sparked discussions. There is a subtle unease within JD(U), and Choudhary will have to ensure that allies do not feel sidelined. Simultaneously, he must also carry along senior BJP leaders who missed out in the race for the top post. The opposition will continue to attack him over past controversies, including his removal from a ministerial post at a young age and questions related to his educational background. As Chief Minister, he will need to respond to such challenges through his govern-

ance style and credibility. The 2025 mandate in Bihar can be seen as a 'farewell mandate,' reflecting the public's readiness for change. Choudhary's biggest strengths lie in his OBC identity and the full backing of the BJP leadership. However, his greatest challenge remains the 'aura of Nitish Kumar.' Until now, the BJP operated in Bihar under Nitish Kumar's shadow. Now, it must build its independent political edifice—one whose foundation Samrat Choudhary is expected to lay. This journey will be difficult, as he must sustain development momentum while navigating Bihar's complex social structure, where caste politics remains deeply entrenched.

Samrat Choudhary's story is that of a Struggling Leader who has risen from the ground to the pinnacle. But his real test as Chief Minister begins now. Will he be able to completely free Bihar from its 'BIMARU' tag and realize the vision of a 'Developed Bihar'? The answer lies in the future. For now, Bihar's new 'Samrat' stands at the center of a challenging labyrinth—armed with both opportunity and responsibility. How he transforms this moment into history will depend entirely on his leadership.



YOGESH KUMAR GOYAL  
senior journalist

Where Compassion Becomes Consciousness and  
Silence Speaks to the Soul

In a bustling metropolis like Delhi—marked by relentless pace, chaos, and an increasing sense of emotional disconnect—if there emerges a place where the mind finds instant calm, the soul experiences rest, and life gains a renewed sense of direction, then such a place is not ordinary; it becomes a pulsating center of divinity. Vatsalya Peeth stands as one such extraordinary spiritual sanctuary. Preserving the sacred memories of Shasan Mata Sadhvipramukha Kanakprabha Ji, it is poised to become a center of peace, spiritual discipline, and inner awakening—not only for followers of the Terapanth Dharma Sangh but for all of humanity.

The auspicious inauguration on April 19, 2026 is not merely an event; it symbolizes the awakening of a new spiritual consciousness and the manifestation of profound inner experiences. This is the very sacred land where Sadhvipramukha Kanakprabha Ji spent invaluable moments of austerity, renunciation, and deep spiritual practice. It is also the sanctified ground where she transcended the physical realm into liberation and where her final rites were performed. Today, that very land has transformed into Vatsalya Peeth—a living pilgrimage where every particle resonates with the sweetness of affection and the depth of meditation. The environment here seems to speak for itself. Peace is not just a concept—it is an experience. Spirituality is not merely an idea—it becomes a tangible touch of life. Upon arriving at this sacred space, one feels as though all restlessness, anxiety, and tension begin to dissolve, and the soul gradually returns to its true essence.

The architectural design of Vatsalya Peeth is equally unique and captivating. It beautifully harmonizes modernity with spirituality. Its open-to-sky structure, thoughtfully designed skylights that invite natural illumination, balanced ventilation for fresh air, and a dignified simplicity free from artificial grandeur—all combine to create a living meditation space. Every wall, every pathway, and every corner silently conveys a message: the purpose of life does not lie in external glitter, but in the Search of inner light. The eternal mantra "Tamaso Ma Jyotirgamaya" (Lead me from darkness to light) seems embodied within its

very structure. The decor is free from artificial embellishments—simple, serene, and sattvic—mirroring the pure, calm, and impactful personality of Sadhvipramukha Kanakprabha Ji herself. Her life remains an extraordinary source of inspiration. She was not merely a nun, but an embodiment of affection, a flowing



river of knowledge, and a living Saraswati of creative expression. Initiated at a young age under the guidance of Acharya Tulsi, she dedicated her life to spiritual discipline, service, and creation. Choosing the path of renunciation at the tender age of seventeen, her journey eventually led to the guidance and leadership of a vast Sangh of more than seven hundred nuns.

To lead such a large spiritual community is remarkable in itself—but what made her leadership exceptional was the perfect balance of discipline and maternal warmth. She proved that a woman is not only a symbol of compassion and nurturing, but also a powerful force of organization, leadership, and creativity. Her life resembled a glowing flame—burning itself to illuminate others. Her speech carried strength, her thoughts depth, and her conduct a purity that inspired all who came in contact with her. Her contributions extended far beyond spiritual practice—she made significant impacts in literature, education, and social awakening. She authored and edited numerous literary works and played a vital role in editing Mera Jeevan Mera Darshan, the autobiography of Acharya Tulsi. Her writing reflected sensitivity, grace of expression, and profound contemplation.

She was known as a successful spiritual practitioner, an efficient administrator, a powerful orator, and a deeply sensitive poet.

Vatsalya Peeth has not been built merely as a memorial—it is envisioned as a living spiritual center. In the years to come, it will establish itself as a sacred

hood, that infinite compassion, and that life-giving affection which she embodied and shared with the world. In today's age—where materialism and blind competition are causing individuals to lose their inner balance and peace—centers like Vatsalya Peeth become deeply essential. It reminds us that true happiness does not lie in external achievements, but in inner harmony and spiritual elevation. The life of Sadhvipramukha Kanakprabha Ji stands as a living testament to this truth.

Through her life, she conveyed a powerful message: Spiritual practice elevates the soul, Service builds society, Creation enriches culture. Vatsalya Peeth stands as the living embodiment of this sacred trinity—Sadhana (spiritual practice), Seva (service), and Srijan (creation). This place not only preserves the glory of the past but also serves as a beacon of inspiration for the future. Every brick, every stone, and every structure reflects her life values. It is not merely a reflection of her personality, but a living extension of her thoughts and spiritual discipline. Undoubtedly, in the times ahead, Vatsalya Peeth will emerge as a radiant pilgrimage center, spreading the light of peace, compassion, and spirituality in all directions. It will inspire humanity to realize that the true journey of life is not outward, but inward—and it is within this inward journey that one discovers true joy, peace, and liberation. In essence, Vatsalya Peeth is not just a place—it is an experience.

An experience that calms the mind, awakens the soul, and gives meaning to life.

"When the soul finds rest under the shade of compassion,

Every moment of life transforms into a sacred abode of divine remembrance."



LALIT GARGG  
Writer, Journalist,  
Columnist



## Kankaria Lake Depot Turns India's First Water Neutral Facility

**Depot Saves 1.60 Lakh Litres Daily through Wastewater Treatment and Reuse, Reducing Freshwater Dependence**

Kankaria Depot Promotes Environmental Protection and Greener Railways through Eco-Friendly Phytoremediation Technique and Advanced Multi-Stage Purification In a significant step towards environmental sustainability, the Kankaria Coaching Depot has emerged as a 'water neutral' Railway depot, showcasing how innovative practices can transform traditional railway operations into eco-friendly models. The initiative highlights a major breakthrough in water conservation, with the depot saving nearly 1.60 lakh litres of water - equivalent to over 300 household tanks - every day through advanced treatment and reuse systems.

At the heart of this transformation is a modern wastewater treatment system based on phytoremediation, a natural process where plants are used to purify water. The depot has successfully implemented this eco-friendly technology to treat wastewater generated from routine activities such as coach washing and maintenance. Instead of being discharged, the water is cleaned and reused, significantly reducing dependence on freshwater sources.

The system follows a sci-

entifically designed multi-stage process, combining natural and technical methods to ensure effective purification. Using wetland-based treatment, plants play a crucial role in absorbing impurities and improving water quality. In the final stages, the treated water undergoes carbon and sand filtration along with UV disinfection, making it safe for reuse in operational activities. This initiative not only supports environmental conservation but also delivers economic benefits by reducing water consumption costs. The project aligns with the standards set by environmental authorities, ensuring that sustainability and compliance go hand in hand. With daily savings translating into an annual conservation of around 5.84 crore litres of water, the Kankaria Coaching Depot stands as a model for efficient water management in Indian Railways. By adopting such innovative and sustainable practices, it sets a strong example of how infrastructure can evolve to meet the demands of environmental responsibility while maintaining operational efficiency. The transformation of Kankaria Coaching Depot into a water neutral facility reflects a broader shift towards greener Railway operations, reinforcing the commitment to sustainable development and resource conservation.

## AMWJU and EGM Condemn Assault on Journalist by Security Personnel

IMPHAL, 17 APRIL 2026

On 16th April, 2026, ISCOM News journalist Nongmeikakpam Ibotombi was physically assaulted by CRPF personnel while returning home after covering a torch rally at Singjamei. Upon reaching Singjamei Chingamkha from Leirak, several CRPF personnel stationed there attacked him without any questioning. He was not given an opportunity to identify himself as a journalist or present his I-Card, despite stating that he was from the press. The security personnel dragged him and his vehicle onto the road. Although he was wearing a helmet, he sustained injuries and his eyeglasses were broken during the assault

at an undisclosed location. After it was confirmed that he was a journalist, the same security personnel apologized and escorted him back to his residence. A joint meeting of the All Manipur Working Journalists' Union (AMWJU) and the Editors' Guild Manipur (EGM) was held today regarding the incident. The meeting condemned the act in the strongest terms. This is not the first instance of journalists facing such treatment from security personnel. Two journalists were previously assaulted by CRPF personnel at Kvaketheil. Recurring acts of this nature against journalists, who work to provide the public with important information on issues affecting the state, must stop immediately.

## Kabir's Timeless Philosophy Continues to Guide Humanity- CM

Sant Mahapurush Vichar Samaan Parsar Yojana launched to disseminate teachings of the great saints among the masses

CHANDIGARH, APRIL 17

Haryana Chief Minister, Sh. Nayab Singh Saini said that the teachings and philosophy of Sant Shiromani Kabir Das Ji remain profoundly relevant even in the contemporary world. He said Kabir's fearless voice against religious orthodoxy, hypocrisy, and social discrimination in the 15th century continues to inspire society towards unity, harmony, and universal brotherhood. Addressing a seminar on the life and teachings of Sant Kabir in Mohali, Punjab, on Friday, the Chief Minister remarked that any gathering resonating with the wisdom of saints transcends a mere seminar and becomes a spiritual congregation. Such platforms, he said, infuse society with positive energy and foster inner peace through spirituality. Highlighting the current global context marked by unrest and conflict, Saini said Kabir's philosophy holds even greater significance today. His teachings serve as



a beacon for humanity, illuminating the path of peace, love, and fraternity, he added. Describing Sant Shiromani Kabir Das Ji as a true humanist, the Chief Minister emphasized his unwavering opposition to caste divisions, social hierarchies, and all forms of discrimination. He said that the simplicity and clarity of Kabir's message made it deeply accessible to the masses and continues to inspire generations. The Chief Minister said the Haryana Government has launched the 'Sant Mahapurush Vichar Samaan Parsar Yojana' to disseminate the teachings of great saints across society. He reaffirmed

the government's commitment to inclusive development, ensuring that the benefits of progress reach the last person, in line with Sant Shiromani Kabir Das Ji's ideals of equality and social harmony. Under the 'Mukhyamantri Teerth Yatra Yojana', he said, senior citizens from economically weaker sections are being facilitated to visit prominent religious destinations. A special train was recently flagged off from Ambala to Ayodhya, with more such initiatives planned. He further highlighted that financial assistance is being provided for visits to key Sikh shrines under the 'Swarn Jayanti Guru

Darshan Yatra Yojana'. Support is also extended under the 'Swarn Jayanti Sindhu Darshan Yojana' and the 'Kailash Mansarovar Yatra Yojana' to enable devotees to undertake sacred journeys.

Sh. Nayab Singh Saini underscored that Kabir's life and teachings reinforce the importance of unity and brotherhood in society. "A truly harmonious and discrimination-free society can only be built by imbibing his ideals," he said. Appreciating the seminar organisers, the Chief Minister said that true reverence towards saints lies not merely in reading their words but in practicing them in everyday life. He paid floral tributes to Sant Kabir Das and urged citizens to follow his path. Notably, the seminar was organised by the Bhagat Kabir Welfare Foundation. Rajya Sabha MP, Dr Subhash Sharma, Amanjot Kaur, Dr Kuldeep Agnihotri, Prem Singh Dhillon, Satinder Satti and other dignitaries remained present.

## SVEEP Drive Promotes Voting at Darjeeling Railway Station

MALIGAON, 17 APRIL, 2026

In a unique and collaborative effort to strengthen voter awareness and democratic participation, the Northeast Frontier Railway (NFR), through its heritage line Darjeeling Himalayan Railway (DHR),



partnered with the Office of the District Election Officer, Darjeeling to organise a "Mega

SVEEP" (Systematic Voters' Education and Electoral Participation) programme on 17th April 2026. The initiative was aimed at encouraging informed and inclusive participation in the upcoming General Election to the West Bengal Legislative Assembly (WBLA) 2026. As part of the programme, a

major phase of activities was hosted at the iconic Darjeeling Railway Station. The station premises witnessed enthusiastic participation from railway officials, district authorities and members of the public, all united in promoting the importance of every vote in a vibrant democratic setup.

## Government Expands Coverage of RELIEF Scheme Amid West Asia Geopolitical Developments

In view of the evolving geopolitical situation in West Asia and its continuing impact on maritime logistics across the Gulf and adjoining regions, the Government has expanded the list of eligible destinations under RELIEF - Resilience & Logistics Intervention for Export Facilitation, a time-bound intervention under the Export Promotion Mission (EPM).

RELIEF was launched on 19 March 2026 as a targeted intervention to support Indian exporters affected by extraordinary freight escalation, heightened insurance premia and war-related export risks arising from disruptions in the Gulf and wider West Asia maritime corridor. The intervention provides calibrated support across the export cycle, including for shipments already undertaken during the disruption period as well as prospective exports.

RELIEF Scheme Supports MSME Exporters; Egypt and Jordan Added to Eligible List



RELIEF is being implemented through ECGC as the nodal agency and includes support for insured exporters, facilitation of insurance cover for upcoming shipments, and reimbursement assistance for eligible MSME exporters facing extraordinary freight and insurance surcharge burdens. With this expansion, Egypt and Jordan have been added to the list of eligible countries for shipments meant for de-

livery or transshipment, under the relevant provisions of the RELIEF framework. In addition, through a Policy Circular dated 15th April 2026, the Government has clarified the scope of Component II of RELIEF, which pertains to ECGC insurance support. It has been clarified that exporters obtaining a fresh ECGC Whole Turnover Policy on or after 16 March 2026 shall also be eligible for

support under Component II. This clarification is aimed at ensuring greater clarity and facilitating wider participation of exporters, particularly new policyholders. The above measures reflect the Government's continued assessment of evolving trade and logistics conditions in the region and its commitment to respond to emerging challenges faced by exporters. By expanding the geographical coverage of RELIEF, the Government aims to ensure that exporters operating across the extended West Asia and North Africa corridor are adequately supported during the ongoing disruptions. This expansion is expected to further strengthen export resilience, sustain trade flows and support Indian exporters navigating the current geopolitical and logistics uncertainties.



## PM Modi Honors Chandra Shekhar on Birth Anniversary

**Prime Minister pays tributes to former Prime Minister Chandra Shekhar on his birth anniversary**

The Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi has paid tributes to former Prime Minister, Shri Chandra Shekhar on his birth anniversary. The Prime Minister noted that this year marks the beginning of Chandra Shekhar Ji's 100th birth anniversary and said it is an occasion to reiterate the commitment to realising his vision for a prosperous and just India. Recalling his legacy, the Prime Minister said that Chandra Shekhar Ji is remembered as a mass leader blessed with courage, conviction and a deep commitment to democratic values. Firmly rooted in the soil of India and sensitive to the aspirations of ordinary citizens, he brought simplicity and clarity to public life. I recall the instances when I had the opportunity to meet him and exchange perspectives for the development of our nation. I call upon the youth of India to read more about his thoughts and efforts towards India's progress.

Shekhar Ji and exchange perspectives for the development of the nation. The Prime Minister called upon the youth of India to read more about the thoughts and efforts of Chandra Shekhar Ji towards India's progress. In a X post, Shri Modi said; "Tributes to former Prime Minister Chandra Shekhar Ji on his birth anniversary. This year marks the start of his 100th birth anniversary and is a time to reiterate our commitment to realising his vision for a prosperous and just India. Chandra Shekhar Ji is remembered as a mass leader blessed with courage, conviction and a deep commitment to democratic values. Firmly rooted in the soil of India and sensitive to the aspirations of ordinary citizens, he brought simplicity and clarity to public life. I recall the instances when I had the opportunity to meet him and exchange perspectives for the development of our nation. I call upon the youth of India to read more about his thoughts and efforts towards India's progress."

## Renowned Psychiatrist Professor Dr. N. Heramani Passes Away

IMPHAL, 17-APRIL-2026:

Professor Dr. Ningombam Heramani, a distinguished psychiatrist and former Head of the Department of Psychiatry at the Regional Institute of Medical Sciences (RIMS), passed away on April 16. He was 72. With a professional career spanning over 31 years, Professor Dr. Ningombam Heramani made notable contributions to the field of mental healthcare in Manipur. He held an MBBS degree along with an MD in Psychological Medicine and served as the Head of the Department of Psychiatry at RIMS until his retirement in 2020. After retirement, he continued his medical service as the Head of the Department of Psychiatry at Shija Hos-



pitals and Research Institute from 2021. His tenure, which was extended until December 2025, saw him remain actively engaged in patient care and institutional development even beyond the formal extension period. Born on September 24, 1954, at Khongman Zone 4 in Imphal East district, Professor Dr. Ningombam Heramani is survived by his wife, one daughter, three sons, a daughter-in-law, and a granddaughter.

## Women Empowerment Strengthens Nation

APRIL 17, 2026

Narendra Modi said that Nari Shakti (women power) is the identity of a strong India. He highlighted that the country's mothers, sisters, and daughters, through their determination, dedication, and spirit of service, are making India proud in every field.

Here is the English translation in simple, clear language: Contribution of Nari Shakti On April 17, 2026, Narendra Modi said that Nari Shakti (women power) is the identity of a strong India. He highlighted that the country's mothers, sisters, and daughters, through their determination, dedication, and spirit of service, are making India proud in every field. He also shared a Sanskrit verse: "We bow with devotion to Goddess Ambika, who is worshipped by all gods and great sages, who pervades the entire universe through her divine power, and who embodies the combined strength of all deities. May that Mother bless us with well-being."

In his message on X, he said: "Our Nari Shakti is the symbol of a strong India. The mothers, sisters, and daughters of the country, with their unwavering resolve, commitment, and service, are enhancing the pride of India in every field." "We bow with devotion to Goddess Ambika, who is worshipped by all gods and great sages, who pervades the entire universe through her divine power, and who embodies the combined strength of all deities. May that Mother bless us with well-being."

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# Union Minister Shri Prataprao Jadhav Concludes Chintan Shivir 2026

Shri Prataprao Jadhav, Union Minister of State (Independent Charge), Ministry of Ayush and Minister of State for Health & Family Welfare, today presided over the valedictory session of the two-day Chintan Shivir-2026 in New Delhi, marking the successful conclusion of a comprehensive national-level brainstorming exercise aimed at strengthening policy, governance, and implementation frameworks in the Ayush sector.

Addressing the gathering, the Union Minister expressed satisfaction with the meaningful deliberations held during the Shivir and emphasised that the exercise has emerged as a strong reflection of the government's collective vision, commitment, and determination to advance Ayush. He underlined that Ayush represents not just a system of treatment but a holistic health and lifestyle approach, offering solutions to modern health chal-

**Calls for Action-Oriented Roadmap for Strengthening Ayush Sector**  
2-Day Chintan Shivir Charts Strategic Future for Integrative Healthcare, Governance, and Outreach in Ayush

lenges, particularly lifestyle-related diseases. Reiterating the importance of integrative and multidisciplinary approaches, Shri Jadhav called for deeper institutional integration of Ayush with mainstream healthcare systems, strengthening of evidence-based research, and enhanced focus on digital health platforms such as Ayush Grid and telemedicine to improve accessibility, especially in rural areas. He also stressed the need for entrepreneurship, innovation, and capacity building to unlock the sector's full potential and contribute meaningfully to the vision of Visions Bharat 2047. The Day-2 of the event began with an engaging session focused on policy convergence and inter-ministerial coordination for strengthening Ayush in public health. Moderated by Dr. A. Raghunath, the session witnessed the gracious presence of domain leaders and higher officials of



the Union Government, including Ms. Punya Salila Srivastava, Secretary, Ministry of Health & Family Welfare; Dr. Vinod Paul, Member, NITI, and Ms. Preeti Sudan, former Secretary, Ministry of Health & Family Welfare. Dr. Vinod Paul outlined a national vision for integrative healthcare, emphasising seamless integration of Ayush with modern medicine to achieve Universal Health Coverage and Vision 2047 goals, with a focus on preventive and holistic care.

Ms. Punya Salila Srivastava, Secretary, Ministry of Health & Family Welfare, highlighted strategies for integrating Ayush into national programmes such as Ayushman Arogya Mandir, focusing on NCDs, mental health, and maternal-child health, supported by digital interoperability through ABHA ID. Ms. Preeti Sudan contributed insights on strengthening coordination and policy frameworks. The session emphasised policy integration, co-location of services, digital

health adoption, research collaborations, and last-mile delivery, thereby improving accessibility, continuity, and quality of care. Secretary, Ministry of Ayush, Vaidya Rajesh Kotecha, in his address, noted that the Chintan Shivir served as a platform for collective introspection, policy review, and the development of a future roadmap. He highlighted that the discussions reflected a clear consensus on strengthening research, standardisation, and global credibility, while also emphasising the importance of effective communication and public outreach, particularly through digital platforms. He stated that the outcomes of the Shivir would guide time-bound, actionable strategies to further strengthen the Ayush ecosystem. A comprehensive presentation on the proceedings and outcomes of the two-day Shivir was made by Joint Secretary, Ministry of Ayush, Alarmelmangai D, summa-

rising key insights and actionable takeaways from all sessions. The Shivir was inaugurated on April 16, 2026, by Shri Prataprao Jadhav, who emphasised the need to strengthen policy direction, research, innovation, and global outreach in Ayush.

Key initiatives launched during the event included: MoU between the All India Institute of Ayurveda and the General Insurance Council to expand insurance coverage for Ayush treatments; Launch of the Ministry's official WhatsApp Channel; Release of the benchmark rates document for Ayush insurance; Launch of toll-free number 1800-11-0008 for Ayush insurance support. The fifth session on "Entrepreneurship & Capacity Building" highlighted the role of Mission Karmayogi in transforming governance through structured learning and skill development. R. Bala Subramaniyam and Deepa Krishnan emphasised continuous learning through digital platforms like iGOT, leadership development, and domain-specific training.

## Woman Teacher Burned in Punjab Acid Attack

CHANDIGARH: (APR 17)

A man allegedly threw acid on his maternal aunt, a primary school teacher, while she was teaching a class in Punjab's Batala district on Friday, inflicting severe burns and also injuring two children present in the classroom, police said. The accused -- identified as Tejvir

Singh -- has been arrested, they said, adding that the victim is undergoing treatment at the civil hospital in Batala. Deputy Superintendent of Police (Har Gobindpur Sahib) Harish Behal said the incident took place under Ghuman police station limits, asserting that police took immediate action after the incident was reported.

## Pak-linked drug flow via Golden Crescent increases; India intensifies multi-agency crackdown

NEW DELHI

The focus of the Indian security agencies dealing with the menace of narcotic smuggling has been largely on the contraband originating from the Golden Crescent of Pakistan-Afghanistan. The Indian agencies have said that activities through the Golden Crescent have gone up considerably. There is a push by Pakistan to smuggle huge quantities of narcotics into India.

Ramping up activities at the Golden Crescent is a clear sign that the Pakistan-based operatives are trying to raise money to fund terror activities against India.

Estimates by the security agencies show that 65 per cent of the narcotics that come into India are from the Golden Crescent. The remaining come in from the Golden Triangle, which comprises Myanmar, Laos and Thailand.

Officials say that the Pakistan-based narcotic smugglers are pushing more drugs into South India today and the



drugs are reaching Kerala and Tamil Nadu.

Once the domestic needs are catered to, then the drugs are smuggled into Maldives and Sri Lanka. Prior to the drugs reaching the southern states, they are smuggled into Gujarat and Maharashtra. With this strategy, the cartels plan to cover both North and South India significantly.

When it comes to the north-

eastern states, the cartels operating from the Golden Triangle handle the job, an official said.

With Intelligence inputs suggesting that the Pakistan-based narcotic smugglers are ramping up operations, a high level meeting was held between the officials of the Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB), National Technical Research Organisation (NTRO) and the Indian Navy.

It was decided to intensify surveillance to detect drugs coming in from the Golden Crescent. The agencies are keeping a close watch on high speed motor boats and smaller fishing boats.

Of late, the cartels are also relying on commercial shipping containers through which they are attempting to smuggle in larger quantity of drugs. The drugs that come in from the

Golden Crescent largely comprise charas and methamphetamine. With inputs suggesting a major rise in drug smuggling activity, India has also been working closely with international agencies to put a halt to the menace.

"It is important that apart from taking steps on our own, we coordinate with international agencies as well," an official said. India would, however, be taking the lead role as it is a landing point owing to its geographical proximity to the Golden Crescent, the official also said.

While constant attempts are being made to step up drug smuggling activity, officials report that in the last three months, the activities have been down. The vigil has been stepped up and multiple agencies are working in tandem to keep the menace at bay.

In addition to disruptions being reported in the Golden Crescent supply chains due to regional stability, the Indian agencies, too, have resolved to fight this problem.

Officials say that Prime Minister Narendra Modi has made it clear that the Centre wants India to be drug free.

Union Home Minister, Amit Shah, said that all departments of the government of India should prepare a road map up to 2029 and establish a time-bound review mechanism for its implementation.

He said that during the next three years, a campaign would be carried out collectively across the country to move fast towards making India drug free. An Intelligence Bureau official said that if supplies from the Golden Crescent fall, then every attempt will be made to scale up operations from the Golden Triangle.

The cartels from these regions are inter-connected and hence they cannot be treated as separate entities.

The road map ahead would be to have coordinated efforts by multiple agencies to deal with cartels that operate both from the Golden Crescent as well as the Golden Triangle, the official also added.

## India, China discuss implementation of SCO Leaders decisions, organisation's future



NEW DELHI

India and China held Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) Bilateral Consultations in New Delhi, discussing the implementation of the SCO Leaders' decisions and the future course of the organisation.

The two sides agreed to continue and consolidate mutual cooperation and consultations in SCO matters, according to a statement released by the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) on Friday. India's SCO National Coordinator, Ambassador Alok A Dimri and China's National Coordinator, Ambassador Yan Wenbin, led the respective delegations during the meeting held in New Delhi on April 16-17.

"Both delegations, jointly, called on Secretary (West) Shri Sibi George to review cooperation within the SCO

framework, including in the areas of security, trade, connectivity, and people-to-people ties. Both sides agreed to continue mutual consultations in future," the MEA release said.

The Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) was established on June 15, 2001, with its founding members being China, Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan. In 2017, India and Pakistan joined it. In 2023, Iran became a member, followed by Belarus in 2024, bringing the total number of SCO member states to 10. The SCO has two observer states -- Afghanistan and Mongolia -- and 14 dialogue partners -- Azerbaijan, Armenia, Cambodia, Nepal, Turkey, Sri Lanka, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Qatar, Bahrain, the Maldives, Myanmar, the United Arab Emirates, and Kuwait.

## Oil refinery fire to have minimal impact on Australian fuel supply: PM Albanese



MELBOURNE

Prime Minister Anthony Albanese said on Friday that a major fire that broke out at one of Australia's two oil refineries will have a minimal impact on fuel production.

Albanese on Friday returned early from an official trip to Brunei and Malaysia to inspect the damage at Viva Energy's refinery southwest of Melbourne after equipment failure caused a major fire on Wednesday night. The fire was extinguished around midday on Thursday.

Speaking to reporters at the refinery, Albanese said that the timing of the fire was "regrettable" amid the oil supply crisis caused by the conflict in the Middle East, but that it would have a minimal impact on production.

"The advice that we've received today is that 80 per cent of diesel production is continuing, 80 per cent of aviation fuel is continuing," said Albanese, who was in Brunei and Malaysia for talks on fuel security.

Petrol production at the facility, which provides 10 per

cent of Australia's national fuel supply, was at 60 per cent of capacity on Friday and there are hopes that it can "ramp up" in the coming days, Albanese said.

He said that the government would provide its regular weekly update on fuel stockpile levels on Saturday, Xinhua news agency reported.

Authorities said on Thursday that equipment failure caused a major fire at an Australian oil refinery that is expected to affect the national fuel supply.

The fire broke out at Viva Energy's refinery in the city of Geelong, 65 km southwest of Melbourne, around 11 p.m. local time on Wednesday and was continuing to burn on Thursday morning.

The facility is one of only two operational refineries in Australia and produces about 10 per cent of the national fuel supply.

Michelle Cowling, deputy commissioner of the fire and rescue service in the state of Victoria, told Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC) radio that equipment failure in the refinery caused the fire.

## South Korean President Lee's approval rating edges down to 66 per cent

SEOUL

South Korean President Lee Jae Myung's approval rating inched down slightly for the first time in three weeks to 66 per cent, a poll showed Friday.

The survey by Gallup Korea, conducted Tuesday through Thursday on 1,000 respondents aged 18 and over, showed that the positive assessment of Lee's overall performance fell 1 percentage point from the previous week, Yonhap News Agency reported.

In the previous survey, Lee's approval rating stood at 67 per cent for the second consecutive week, marking the highest level since taking office.

The negative assessment rose 2 percentage points to 26 per cent, while 8 per cent were undecided.

Lee's handling of the economy and people's livelihoods was cited most frequently as the reason for positive evaluation at 17 per cent, followed by diplomacy at 14 per cent and



competence at 11 per cent.

Among the negative responses, 17 per cent pointed to concerns over the economy and the high exchange rate, followed by diplomacy at 12 per cent and excessive welfare policies at 9 per cent.

The approval rating for the ruling Democratic Party remained unchanged at 48 per cent, maintaining its highest level since the current administration took office for the third straight week.

Support for the main opposition People Power Party fell 1

percentage point to 19 per cent.

The survey had a margin of error of plus or minus 3.1 percentage points at a 95 per cent confidence level.

On Thursday, Cheong Wa Dae said South Korean President Lee Jae Myung will attend talks led by Britain and France this week over freedom of navigation in the Strait of Hormuz.

The virtual gathering, to be hosted by French President Emmanuel Macron and British Prime Minister Keir Starmer late Friday (Seoul time), aims to ensure free and safe passage

through the crucial waterway.

"As the freedom and security of navigation through the Strait of Hormuz serve the interests of all parties and are vital to our national interests, we are continuing efforts to work in solidarity with countries that share similar positions," a senior official told reporters.

Lee is preparing a message addressing energy supply chains, Seoul's stance on the Middle East situation, and the importance of international solidarity to ensure free passage through the crucial shipping route, the official said.

The leader-level meeting follows earlier consultations, including a France-led video conference of top military officials on March 26 and a Britain-led ministerial meeting on April 2, both of which South Korea attended.

The United States is not expected to attend the meeting, while China's and Japan's participation has yet to be confirmed, the official said.

## Baloch group claims attack on Pakistani military camp, highway blockade

QUETTA

The Balochistan Liberation Front (BLF) has claimed responsibility for an attack on a Pakistani military camp in Jhao area and blocking of a key highway in Kharan area of Balochistan province, local media reported on Friday citing a statement issued by the group.

BLF spokesperson Major Gwahram Baloch stated that group's fighters conducted an attack on a military camp in Kohadu area of Jhao on April 12, which killed or injured sev-

eral personnel, The Balochistan Post reported. He said the attack started with a sniper attack on a military personnel guarding the camp followed by what he said was a coordinated attack using rocket launchers and automatic weapons. "As a result of the operation, the camp sustained severe damage, and several military personnel were killed or injured," the group's spokesperson stated.

In a separate operation on April 14, the BLF said its fighters blocked Nourozabad Road in the Sarawan area of Kharan and held control of the highway for sever-

al hours, carrying out search operation in vehicles. The BLF warned transporters against cooperating with Pakistani forces, stating that those providing logistical or personnel support would be "directly targeted." In the statement, the BLF said, "Anyone assisting the enemy in logistics or personnel movement will be directly targeted." The group pledged to continue carrying out armed attacks against Pakistani forces and their "facilitators" until achieving what it termed as "complete independence of Balochistan."



## India, Cyprus discuss bilateral ties and institutional cooperation

NICOSIA

India's High Commissioner to Cyprus, Manish held a meeting with Cyprus' Minister of Justice and Public Order Costas Fytiris on Friday, discussing issues related to the Ministry of Justice and Public Order, including institutional cooperation between the two countries, extradition and criminal matters, exchange of prisoners, and various consular matters affecting Indian nationals.

During the meeting, the Indian envoy briefed Costas Fytiris on recent developments in bilateral ties and the upcoming visit of Cyprus President Nikos Christodoulides to India in May 2026.

"High Commissioner Mr. Manish met with Mr. Costas Fytiris, Minister of Justice and Public Order of the Republic of Cyprus. Both sides held wide-ranging discussions. The High Commissioner

briefed the Minister on recent developments in bilateral relations and on the forthcoming visit of H.E. President Nikos Christodoulides to India in May 2026," the Indian High Commission in Cyprus stated in a post on X.

"In this context, they discussed various issues related to the Ministry of Justice and Public Order, including institutional cooperation between the two countries, extradition and criminal matters, exchange of prisoners, and various consular matters affecting Indian nationals," it added.

On April 4, Manish called on Cypriot President Nikos Christodoulides at the Presidential Palace in Nicosia, reviewing the preparations for the President's visit to India in May 2026, at the invitation of Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

According to the Indian Embassy in Cyprus, the two sides discussed the key deliv-

erables under the India-Cyprus Joint Action Plan, with a focus on deepening cooperation across various sectors, including trade, investment, innovation, and connectivity, building on the momentum generated during Prime Minister Modi's visit to Cyprus in June 2025.

"Both sides also discussed progress in other priority sectors such as defence and security, renewable energy, digital transformation, fintech, and maritime cooperation, while also emphasising the importance of strengthening people-to-people linkages through academic and cultural initiatives," the Indian Embassy posted on X.

In October last year, External Affairs Minister (EAM) S Jaishankar and his Cyprus counterpart Constantinos Kombos reviewed the India-Cyprus Joint Action Plan 2025-2029 during their meeting in New Delhi.

## UN chief welcomes Israel-Lebanon ceasefire, urges full compliance with international law

UNITED NATIONS

United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres on Friday welcomed the announcement of a ceasefire between Israel and Lebanon, expressing hope that it would help advance efforts toward lasting peace in the region.

"I welcome the announcement of a ceasefire between Israel and Lebanon, and commend the role of the US in facilitating it. I hope this will pave the way for negotiations towards a long-term solution to the conflict & contribute to ongoing efforts toward a lasting & comprehensive peace in the region. I urge everyone to fully respect the ceasefire and to comply



with international law at all times," Guterres posted on X. Earlier, Stephane Dujarric, chief spokesman for the UN Secretary-General, on Thursday called on parties concerned to respect a newly announced ceasefire between Israel and Lebanon.

"I think the people of Lebanon have suffered tremendously. ... The population in northern Israel also deserves to live in peace. And we hope that everyone will abide by this ceasefire," said Dujarric.

The spokesman said the United Nations welcomes

steps that would end hostilities and suffering on both sides of the Blue Line, a border demarcation line between Lebanon and Israel established by the world body in 2000.

"The United Nations, through our political and peacekeeping missions, remains ready to support these efforts and continues to urge the full implementation of Security Council Resolution 1701 ... toward a permanent ceasefire and long-term solution to the conflict," he said, adding there is no military solution to this conflict. US President Donald Trump, earlier on Thursday announced a ceasefire between Israel and Lebanon aimed at bringing a

temporary cooling-off along another front linked to the Iran conflict.

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

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



## Markets rebound: Sensex jumps 505 pts, Nifty tops 24,300

NEW DELHI, APRIL 17

The Indian stock market on Friday recouped losses and ended higher. Nifty was above 24,300, supported by positive geopolitical developments. At close, the Sensex was up 504.86 points or 0.65 percent at 78,493.54, and the Nifty was up 156.80 points or 0.65 percent at 24,353.55. Nifty Midcap index adding 1.2% and Smallcap index rising 1.5%. For the week, BSE Sensex and Nifty added 1.2 percent each. Among the sectors, all the indices ended in the green with FMCG, media, metal, oil & gas, power, capital goods, consumer durables, and energy up 1-2%. On Nifty, the gainers were HUL, Nestle, JSW Steel, Power Grid Corp, and Apollo Hospitals, while on the losing end were Wipro, HDFC Life, Sun Pharma, L&T, and M&M. Over 160 stocks touched their 52-week high on the BSE. These included Lloyds Metals, Siemens, ABB India, Apar Industries, NLC India, Adani Energy, BHEL, Adani Power, Anand Rathi, Syrra SGS, Welspun Corp, Granules India, Aurobindo Pharma, SAIL, Tata Power, J&K Bank, Gujarat Mineral, among others.

In today's session, investors earned about Rs 5 lakh crore as the overall market capitalisation of BSE-listed firms rose to nearly Rs 466 lakh crore from Rs 461 lakh crore in the previous session. Among the specific performers, Ola Electric Mobility also witnessed strong buying interest, with the stock rising 5.5%. Wipro shares dropped 2.8% after its March quarter results. Shares of Kalyan Jewellers India fell nearly 6%. Titan, which sells jewellery under the Tanishq brand, was also in the red as its shares were trading down 1.02%. Rupee traded stronger at 93.24, up by 0.15%, supported by a softer dollar index hovering near 98. Oil prices declined in early Asian trade on optimism that the West Asia conflict may be nearing a pause after a 10-day ceasefire. Brent crude futures dropped \$1.34, or 1.35%, to \$98.05 a barrel at 02:11 GMT while the US West Texas Intermediate crude fell \$1.65, or 1.74%, to \$93.40 a barrel. Gold prices were largely steady, with the spot gold price flat at 4,789.67 per ounce, but up 0.9% for the week. US gold futures for June were steady at \$4,809.30.

# Is Your Liver Older Than You?

## STAR Hospitals Hyderabad Launches

HYDERABAD APRIL 17, 2026

"The Endangered Organ" Rulebook and a 40-Second Health Quiz to Combat India's Silent Crisis

At a time when nearly 40% of adults in Hyderabad are living with fatty liver disease, STAR Hospitals has unveiled a landmark preventive intelligence initiative: "The Endangered Organ" Liver Rulebook. Built on insights from thousands of real patient journeys, this unique clinical framework redefines how India detects and protects the liver before it's too late.

The Silent Crisis: Why Hyderabad is at the Epicentre The launch comes as new data reveals a staggering urban health crisis in Telangana. Recent studies show:

- A Growing Epidemic: 40.9% of adults in Hyderabad have Metabolic Dysfunction-Associated Steatotic Liver Disease (MASLD), surpass-

ing the national average of 38.9%.

- The Gender Gap: In Hyderabad, nearly half of all men (46%) and over a third of women (36.2%) are affected.
- The "IT" Risk: Prevalence among IT professionals in the city-driven by sedentary roles and high stress has soared to 84%.
- The Cancer Link: Cases of hepatocellular carcinoma (liver cancer) are rising sharply, with weekly diagnoses in the region nearly doubling recently.

Redefining Prevention: The Liver Rulebook & 40-Second Quiz

Unlike traditional medical texts, the Liver Rulebook is an infographic-led guide distilled from years of patient/disease patterns rather than just theory. It aims to shift the public mindset from reactive treatment to proactive "preventive intelligence".

Complementing the book, STAR Hospitals launched the "Know Your Liver Score in 40 Seconds" campaign. This rapid self-assessment tool evaluates various alcohol patterns, sleep quality, diet, and fatigue to classify individuals into Safe, Risk, or Endangered Zones.

Voices from the Experts

"We often see patients when intervention is complex and outcomes are uncertain. Many of these cases were preventable. This rulebook bridges the gap by putting awareness & learning into the hands of the people."

- Dr. Mettu Srinivas, Director & Lead Surgeon, STAR Center for Advanced Liver Care & Transplantation

communities."

- Dr. Golamari Srinivas, Senior Consultant, Clinical & Transplant Hepatology

"Healthcare in India has long been reactive. But liver symptoms often appear late. We need a behavioral shift where tools like the Liver Score trigger the first step toward understanding one's health."

- Dr. Ramu, Senior Consultant - Transplant Hepatology

The STAR Liver Life Circle (A Support Group)

STAR Hospitals also introduced the STAR Liver Life Circle, a 360-degree care continuum for transplant candidates, recipients, and donors. Built on four pillars-Educate, Advocate, Support, and Nurture-it integrates medical expertise with holistic wellness, including yoga and mental

health support, to ensure no one navigates the journey alone. Guidance from the STAR Liver Institute

- Identify the Signs: Watch for persistent fatigue, jaundice, abdominal swelling, or dark urine.

- Actionable Habits: Prioritize a whole-food diet, daily activity, and Hepatitis B vaccination.

- Screen Early: If you have obesity or Type 2 Diabetes, your risk of liver scarring (fibrosis) is significantly higher-regular screening is the only way to catch "silent" damage.

About STAR Hospitals Hyderabad:

STAR Hospitals - A Legacy of Clinical Excellence Founded 17 years ago, STAR Hospitals Hyderabad has grown into a cornerstone of Indian healthcare. The institute's scale and expertise include:

- 17 Years of medical excellence and trust

- 11 Dedicated Centres of Excellence focused on specialized care.

- Star Centre for Cardiac Sciences

- Star Centre for Orthopaedics

- Star Centre for Gastrointestinal Care

- Star Centre for Neurosciences.. Star Centre for Robotic Knee Replacement Surgeries

- Star Centre for Cancer Care

- Star Centre for Renal Sciences

- Star Multi-organ Transplant Program

- Star Centre for Emergency Medicine

- Star Centre for Minimally Invasive Surgeries

- Star Centre for Plastic, Reconstructive & Aesthetic Surgery

- 35+ Super Specialities

- 200+ Super Specialists

- 600+ Bed Capacity across its state-of-the-art facilities.

## FSSAI Pushes States to Curb Use of Prohibited Ripening Agents

NEW DELHI, APR 17

The Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) has directed all States and Union Territories to step up surveillance and enforcement against the use of unauthorized and hazardous artificial ripening agents in fruits, reiterating that substances such as calcium carbide are strictly prohibited. In a communication issued on April 16, FSSAI asked Commissioners of Food Safety, Regional Directors and Central Licensing Authorities to intensify inspections across fruit markets, mandis, storage facilities, wholesalers and distribution networks, particularly during the seasonal arrival of fruits. The authority reiterated that the use of calcium carbide, commonly referred to as "masala", for artificial ripening is banned under the Food Safety and Standards (Prohibition and Restrictions on Sales) Regulations, 2011. It warned that the chemical poses serious health risks, including difficulty in swallowing, vomiting and skin



ulcers. FSSAI also noted instances where food business operators (FBOs) are using ethephon solutions for ripening fruits such as bananas. It emphasized that its guidelines on artificial ripening permit only the use of ethylene gas under controlled conditions and strictly prohibit direct contact of fruits with ethylene in powder or liquid forms. Calling for stricter vigilance, the regulator said enforcement drives may be undertaken to curb the illegal use of calcium carbide and other non-permitted agents, including synthetic colours and wax. The presence of such substances at premises or near fruit consignments could be treated as evidence for initiating prosecution under relevant provisions of the Food Safety and Standards Act.

## Tea Industry Urges Narendra Modi to End Auction Rule

SILIGURI, APR 17

Four major tea industry bodies from Assam and North Bengal have jointly appealed to Prime Minister Narendra Modi, seeking urgent amendments to existing regulations mandating the compulsory sale of tea through public auctions, warning that the policy is placing severe financial and operational strain on producers. In a letter sent on April 15, the Assam Bought Leaf Tea Manufacturers Association (ABLTMA), North Eastern Tea Association (NETA), Bharatiya Cha Parishad (BCP), and North Bengal Tea Producers' Welfare Association (NBTPWA) raised concerns over provisions under the Tea (Marketing) Control (Second Amendment) Order, 2015 and the subsequent 2024 amendment. The Associations, which collectively represent a significant share of North India's tea output, urged the Prime Minister to withdraw or suitably modify the requirement that mandates



at least 50 per cent of total annual tea production be routed through public auctions. They argued that such compulsion undermines market flexibility and imposes additional costs on producers. In their representation, the organisations highlighted four key demands. First, they called for the withdrawal or modification of the 50 per cent compulsory auction clause introduced under the 2015 notification. Second, they sought similar reconsideration of the 2024 amendment, which not only reiterates the 50 per cent requirement but also mandates that 100 per cent of dust-grade teas be sold through auctions. Third, the Associations stressed the need

to allow producers the freedom to choose their mode of sale—whether through auctions or private channels—based on prevailing market conditions. They argued that such flexibility is essential for improving efficiency and sustaining profitability in a highly competitive sector. Finally, as an alternative, they requested that the government consider granting suitable exemptions or relaxations to affected stakeholders under existing provisions of the Tea (Marketing) Control framework. The industry bodies maintained that compulsory auction sales increase transaction costs and lengthen the sales cycle, often eroding already thin profit margins.

## Gautam Adani Becomes Asia's Richest Man

NEW DELHI, APRIL 17

Globally, Elon Musk continues to dominate the global rankings with a net worth of \$656 billion, followed by Larry Page at \$286 billion. Other names in the top 10 include Jeff Bezos, Sergey Brin, Mark Zuckerberg, Larry Ellison, Michael Dell, Jensen Huang, Bernard Arnault, and Jim Walton. Shares of billionaire Gautam Adani-backed Adani Enterprises rose as much as 2.17% to hit an intraday high of Rs 2,190.90 on the National Stock Exchange (NSE), and on the BSE, Adani Enterprises shares advanced as much as 2.09%.

# Akshaya Tritiya 2026: Gold May See Near-Term Volatility, But 'Buy on Dips' Outlook Holds

MUMBAI, APRIL 17, 2026:

As India ushers in the new financial year with Akshaya Tritiya, gold continues to balance tradition with a complex global backdrop. According to a recent commodities insight report by Motilal Oswal Financial Services, gold prices have risen nearly 10% so far in 2026, even as the journey remains volatile with sharp swings through the first quarter. The report highlights that gold is currently being driven by multiple global factors, including geopolitical tensions, concerns around slowing economic growth, and uncertainty around interest rate movements in the United States. While these factors are supporting gold's



safe-haven appeal, periods of a stronger dollar and elevated bond yields have created intermittent pressure, resulting in a non-linear price trajectory. Navneet Damani, Head of Research - Commodities, Motilal Oswal Financial Services, said, "Gold is currently navigating a complex global environment. While there are phases of pressure due to interest rate expectations and currency strength, the broader outlook remains supported by uncertainty, inflation concerns, and long-

## Motilal Oswal Financial Services

term investment demand. For Indian investors, gold continues to serve as a reliable store of value, especially during periods of volatility." On the demand front, the report points to contrasting trends across key markets. In India, elevated prices have kept jewellery demand subdued and price-sensitive, leading to discounted domestic prices. In contrast, China has witnessed relatively stronger, investment-led demand. The report also notes a gradual shift in India towards financial forms of gold such as ETFs, reflecting evolving investor behaviour.

Citing data from the World Gold Council, the report

states that central banks purchased around 860-870 tonnes of gold in 2025, marking continued strong buying, though at a slower pace than previous years. At the same time, global ETF demand has seen a recovery after earlier outflows, with mixed but constructive trends continuing into 2026.

Manav Modi, Analyst Commodities, Motilal Oswal Financial Services, said, "We are seeing a gradual change in how investors participate in gold. While physical buying remains important during occasions like Akshaya Tritiya, there is a clear rise in interest towards more flexible and transparent in-

vestment options. This trend is expected to strengthen as investors look for both convenience and liquidity." From an investment perspective, the report maintains that gold's long-term fundamentals remain intact, supported by its role as a hedge against inflation, currency depreciation, and global uncertainty. Historically too, Akshaya Tritiya has been a favourable entry point for investors, with gold delivering consistent long-term returns despite interim corrections. Commenting on the Outlook Mr. Navneet Damani, Head of Research - Commodities and Manav Modi, Analyst Commodities, Motilal Oswal Financial Services indicates that gold may continue to trade within a broad range in

the near term as markets adjust to evolving global cues. While some consolidation is likely after the recent rally, the medium- to long-term outlook remains constructive. Factors such as geopolitical risks, slowing global growth, and the possibility of monetary easing later in the year could support prices, while persistent inflation, a stronger dollar, and weak physical demand may act as near-term headwinds. The report maintains a clear "buy on dips" stance for investors with a medium- to long-term horizon. As Akshaya Tritiya approaches, gold continues to remain a trusted asset for Indian households—bridging tradition and financial security in an increasingly uncertain world.

**TATA MOTORS**  
HINDUSTAN  
**SUMMER CHECK-UP**  
9<sup>th</sup>-28<sup>th</sup> APRIL 2026  
COOL DRIVES START WITH  
A FREE SUMMER CHECK-UP

- UP TO 10% OFF on parts, lubricants & services
- FLAT 15% OFF on accessories
- FLAT 10% OFF On Extended Warranty

30+ Points Vehicle Inspection | AC Cooling & Efficiency Checks  
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1800 209 8282  
customercare@tatamotors.com

**Tata Motors Passenger Vehicles Organizes Nationwide Summer Check-Up Camp**  
Offers Free Vehicle Check-Up and Exclusive Benefits for Existing Customers

MUMBAI, APRIL 17, 2026

In its continued pursuit of delivering an enhanced ownership experience, Tata Motors Passenger Vehicles today announced the launch of a nationwide Summer Check-Up Camp for its customers. This service initiative will run from April 9 to April 28, 2026, across authorised Tata Motors Passenger Vehicles workshops.

With the onset of the summer season, the initiative is aimed at ensuring optimal vehicle performance, reliability and comfort during high-temperature conditions.

Customers can avail a free comprehensive vehicle health check-up, which includes a 30-point inspection covering key systems such as air-conditioner performance, battery health, tyres and alignment, engine oil and coolant levels, electrical systems, CNG system checks along with EV-specific diagnostics. The camp also offers exclusive discounts on extended warranty, spare parts, lubricants, value-added services and genuine accessories. Customers can avail a flat 10% discount on extended warranty, up to 10% discount on spare parts, lubricants and value-added services, and a flat 15% discount on Tata Motors Genuine Accessories (TMGA). Additionally, easy EMI options are available on extended warranty and AMC packages. With these regular proactive ini-

tiatives, Tata Motors Passenger Vehicles continues to reinforce its customer-first approach by delivering value-driven service experiences that prioritise reliability, comfort and convenience. Customers are encouraged to visit their nearest authorised Tata Motors Passenger Vehicles workshop to make the most of the Summer Check-Up Camp. For more information, customers can reach out to 18002098282 or write to customercare@tata-motors.com.

About Tata Motors Passenger Vehicles Ltd. (Formerly Tata Motors Ltd) \*

Part of the USD 180 billion Tata Group, Tata Motors Passenger Vehicles Ltd. (the Company), BSE: Scrip code 500570; NSE: Scrip code TMPV) is one of India's leading automobile manufacturers, offering a diverse portfolio of cars and SUVs renowned for their design, safety, and performance. The company delivers multi-powertrain options, advanced connected technologies, and intelligent personal mobility solutions. Known for its innovation, reliability, and engineering prowess, the company is at the forefront of India's electric vehicle revolution, accelerating the nation's shift toward sustainable mobility. It continues to drive progress across zero emission, connected, and future ready mobility solutions, supported by robust design and R&D capabilities.



**The Seismic Factor: Is a Printed House Safe?**

One of the most frequent questions posed to the scientists at Roorkee is: "Will it fall down during an earthquake?"

CBRI, being a premier institute for building research, has subjected their printed components to rigorous "shake table" tests. Because the concrete layers are fused at a molecular level during the "wet-on-wet" printing process, the interlaminar shear strength is remarkably high. Furthermore, the ability to print vertical channels within the walls allows for the easy insertion of steel reinforcement bars (Rebar), which are then grouted, creating a reinforced concrete structure that meets and exceeds the National Building Code (NBC) standards for seismic zones IV and V.

**The Challenges: The Road to Mass Adoption**

Despite the "magic" of the technology, the path to a 3D-printed India isn't without hurdles.

The "Last Mile" of Finishing: While walls are printed in hours, plumbing, electrical wiring, and roofing still require manual intervention. CBRI is currently researching "hybrid" systems where conduits for wires are printed into the walls automatically.

Regulatory Frameworks: Until very recently, building by-laws didn't recognize "printed concrete" as a standard material. CBRI's research is instrumental in helping the government draft new codes that will allow banks to provide home loans for these futuristic structures.

Weather Sensitivity: Printing in heavy rain or extreme humidity can affect the curing of the mix. Developing "all-weather" nozzles is the next frontier for the Roorkee team.

**A New Horizon for Social Housing**

The true soul of this project lies in its potential for Social Impact. Under the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (PMAY), India has a gargantuan goal of "Housing for All." (Traditional methods are simply too slow to meet the deficit. Imagine a fleet of CBRI-designed printers being deployed to a rural district. In a single month, an entire village of 50 disaster-resilient, thermally comfortable, and aesthetically pleasing homes could be "downloaded" and "printed." This isn't science fiction; it is the inevitable conclusion of the work being done in Roorkee. The 3D concrete printing technology of CBRI Roorkee represents a marriage between the ancient necessity of shelter and the cutting edge of the Fourth Industrial Revolution. It suggests that in the very near future, we won't just build our homes—we will hit "print," sit back, and watch as our sanctuaries rise from the dust in a matter of hours. The "bricks and mortar" era is crumbling; the era of the "extruder and algorithm" has arrived.

# The Layered Revolution

## Roorkee's CBRI is "Printing" the Future of Indian Housing

For decades, the sound of Indian home construction has been a predictable symphony: the rhythmic clinking of trowels against clay bricks, the grinding of manual cement mixers,

and the slow, sun-drenched curing of concrete slabs over weeks of grueling labor. But if you walk through the hallowed grounds of the Central Building Research Institute

(CBRI) in Roorkee today, the soundtrack of progress has changed. It is now a futuristic hum—the precise, whirring dance of a robotic gantry extruding a specialized grey

slurry, layer by agonizingly perfect layer. This isn't just a new tool; it's a fundamental departure from how humanity has built shelter since the dawn of the kiln. 3D Concrete

Printing (3DCP), spearheaded by CBRI, is transforming the "dream home" from a multi-year financial and emotional marathon into a sprint that can be measured in hours.

### The Alchemy of the Extruder: How It Works

At its core, 3D concrete printing is an additive manufacturing process. Think of your standard office inkjet printer, but instead of moving a tiny cartridge over a flat piece of paper, imagine a massive, computer-controlled robotic arm or a gantry system moving through three-dimensional space. Instead of ink, it deposits a proprietary "printable" concrete mix.

The CBRI's breakthrough lies in the rheology of the mix. In traditional construction, concrete is poured into wooden or steel molds (formwork) and left to harden. In 3DCP, there is no formwork. The concrete must be fluid enough to be pumped through a nozzle but "thixotropic" enough to hold its shape and support the weight of the next layer immediately after being deposited.

The CBRI team has developed a specialized cementitious blend that includes fly ash, micro-silica, and specific chemical admixtures. This mix ensures that the "open time" (how long it stays workable) and the "setting time" (how fast it hardens) are perfectly synchronized with the speed of the robotic arm.

### Salient Features of the CBRI Technology

What sets the Roorkee-developed technology apart from global competitors is its adaptation to the Indian context. CBRI has focused on making the technology rugged, cost-effective, and compatible with local materials. Gantry-Based Precision: The system typically uses a large-scale gantry that spans the entire footprint of the house. This allows for absolute geometric accuracy, reducing human error to near zero. Digital Twin Integration: Every house is first built in a virtual environment using Building Information Modeling (BIM). The software translates the architectural 3D model into "G-code"—the language the robot speaks. Topology Optimization: Unlike traditional straight walls, 3DCP allows for hollow-core walls with internal "zig-zag" reinforcement patterns. This reduces material usage by up to 30% while maintaining, or even exceeding, structural strength. No-Waste Workflow: In traditional construction, nearly 10-15% of materials end up as site waste. In 3D printing, the machine extrudes exactly what is needed—down to the last gram of concrete.

### Architectural Avant-Garde: House Designs and Aesthetics

The most striking aspect of 3D concrete printing is the death of the "right angle." For centuries, we built square houses because it was easier to align bricks and wooden planks that way. The robot, however, doesn't care if a line is straight or curved.

**The Curvilinear Cottage**

CBRI has demonstrated designs where walls curve organically like a nautilus shell. These aren't just for "offbeat" aesthetics; curved walls are structurally superior at handling wind loads and seismic tremors. These designs often feature integrated furniture—benches, shelves, and niches are printed as part of the wall itself, rather than added later.

**The Thermal-Efficient Modular Home**

One of the most practical designs involves "cavity walls." The printer creates two thin skins of concrete with a hollow space or a printed lattice in between. This air gap acts as a natural thermal insulator, keeping the interior significantly cooler in the scorching Indian summer without the need for expensive glass wool or foam insulation.

### The "Zero-Joint" Monolith

In traditional construction, the "joints" (where the wall meets the floor or where bricks meet mortar) are the weakest points and the primary sites for water seepage. A 3D-printed house is effectively a single, monolithic piece of stone. This makes the structures incredibly resilient against the heavy monsoon rains typical of the sub-continent.

**The Advantage Matrix:** Why Roorkee's Tech is a Game-Changer

The advantages of CBRI's 3D concrete printing can be categorized into the "Three S's": Speed, Savings, and Sustainability.

**1. Unprecedented Speed**

A standard 1BHK (one-bedroom) house of about 500 square feet, which would normally take 4 to 6 months to reach the finishing stage, can have its structural walls printed in less than 48 hours. When you remove the time taken for formwork assembly and curing intervals between floors, the "time to inhabit" drops by nearly 70%.

### 2. Radical Cost-Effectiveness

While the initial investment in the robotic hardware is high, the "per-unit" cost drops significantly in large-scale housing projects.

**Labor Savings:** The process requires only 2-3 skilled technicians to monitor the machine, as opposed to a crew of 20-30 laborers.

**Material Efficiency:** By using optimized infill patterns, the volume of concrete required is drastically reduced. Formwork Elimination: Formwork (shuttering) usually accounts for 10-15% of total construction costs. 3DCP eliminates this entirely.

**3. Sustainability and the Circular Economy**

The construction industry is one of the largest carbon emitters globally. CBRI's technology mitigates this by:

- Incorporating industrial waste like slag and fly ash into the concrete mix.
- Reducing the carbon footprint associated with transporting heavy bricks and timber formwork. Designing for a longer lifecycle due to the monolithic nature of the structures.



# Cool Roof Revolution

## How Hyderabad is Beating the Heat with SRI Tiles

In the blistering heat of a Deccan summer, the city of Hyderabad often feels less like a metropolitan hub and more like a vast, paved oven. As the mercury climbs toward 45°C, the "Urban Heat Island" effect turns our terraces, pavements, and parking lots into thermal batteries that soak up solar radiation all day and bleed it back into our bedrooms all night. For decades, the solution was simple, expensive, and environmentally taxing: crank up the air conditioning. But a quiet, white revolution is taking place beneath our feet. High Solar Reflectance Index (SRI) Precast Concrete Tiles are moving from the niche world of green building certifications into the mainstream of Hyderabad housing. These aren't just tiles; they are precision-engineered thermal shields that promise to slash indoor temperatures, reduce electricity bills, and make our "City of Pearls" a whole lot cooler.

### The Investment

Standard terrace tiling might cost you ₹40 to ₹60 per square foot. High-SRI precast concrete tiles generally range from ₹80 to ₹120 per square foot, including installation.

**The ROI (Return on Investment)**

**Electricity Savings:** Studies in tropical climates show that high-SRI roofs can reduce air conditioning energy consumption by 15% to 25%. For a 1,500 sq. ft. top-floor flat, this could mean a saving of ₹1,500 to ₹3,000 per month during the six months of summer.

**HVAC Sizing:** If you install SRI tiles during the construction phase, you can often opt for a lower-tonnage AC unit, saving thousands in initial appliance costs.

**Longevity:** Cool roof paints are cheaper (₹15-20 per sq. ft.) but peel and fade. Over a 10-year period, the tile is significantly more cost-effective as it requires zero re-application.

**Availability in Hyderabad: Where to Buy?**

The good news for Hyderabad homebuyers is that the city has become a manufacturing hub for precast concrete products.

**Manufacturing Hubs:** Areas like Pashamylaram, Jeedimetla, and Patancheru house several industrial precast units that specialize in high-SRI products.

**Key Brands:** Look for companies like UltraTech (Weather Pro series), NCL Industries, and local specialized players like KJS Concrete or Sri Ram Precast. Retail Corridors: For those looking to browse, the Kukatpally-Miyapur

stretch and the Uppal hardware market are the primary retail destinations where you can find samples of these tiles.

**The "Green" Mandate: TS-bPASS and IGBC**

Hyderabad is the headquarters of the Indian Green Building Council (IGBC). Almost every new high-rise in the Financial District aims for a "Gold" or "Platinum" rating. One of the easiest ways for a developer to earn "Heat Island Reduction" points is to use SRI tiles with a value of >7. Furthermore, the Telangana government's Cool Roof Policy (the first of its kind in India) aims to make cool roofing mandatory for all commercial and government buildings above a certain size. This policy is expected to drive down the prices of high-SRI tiles as demand scales up.

**Final Verdict**

High Solar Reflectance Index precast concrete tiles are the silent sentinels of sustainable housing. For a city like Hyderabad, they are no longer a luxury—they are a necessity. While the upfront cost is slightly higher than a traditional red-brick or grey-cement finish, the thermal comfort, the relief of lower EB bills, and the contribution to a cooler city make it one of the smartest investments a homeowner can make in 2026. As we look toward an increasingly warming world, the solution isn't just more machines to cool us down—it's smarter materials to prevent us from heating up in the first place. Next time you plan your dream home in the City of Nizam, remember: the coolest part of your house should be the roof.

### Decoding the Magic: What exactly is SRI?

To understand why these tiles are a game-changer, we have to look at the physics of a rooftop. Most traditional roofing materials—like dark bitumen, grey concrete, or red clay tiles—have low reflectance. They absorb the sun's energy, heat up, and conduct that heat into the structure. The Solar Reflectance Index (SRI) is a composite value that measures a surface's ability to stay cool in the sun. It combines two critical factors:

**Solar Reflectance:** The fraction of solar energy reflected by the surface (the "mirror" effect).

**Thermal Emittance:** The ability of the surface to shed absorbed heat (the "cooling" effect).

An SRI value ranges from 0 (standard black surface) to 100 (standard white surface). High-performance precast concrete tiles often achieve SRI values of 90 to 105. To put that in perspective, while a standard terrace slab might reach 65°C on a May afternoon in Gachibowli, a high-SRI tile remains at nearly ambient air temperature, often 15°C to 20°C cooler than the bare roof.

### Anatomy of a High-SRI Precast Tile

These aren't your average "white-washed" tiles. High-SRI precast concrete tiles are manufactured under factory-controlled conditions involving:

- White Portland Cement:** Unlike traditional grey cement, white cement provides the base for high reflectivity.
- Specialized Aggregates:** Calcined clay or high-purity silica are often used to ensure the tile doesn't just look white but reflects a broad spectrum of solar radiation.
- In-situ Nano-Coatings:** Many modern tiles are integrated with titanium dioxide (TiO<sub>2</sub>) or other cooling pigments that are resistant to UV degradation and "yellowing" over time.
- High-Pressure Compaction:** Being "precast" means these tiles are subjected to immense hydraulic pressure, making them denser and less porous than site-poured concrete. This prevents water absorption and algae growth, which are the twin enemies of reflectance.

### The Feature Set: More Than Just a Pretty Face

**Why should a homeowner in Jubilee Hills or a developer in TELLAPUR choose these over traditional weathered tiles?**

- 1. Extreme Thermal Insulation**  
The primary feature is, of course, the temperature drop. By reflecting nearly 80-90% of incident sunlight, these tiles prevent the "heat soak" phenomenon. The ceiling of the top-floor apartment remains cool to the touch, eliminating the "oven effect" that usually plagues penthouses.
- 2. Durability and Load Bearing**  
Being precast concrete, these tiles are incredibly robust. They can handle significant

foot traffic, the weight of water tanks, and the installation of solar panel racks without cracking. Unlike "cool roof paints" which need to be reapplied every 2-3 years, a high-SRI tile is a permanent structural solution.

**3. Albedo and Urban Cooling**

On a macro level, if an entire gated community in Hyderabad adopts high-SRI tiles, the local ambient temperature (the albedo effect) actually drops. This reduces the strain on the city's power grid during peak summer hours.

**4. Low Maintenance and Self-Cleaning**

Many high-SRI tiles are designed with a smooth, hydrophobic surface. Dust and pollutants—which can lower SRI values—are easily washed away by the first rains of the monsoon, ensuring the tile stays "cool" for years.

**The Hyderabad Context: Why It's a Perfect Fit**

Hyderabad is uniquely positioned for this

technology. Our geography consists of vast rocky plains and a dry heat profile. Unlike coastal cities like Mumbai, where humidity is the main culprit, Hyderabad's discomfort is driven by direct solar radiation.

**Uses in Modern Hyderabad Architecture**

**Residential Terraces:** The most common application. It turns a hot, unusable roof into a pleasant evening sit-out.

**Parking Decks:** In many luxury villas in areas like Kokapet, SRI tiles are used in open parking areas to prevent the interiors of parked cars from reaching lethal temperatures.

**Public Pavements:** Smart City initiatives in the IT corridor are beginning to use high-SRI pavers to make walking to the Metro more bearable.

**The Economics of "Cool": Cost-Effectiveness Explored**

One of the biggest hurdles to adoption is the "initial cost" myth. Let's break down the math.





## Shubman Gill hits 86 as GT keep KKR winless with five-wicket victory

AHMEDABAD

Skipper Shubman Gill continued his knack of making a truckload of runs at Narendra Modi Stadium – this time by smashing a serene 86 to guide Gujarat Titans (GT) to a comfortable five-wicket victory over a struggling Kolkata Knight Riders (KKR) in Ahmedabad on Friday.

While Gill's 50-ball masterclass, laced with eight fours and four sixes coming at a strike-rate of 172, ensured GT's dominance for the majority of the chase, it also condemned KKR to their sixth consecutive defeat in this season, leaving them rooted to the bottom of the table.

Though KKR fought hard and took the game deep, Rahul Tewatia and Shahrukh Khan kept their head calm to complete the chase after a few nervy moments with two balls to spare and make it a hat-trick of victories for GT. KKR would be left ruing the lack of support from their batting group to Cameron Green, who finally came good by hitting a superb 79 off 55 balls.

Chasing 181, Gill was in sublime touch from the outset, unleashing a trademark exhibition of high-elbow drives, short-arm jabs, and delectable flicks. He found an able ally in



B Sai Sudharsan (22), who smacked Anukul Roy for two majestic sixes, as GT raced to 50 in just 4.2 overs.

Though Sunil Narine broke the 71-run opening stand by dismissing Sudharsan, who top-edged to short fine leg, Jos Buttler joined in to keep the momentum going with a brisk 25 off 15 balls, before holing out to the deep on a googly from Varun Chakaravathy, who got his first wicket of IPL 2026.

Despite Washington Sundar fall-

ing to Chakaravathy, Gill reached his half-century off 27 deliveries and continued to hit a flurry of boundaries. He looked destined for making a hundred before a moment of brilliance by Cameron Green at deep backward point ended his stay. Gill's dismissal triggered a slight wobble as KKR's bowlers took the game into the final over.

With five runs needed off the final over, Ramandeep Singh removed Glenn Phillips (19) on the first ball to

spark a glimmer of hope for KKR. But Tewatia and impact sub Shahrukh remained calm to seal the win for GT.

### Brief scores

Kolkata Knight Riders 180 all out in 20 overs (Cameron Green 79, Rovman Powell 27; Kagiso Rabada 3-29, Mohammed Siraj 2-23) lost to Gujarat Titans 181/5 in 19.4 overs (Shubman Gill 86, Jos Buttler 25; Varun Chakaravathy 2-34, Ramandeep Singh 1-5) by five wickets



## IPL 2026: The plan for Cummins is to play for SRH on April 25 against RR: Vettori

HYDERABAD

Sunrisers Hyderabad skipper Pat Cummins will rejoin the squad on Friday evening, on the eve of their clash against Chennai Super Kings, but is expected to return to action only on April 25 against Rajasthan Royals in Jaipur, said head coach Daniel Vettori.

Cummins, who has been recovering from a lumbar stress injury, had linked up with SRH on March 27, a day before their opening game against Royal Challengers Bengaluru, and travelled with the squad for the next fixture against Kolkata Knight Riders before flying home for a fitness test.

After passing the fitness test in Australia, Cummins is now on his way back to rejoining SRH. "He's flying today, so he will be with us, I think, this evening. The plan is for the 25th (of April)," said Vettori in the pre-match press conference on Friday.

In his absence, SRH experimented with their pace attack and found success in debutant fast bowlers Praful Hinge and Sakib Hussain, both of whom claimed four-wicket hauls against RR at the Rajiv Gandhi International Stadium earlier this week. Vettori called those

performances encouraging, but added that adjustments could still be made based on how conditions play out in various matches. "Obviously, we're very, very satisfied with the way that bowling group bowled, but we're going to have to check conditions again."

"We're playing on the same wicket as the last game, and obviously, Hyderabad's been exceptionally hot, so anticipating the wicket may be slightly different from the last one, and that may mean that we have to make some changes. But they'll be tactical changes, obviously, because the bowling group was so effective last game."

"9 for 5, that's what impressed me the most. Look, I think particularly against (Vaibhav Sooryavanshi and (Yashasvi) Jaiswal, who have been so incredibly successful since they've become an opening partnership, to, I suppose, have no fear going into that bowling spell."

"Two guys who I don't think ever bowled to either of them before, maybe a little bit in domestic cricket, but just still to have the confidence to go on and stick to their plans (that was impressive) and we know that that doesn't always work, but when it does work it's incredibly satisfying," he said.

### FOOTBALL

## 2025-26 edition of I-League 3 to begin on April 27

**NEW DELHI:** The 2025-26 season of the I-League 3, the fourth tier of the Indian men's football league system, will commence on April 27, with four groups being hosted in four different venues, where the clubs will play each other in a single round-robin format. Group A and Group B matches will be played in Imphal at the Khuman Lampak Stadium and the SAI Turf Ground, respectively, while Group C fixtures will take place at the Mulna Football Stadium in Balaghat, and Group D at the Padukone-Dravid Centre for Sports Excellence in Bengaluru.

## It's just a question of one of the batters coming good

BENGALURU

Delhi Capitals head coach Hemang Badani dismissed concerns over batting consistency ahead of their IPL 2026 clash against defending champions Royal Challengers Bengaluru, insisting the team has posted competitive totals and only needs one batter to step up at the right time.

DC are looking to break their two-game losing streak when they take on RCB at the M. Chinnaswamy Stadium

on Saturday afternoon. "I would politely disagree. We have scored 190 and 200. We lost a game by 1 run, a close game. In the last game as well, we scored around 180-190. It is a question of one of our batters coming good at that point in time. I think we will be okay," said Badani in the pre-match press conference.

On preparations for the contest, considering DC had a longish break, Badani said, "Our job is to get ready and come. As far as RCB is con-

cerned, their batting is very good, and their bowling is also very good. But our focus is on how we prepare for tomorrow."

Badani acknowledged the chatter around momentum but stressed that DC has worked on specific areas. "The way I see it, yes, there is a lot of conversation about momentum in tournaments like this. A lot of the coaching staff and even the broadcasters speak about momentum."

"But I think it is more about finding out what the

area of concern is for a certain side. We have kind of figured out, or at least we think we have addressed that issue. You will get to know tomorrow or the day after what happens. I cannot speak any further on that. It is a question of looking after that area of concern, and we have tried to address that issue," he said.

He also praised fast bowling all-rounder Auqib Nabi's temperament and consistency after he made his IPL debut against CSK. "If I can

add more than one, there are two things that I think have been reasons for us to go hard for him. One is his temperament.

"I have seen him be consistent with whatever has happened with him, be it good or bad - he has stayed the same and maintained equilibrium. We have seen many times when cricketers have ups and downs, and they behave very differently. But in this case, he has just been the same way throughout the season."

## Russia defeat India U17 women in third and final friendly

NEW DELHI

The India U17 women's team, preparing for the AFC U17 Women's Asian Cup in China, concluded its tour of Russia with a 0-3 defeat in the third and final friendly at the Matsesta Football Centre in Sochi on Friday.

After a goalless first half, Russia took the lead in the 46th minute through Valeria Menyailova, before Polina Frolova doubled the advantage in the 80th. Substitute Anna Bykhanova added the third in stoppage time (90+2) to seal the result. India were reduced to 10 players in the 82nd minute of the match when Julian Nongmaithem was shown a second yellow and sent off.

The Young Tigresses, coached by Italian Pamela Conti, used the three-match series as part of their preparations for next month's AFC U17 Women's Asian Cup China 2026. India had earlier lost 0-4 in the opening match and 0-3 in the second friendly, making it a challenging but valuable learning experience against a physically stronger and more experienced Russian side. Early on, a moment of indecision saw goalkeeper



Munni rush out of her box to clear a loose ball but fail to connect properly, presenting Mira Kuznetsova with an open goal. However, the Russian forward's attempted lob went off target, sparing India an early setback.

Beyond that scare, India's defence showed marked improvement. The backline remained more organised and disciplined, closing down spaces effectively and preventing the Russian forwards from operating freely. The Indian players also did well to contain the hosts on the wings, restricting their ability to stretch play across the pitch. As a result, Russia were often forced to attempt long-range efforts

to test Munni rather than carving out clear-cut chances.

India also showed better intent in attack. Their pressing was more coordinated, and they managed to build promising moves from midfield. However, the final third continued to be an area of concern, with attackers unable to position themselves effectively or failing to capitalise on openings, as several attempts went wide or lacked precision.

The first half ended goalless, with both sides heading into the break on level terms. However, Russia came out with renewed purpose after the restart and struck immediately.

In the very first minute of

the second half, Dana Dobrovitskaya seized control of a loose ball in midfield and threaded a precise pass through the Indian defence. Menyailova timed her run well and calmly slotted past Munni to give the hosts the lead.

Russia nearly doubled their advantage in the 50th minute when Dobrovitskaya weaved past defenders and unleashed a shot, but Munni gathered it safely. India responded with their best phase of the match. In the 63rd minute, a long throw from Divyani Linda led to a half-cleared ball falling to Julian Nongmaithem, whose powerful left-footed strike was parried away by the Russian goalkeeper. Julian came close again in the 70th minute, meeting a cross from substitute Anushka Kumari, but her effort was once again denied.

These chances injected confidence into the Indian side, but Russia regained control at a crucial moment. In the 80th minute, Menyailova combined neatly with substitute Daria Sorokina on the left before delivering a low cross into the box. Polina Frolova made a well-timed run and finished with a composed right-footed strike to make it 2-0.

## APRC Round 2: Gaurav Gill sets early pace in South India Rally 2026

CHENNAI

Returning to rallying after a year's break, India's top driver Gaurav Gill showed no sign of any rust as he put in a dominating performance to top the timesheets in the 49th South India Rally, which commenced at the Madras International Circuit here on Friday.

The three-day event is also the second round of the FIA Asia-Pacific Rally Championship powered by Vamcy Mera and Round 1 of the FMSCI Indian National Rally Championship. The 44-year-old Delhi-based Gill, a three-time



APRC champion and winner of seven National titles, clocked a combined time of two minutes, 51.5 seconds for the two loops

of 1.45 Kms dirt Super Special Stage, piloting a Volkswagen Polo to finish 5.1 seconds ahead of his arch rival Karna Kadur

in the APRC segment with Mangaluru's Jason Saldanha in third place. Arjuna Award winner Gill also led the INRC with a 4.1-second advantage over local challenger Ritesh Rai, who is taking part for "some fun", while Kadur is in third position.

Gill, with the experienced Srikanth Gowda (Chikkamagaluru) as his co-driver for the first time, gave a near-flawless exhibition of pace, precision, and car control and looked to be in good shape going into tomorrow's Special Stages. "It was a good start, and I'm very happy to get back to rallying, which is what I love."

## My strength lies in hitting hard length consistently, says RCB's Hazlewood

BENGALURU

Royal Challengers Bengaluru (RCB) fast bowler Josh Hazlewood said the key to his success in the shortest format comes from sticking to his strengths, as the defending champions prepare to face Delhi Capitals in their Indian Premier League (IPL) 2026 fixture at the M. Chinnaswamy Stadium on Saturday afternoon.

RCB, currently on eight points, will look to further



consolidate their position on the points table, and a win over DC would get them to reclaim top spot in the points table. "My strength is hitting that hard length consistently

and making it difficult for batters to score. In T20 cricket, it's about executing that under pressure and adapting when needed. "With the way T20 cricket is going, the expectations on batters are very high. If you can build a few quiet deliveries, the pressure can shift quickly and create opportunities," Hazlewood said in the pre-game press conference, ahead of the clash where RCB will also don their iconic green jerseys as part of the franchise's 'Green Initiative'.

## Copa del Rey 2025-26: Atletico, Real Sociedad ready for 1987 repeat in final

MADRID

Former finalists Atletico Madrid and Real Sociedad meet in the Copa del Rey final on Saturday, with the trophy becoming the second major title to be decided in Spain this season after the Super Cup.

Real Sociedad won the 2020 Copa del Rey final 1-0 against Athletic Bilbao. This will be the first Cup final attended by their supporters since 1987, when they beat Atletico Madrid on penalties after the match ended 2-2 following extra time, reports Xinhua.

Atletico's last Copa del Rey triumph came in 2013, when they beat arch-rivals Real Madrid 2-1 at the Santiago Bernabeu. Atletico reached the final after a thrilling 4-3 aggregate win over FC Barcelona, while Real Sociedad knocked out local rival Athletic Bilbao with 1-0 wins in both legs.

A win for Real Sociedad would secure a place in next season's Europa League. While Atletico are close to assuring that through their position in La Liga, victory on Saturday would also keep alive their hopes of a domestic and European Cup double. It will also be a crucial match for Antoine Griezmann.

## ISL 2025-26: Farukh's early strike gives Chennaiyin second win of season

CHENNAI

An early strike from Farukh Choudhary proved decisive as Chennaiyin FC secured a hard-fought 1-0 victory over Sporting Club Delhi in their Indian Super League (ISL) 2025-26 encounter at the Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium in Chennai on Friday.

The result helped the Marina Machans move to tenth place in the table with eight points from eight matches, while SC Delhi remained in ninth place with the same number of points. Farukh Choudhary was adjudged the Player of the Match for his match-winning finish.

Chennaiyin FC head coach Clifford Miranda made three changes to his starting line-up following their

previous match against East Bengal FC, with Ankit Mukherjee, Mohammed Ali Bemammer, and Daniel Chima Chukwu replacing Elson Jose Dias Junior, Laldinliana R, and Vivek S. The hosts set up with clear attacking intent, deploying Chima Chukwu and Farukh Choudhary up front, orchestrated by Alberto Noguera in midfield.

SC Delhi head coach Tomasz Pawel Tchorz made one alteration from their outing against NorthEast United FC, introducing Matija Babovic for Julio Rivas to lead the attack. The visitors fielded a structured line-up featuring Alex Saji anchoring the defence to absorb the anticipated early pressure.

The hosts began on the front foot,



applying immediate pressure and forcing goalkeeper Nora Fernandez into two crucial saves within the opening seven minutes. Their bright start was rewarded in the

11th minute when Noguera delivered a precise first-time through ball to Farukh. The forward unleashed a stunning left-footed strike that sailed into the top right corner, leav-

ing Fernandez as a mere spectator.

Throughout the first half, SC Delhi struggled to break down a well-organised Chennaiyin defence. The visitors survived a major scare in the 42nd minute when Chima Chukwu looked certain to score from close range, only to be denied by an outstanding goal-saving block from Saji, ensuring the score remained 1-0 at the interval.

SC Delhi emerged after the restart with renewed purpose. In the 51st minute, an unmarked Saji connected with a cross inside the box, but he directed his header straight at goalkeeper Mohammad Nawaz, who gathered the ball on his second attempt. At the other end, Saji continued his defensive masterclass,

executing a perfectly timed sliding tackle in the 55th minute to prevent Farukh from doubling the hosts' advantage in a one-on-one situation.

To alter the game's momentum around the hour mark, both benches turned to their substitutes; Chennaiyin FC introduced Dinpuia and Imran for Ankit and Farukh, while SC Delhi brought on Sourav to replace Babovic. As the clock ticked down, the visitors intensified their search for an equaliser.

SC Delhi carved out a promising opening in the 80th minute when Fane made a darting run into the penalty area. However, the Frenchman opted to cut the ball back rather than shoot, allowing the Chennaiyin defence to clear the danger.

# Can Nani Reach the 500 Crore Club with The Paradise?

Nani is slowly becoming one of the most reliable stars in Telugu cinema. With every movie, he is increasing his market and trying new styles. Now all eyes are on his upcoming film *The Paradise*, directed by Srikanth Odela. According to industry talk, this film is being made with a huge budget of around ₹200 crore.

When a film is made with such a big budget, the expectations are also very high. The makers will be aiming for at least ₹500 crore at the box office. But reaching that number is not easy. Today it is not enough for a film to perform well only in South India. To collect ₹500 crore, it must also become a big success in North India.

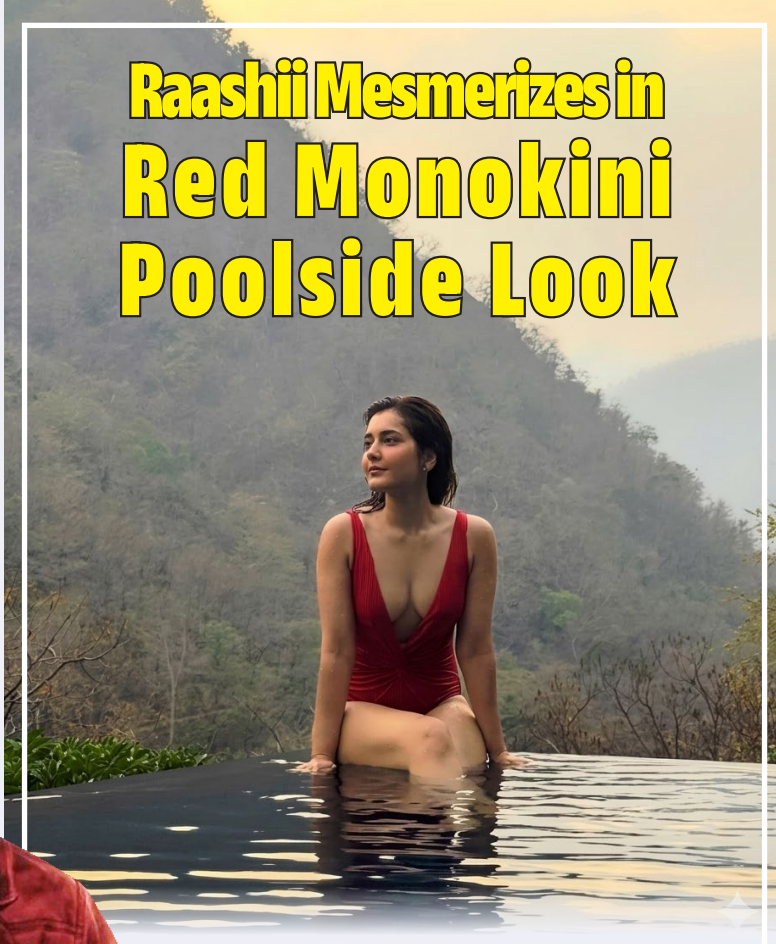
Recently, the song *Aya Share* from the film has created good buzz in Telugu states. It is even being played during IPL matches, which is helping the film gain local attention. However, Nani still has a different image in the Hindi market. Many people in North India see him more as a class actor rather than a mass hero. Even though his film *Dasara* showed a rough and mass side, it did not reach the level of films like *Pushpa* or *KGF* in the Hindi belt.

To enter the ₹500 crore club, Nani needs to strongly connect with the North audience. The film *The Paradise* is said to have a raw and intense story, which could appeal to a wider audience. But content alone is not enough. Strong promotions are very important. The team must actively promote the film in cities like Mumbai and Delhi. Nani himself may need to attend events, give interviews, and interact with Hindi media to create hype.

In the past, some films like *HIT 3* performed well mainly in the South but did not make a big impact nationwide. The makers of *The Paradise* should avoid repeating that mistake. One big advantage for the film is its music by An-



## Raashii Mesmerizes in Red Monokini Poolside Look



Raashii Khanna, the versatile Indian actress, recently shared a captivating photograph that has fans in awe. Sitting gracefully in a pool with misty hills in the background, she looked radiant in a deep red plunging monokini. With wet hair, a poised expression, and natural elegance, the image perfectly captures her serene yet alluring vibe. Born on November 30, 1990, in New Delhi, Raashii Khanna began her career as a model before stepping into films. She made her acting debut in a supporting role in the 2013 Hindi political thriller *Madras Cafe* opposite John Abraham. Her breakthrough came with her Telugu debut in *Oohalu Gusagusalade* (2014), where she played the lead and won the SIIMA Award for Best Female Debut - Telugu. She has since carved a strong pan-Indian presence with hits like *Jil* (2015), *Supreme* (2016), *Tholi Prema* (2018), *Venky Mama* (2019), *Sardar* (2022), *Thiruchitrabalam* (2022), *Armanai 4* (2024), *Yodha* (2024), and *120 Bahadur* (2025) opposite Farhan Akhtar.

## Lynette Howell Taylor, Sara Murphy and Nastasya Popov to Discuss Power at Archer Film Festival



The milestone 15th annual Archer Film Festival will feature a trio of entertainment industry insiders (including one of its founding members). Academy of Motion Picture Arts & Sciences president Lynette Howell Taylor, Oscar-winning *One Battle After Another* producer Sara Murphy and filmmaker Nastasya Popov are booked to share the stage set inside in Pacific Design Center's Silver Screen Theater in West Hollywood on April 17. Their panel discussion, "Women Behind the Camera: Shifting Power in Film," is meant to examine "how power is evolving in the entertainment industry" with commentary on how they "are actively reshaping the stories we tell and the systems that bring them to life."

The Archer Film Fest is an entirely student-led and organized effort that seeks to empower female filmmakers and amplify underrepresented voices. In addition to the Q&A, the fest will screen a selection of finalist films. More than 300 student-produced film submissions were received from more than 50 countries. Event sponsors include Boardwalk Pictures, Warner Bros. Television, Mark Gordon Pictures, The Kennedy/Marshall Company, Paramount, Campfire Studios, Apache Digital, and Jack Tar Pictures. Taylor serves as the Academy president and continues to work as an active producer with credits including *The Accountant 2*, *Roofman*, *A Star Is Born*, *The Accountant*, *Big Eyes*, *The Place Beyond the Pines*, *Half Nelson*, *Blue Valentine* and *I Know This Much Is True*.

Murphy recently won a best picture Oscar for producing Paul Thomas Anderson's *One Battle After Another*. Her other credits include *Licorice Pizza*, *Never Rarely Sometimes Always*, *Anima*, *If Beale Street Could Talk*, *If I Had Legs I'd Kick You* and *The History of Sound*.

Popov is a director and writer whose breakout feature, *Idiotka*, was acquired by Utopia following its world premiere at SXSW 2025. An alum of the Archer School for Girls, Popov was a founding member of the Archer Film Festival.

# Suriya To Enter Superhero Era with Karuppu?

Suriya worked on an exciting project titled *Karuppu*, directed by RJ Balaji. The film was supposed to hit the screens by now but faced a postponement. However, the film is aiming for a release on May 14th and there have been significant narratives doing rounds about the film's concept.

The interesting buzz is that Balaji has now indicated that Suriya will portray a superhero tasked with confronting the challenges of a troubled world in the film.

In the initial days of production and during the earlier promotional events, the team indicated that the film would be heavy on devotional elements and would touch the softer side of devotion, which Suriya had not done before. Since Balaji also worked under the same genre, everyone thought that he would deliver it well for Suriya. But the latest revelation is creating a new wave of excitement among the fans. "When the world is going through an extremely difficult phase, what if a superhero arrives to put an end to that suffering? We have portrayed that in a massy and action-packed way, how he rises, overcomes hardships, defeats evil, and restores goodness," Balaji shared in an interview. Although the setup gives a routine superhero trope, when Suriya steps in, we can expect some freshness or uniqueness to the plot. Suriya's performance is reportedly going to be a major highlight of the film.

*Karuppu* features a strong supporting cast, including Trisha Krishnan as the co-lead, alongside actors Indrans, Natty Subramaniam, Swasika, Sshivada, Anagha Maaya Ravi, Supreeth Reddy, and Yogi Babu in pivotal roles.



## RGV Takes A U-turn On Dhurandhar!

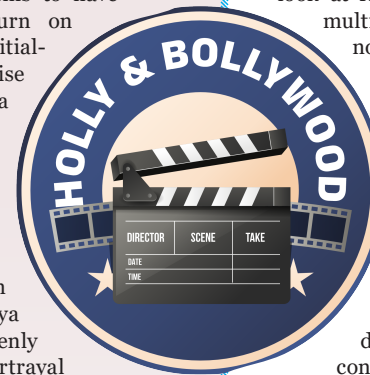
Ram Gopal Varma seems to have taken a surprising U-turn on *Dhurandhar 2*. After initially showering massive praise on the film and calling it a game-changer in Indian cinema, RGV has now expressed his reservations about a key aspect of the film.

While he continues to admire the craft and scale of the film directed by Aditya Dhar, RGV has openly criticized the portrayal of underworld don Dawood Ibrahim. He stated that the depiction shown in the film does not align with what he knows about the real-life figure.

According to RGV, while filmmakers may have their own sources, the version presented on screen feels inaccurate to him. He even went on to suggest that Dawood may have stepped away from active criminal operations nearly two decades ago, making the film's narrative questionable.

Interestingly, despite this criticism, RGV maintained that such subjects are hard to verify, as no one can definitively prove or disprove these portrayals. This makes cinematic interpretations more subjective than factual.

This shift in stance has caught the attention of many, especially since RGV was one of the loudest voices supporting the film earlier. His mixed response now adds another layer to the ongoing discussions around *Dhurandhar 2*, which continues to dominate both the box office and public debate.



## 'Avengers: Doomsday' Trailer Shakes CinemaCon as Robert Downey Jr. Unveils Doom First-Look



Marvel Studios made a major splash at CinemaCon on Thursday by unveiling an extended first look at *Avengers: Doomsday*, a multiverse-driven epic that notably brings Robert Downey Jr. back to the Marvel Cinematic Universe—this time in a completely new role. The presentation, held in Las Vegas as part of Disney's showcase, was led by Marvel chief Kevin Feige, who described the film as a continuation of the story left behind after *Avengers: Endgame*. He also highlighted the long-awaited integration of the Avengers and the X-Men.

Directors Anthony and Joe Russo return to helm the project, working from a script by Michael Waldron and Stephen McFeely. Joe Russo emphasized the depth of the film's central antagonist, Doctor Doom, calling him far more than a traditional villain and describing him as a character who is always several steps ahead.

Robert Downey Jr. made a dramatic entrance at the event, walking onstage to the Rolling Stones' "Sympathy for the Devil." Known for his iconic portrayal of Iron Man, Downey expressed excitement about reuniting with the Marvel team in a completely different role. The audience was then shown a trailer that offered

the first full glimpse of his Doctor Doom, including the character's masked appearance.

The footage teased a looming, high-stakes threat. Chris Hemsworth's Thor warns fellow heroes to set aside their differences, insisting that unity will be essential to face what's coming. The trailer closed with a surprising moment as Chris Evans appears and lifts Thor's hammer, leaving Thor stunned. Evans later joked onstage about his dislike for Doom.

This marks the first substantial footage of *Doomsday*, following earlier teasers released in late 2025 and early 2026 that focused on characters like Thor, Steve Rogers, Shuri, and members of the Fantastic Four. Those previews collectively generated massive online attention, though Downey's involvement had been largely kept under wraps.

Set for release on December 18, the film is already considered a strong contender to dominate the 2026 box office, especially given its creative ties to *Infinity War* and *Endgame*. Despite speculation about a potential delay due to competition for premium large-format screens, Disney confirmed the date remains unchanged. The studio is also introducing its own premium format branding, *Infinity: Vision Logos*, aimed at rivaling IMAX and enhancing the theatrical experience worldwide.

## Big Twist: Jacqueline Agrees to Become Approver

Bollywood babe Jacqueline Fernandez has pulled a MASALA U-TURN in the sizzling Suresh Chandrashekar money laundering blockbuster! The *Judwaa 2* dazzler told Patiala House Court she's ALL IN to become an "APPROVER" - spilling juicy secrets to ED cops for a get-out-of-jail-free card!

FLASHBACK TO THE OG PLOT: Jailbird Suresh, the conman Casanova, ran a ₹200 crore extortion extravaganza - duping

fat cats with phony favors! ED screams: Jackie pocketed luxury loot - BMW bling, designer swag - all DIRTY MONEY DISGUISED AS LOVE GIFTS! She kept crying innocence, but this stand's shifting sands! What's next in this glamour-graft thriller? Jackie insists: "Zero illegal vibes!" Will her tell-all torch Suresh's empire? Or fizzle like a flop sequel? Lights, camera, VERDICT - April 20, don't miss!