

# HYDERABAD HEADLINES

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## TITANS SURGE WITH BIG VICTORY

STADIUM 11

## KRITHI SHETTY REGAL CHARM



BOX -OFFICE 12



## A heartfelt farewell to the POLICE CHIEF!

HYDERABAD, APRIL 30:

Director General of Police B. Shivadhar Reddy retired from service on Thursday. On this occasion, the farewell ceremony held at the State Police Headquarters was conducted in a grand and emotionally warm atmosphere. Having served in various positions in the police department over a long career and leaving a distinct mark, DGP B. Shivadhar Reddy's departure moved his colleagues and staff emotionally.

At the beginning of the programme, Shivadhar Reddy handed over his responsibilities to the Director General of Police (Law and Order), Mahesh M. Bhagwat. Until C.V. Anand assumes charge as the new DGP, Mahesh Bhagwat will serve as the in-charge DGP. After the official handover process, Shivadhar Reddy moved forward greeting IPS officers and staff who had gathered to bid him farewell, shaking

hands and warmly acknowledging everyone who came to meet him.

Later, he stood on a flower-decorated vehicle and waved goodbye to everyone. In a highly respectful tradition of the police force, IPS officers pulled the vehicle using ropes while other staff showered flowers on the DGP, escorting him up to the main gate of the office. The entire premises were filled with emotion as officers from the top level to lower ranks bid farewell to their beloved leader.

TGCSEB Director Shikha Goyal, Prisons DG Soumya Mishra, Law and Order DGP Mahesh M. Bhagwat, TSL-PRB Chairman V.V. Srinivasa Rao, SPF DG Swati Lakra, Intelligence Additional DG Vijay Kumar, along with several other IPS officers participated in the event and gave him a warm farewell.

Finally, upon reaching the main gate, Shivadhar Reddy expressed his gratitude to everyone and departed in his vehicle.

## Mamata visits Bhabanipur EVM strong room, warns against counting irregularities

**Kolkata, Apr 30:** West Bengal Chief Minister and TMC supremo Mamata Banerjee early Friday warned against any attempt to tamper with the counting process, hours after she visited an EVM strong room in Bhabanipur, alleging possible malpractice. Banerjee, who emerged around 12:07 am after spending nearly four hours at the counting centre for her Bhabanipur constituency housed in Sakhawath Memorial School in south Kolkata, said only one per-

son would be allowed inside the designated counting area. "Either the candidate or one agent can stay upstairs. I have also suggested installation of a CCTV camera for the media," she told reporters. Stressing the need for transparency, she said, "It is essential to maintain transparency. People's votes must be protected. I rushed here after receiving complaints. The central forces initially did not allow me to enter."

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2 >

## Centralized procurement system to INCREASE ACCOUNTABILITY

Students should receive study materials on time

No compromise on quality of materials

Feedback should be taken from every student

Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy reviews welfare departments

HYDERABAD:

Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy has directed that all necessary materials for students should be provided on time. He said that if clothes, notebooks, and other materials are supplied on time, students will be able to fully focus on their studies. The Chief Minister held a review meeting on Thursday evening regarding centralized procurement of materials supplied to students in educational institutions under the Education Department, as well as BC, Minority, Tribal Welfare departments, and SC Development Department. He said that



earlier, each department handled its own procurement and supply, which led to a lack of uniformity and also resulted in several irregularities. To prevent such issues, a centralized procurement system has been introduced, he added.

CM Revanth Reddy stated that in the past, since each department separately handled procurement and supply of items like clothes, notebooks, trunk boxes, and other materials, there was scope for irregularities. He made it clear that

such malpractice would not be tolerated under any circumstances.

He said the centralized procurement system would improve accountability. The government's aim is to benefit students, not suppliers, he added.

The Chief Minister instructed officials that items provided to students such as notebooks, trunk boxes, plates, glasses, track suits, bed sheets, school bags, ID cards, and uniforms must be of good quality. He emphasized that equal

importance should be given to both quality and timely delivery.

He said all necessary materials for students should be delivered by June 15, and payments to suppliers would be completed only after successful delivery.

He also suggested appointing a nodal officer at the mandal level for items distributed to students. From there, steps should be taken to ensure supplies reach schools and hostels in villages.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2 >

## CEC approves the TRS party

Central Election Commission officially grants the name TRS to Kalvakuntla Kavitha



HYDERABAD, APRIL 30:

Kalvakuntla Kavitha had announced the name TRS at Advaya Convention in Medchal on the 25th of this month. The Central Election Commission has approved the name "Telangana Rakshana Sena". Officials delivered the approval letter to Kavitha at her residence in Banjara Hills.

## SHORT TAKES



### Gautama Buddha: The Eternal Voice of Peace, Balance, and Inner Awakening

Throughout human history, a few great individuals have transcended time and continue to guide humanity. Gautama Buddha is one such figure, whose teachings of compassion, non-violence, and self-awakening remain deeply relevant even today.

OPINION 06

## "A Child's Smile is True Development": Seethakka

**Hyderabad, April 30:** Emphasizing that "a child's smile is the true measure of development", Telangana Minister Danasari Anasuya Seethakka on Thursday inaugurated a series of child and maternal welfare initiatives in Kachiguda.

The Minister launched an "Adoption Helping Desk" and a "Foster Care Center" at Kachiguda Railway Station, along with a 'Breastfeeding Kiosk' at Kachiguda Bus Station. The programme was attended by Amberpet MLA Kaleru Venkatesh, Hyderabad Collector Priyanka Ala, Women & Child Welfare Secretary Anita Ramachandran, Director Shrutijha and other senior officials.

On this occasion, Seethakka said the initiatives aim to ensure "care, dignity and security" for children and mothers. She highlighted that the Adoption



Desk will provide legal guidance, counseling and transparent procedures, while warning of strict action against illegal adoptions.

On foster care, she noted it offers temporary family support for children in need, calling it a "ray of hope". The breastfeeding kiosk initiative, she said, promotes privacy and dignity for mothers in public spaces, with plans to expand across the state.

She also underlined the gov-

ernment's focus on 'children's mental health', with counseling services being provided in collaboration with the Roshni Center. The initiatives are part of the state's "99-Day Action Plan" aimed at bringing positive change in people's lives. "Every small effort we make for children can create a lasting impact. When we work together for a child's smile, that is true development," the Minister said.

## VIJAY'S POLITICAL EARTHQUAKE:

### EXIT POLLS SHAKE DRAVIDIAN FORTRESS, SIGNAL A NEW POWER CENTRE IN TAMIL NADU

BY C. SUBRAHMANYAM

Exit polls project actor-politician Vijay's Tamilaga Vettri Kazhagam surging to the front ranks, challenging the entrenched DMK-led alliance and pushing AIADMK into the margins. Youth mobilisation, personality-driven politics, and a cross-caste appeal appear to be redrawing Tamil Nadu's electoral map, potentially ending decades of bipolar dominance.

The Axis My India exit poll has dropped a political bombshell. Tamilaga Vettri Kazhagam, led by Vijay, is projected to bag between 98 and 120 seats in a 234-member Assembly. That is not a symbolic debut. That is a direct assault on the established order. The ruling Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam-led alliance is placed in the 92 to 110 range. The so-called alternative axis of All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam and Bharatiya Janata Party is reduced

to a distant third, hovering around 22-23. This is not a marginal shift. This is structural disruption.

**YOUTH TSUNAMI**  
68% FIRST-TIME VOTERS TILT TOWARDS TVK  
59% IN 20-29 BRACKET ALIGN WITH VIJAY  
NO RIVAL PARTY REGISTERS COMPARABLE TRACTION

**THE YOUTH SURGE: A VOTE THAT REFUSES TO FOLLOW OLD SCRIPT**

The data cuts sharply. Young voters have not just participated. They have dictated the direction. Nearly seven out of ten first-time voters are projected to have backed TVK. This is not incremental support. This is generational consolidation. The 20-29 and 30-39 segments echo the same pattern. Tamil Nadu's youth vote, traditionally fragmented or

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2 >



**CEMENTING DREAMS WITH SUPERIOR STRENGTH.**

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FAST SETTING CEMENT

**3 TIMES BETTER**

GERMAN TECHNOLOGY  
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TAMPER PROOF PACKING

# Samaritan School ICSE Records 100% Pass in Class 10 Exams

NEREDMET, MADHURA NAGAR:

Samaritan School ICSE has achieved a 100% pass rate in the Class 10 ICSE Board Examinations for the academic year 2025-26, marking a significant academic milestone for the institution.

School authorities attributed the success to students' dedication, consistent academic planning, and the guidance provided by teachers. The institution's emphasis on conceptual learning, continuous assessment, and individual mentoring was cited as a key factor behind the strong performance.

## Top Performers

N. Naga Srinika emerged as the school topper with 91%, followed by N. Joshua Nathan (88%), G. Varun Sai (83%), V. Sonika (82%), B. Sruthi (80%), and Poojan Bhuma (80%). Other notable scorers include P. Nishika (78%), Ana Jessica Alexander (77%), Ch. Joana Nidhi (76%), and Aashi Lama (75%). Several other students scored above 70%, reflecting overall consistency.

## Result Highlights

The school reported a 100% pass percentage, with multiple students secur-



ing distinctions and a significant number scoring above 70%.

## Felicitation Ceremony

A felicitation ceremony was organized to honor the achievers. Chairman Laxma Reddy and Vice Chairman Dr. Komatireddy Gopal Reddy attended the event and congratulated the students and staff. They emphasized the institution's long-standing commitment to

quality education and holistic development.

Principal Devi and Director Srinivasa Reddy also addressed the gathering, encouraging students to maintain their pursuit of excellence. The toppers were felicitated with shawls and bouquets.

## Commitment to Quality Education

The management stated that the

results reflect structured academic practices, strong teacher-student engagement, and active parental support. The school reaffirmed its commitment to nurturing responsible and future-ready individuals.

With this achievement, Samaritan School ICSE continues to strengthen its reputation as a center for academic excellence.

# Rare liver transplant saves 18-month-old at OH

HYDERABAD, APRIL 30

In a remarkable medical feat, doctors at Osmania General Hospital successfully performed a complex liver transplant on an 18-month-old boy suffering from Glycogen Storage Disease (GSD) type III, a rare metabolic disorder. The child, weighing just 10 kg, underwent a 14-hour-long living donor liver transplant, during which doctors implanted a 240-gram portion of liver donated by his father.

The surgery was led by Prof. Dr CH. Madhusudhan, head of the department of surgical gastroenterology, along with a multidisciplinary team. Doctors said the child is now stable and recovering well.

The boy, identified as Afan, son of MohdIrfan and Saziya from Hyderabad, had been experiencing severe health issues, including excessive hunger, abdominal distension and episodes of drowsiness, particularly in the early hours of the day.

Medical investigations revealed recurrent low blood sugar levels, high lipid content and an enlarged liver. Further evaluation confirmed Glycogen storage disease type III.

Explaining the condition, doctors said the disease is caused by the deficiency of an enzyme required to convert stored glycogen into glucose. This leads to repeated hypoglycaemic episodes, liver enlargement and muscle weakness, with potential long-term complications affecting the heart, brain and skeletal muscles.

Given the child's deteriorating condition, doctors opted for a liver transplant as a definitive treatment. The father was



identified as a suitable donor, and a portion of his liver was surgically transplanted into the child.

Hospital authorities said the highly expensive procedure, which can cost up to ₹50 lakh in private hospitals, was carried out free of cost under the Rajiv Aarogyasri scheme. Post-transplant medications will also be provided free by the government.

Doctors noted that such procedures are extremely rare in government hospitals in India, especially for conditions like GSD. They described the case as a significant milestone in public healthcare.

Commending the medical team, Health Minister Damodar Raja Narasimha said the success reflects the growing capabilities of government hospitals in delivering advanced and life-saving treatments.

# Social welfare schools script history with 99.12% success in SSC

HYDERABAD, APRIL 30

In a remarkable academic milestone, the State Social Welfare Residential Educational Institutions have scripted history by securing an outstanding 99.12% pass percentage in the 2026 SSC examinations.

Out of 17,071 students who appeared, 16,921 successfully cleared the examinations, said Social Welfare Minister Adhuri Lakshman Kumar. Addressing the media at DSS Bhavan on Thursday, the Minister asserted that these results are not merely statistical achievements but a reflection of systemic transformation, sustained monitoring, administrative resolve, and strategic reforms undertaken by the government.

The Minister credited the leadership of Chief Minister Revanth Reddy for steering the Gurukul system towards a new trajectory of excellence. He reported that 163 out of 235 institutions attained a 100% pass rate, and all Gurukuls in nine districts achieved similar results. In the first year of intermediate studies, the pass percentage stands at 77.79%, with 12 institutions recording 100% results. In the second year, the pass percentage increases to 88.22%, with 41 institutions also achiev-

ing 100% results.

Furthermore, 441 students qualified for the JEE Mains 2026, with 35 students attaining scores above 90%. Additionally, notable performances were observed in the IIT, JEE, and NEET streams, Adhuri Lakshman Kumar said. The Minister emphasised that a student-centric academic framework formed the backbone of this success.

He lauded the unwavering dedication of teachers who treated students as their own children, remaining accessible round-the-clock. "Regular training programmes, workshops, and performance-based review systems have further strengthened academic delivery. Recognising the link between health and learning outcomes, the government enhanced mess charges to provide protein-rich and nutritious diets.

This has resulted in improved attendance and reduced health issues, positively impacting academic performance," the Minister pointed out.

"Despite criticism from opposition quarters, public confidence in Gurukul institutions has strengthened significantly. The surge in admissions this academic year reflects deepening trust among parents, particularly from marginalised communities," he added.

# Discipline and Integrity Alone Bring Recognition to an Employee

Dr. G. Rameshwar Rao, Director, Engineering Staff College of India



HYDERABAD, APRIL 30

Dr. G. Rameshwar Rao, Director of the Engineering Staff College of India (ESCI), stated that the very day an employee joins service, their date of retirement is also known, and that the span of nearly three to three-and-a-half decades of service reflects the individual's discipline and integrity. He made these remarks on the occasion of the retirement of ESCI employee Sri T. Yellaiah.

Sri Yellaiah retired from service on Thursday, April 30, 2026. Speaking on the occasion, Dr. Rameshwar Rao said that the period between joining and retirement is extremely valuable. Along with professional responsibilities, one must also balance family life, children's education, their well-being, marriages, relationships, and social responsibilities. Ultimately, a life lived with values and goodness leaves behind sweet memories.

T. Yellaiah, who joined ESCI in 1991, gradually rose to the position of Assistant Manager. Over his 35-year-long career, he earned a reputation as a good and respected individual among his colleagues, making him fortunate to retire with such goodwill. Dr. Rameshwar Rao noted that Yellaiah worked in various departments including Transport, Horticulture, and Hostel Management, earning appreciation from all.

On this occasion, T.Yellaiah's close associates and colleagues participated in the event. Speaking at the gathering, Yellaiah expressed his gratitude to the authorities who promoted him from a driver to the level of Assistant Manager. He stated that he firmly believes discipline and integrity alone bring recognition to an employee.

The meeting was attended by College Chief Sri Lakshmi Kantha Rao, Dr. P. Raja Rao, and several staff members.

# KISHAN REDDY ACCUSES CONG OF BLOCKING WOMEN'S RESERVATION BILL

HYDERABAD, APRIL 30

Union Minister G. Kishan Reddy on Thursday alleged that the Congress party and its allies obstructed the implementation of the long-pending Women's Reservation Bill.

Addressing the media here, the Union minister said the Bill linked with delimitation was crucial to ensure fair representation, especially given India's population

growth from 550 million in 1971 to over 1.4 billion today. He claimed the proposed exercise could have significantly increased Lok Sabha seats and created greater opportunities for women, Dalits and tribal communities, while also addressing disparities in constituency sizes.

Kishan Reddy dismissed concerns that delimitation would harm southern states, asserting that it was designed to ensure

'balanced' representation under a "Team India" approach.

The Union Minister further alleged that the Congress has historically opposed key reforms and accused it of prioritizing political interests over public welfare. He also called on people to attend "Jan Aakrosh Sabha", to be addressed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in Hyderabad.

# BJP RAPS GOVT OVER 'RWHS FAILURE', WARNS OF DEEPENING WATER CRISIS

HYDERABAD, APRIL 30

The Telangana unit of Bharatiya Janata Party on Thursday accused the Congress-led state government of failing to enforce mandatory rainwater harvesting, despite the policy being in place since January 2025. The government should take the initiative with immediate installation of scientifically designed rainwater harvesting systems, including recharge pits, percolation tanks and storage units - across all government build-

ings, parks, roadsides and vacant lands before the onset of monsoon, the party noted. Party spokesperson P.L. Srinivas said poor implementation has worsened Hyderabad's water crisis, with drying borewells, reduced piped supply and rising dependence on private tankers.

Citing official data, he noted that barely half of the targeted households were surveyed and only about 12,000 installed recharge pits. "Despite above-normal rainfall last year, the opportunity to

recharge groundwater was lost," he said.

The BJP leader also criticised the proposed penalties on non-compliant households, calling them "coercive", and demanded a mission-mode push with awareness campaigns, subsidies and strict monitoring ahead of the monsoon. Warning of an acute water crisis, the party spokesperson urged the government to prioritise rainwater harvesting through effective execution and public participation.

CONTINUATION FROM PAGE 1

# VIJAY'S POLITICAL EARTHQUAKE

FROM PAGE 1

absorbed into Dravidian alignments, appears to have found a single focal point. This is where the ground reality diverges from conventional political arithmetic. The old caste-calibrated coalition-building looks suddenly inadequate against a unified aspirational vote.

"THIS IS NOT A DEBUT. THIS IS A DIRECT CLAIM TO POWER."

THE NARRATIVE SHIFT: FROM WELFARE TO ASPIRATION

For decades, Tamil Nadu's politics has revolved around Dravidian identity, welfare guarantees, and linguistic pride. Vijay's pitch has been starkly different. Change. Clean break. New governance grammar. Roughly 35% of voters are projected to have aligned with this narrative. That is not a fringe sentiment. That is a decisive bloc willing to step outside entrenched loyalties. The question now is not whether the message resonated. The numbers suggest it has cut through the political noise with precision.

THE CHARISMA FACTOR: PERSONALITY OVER PARTY

There is no escaping the centrality of Vijay himself. His appeal appears to have transcended organisational limitations. A significant section of voters is believed to have voted not for the party structure, but for the individual. This aligns with a broader national pattern where personality-driven politics is increasingly overshadowing ideological frameworks. Tamil Nadu, long

resistant to such shifts, now shows signs of yielding.

CM FACE BATTLE  
VIJAY: 37% PREFERENCE  
M. K. STALIN: 35%  
A debutant edges past an incumbent

CUTTING ACROSS CASTE AND CLASS: A NEW SOCIAL COALITION

Unlike the traditional Dravidian model that stitches alliances through caste arithmetic, TVK appears to have bypassed that route. Its appeal cuts across OBCs, Scheduled Castes, minorities, and urban middle classes. This is not accidental. It signals a deliberate repositioning, an attempt to replace segmented mobilisation with a broader, identity-neutral pitch. If sustained, this could fundamentally alter how electoral coalitions are constructed in the state.

FROM M. G. RAMACHANDRAN TO VIJAY: CINEMA AND POWER, A FAMILIAR ARC WITH A NEW TWIST

Tamil Nadu has seen this script before. MGR transformed cinematic popularity into political dominance, ruling the state for a decade. Actors like Rajinikanth and Kamal Haasan entered politics with enormous expectations but limited electoral conversion. What sets Vijay apart, if these projections hold, is scale. Not symbolic entry. Not fragmented presence. A near-parallel standing with the ruling establishment right at the outset. This is not

nostalgia repeating itself. This is a recalibrated version of the same phenomenon, operating in a far more competitive political marketplace.

THE BIG POLITICAL MESSAGE: END OF A BIPOLAR ERA?

Tamil Nadu's politics has been a two-horse race for decades. DMK versus AIADMK. Every election, every narrative, every alliance has revolved around this axis. This exit poll cracks that axis wide open. AIADMK's projected decline is not just electoral. It is existential. DMK, despite holding ground, now faces a challenger that is not peripheral but central. If the numbers translate into actual results, Tamil Nadu will no longer be defined by bipolar politics. It will enter a multi-polar contest with TVK as a primary force.

VERDICT DAY WILL DECIDE IF THIS WAVE TURNS INTO A POLITICAL RESET

Exit polls are not verdicts. Tamil Nadu has a reputation for overturning predictions. But even as projections, these numbers carry weight. They indicate a churn that cannot be dismissed as a temporary wave. A new voter base has asserted itself. A new narrative has gained traction. A new political centre is emerging. If the ballot confirms the projection, Vijay will not be described as a newcomer anymore. He will stand as a full-scale contender, forcing every established party to rethink strategy, structure, and survival. The Dravidian fortress is not demolished yet. But for the first time in decades, it is visibly under siege.

# Centralized procurement system to INCREASE ACCOUNTABILITY

FROM PAGE 1

He instructed that photos and videos of the supply process should be taken.

The Chief Minister directed that it should be verified whether every student has received all required materials. He also instructed that feedback should be collected from students regarding the quality of notebooks, uniforms, and other materials, as well as their experience after receiving them.

He further directed that a coordination committee be formed among the SC, ST,

BC, Minority, and Education departments.

The review meeting was attended by Government Advisor P. Sudarshan Reddy, MP Vem Narendar Reddy, CM OSD Vemula Srinivasulu, Tribal Welfare Special Chief Secretary Sabyasachi Ghosh, Education Secretary Yogita Rana, Minority Welfare Secretary Shafiqullah, BC Welfare Secretary Bala Mayadevi, SERP CEO Divya, Higher Education Commissioner Sri-devasena, School Education Director Dr. Naveen Nicholas, Tribal Welfare Secretary



# Mamata visits Bhabanipur EVM strong room, warns against counting irregularities



FROM PAGE 1

Sounding a stern note ahead of the May 4 counting, she added, "If there is any plan to tamper with the counting process, it will not be tolerated." On Thursday evening, Banerjee had reached the Bhabanipur Assembly segment counting centre, which houses the strong room for EVMs used in the April 29 polling, citing suspicion of tampering with the machines.

She entered the premises along with her election agent and remained inside for hours, even as Kolkata Mayor and TMC candidate from the Kolkata Port segment Firdad Hakim reached the spot but could not meet her.

"I reached here upon learning that the chief minister has arrived. But I couldn't meet her since she was already inside the premises, exercising her right as a candidate to visit strong rooms. I wasn't allowed

there. I will not be able to confirm what exactly is transpiring inside," Hakim said.

The development coincided with protests by TMC candidates Kunal Ghosh and Shashi Panja outside the Khudiram Anushilan Kendra in north Kolkata, where they staged a sit-in alleging irregularities and possible tampering of EVMs stored in strong rooms, leading to face-offs between TMC and BJP supporters.

Earlier in a video message, Banerjee had urged party leaders, workers and polling agents to maintain a 24-hour vigil on EVM strong rooms, alleging that the BJP could attempt to tamper with the machines before counting begins. Her remarks come amid heightened political tension in the state following a fiercely contested Assembly election, with parties closely monitoring arrangements and raising concerns over transparency.

Bhatti offers prayers at Tirumala

HYDERABAD

Deputy Chief Minister Bhatti Vikramarka, along with his family members, visited the revered hill shrine of the Tirumala Venkateswara Temple on Thursday morning. Upon his arrival, Bhatti Vikramarka received a warm welcome from TTD officials. The Deputy Chief Minister then paid his respects to Lord Venkateswara, offering his prayers.



Devotees present for his visit expressed great enthusiasm, gathering to greet him with handshakes and selfies. The temple staff also welcomed him with kindness and took photographs. He engaged warmly with the attendees. After the Tirumala visit, Bhatti Vikramarka proceeded to Sri Kalahasteeswara Temple. There, he and his family offered special prayers to Lord Shiva. Temple priests blessed him with Vedic hymns and presented sacred theertha prasadam.

“Guru Tegh Bahadur’s sacrifice is unparalleled”: Minister Jupally



NANDIGAMA (RANGAREDDY DISTRICT)

Kanha Shanti Vanam became a platform for a rare confluence of history, spirituality, and national heritage. A grand spiritual event was here on Thursday to mark the 350th martyrdom anniversary of Guru Tegh Bahadur, the 127th birth anniversary of Babuji Maharaj, and the 117th birth anniversary of Sant Tukdoji Maharaj.

Former President of India Ram Nath Kovind, Telangana Governor Shiv Pratap Shukla, State Tourism and Culture Minister Jupally Krishna Rao, and Heartfulness guide ‘Daaji’ attended the event. Thousands of spiritual seekers from 160 countries participated.

Paying tribute to Guru Tegh Bahadur, the ninth Sikh Guru, popularly known as “Hind-Chadar” (Protector of India), the Minister remembered his supreme sacrifice for religious freedom and human rights. He stated that Guru Tegh Bahadur was unique in world history, as he sacrificed his life not for his own faith but to protect the religious freedom of others.

Recalling the contributions of Babuji Maharaj, founder of the Heartfulness system, the Minister appreciated his efforts in making the complex path of yoga accessible to common people. He said that Babuji demonstrated that God is not a distant entity but a state of inner peace within the human heart, and that his teachings have transformed Telangana into an international spiritual hub.

Telangana eyes global leap: 1,000 businesses by 2027, says IT Minister Sridhar Babu

HYDERABAD

Telangana has set an ambitious target to take 1,000 businesses and students global by March 31, 2027, with IT and Industries Minister D. Sridhar Babu unveiling the “Explore-2Expand (E2E)” initiative on Thursday.



The minister officially unveiled the logo of Explore-2Expand (E2E), a new international platform aimed at enabling businesses, exporters, students, startups, and professionals to explore global opportunities and expand beyond borders. The platform will facilitate global missions, export promotion visits, student exposure programmes and international networking opportunities. Calling it a “forward-looking initiative”, the Minister urged businesses, exporters and students to actively participate and leverage global markets. The Minister appreciated Sundeep Kumar Makthala for conceptualizing

and leading an initiative that connects talent and enterprise from Telangana and India to the global stage.

The first E2E mission will be held in Singapore from May 21-24, marking the start of a series of international engagements. The initiative aims to boost exports, foster entrepreneurship and strengthen Telangana's vision of becoming a Trillion-dollar economy. BJP MLA Payal Shankar, Tconsult Director Bhagya Lakshmi Vakiti, Secretary Yamini Maddukuri, Keshav Soni and other distinguished guests attended the logo launch event.

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

**E-Tender Notice No. GSU-GTL-02-2026 Dated 29/04/2026**

Dy. Chief Engineer / Gati Shakti Unit / Guntakal acting for and on behalf of the President of India invites E-Tender for the following work.

**Closing Date and Time:** 22.05.2026 at 11:00 hrs.

**SI. No. 1, Tender No.:** GSU-GTL-RUB-LC-234-02-2026, **Description of work:** Guntakal Division: Gooty - WADI Section: Proposal for construction of RUB of size 2 x 6.0m x 5.0m RCC box in lieu of LC-234 at KM 667/7-8 between Wadi and Nalwar Stations by Air-Pushing with RH-grinder and RCC Retaining wall., **Advertised Value (Rs.):** 23,68,73,662.76, **Bid Security (In Rs.):** 47,37,500.00

For Bid document and other details login to <http://ireps.gov.in> any corrigenda will be issued online only.

No. G/GS/496/TN-02-2026 Date: 29/04/2026

**Dy. Chief Engineer/Gati Shakti Unit, Guntakal**

**Tender No. GTL-EM-05-2026-27 Dt. 30.04.2026**

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

**Tender No. GTL-EM-05-2026-27, Name of work:** Guntakal Division - Provision of lifts on the Foot Over Bridges of Dhone, Tadipatri, Pakala, Anantapur, Adoni, Rajampeta, Gooty, Mantralayam Road, Sri Kalhasti, Dharmavaram and Yerraguntla Railway Stations - Power Supply Arrangements., **Approximate Value (₹):** 2,14,67,313.74

**Closing date and time:** 22.05.2026 at 15:00 hrs

For bidding the tender and other details login to <http://www.ireps.gov.in>. Corrigendum of tender, if any will be issued online only. Tender Document may be downloaded from <http://www.ireps.gov.in> by the tenderers free of cost.

**Note:** To participate / Bid in this e-Tender, tenderer should have valid DSC (Digital Signature Certificate).

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

**Tender No. GTL-EM-10-2026-27 Dt. 30.04.2026**

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

**Tender No. GTL-EM-10-2026-27, Name of work:** Guntakal Division - Provision of lifts on the Foot Over Bridges of Raichur and Yadgir Railway Stations - Power Supply Arrangements., **Approximate Value (₹):** 20,89,866.32

**Closing date and time:** 21.05.2026 at 15:00 hrs

For bidding the tender and other details login to <http://www.ireps.gov.in>. Corrigendum of tender, if any will be issued online only. Tender Document may be downloaded from <http://www.ireps.gov.in> by the tenderers free of cost.

**Note:** To participate / Bid in this e-Tender, tenderer should have valid DSC (Digital Signature Certificate).

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

**Open e-Tender Notice No. DRM/Works/BZA/18/2026 Dt. 30.04.2026**

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 against each:

**SI. No. 1, e-Tender No.:** E-12-EAST-BZA-2026, **Details of Work:** Name of the work: SW-I : Construction of Tower car shed for BZA Depot in BZA Division. SW-II : BZA Proposed construction of office & Store building for SSE/W/ Watering arrangements/BZA in SSE/ Works/BZA section. SW-III: BZA Division : RYP station Construction of General Waiting hall, Ladies Waiting hall, VIP Lounge in GF and Dormitory, Retiring rooms in FF on PF-1, **Period of completion:** 12 (Twelve Months), **Tender value (₹):** 8,59,31,780.00, **E.M.D. (₹):** 17,18,600.00, **Date of closing:** 22.05.2026.

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 Divisional Railway Manager (Works), S.C.Railway, Vijayawada and ADEN sub-divisional offices of Vijayawada Division which can be seen.**

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

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

**TENDER NOTICE No. 50 to 53 - DRM\_W\_HYB\_26 dt. 29/04/2026**

On behalf of the President of India, Divisional Railway Manager/ Works, Hyderabad Division, South Central Railway, Secunderabad invites Open Tenders for the following works through e-procurement up to 15.00 hours of 25/05/2026.

**Tender No.:** 50\_DRM\_W\_HYB\_26, **Name of the work:** HYB: SC-MUE: Construction of RUB at KM 601/15-17 (OHE) (trespassing location) at Gundalohampalli yard., **Approx Value (Rs.):** 7,18,58,947.00, **EMD (Rs.):** 14,37,200.00

**Tender No.:** 51\_DRM\_W\_HYB\_26, **Name of the work:** Hyderabad Division: SC-MUE Section: Proposal for extension of exg RUB By No2 (2 vents of 6Mx5M RCC Box by launching of RCC Boxes) and Exg Br No 1A (1 vent of 2Mx2M RCC Box with Air pushing and Cast-in-situ method) connection with the work of “Doubling of Malkajgiri - Mouli Gate cabin)., **Approx Value (Rs.):** 2,06,88,559.00, **EMD (Rs.):** 4,13,800.00

**Tender No.:** 52\_DRM\_W\_HYB\_26, **Name of the work:** MJF-MLY section: Laying and Linking of Track for Doubling of line between MJF-MLY for a length of 2.50 Km., **Approx Value (Rs.):** 2,79,13,909.00, **EMD (Rs.):** 5,58,300.00

**Tender No.:** 53\_DRM\_W\_HYB\_26, **Name of the work:** MJF-MLY section: Laying of Formation for a proposed doubling work between MJF-MLY stations., **Approx Value (Rs.):** 2,93,30,760.00, **EMD (Rs.):** 5,86,600.00

For further details visit the website [www.ireps.gov.in](http://www.ireps.gov.in)

**Divisional Railway Manager/ Works/Hyderabad**

**Tender Notice No. 11, 2026-27, Sr.DEE\_TRD\_HYB, dt: 29.04.2026**

Sr.DEE/TRD/HYB acting for and on behalf of The President of India invites E-Tenders against **Tender No. 11, 2026-27, Sr.DEE\_TRD\_HYB, dt: 29.04.2026, Closing date: 21.05.2026, 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.

**SI. No. 1, Description of work:** Hyderabad Division - Provision of additional loop line at Masaipet (ME) - Electrical TRD Arrangements., **Tender Advertisised Cost (₹):** 1,18,27,540.50, **EMD (₹):** 2,36,600.00, **Completion Period:** 12 Months, **Date of Closing:** 21.05.2026

**Website particulars:** [www.ireps.gov.in](http://www.ireps.gov.in)

Notice Board Location where complete details of tender can be seen: **Office of the Sr.DEE/TRD/HYB, Hyderabad Bhavan, Secunderabad - 500025.**

**Sr. Divisional Electrical Engineer/ TRD/ Hyderabad**

**Tender Notice No. 03-TSMD-MLY -26-27, dt: 29.04.2026**

DEE/TSMD/MLY acting for and on behalf of The President of India invites E-Tenders against **Tender No. 03-TSMD-MLY-26-27, dt: 29.04.2026, Closing date: 21.05.2026, 10:30 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.

**SI. No. 1, Description of work:** HYB DIV: TSMD/MLY: Provision of fault indication light for deflated air spring in EMUs, **Tender Advertisised Cost (₹):** 41,85,494.28, **EMD (₹):** 83,700.00, **Completion Period:** 12 Months, **Date of Closing:** 21.05.2026

**Website particulars:** [www.ireps.gov.in](http://www.ireps.gov.in)

Notice Board Location where complete details of tender can be seen: **Office of the DEE/TSMD/MLY, Mouliali, Secunderabad - 500047.**

**Divisional Electrical Engineer/ TSMD/ Mouliali A174**

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

CM Revanth greets working class on May Day

HYDERABAD

Chief Minister Shri A Revanth Reddy extended heartfelt greetings to all working communities on the occasion of the International Workers Day (May first)



The Chief Minister highlighted that the the People's Government was moving forward in tune with the spirit of the working class and affirmed that the workers would receive due respect and dignity in the government. The CM noted that the workers are the true partners in the development of the Telangana State, envisioned by his government. The new industrial policy being implemented by the state govern-

mental programmes. The Chief Minister said that the government already launched Rs 5 Lakh accident insurance scheme for Gig workers employed in the unorganized sector and also introduced Telangana Gig and Platform Workers' Welfare act.

The Chief Minister highlighted that the government introduced a slew of initiatives with the sole objective of workers' welfare and lakhs of people are securing employment directly and indirectly. Long pending compassionate appointments in various government departments for years were also filled. The government was releasing Diwali festivals to the workers

of Singareni company which has been playing an important role in the state's development and stands as a beacon of pride for the entire nation.

The CM also said that, first time in the history of Singareni, the government provided a bonus of Rs 5000 to each contract worker. With the cooperation of banks, the state government was providing insurance coverage worth ₹1 crore to the Singareni workers. Special measures are also being taken to ensure the welfare of Telangana workers employed in Gulf countries. Rs 5 Lakh financial assistance will be provided to the kin the Telangana workers who passed away in Gulf countries.

Chairman, TGCHE distributes certificates to the first Batch of Law Interns of 2026

HYDERABAD

While distributing certificates to the law interns who completed their internship at TGCHE, Prof. V. Balakista Reddy, Chairman, TGCHE, highlighted the importance of the mandatory internship of the Bar Council of India for law students. He stated that internships help them gain hands-on experience of real-world issues.



His address also enabled the interns to develop a conceptual understanding of an internship and its relevance while preparing themselves for placement during their graduation programme.

The interns participated in a wide range of interactive sessions held by Prof. Reddy and his team on various topics, including the role of communication skills for future lawyers, the Indian Constitution, the impact of the global political economy on international laws, the relevance of intellectual property rights, Indian foreign policy, the interface between domestic and international laws, and the rise of transnational governance in the wake of a globalizing world order.

A group of law students from the College of Law for Women (Andhra Mahila Sabha) and Islamia College, both affiliated to Osmania University, completed their 21-day mandatory internship at the Telangana Council of Higher Education.

Apart from attending various sessions the interns made presentations and submitted their assignments at the TGCHE, which included online and offline dispute resolution, arbitration, mediation and conciliation, law and technology connect, the changing dynamics of legal education, and legal provisions in the 21st century. The interns shared their experiences with Prof. Reddy and thanked the TGCHE for the opportunity extended to them. Prof. Sriram Venkatesh, Secretary, TG-CHE, Prof. Rajeshwar Mittapalli, R. Radhakrishnan, Ms. Amruta Ashok, Faculty of Law, Andhra Mahila Sabha, and Prof. Azam Khan, Director, School of Law, Islamia College, also shared their views on the occasion. The event concluded with the distribution of certificates to the interns.

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Dance India Awards 2026 set to dazzle Hyd on May 2 & 3

HYDERABAD

The vibrant world of classical dance will take center stage as the “Jathin and the Dance India Awards 2026” unfolds on May 2 and 3 at Suravaram Pratapareddy Telugu University. Announcing the event, Nataraj Music and Dance Academy founder B.R. Vikram Kumar unveiled the official logo at a press meet at NSS in Hyderguda, alongside key organizers and cultural figures. The prestigious event will fea-

ture performances in classical styles, including Odissi, Kathak, Bharatanatyam, Kuchipudi and Mohiniyattam by acclaimed dance teachers from the Telugu states. Distinguished guests such as retired IAS officer V.N. Vishnu, Hyderabad Additional Income Tax Commissioner Shankar Pandi, Andhra Natyam exponent Dr. Kalakrishna, and international lighting designer Sai Venkatesh are expected to grace the occasion, marking it a grand celebration of India's rich dance heritage.

**SOUTHERN RAILWAY**  
CARRIAGE & WAGON WORKS  
**Tender Notice No: CWPERDOORMODIFICATION2026**  
For and on behalf of President of India, Chief Workshop Manager, Carriage & Wagon Works, Southern Railway, Perambur, Chennai -23 invites e-tender for the following work as per the tender notice given in e-tender portal [www.ireps.gov.in](http://www.ireps.gov.in)

Name of work : Blocking & Reduction in height of doors of BOXN wagons & its variants at the premises of Carriage & Wagon Workshop, Perambur.

Approximate cash value ₹	Earnest Money Deposit	Bidding start date	Tender closing date and time	Cost of tender form (Rs.)	Period of Completion in months
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
₹ 5,05,34,652.00	₹ 10,10,700.00	06/05/2026	20/05/2026 15:00 Hrs	Nil	36

**Similar Nature of Work:**  
\*Manufacturing/ Rebuilding/ Rehabilitation/ Renewal/ Corrosion repair attention/ Modification/ Fabrication work of Railway Rolling Stock (Coach/ Wagon/DEMU/ MEMU/SPART/ Locomotive/Metro Coach) in  
(a) Any unit of Indian Railways (or)  
(b) Any Unit of Central Govt./State Govt./ Public Sector Undertaking units (or)  
(c) Public listed companies/Private companies/Trusts having annual turnover of ₹ 500 crores and above, subject to the certificate being issued from their Head Office by a person of the company duly enclosing the authorization by the management for issuing such credentials,.

Website Address : [www.ireps.gov.in](http://www.ireps.gov.in)  
Office Address : Chief Workshop Manager, Carriage & Wagon Works, Southern Railway, Ayanavaram, Chennai - 600 023.  
Chief Workshop Manager, Carriage & Wagon Works.

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## SHORT TAKES

### Telangana crosses 10LMT mark in Rabi paddy procurement

**HYDERABAD:** The Civil Supplies department has successfully procured 10.2 Lakh Metric Tonnes (LMT) of paddy for the Rabi 2025-26 season. Under the guidance of the Commissioner of Civil Supplies M. Stephen Raveendra, the state has already released Rs 500.20 crore in Minimum Support Price (MSP) payments directly to the farmers. This rapid procurement drive has successfully completed transactions for over 1 lakh farmers across the state. To handle the heavy inflow of grain, the department is operating at full capacity. All 8,575 Paddy Purchase Centers (PPCs) are currently open at all districts and actively buying paddy from cultivators. This extensive network includes 4,350 centers run by PACS, 3,563 by IKP, and 662 by other supporting agencies. Farmers are bringing in large quantities of both fine and coarse grain varieties. So far, the state has purchased 4.50 LMT of the fine variety (Sannarakam). Coarse variety (Doddurakam) makes up the rest of the volume, with 5.50 LMT procured to date. The department is also moving the purchased grain quickly to avoid any storage bottlenecks at the ground level. Officials are shifting the paddy directly from the purchase centers to the mills without delay. This swift transport keeps the centers clear and ready to receive new grain from farmers every day.

## Minister Tummala reviews with seed company representatives

- Only quality seeds should be made available to farmers - Minister Tummala
- Strict action must be taken to curb spurious seeds - Minister Tummala
- Clear regulations should be framed for co-marketing
- Tight security must be ensured at state borders to prevent HT cotton seeds from entering - Minister Tummala
- Officials instructed to ensure timely availability of seeds for Kharif sowing



### HYDERABAD

Today at the Secretariat, Minister Tummala held a review meeting with officials of the Agriculture Department, Seed Development Corporation, and representatives of seed companies. As part of preparations for the Kharif 2026 season, the availability of seeds was reviewed company-wise and crop-wise. The Minister emphasized that only high-quality, high-yielding seeds should be supplied to farmers. He directed agriculture officials to coordinate with the police department and take stringent measures to curb fake seeds. For the Kharif 2026 season, cultivation is expected in about 13.466 million acres, requiring approximately 1.942 million quintals of seeds. Currently, about 3.821 million quintals of seeds are available in the state—nearly double the requirement, the Minister stated. Regarding cotton cultivation, with a target of about 5.2 million acres, officials stated that against a requirement of 10.4 million packets, around 21.211

million packets are available. Compared to last year's usage, this higher availability is expected to boost farmers' confidence. The Minister also reviewed the availability of hybrid seeds and directed that seeds in high market demand should be prioritized. He stressed that there should be no compromise on quality and that continuous monitoring must be ensured through seed testing laboratories. Strict legal action should be taken against the production and sale of substandard seeds. He recalled that in the past, cases were filed and licenses canceled for such violations. Companies were instructed to submit stock details to the government at the end of every month and bear responsibility for losses caused by self-certified seeds. On paddy varieties, the Minister suggested that selection should consider the opinions of farmers, millers, and consumers, and align with international export standards. Companies were directed to make seed stocks available to farmers from May 15. Regarding vigilance against fake seeds, the Minister ordered the formation of special task force teams from district to mandal level to crack down on illegal storage, transport, and sales. Strict checks should be conducted at state borders to prevent illegal trans-

port of loose cotton seeds. To enhance transparency in seed supply, the licensing system should be strengthened. Cotton seeds that fail GOTS tests should be declared unfit and prevented from reaching farmers. The Minister noted irregularities in the co-marketing system, where the origin of seeds is unclear, and warned that the government will not tolerate companies exploiting loopholes in the Seed Act to mislead farmers. Officials were asked to consider even completely abolishing co-marketing if necessary. Officials informed that special measures are being taken to distribute green manure seeds to improve soil fertility. For Kharif 2026, 1.95 lakh quintals will be distributed at a cost of ₹134 crore. The Minister reiterated that all seeds must be made available before Kharif sowing, with zero tolerance for fake seeds and no compromise on quality. He advised conducting awareness programs for farmers and maintaining coordination with seed companies. He stated that the government is committed to strengthening agriculture, ensuring quality seed supply, and eliminating fake seeds. Participants in the meeting included Seed Corporation Development Chairman Anvesh Reddy, Agriculture Secretary Surendra Mohan, Agricul-

ture Director Gopi, Horticulture Director Yasmin Basha, MARKFED MD Srinivas Reddy, Marketing Director Lakshmi Bai, Additional Directors, and other officials. Meeting with Development Innovation Lab representatives Representatives of the Development Innovation Lab met Agriculture Minister Tummala Nageswara Rao at the Secretariat today. They explained their initiatives aimed at providing timely weather-based advisory services to farmers. The representatives stated that their organization is independently implementing pilot projects in states including Odisha and Telangana. They said farmers are being provided with advance information on weather conditions and rainfall through SMS and WhatsApp. This helps farmers decide the right time for sowing, harvesting, and marketing their produce. They also highlighted that this system helps reduce crop losses caused by unexpected weather events such as unseasonal rains, cyclones, and storms. The representatives requested government support for implementing this project. The Minister directed the Agriculture Director to examine the proposal thoroughly and take an appropriate decision.



## 'Government's Goal is Uninterrupted Power Supply Without Inconvenience to People'

### HYDERABAD

Deputy Chief Minister and Energy Minister Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka stated that the government's primary objective is to ensure uninterrupted power supply to the public without causing any inconvenience, despite the rising electricity demand due to intense summer heat in the state. In view of the increasing power demand across the country, the Deputy Chief Minister conducted a review meeting with senior officials of the Energy Department at Praja Bhavan on the state's power supply situation. Officials informed the minister that along with soaring temperatures, the usage of air conditioners and coolers in homes and offices has increased significantly. This, combined with agricultural requirements, has put additional pressure on the power grid. Despite the nationwide stress on the electricity market, the minister directed officials to procure additional power through power exchanges to ensure there is no shortage for the state's needs. He emphasized that there should be no interruption in pow-

er supply to hospitals, drinking water supply schemes, and other essential services, and called for continuous monitoring. He also instructed that all available power generation units in the state be utilized to their full capacity and that hydropower generation be managed efficiently. With temperatures expected to rise further in the coming days, he advised all power utilities to work in coordination and prepare advance plans. Officials assured the minister that the state's power system remains stable and that adequate arrangements are in place to meet any challenges. The Deputy Chief Minister directed officials to closely monitor the situation and take all necessary steps to ensure reliable and quality power supply to all categories of consumers. Reiterating that providing quality power is the government's top priority, he also instructed field-level staff to remain constantly alert. The meeting was attended by Special Chief Secretary of Energy Department Navin Mittal, TRANSCO CMD Krishna Bhaskar, GENCO CMD Harish, SPDCCL CMD Jitesh V. Patil, and other officials.

## Negligence in Indiramma Housing Scheme Will Not Be Tolerated: Minister Sridhar Babu



### HYDERABAD

Telangana IT and Industries Minister D. Sridhar Babu has made it clear that the State Government will not tolerate any negligence in the implementation of the prestigious Indiramma Housing Scheme. He directed senior officials to ensure that the programme progresses strictly in line with the targets set by the Government. State Government has spent Rs.5,808 crore on this flagship program, the minister said. The Minister instructed that construction of 3,500 houses per Assembly constituency every year must be completed, ensuring timely housewarming ceremonies for beneficiaries. He was speaking at a review meeting held on Thursday at the

State Housing Corporation office in Himayatnagar, where progress of Indiramma housing works across 13 Assembly constituencies of the erstwhile Karimnagar district was assessed. The meeting, chaired by Revenue and Housing Minister Ponguleti Srinivasa Reddy, was attended by Ministers Tummala Nageswara Rao and Laxman Kumar, along with MPs, MLAs, MLCs from the district, Corporation Chairpersons, Housing Corporation MD V.P. Gautam, District Collectors, and senior officials from various departments. Responding to issues raised by public representatives, the Minister directed officials to resolve them without delay. He emphasized that matters related to forest lands must be addressed promptly by the con-

cerned departments, and under no circumstances should delays in forest clearances hinder the progress of housing construction. Sridhar Babu urged District Collectors to exercise their discretionary powers effectively, particularly in resolving compensation and land-related issues involving forest areas. He stressed the need for strong coordination among departments at the field level and called for continuous monitoring of progress. He further advised Collectors to adopt a humanitarian approach rather than causing delays in the name of procedural constraints. Issuing a stern warning, the Minister stated that officials who fail to meet housing targets will not be spared under any circumstances.

## Issuance of accreditations in state to serve as a model for the nation

- More facilities for journalists once the number of accreditations is finalized
- Double the number of accreditations granted compared to the past
- Accreditations for all who apply by May 10
- Collectors instructed to distribute accreditations in all districts on May 1
- Bus passes extended for all until May 15
- Minister for Information & Public Relations, Revenue, and Housing, Ponguleti Srinivasa Reddy

### HYDERABAD

State Minister for Information & Public Relations, Revenue, and Housing, Ponguleti Srinivasa Reddy, stated that the government is firmly committed to granting accreditations to every eligible journalist in the state. Following the vision of Hon'ble Chief Minister Revanth Reddy, he said the government is ready to provide not only health benefits but also additional facilities to journalists. On Thursday, under the aegis of the Information Department, the



Minister distributed new accreditation cards to journalists. Speaking on the occasion, the Minister said that the accreditation cards issued by the previous government had been extended until now. He explained that the delay in issuing new cards was due to a review aimed at adopting best practices implemented in other states and across the country. He noted that although the previous government had the capacity to issue 32,500 accreditations, it limited them to 23,352. The current government has made changes to increase this number to over 46,000. So far, around 2,800 cards have already been approved. He further stated that amend-

ments were made to government orders based on journalists' suggestions, and there will be no hesitation in granting accreditations to all eligible journalists. The Minister announced that instructions would be issued to district collectors to distribute accreditation cards across all districts on May 1. He said May 10 has been set as the cutoff date for applications, and all applications received by then will be approved. Once the total number of accreditations is finalized, a comprehensive plan can be developed to provide health and other benefits to journalists. He added that Chief Minister Revanth Reddy has already given several suggestions in this direction.

He also clarified that even if journalists change jobs across organizations, the process of granting accreditations will continue as an ongoing process, and there is no need for any doubts in this regard. He assured that Telangana will work for the welfare of journalists in a way unmatched anywhere in the country and mentioned that a meeting with journalist unions will be held soon. Since the bus passes of 30, the Minister announced that steps will be taken to extend them for another 15 days. On this occasion, he distributed accreditation cards to several journalists and congratulated them.

## Bicycles distributed in phases to children who registered their names



### SANGAREDDY

Jaggareddy distributed free bicycles to 62 children studying in various schools in Sangareddy town. Speaking on the occasion, he explained that bicycles are being distributed in phases to students who have registered their names at his office so far. During the distribution, Jaggareddy interacted with the

children. The students told him that they had requested bicycles to commute from home to school. A total of 25 girls and 37 boys received bicycles. Senior Congress Party leaders Cheryala Anjaneyulu, George Mathews, Kuna Santosh, Kiran Goud, Srikanth, Mahesh Mudiraj, Raju, Sudip, and others participated in the program.

## Telangana Study Forum Leads Massive Rally for World Peace

- Strong Condemnation of War and US Hegemony; Call for a Greener, Peaceful Future

### HYDERABAD

In the wake of escalating global tensions following the February 28 attack by the United States, which reportedly led to the death of Iran's top leader Ayatollah Khomeini, concerns over global instability have intensified. Condemning the war and its far-reaching consequences, the Telangana Study Forum organized a massive World Peace Rally in Hyderabad. Forum President N. Srinivasa Chari, who inaugurated the rally, strongly criticized what he described as the hegemonic and authoritarian policies of the United States. He stated that such actions are destabilizing global peace and pushing nations toward conflict. "Development Possible Only in Peace" - Kodandaram Chief Guest Professor Kodandaram emphasized that sustainable development is only possible in a peaceful world. He noted that wars disproportionately affect innocent civilians, especially children and the elderly. He further highlighted the economic consequences of war, including rising prices of essential commodities, fuel shortages, and disruptions affecting households, hostels, and businesses worldwide. Severe Impact on Children and Environment Eminent educationist and environmentalist Dr. Komatireddy Gopal Reddy expressed deep concern over

the loss of innocent lives, particularly schoolchildren. "War is not just a conflict between nations—it is the destruction of future generations. It damages the environment irreversibly. We must strive for a greener world, a cleaner world, and a peaceful world," he stated. Global Fear and Instability Rising Professor Rajendra Babu remarked that the actions of the United States



are creating widespread fear and uncertainty among nations. He urged the global community to collectively condemn such actions and work toward peace. Environmental Damage a Major Concern Senior advocate K.V.L. warned that wars inflict irreversible damage on the environment, posing a serious threat to future generations and ecological balance.

Strong Condemnation by Telangana Activists Kacham Satyanarayana, President of the Telangana Activists Welfare Association, strongly condemned what he termed as the authoritarian approach of the United States and called for united global efforts to restore peace. Prominent Participants The rally was attended by several prominent personalities including Ayachitam Sridhar, Prem Maheshwar Reddy, Sreevani, Rangareddy, Baer Balakrishna, Srishailam Yadav, and others. Key members of the Telangana Study Forum such as General Secretary Rajamahender Reddy, Vice Presidents Somireddy, Komatireddy Gopal Reddy, Bhogam Laxmaiah, Treasurer Satyanarayana, Sriramulu, Venugopal, Saidulu, Prasanna Chari, Madhuchari, Gannaju Satyanarayana, Chandramouli, Karunakar Reddy and others actively participated and made the event a success.

## Padmavathi Vasanthotsavams begin grandly

Swarna Rathotsavam on May 1.. Sheshachalam-like atmosphere at Shukravapuruta

TIRUPATI:

The annual Vasanthotsavams (spring festival) of Sri Padmavathi Ammavaru at Tiruchanur began on Thursday in a grand manner. The Swarna Rathotsavam (Golden Chariot Festival) will be held on May 1 at 9:30 AM in a visually splendid manner.

During the spring season, the Sun shines more intensely in the Aries zodiac sign, and the heat of the sun's rays is believed to cause ailments in living beings. It is believed that worshipping Sri Padmavathi Ammavaru during the Vasanthotsavams grants physical



and mental peace to devotees. **Grand Snapana Tirumanjanam Performed**

As part of the Vasanthotsavams, the day began with Suprabhatam, followed by Sahasranama Archana to



awaken the Goddess. At 2:00 PM, the processional deity was taken in a grand procession from the temple to Shukravapuruta. At 2:30 PM, Snapana Tirumanjanam (sacred bathing ritual) was

performed. The deity was ceremonially bathed with turmeric, kumkum, milk, curd, honey, sandal paste, and coconut water. In the evening from 7:30 PM to 8:30 PM, the Goddess will be taken in a pro-

cession along the four mada streets of the temple. **Shukravapuruta Transformed into Sheshachalam Forest**

Under the supervision of TTD Horticulture Deputy Director Sri Srinivasulu, Shukravapuruta has been beautifully decorated to resemble the Sheshachalam forest. Lush greenery, flowers, and artistic animal figures have captivated devotees. Figures of cows, calves, monkeys, peacocks, swans, and parrots are major attractions.

A total of 300 kg of wild roots, 500 kg of traditional flowers, and 15,000 cut flow-

ers along with various fruits were used in the decoration. Landscaping experts from Bengaluru and Hyderabad, along with TTD staff, participated in the arrangement.

As part of the event, spiritual music programs were conducted under the Annamacharya Project.

TTD Board Member Panabaka Lakshmi, Deputy Executive Officer Harindranath, AEO Devarajulu, priests Babuswamy, Superintendents Muni Chengalrayulu, Ramesh, Suresh, Temple Inspector Chalapathi, and a large number of devotees participated in the celebrations.

## Regulation of Train Services

CHENNAI, APRIL 30:

Train services across several routes in the Chennai Division will face delays in May 2026 due to scheduled safety and maintenance works under a Fixed Time Corridor Block. According to railway officials, multiple trains will be regulated en route on specific dates, leading to delays ranging from 30 minutes to over an hour. The Puducherry-Kakinada Port Circular Express (Train No. 17656), departing at 1:30 pm, will be delayed by 30 minutes on May 2, 7, 9, 14 and 16. Similarly, the Puducherry-Kacheguda Express (Train No. 17654), scheduled to leave at 12:45 pm, will be delayed by one hour on May 5 and 12. The Chennai Egmore-Madurai Vaigai Superfast Express (Train No. 12635) will experience a delay of 1 hour 10 minutes on May 11, 14, 16, 29 and 31. Other affected services include the Nagercoil-Chalappalli Amrit Bharat Express (Train No. 16357), which will be delayed by 1 hour 20 min-



utes on May 28, and the Ayodhya Cantt-Rameswaram Shradha Sethu Superfast Express (Train No. 22614), expected to run 45 minutes late on May 27. The Tiruchirappalli-Ahmedabad Special (Train No. 09420) will be delayed by 45 minutes on May 31. Meanwhile, the Howrah-Dr MGR Chennai Central Mail (Train No. 12839) will be regulated by 55 minutes on May 16, 20, 23, 27 and 30. Additionally, the Silchar-Coimbatore Express (Train No. 15628) will face a delay of 55 minutes on May 19 and 26. Railway authorities have advised passengers to check updated schedules before travel and plan accordingly, as these temporary changes are part of essential maintenance aimed at ensuring safety and improving infrastructure.



## Kerala Police bust sex racket, arrest two Bangladeshi women for illegal stay

Two Bangladeshi women were arrested in Karyavattom for illegal stay and suspected involvement in a prostitution racket.

Two Bangladeshi women staying illegally in the country were arrested from Karyavattom here, police said on Thursday. The arrested women were allegedly staying with a group suspected to be involved in prostitution in the area, police said. Acting on a tip-off from the Kerala Anti-Terrorist Squad (ATS), Kazhakoottam police raided a rented house in Karyavattom on Wednesday night. Police said the two women had been in Thiruvananthapuram for the past one

month and were allegedly working for a prostitution racket. Apart from the two Bangladeshi women, six others were taken into custody during the raid. According to police, the group had rented the house earlier this month after posing as doctors. Police said separate cases have been registered - one for illegal stay against the two Bangladeshi women and another in connection with prostitution activities. Police recently arrested two other Bangladeshi women from a spa in Thiruvananthapuram. Officials said police have intensified the crackdown on Bangladeshi nationals allegedly staying illegally in the state using forged documents and identity cards.

## K'taka govt clears Rs 600 crore minority development plan amid bypoll row

BENGALURU, APRIL 30

The Congress government in Karnataka has approved a Rs 600 crore plan for the next two years to undertake development works in minority colonies. Additionally, the government has decided to release an extra Rs 20 crore for the construction of the Belagavi Deputy Commissioner's office building. Minister for Law and Parliamentary Affairs H.K. Patil made the announcement after the Cabinet meeting on Thursday evening. The move is seen as an attempt to assuage the outrage within the minority community against the Congress, which intensified after the party rejected demands to field a Muslim candidate in the Davanagere South bypoll.

When asked about this, Minister Patil said, "Do you think an action plan would be prepared suddenly after the Davanagere bypolls?" He added that the process has been underway for a long time and has now been taken up, and said these are just allegations. When questioned about the government approv-



ing a Rs 600 crore action plan that had been pending for two years, Patil said that works that are not completed will naturally be carried forward to the next year, and projects facing a shortage of funds will be provided with the necessary support. He further stated that the government has also taken an important decision to promote education among the children of construction workers. The Cabinet has approved the distribution of kits worth approximately Rs 8,600 each, containing various study materials and school textbooks, for the children of registered construction workers. For this initiative, the government has sanctioned an estimated amount of Rs 115.84

crore. Minister Patil said that discussions were held on the Hyderabad-Bengaluru high-speed rail project to strengthen transport connectivity, and that a total of 15 railway stations are proposed to be established in Karnataka under the project. Additionally, the Cabinet has approved an annual subsidy of Rs 28.7 crore to promote the operation of air services between Bidar-Bengaluru and Kalaburagi-Bengaluru, he said. He further stated that administrative approval has been granted for the GBA Bidadi Township project in the state, with an allocation of Rs 18,133 crore for the large-scale initiative. Under the project, around 7,481 acres and 21.08 guntas of

land spread across nine villages in Ramanagara taluk of Bengaluru South district will be acquired. To provide better financial support to farmers losing their land, the government has decided to allot developed land in return. Each acre of acquired land will be compensated with 9,600 square feet of developed land, the minister said. Minister Patil, talking about the sensational alleged Soujanya rape and murder case, said that if the Supreme Court seeks information, details will be provided. He said that Soujanya's mother, Kusumavati, has filed a petition in the Supreme Court seeking a reinvestigation and that, accordingly, the Supreme Court has directed the Central Bureau of Investigation and the state government to submit complete details of the case. Meanwhile, the Cabinet discussed the final report submitted by the State Education Policy Commission, but no final decision was taken. The minister said the government has decided to hold a detailed discussion at the next Cabinet meeting after gathering more information.

## YSRCP leader Srihari gets bail in abusive social media post case

AMARAVATI, APRIL 30

A court in Andhra Pradesh's Chittoor district on Thursday granted bail to YSR Congress Party (YSRCP) General Secretary (Media), Pudi Srihari, who was arrested on Wednesday for an allegedly abusive social media post targeting Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu. Police arrested him in Bengaluru early on Wednesday morning. He was brought to Kuppam, where he was produced before the Additional Junior Civil Judge Court on Thursday. After hearing arguments from both sides, the court granted bail to Srihari. YSRCP General Secretary (legal cell) and former Advocate General, P. Sudhakar Reddy, said the police arrested Srihari at 5.45 A.M. but told the court that he was arrest-

ed at 11.45 P.M. Sudhakar Reddy said that the YSRCP has full faith in the judiciary and will continue its fight against false cases. Srihari was arrested a day after the Supreme Court declined to intervene in Andhra Pradesh High Court's order, suspending the remand rejection order of the trial court. Srihari, who served as Chief Public Relations Officer (CPRO) to then Chief Minister, Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy, had approached the Supreme Court, apprehending arrest after the High Court suspended the remand rejection order given by the trial court in Kuppam. Srihari was arrested on April 15 in Vijayawada in the case registered against him over making objectionable social media posts with morphed images of Chief Minister Naidu.

## Calcutta HC rejects Trinamool plea against ECI directive on central staff for counting duty

KOLKATA, APRIL 30

The Calcutta High Court on Thursday dismissed a writ petition filed by the Trinamool Congress challenging the Election Commission of India's (ECI) directive to appoint Central government and Central Public Sector Undertaking (PSU) employees as counting supervisors and assistants for the 2026 West Bengal Assembly elections.

A single-judge bench of Justice Krishna Rao, which had reserved its order earlier in the day after hearing arguments from both sides, pronounced the verdict in the evening, rejecting the petition in its entirety. "It is the prerogative of the Election Commission of India to appoint counting supervisors and counting assistants either from the state government or



the Central government. This Court does not find any illegality in appointing counting supervisors and counting assistants from Central government/Central PSU employees instead of state government employees," the court observed. The High Court further noted that the impugned communication issued by the Additional Chief Electoral Officer, West Bengal, was aimed at ensuring "transparency, integrity and orderly con-

duct of counting proceedings" and formed part of the ongoing electoral process. The bench observed that Clause 15.7.9 of the Handbook for Returning Officers permits counting supervisors and assistants to be appointed from either Central or state government officials or comparable undertakings. The court ruled that the ECI's decision to prefer Central government/Central PSU employees was well within its authority. Addressing the Trinamool Congress' primary contention that Central government employees, being under the administrative control of the BJP-led Union government, could favour the principal opposition party in the state, the court held that such apprehension was not sustainable. It pointed out that micro-observers, who are invariably drawn from Central

government/Central PSU employees, would also be present at every counting table, along with counting agents of candidates and other officials, thereby ensuring adequate checks and balances. The court further observed that if any irregularity or favouritism occurs during the counting process, the Trinamool Congress retains the right to challenge it through an election petition after the declaration of results. Citing Section 100 of the Representation of the People Act, 1951, the judgment stated: "If the petitioner proves that the Central Government/Central PSU employees appointed as counting supervisors and counting assistants helped the opponent by manipulating votes during counting, the petitioner has the liberty to raise all such grounds in an election petition."

## ₹2,720.67 crore released for NTR Bharosa pension distribution today

Minister Kondapalli says ₹63,157.90 crore spent on pensions since the coalition government came to power

AMARAVATI, APRIL 30:

The state government has released ₹2,720.67 crore for the distribution of NTR Bharosa pensions on May 1, 2026, to 6,247,538 beneficiaries across the state. Arrangements have been completed to deliver pensions directly to beneficiaries at their homes in villages, wards, and urban areas. Under the newly sanctioned spouse pensions, ₹4.15 crore has been released for 8,141 beneficiaries, and these will also be distributed on May 1. State Minister for Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises, Rural Poverty Alleviation, and NRI Empowerment Relations, Kondapalli Srinivas, stated that the



government is effectively implementing the NTR Bharosa scheme with the goal of public welfare. The minister said that since the formation of the government, a total of ₹63,157.90 crore has been spent on pension distribution, including this month's release. He added that the government remains committed to the welfare of the poor, elderly, disabled, widows, and other eligible beneficiaries.

## TMC stages sit-in outside EVM strongroom in Kolkata alleging irregularities

KOLKATA: (APR 30)

Hours after party supremo Mamata Banerjee urged TMC leaders, workers and polling agents to maintain a 24-hour vigil over strongrooms housing EVMs, party candidates Kunal Ghosh and Shashi Panja staged a sit-in protest at Khudiram Anushilan Kendra on Thursday, alleging irregular activities inside the facility. The protest came a day after the second phase of polling in West Bengal on Wednesday, following which EVMs were stored in strongrooms at the centre.

## SP protests in UP Assembly, says BJP is misleading people on women's quota

Samajwadi Party legislators protested in the Uttar Pradesh Assembly premises, accusing the BJP of misleading people on women's reservations. The demonstration came before a special session and sharpened the dispute over implementing the 2023 law.

SP members staged a protest in Uttar Pradesh Assembly premises on Thursday, accusing the BJP of misleading the people on the issue of women's reservation. The protest came ahead of the special one-day session of the assembly during which the government is expected to move a censure motion



against opposition parties, holding them responsible for the failure to pass the Women's Reservation Amendment Bill in Lok Sabha. Holding banners that read 'Implement 33% Women's Reservation, the Samajwadi Party (SP) members staged the protest in front of the

statue of Chaudhary Charan Singh. SP MLA Sangram Singh Yadav told reporters that the BJP is "misleading" the public in the name of women's reservations. The BJP is deliberately withholding the benefits of this legislation from women solely to facilitate the delimitation of con-

stituencies according to its own preferences, he charged. "The BJP stands exposed on this issue. It has been anti-women from the very beginning. It is our leaders Dr Ram Manohar Lohia and Mulayam Singh Yadav who have always championed women's rights," he added. Participating in the protest, SP MLA Amitabh Bajpai demanded the immediate implementation of the women's reservation law, questioning why the BJP is failing to enforce a statute that was passed in 2023. He further demanded that the 2027 Uttar Pradesh Legislative Assembly elections be conducted in accordance with the provisions of the wom-

en's reservation law. Leader of the Opposition in the Legislative Council, Lal Bihari Yadav asserted that the SP is a staunch proponent of women's reservation. "The women's reservation bill was passed by both Houses of Parliament back in 2023. We harbour no opposition whatsoever to women's reservation; rather, the BJP is the one misleading the public under the guise of women's empowerment," Yadav said. SP MLA Kamal Akhtar also questioned why the BJP is creating confusion regarding the issue, given that the women's reservation bill was unanimously passed by Parliament in 2023.

EDITORIAL

THE SCALE DILEMMA: ASSESSING INDIA'S VEHICLE-TO-VEHICLE SAFETY AMBITIONS

India represents a nation fundamentally in transition, frequently encountering a paradoxical "chicken-and-egg" scenario: it tends to adopt high-tech solutions that only become viable at a massive scale, yet it consistently fails to operationalize that very scale effectively. In an effort to bolster road safety, the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways is preparing to launch vehicle-to-vehicle (V2V) communication technology, designed to enable vehicles to exchange real-time data regarding their specific locations and movement vectors. On the surface, this initiative appears credible, particularly as road fatalities continue to climb across the country. A series of tragic accidents in April across Karnataka, Maharashtra, and Uttar Pradesh resulted in over 50 deaths. These events prompted the Supreme Court of India to take suo motu cognisance of similar tragedies from 2025; on April 26, the Court declared that the state is obligated to proactively protect the constitutional right to life and eliminate highway obstructions.

However, the V2V mandate is unlikely to provide immediate relief due to its significant hardware requirements, which are non-trivial compared to the existing automotive landscape. V2V exists as a subset of the broader V2X (vehicle-to-everything) framework, which encompasses communication between vehicles and infrastructure (V2I)—such as toll systems and traffic lights—as well as interactions with pedestrians (V2P). At present, India lacks the necessary backend systems and interoperability standards to make this functional. Crucially, the Ministry has not yet determined the "language" or technical standard these vehicles will use—choosing between DSRC or C-V2X—a lack of clarity that has naturally triggered significant public anxiety.

Vehicle owners are already burdened by high compliance expenses, including the costs for high-security registration plates and mandatory tracking devices, often without the benefit of subsidies or a competitive market to lower the price of government-approved hardware. Within a V2V network, every individual vehicle acts as a data-processing node that provides alerts to the driver. This presents a challenge, as many commercial drivers in India are unaccustomed to digital interfaces and lack the specific training required to interpret sudden vehicle alerts accurately. Without rigorous security protocols, this also opens the door for malicious actors to intercept data, potentially sending fraudulent warnings or forcing unnecessary braking. Technical issues like packet loss and congestion in the 5.9 GHz international frequency band further complicate the rollout.

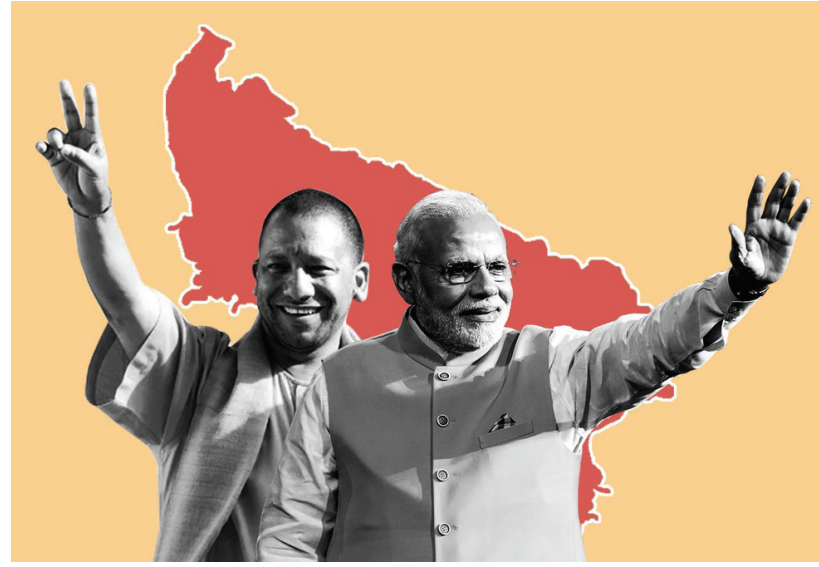
More fundamentally, India continues to struggle with basic road design, inconsistent routing, and inadequate speed control. The roads are largely dominated by pedestrians, two-wheelers, and various forms of non-motorized traffic. In a context where a city is not fundamentally "smart," a high-tech "Smart City" solution like V2V will offer only marginal benefits at best. The utility of such a network depends entirely on widespread adoption, meaning early adopters will be forced to pay the full price for hardware while receiving underwhelming safety advantages. If this technology is to truly mitigate the inherent dangers of Indian roads, the Ministry must prioritize a gradual rollout of physical infrastructure and driver training, supported by subsidies and phased mandates, before enforce full-scale compliance.

OPEN FORUM

Modi's Three-Tier Strategy to Conquer Uttar Pradesh in 2027

After the assembly elections in five states, the BJP high command has shifted its focus to Uttar Pradesh. On one hand, the final phase of voting in West Bengal was underway on April 29, while on the other, Prime Minister Narendra Modi was, at the same time, setting the agenda for the Uttar Pradesh Assembly elections from his parliamentary constituency, Varanasi. This time, the BJP aims to win Uttar Pradesh through Hindutva, women's reservation, and development, while also highlighting strong law and order and the establishment of a fear-free society. A glimpse of this was seen in Varanasi when, on April 28, PM Modi visited the Kashi Vishwanath Temple to offer prayers to Baba Vishwanath. A day earlier, he interacted with 50,000 women on the issue of the Nari Shakti Vandan Adhiniyam (Women's Reservation). By blaming Congress and the Samajwadi Party for the delay in implementing women's reservation, the BJP signaled its strong reliance on the state's female population. On the same day, April 28, the Prime Minister also inaugurated a nearly 600-kilometer-long expressway from Prayagraj to Meerut from HarDOI and dedicated it to the public. This indicates that the BJP is trying to appeal to followers of Sanatan Dharma through temples, attract youth and the people of western Uttar Pradesh through expressways, and win over women by emphasizing reservation.

A notable aspect of the Prime Minister's visit was that while Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath was naturally present alongside him, the presence of BJP's national president Nitin Naveen with Modi in Varanasi also drew attention. A deeper analysis of these developments clearly shows that the BJP will enter the political battlefield of Uttar Pradesh armed with religious faith, symbols of development, and women's empowerment. In fact, PM Modi's visit to the Kashi Vishwanath Temple was not merely a religious trip, but a reflection of the BJP's core strategy. The party has always considered Kashi its stronghold. Modi's massive victories from Varanasi in the 2014 and 2019 Lok Sabha elections stand as proof. After the redevelopment of the temple, it has become a center of Hindu nationalism. During the two-day visit, through offering prayers to Baba Vishwanath, the Prime Minister conveyed



a message to followers of Sanatan Dharma that the BJP alone will protect their faith. One may recall that the inauguration of the Ram Temple in Ayodhya was also part of this strategy, which significantly benefited the party in the 2024 Lok Sabha elections.

In Uttar Pradesh, where the number of Hindu voters is substantial, the temple issue has always been influential. Opposition parties like the Samajwadi Party and Congress attempt to dismiss it as communal, but public sentiment cannot be ignored. Through this visit, the BJP once again demonstrated that it is the custodian of Sanatan culture. Especially in eastern Uttar Pradesh, where lakhs of Ram and Shiva devotees reside, this visit has effectively sounded the bugle for the 2027 elections. The presence of Yogi Adityanath further strengthened this message. Yogi, established as a Sanatan saint himself, has consistently centered his politics around religious issues from Gorakhpur to Varanasi. This time, the presence of the BJP president alongside Modi signaled organizational unity, conveying that both the central and state leadership are aligned.

The second major highlight of the Prime Minister's visit was his interaction with 50,000 women on the Nari Shakti Vandan Adhiniyam. He described the women's reservation bill passed in Parliament as a historic step toward women's empowerment. However, he clearly stated that its delay in implementation is due to Congress and the Samajwadi Party. Although the promise of reserving one-third seats for

women in Parliament and state assemblies has now become law, it cannot be implemented without caste census and delimitation. Modi accused opposition parties of deliberately stalling it to deny women their rights. This is a tactically sharp move, but Modi has consistently asserted that he will ensure its implementation.

Women constitute nearly half of the voters in Uttar Pradesh. In the 2022 Assembly elections, women significantly supported the BJP, especially in cities like Lucknow, Kanpur, and Saharanpur. Now, in 2027, the party is directly targeting this demographic. The presence of 50,000 women at the Nari Shakti Vandan event is evidence of this strategy. Modi appealed to women to teach the opposition a lesson. This issue gains traction as the Samajwadi Party is often accused of dynastic politics, while Congress is perceived as indifferent to women's concerns. The BJP has already built trust among women through initiatives like the Ujjwala Yojana, Beti Bachao Beti Padhao, and the abolition of triple talaq. Now, it aims to further consolidate this support through women's reservation. The Yogi government's initiatives such as women's helplines and Sakhi centers also contribute in this direction. In the presence of the BJP president, Modi indicated that the organization would be mobilized through the Mahila Morcha. Overall, this marks the starting point of the BJP's women-centric strategy.

Meanwhile, by inaugurating the expressway from Prayagraj to Meerut, Modi

is strongly projecting development as a key electoral issue in Uttar Pradesh. This expressway, approximately 600 kilometers long, passes through HarDOI, Shahjahanpur, Bareilly, Moradabad, and Bijnor before reaching Meerut. While inaugurating it, the Prime Minister said it would bring employment opportunities for youth and better market access for farmers. Western Uttar Pradesh has always been a challenging region for the BJP, where Jat, Muslim, and Dalit voters play a decisive role. Although the party faced setbacks here in the 2022 elections, it made a recovery in the 2024 Lok Sabha polls. The expressway is expected to strengthen connectivity in this region. It will also connect with the Delhi-Meerut Expressway, facilitating faster movement of trucks and cargo. For the youth seeking jobs and business opportunities, this presents a golden opportunity. The BJP understands that tangible symbols of development bring votes. The Eastern Dedicated Freight Corridor, Ganga Expressway, and now this expressway are all steps toward making Uttar Pradesh a development hub. The opposition may call it rhetoric, but the work is visible on the ground. The choice of HarDOI for the inauguration is significant, as it has been considered a stronghold of Akhilesh Yadav. By sending a message from here, the BJP is directly challenging the Samajwadi Party. During the inauguration, Yogi Adityanath stated that under Modi's leadership, Uttar Pradesh is progressing rapidly. On this occasion, Governor Anandiben Patel, BJP state president Pankaj Chaudhary, Deputy Chief Ministers Keshav Prasad Maurya and Brajesh Pathak, among other leaders, were also present. This expressway will not only attract western Uttar Pradesh but also serve as a model of development for the entire state.



AJAY KUMAR  
Senior Journalist,  
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WHERE ARE THEY NOW?



Where are the ones, so full of delight,  
Who called their kids by names so bright?  
Whose tender voices, soft and true,  
Made childhood dreams feel fresh and new?

Where are the hearts, so big, so wide,  
Who cared for orphans, stood by their side?  
Who fed the hungry, wiped their tears,  
And calmed their pain, their darkest fears?

Where are the souls who believed in trust,  
In love and kindness, warm and just?  
Who sang of life with melodies sweet,  
With faith and hope, they took no defeat?

Where are the ones who thought so wise,  
To do no harm, to tell no lies?  
Who chose the good, ignored the bad,  
And found in truth the joy they had?

Where is the world of real embrace,  
Beyond the screens, beyond the chase?  
Where innocence once brightly shone,  
Now lost in reels, yet never gone?

Where are the hearts, both kind and pure,  
That saw the world, yet stayed secure?  
Who gave with love, with hands so free,  
And dreamed of a world in harmony?

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

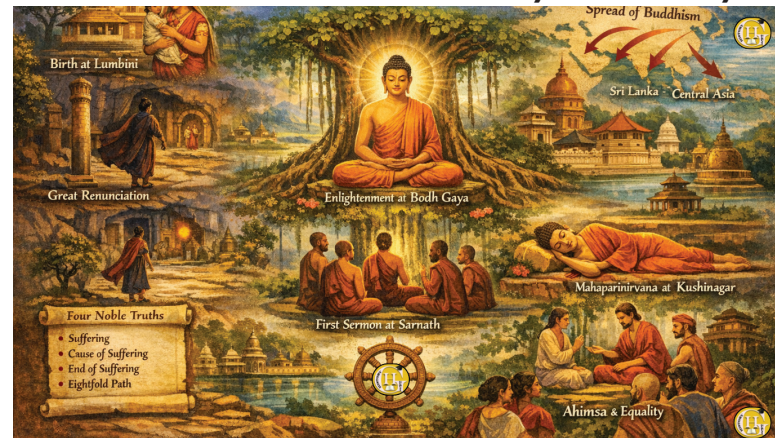
Buddha Purnima (1 May 2026)

Gautama Buddha: The Eternal Voice of Peace, Balance, and Inner Awakening

In the history of human civilization, there have been a few Great personalities whose lives transcend the boundaries of time and continue to illuminate the path of humanity across ages. Gautama Buddha stands as one such eternal beacon, whose message of compassion, non-violence, and self-awakening remains as relevant today as it was over 2,500 years ago. The sacred occasion of Buddha Purnima is not merely a remembrance of a historical figure, but a profound opportunity to reconnect with the timeless ideals of self-realization, equality, and inner peace—values that are urgently needed in today's conflict-ridden and restless world.

This day is uniquely significant, as it marks three pivotal events in the life of Buddha—his birth, enlightenment, and Mahaparinirvana. Born in Lumbini (in present-day Nepal) as Siddhartha, he attained enlightenment under the Bodhi tree in Bodhi Gaya and eventually reached Nirvana in Kushinagar. Thus, Buddha Purnima symbolizes the completeness of life—awakening, fulfillment, and liberation. Across the world—in Sri Lanka, Thailand, Myanmar, Japan, Korea, and India—this day is celebrated with deep reverence under various names and traditions. In Sri Lanka, it is observed as "Vesak," a festival of lights and compassion, marked by devotion and joyous spiritual expression.

Gautama Buddha is a radiant light-house whose light does not merely illuminate the outer world but also enlightens the inner realm of human consciousness. He is revered as one of India's greatest spiritual philosophers, a divine personality, a realized sage, a social reformer, and a religious teacher. In Hindu tradition, he is also regarded as the ninth incarnation of Lord Vishnu, making him universally revered across faiths. Buddha can rightly be called a pioneer of both spiritual and intellectual revolution. His teachings not only challenged religious dogmas and social distortions but also inspired transformative change in countless lives. Witnessing the suffering of society—ritualistic ignorance, social inequality, the humiliation of women, and oppression of the



marginalized—his heart was stirred with deep compassion. His efforts to uplift humanity were monumental and transformative. According to Buddha, conquering oneself is far greater than winning thousands of external battles.

Born as Prince Siddhartha, he renounced royal luxuries at the age of 29 after encountering the harsh realities of life—old age, sickness, and death. In his quest for truth, he undertook intense austerities, only to realize that neither indulgence nor extreme asceticism leads to liberation. He then propounded the doctrine of the Middle Path—a balanced way of living grounded in awareness, moderation, and equanimity. His first sermon at Sarnath, known as Dharmachakra Pravartan, laid the foundation of his teachings. The Four Noble Truths—suffering, its cause, its cessation, and the path leading to its cessation—offer a profound diagnosis and remedy for human suffering.

Today's world is grappling with war, terrorism, intolerance, and psychological stress. In such a context, Buddha's message of compassion and peace becomes profoundly relevant. He declared: "Hatred does not cease by hatred, but only by love." This is not merely a moral teaching but a universal principle for social and global harmony. If individuals, societies, and nations internalize this truth, many conflicts could be resolved. A touching episode from Buddha's life exemplifies his boundless compassion. A man who constantly insulted him met with an accident and lay suffering. Buddha personally attended to him, treated his wounds, and instructed his disciples to care for him. Overwhelmed

by this unexpected kindness, the man's heart transformed, and he sought forgiveness. This incident teaches that true greatness lies not in revenge, but in forgiveness and compassion—the strongest force that unites humanity.

Buddha opposed not only physical violence but also the subtler violence of the mind—jealousy, anger, greed, and ego. He emphasized that one who conquers the self is the true victor. Even a conqueror of countless battles stands inferior to one who has mastered the mind. He also challenged social evils like caste discrimination, untouchability, and gender inequality. He proclaimed that a person's worth is determined not by birth, but by action. His Sangha represented an ideal egalitarian society where people from all backgrounds were welcomed equally. This made his movement not only a religious awakening but also a powerful social revolution.

Later, B. R. Ambedkar embraced Buddha's egalitarian philosophy and guided millions towards dignity and social justice, demonstrating the timeless relevance of Buddha's teachings. One of Buddha's most powerful messages is: "Appo Deepo Bhava" — Be a light unto yourself. This teaching encourages self-reliance, inner awakening, and freedom from external dependencies. Buddha's philosophy invites us to look within, purify the mind, and cultivate virtues like compassion (karuna), friendliness (maitri), joy (mudita), and equanimity (upeksha). True peace, he taught, resides within us—not in the external world.

In today's fast-paced life, dominated by material pursuits and technological distractions, this message calls us back to inner awareness. Mental peace and contentment arise not from external achievements, but from inner clarity and mindfulness.

Buddha emphasized living in the present moment. He taught that attachment to the past and anxiety about the future disturb the mind. One who learns to live fully in the present experiences true joy. The modern concept of mindfulness, now widely practiced across the world, finds its roots in Buddha's teachings—proving their timeless and universal appeal. Humanity today faces numerous crises—environmental imbalance, war, social fragmentation, and mental health challenges. These cannot be solved by technological advancement alone. What is needed is the restoration of human values. Buddha's message of compassion, non-violence, equality, and self-discipline provides a path toward resolving these challenges. If individuals cultivate compassion within, peace and harmony will naturally flourish in society.

Buddha Purnima is not merely a festival—it is an invitation to introspection. It compels us to ask whether we are truly living the teachings of Buddha or merely commemorating them ceremonially. The need of the hour is not just to worship Buddha, but to live Buddha—to embody his values in our daily lives. When every individual awakens the "Buddha" within, a peaceful, balanced, and harmonious world will naturally emerge. This is the true message of Buddha Purnima—and the path toward a brighter future for humanity.



LALIT GARG  
Writer, Journalist,  
Columnist

## Jammu Directly Linked with Kashmir via Passenger Train for the First Time

**With One Interchange at Jammu, You Can Now Access Kashmir Valley from Anywhere in India**  
**Popularity of Vande Bharat, Since Inauguration by Prime Minister Narendra Modi Last June, Leads to Expansion from 8 to 20 Coaches: Sh. Ashwini Vaishnaw**

The long-cherished dream of seamless rail connectivity between Jammu and Srinagar has finally become a reality. Union Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw on Thursday flagged off the extended Srinagar-Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Katra Vande Bharat Express service up to Jammu Tawi, marking the first-ever direct passenger train link between the two key regions of Jammu and Kashmir. The development establishes a continuous rail corridor connecting major destinations in the Union Territory, promising faster travel, improved connectivity, and a significant boost to tourism and trade.

Jammu Tawi railway station, one of northern India's most important rail hubs, now assumes even greater importance as a gateway to the region. The station already connects Jammu and Kashmir to major cities such as Kanyakumari, Howrah, and Mumbai. With the extension of the Vande Bharat Express, passengers can now travel more conveniently to prominent pilgrimage destinations, including Shri Mata Vaishno Devi and Shri Amarnath. Speaking at the flag-off ceremony, Vaishnaw described the launch as a historic milestone in strengthening rail infrastructure in Jammu and Kashmir. He highlighted that the Vande Bharat service has witnessed full occupancy since its introduction, reflecting its pop-



ularity and importance as a key transport link. The introduction of a 20-coach Vande Bharat Express on the Jammu-Srinagar route significantly enhances passenger capacity, catering to growing demand. The Minister noted that this achievement comes within a year of the inauguration of the Jammu-Srinagar rail link by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on June 6 last year, which laid the foundation for seamless connectivity in the region. The expanded Vande Bharat service further strengthens this corridor, ensuring improved travel comfort and reliable all-weather connectivity. Designed specifically for the challenging climatic conditions of the region, the train is equipped to operate efficiently even in sub-zero temperatures. Advanced systems ensure uninterrupted functioning of onboard equipment, making it suitable for the Himalayan terrain. Vaishnaw also highlighted the train's modern features, including advanced electronics and semiconductor-based systems, positioning it among the most technologically sophisticated rail services in the country. Efforts have also been made to enhance the passenger experience by incorporating regional cultural elements. Passengers can enjoy Dogri cuisine onboard, offering a glimpse into the local culture of Jammu and Kashmir. The journey is designed to be immersive, showcasing the region's landscapes, traditions, and heritage. Often referred to as "Paradise on Earth," Jammu and Kashmir is known for its scenic beauty, snow-capped mountains, lush valleys, and serene lakes. Improved rail connectivity is expected to boost tourism significantly, making it easier for travellers from across India to visit the region. The enhanced network will also facilitate economic growth

by enabling smoother transportation of local produce. The region's famous products, including dry fruits, apples, Pashmina shawls, and handwoven carpets, will benefit from faster and more efficient transport to markets nationwide. The Minister noted that improved logistics will support local livelihoods and expand trade opportunities. He added that railway operations in such high-altitude conditions provide valuable experience that will guide future infrastructure development. The completion of the Udhampur-Srinagar-Baramulla Rail Link (USBRL) has been a key factor in transforming connectivity in the Kashmir Valley. Landmark engineering achievements such as the Chenab Rail Bridge—the world's highest railway bridge—and the Anji Khad Bridge have enabled uninterrupted, all-weather rail movement.



## Five Employees Accorded a Heartfelt Farewell at Banaras Locomotive Works

**VARANASI, APRIL 30:**

A retirement ceremony was organized today, April 30, 2026, in the Hall of Fame in Administrative Building at Banaras Locomotive Works (BLW). On this occasion, the BLW family extended a warm and respectful farewell to its five retiring employees. The employees retiring on this occasion included Shri Basant Lal Vishwakarma (SSE/Fitter), Shri Ajay Kumar (SSE/Electria), Shri Pramod Kumar (Senior Technician/Fitter), Shri Gorakh Paswan (Senior Technician/Fitter), and Shri Kamlesh Singh (Senior Technician/Fitter). Addressing the gathering, principal Chief Personnel Officer Shri Lalji Chaudhary said, "All of you are invaluable assets of the BLW family. Through your dedication, discipline, and commitment, you have made significant contributions not only to BLW but also to the progress of Indian Railways. Your services and devotion

to duty will always remain a source of inspiration for us." During the ceremony, the retiring employees shared their memorable experiences from their service tenure and expressed their deep emotional connection with BLW. On this occasion, the family members of the retiring employees also shared their strong emotional bond with the BLW family. Senior Personnel Officer/HQ Shri Rajkumar Gupta extended his best wishes for a healthy, happy, and peaceful life to all the retirees. Divisional Medical Officer, BLW, Dr. Abdul Mabood, provided important health-related advice to the retiring employees. Public Relations Officer Shri Rajesh Kumar conveyed his heartfelt greetings and wished the retirees a happy, healthy, and prosperous life. The program was conducted in a heartfelt manner and concluded with a vote of thanks by Assistant Personnel Officer/HQ Shri Ram Pravech Yadav.



## Muslim side tells HC no proof of temple demolition at Bhojshala

**INDORE: (APR 30)**

A Muslim petitioner argued before the Madhya Pradesh High Court on Thursday that there was no documentary evidence to show that a temple existed at the Bhojshala complex which was demolished and replaced with a mosque during Alauddin Khilji's 1305 invasion. Justices Vijay Kumar Shukla and Alok Awasthi of the Indore bench of the HC are hearing petitions regarding the religious nature of the ASI-protected structure at the Bhojshala complex in Madhya Pradesh's Dhar district. Hindu Front for Justice, one of the petitioners, claims that Bhojshala was originally a Saraswati temple established by King Bhoj of the Parmar dynasty in 1034, and it was demolished in 1305 by Khilji's army during his invasion of Malwa. Parts of the temple were repurposed for the construction of the mosque, it contends.

## Manipur DIPR Launches Official Fact-Check Page, Holds Media Awareness Programme

**IMPHAL, 30 APRIL 2026**

The Directorate of Information and Public Relations (DIPR), Government of Manipur, today launched the "DIPR Manipur Fact Check" official Facebook page and organised a one-day awareness programme on its welfare schemes at the DIPR Auditorium, Imphal. Secretary, IPR, Shri Hungyo Worshang, IAS, as Chief Guest, formally launched the page aimed at authenticating and verifying government orders, notices, circulars, and other official communications. Highlighting the growing challenge of misinformation in the digital era, he stressed the need to verify sources of news, images,



and videos, and urged media houses to actively support efforts to curb the spread of false information. Addressing the media, Director, IPR, Dr Th Charanjeet Singh, MCS, underscored the importance of fact-checking in the age of artificial intelligence, where distinguishing real from fake information has become increasingly difficult. He said misleading information, rumours, and false news incite misunderstanding and pose a huge threat to peace and progress. He added that the media awareness programme was organised to create awareness about DIPR schemes and ensure benefits reach deserving individuals. Dr Charan-

jeet informed that nodal officers from various departments will be designated to verify department-specific documents and information before dissemination to prevent mistrust and possible unrest arising from fake content. Suggestions from stakeholders have also been invited to further strengthen the initiative, he added. The event featured a media sensitisation session in the afternoon on media welfare schemes taken up by DIPR Manipur. Officials elaborated on DIPR schemes including the Journalist Pension Scheme, Welfare Scheme, Press Identity Cards and accreditation processes, and the Manipur State Journalist Awards Schemes.

Sessions on the "Manipur State Journalist Awards Scheme" and "Manipur Working Journalists Welfare Scheme" were conducted by Shri T Ramesh Singh, Additional Director (IPR), and Km Ph. Sheityamala Devi, Deputy Director, DIPR, respectively. Shri Ningthoujam Roshan Singh, Assistant Publicity Officer (Press), DIPR, gave presentations on the "Manipur Working Journalists Pension Scheme" and "Granting of DIPR Press Cards to Working Journalists". The programme concluded with an interactive session between media personnel and DIPR officials, including the Director, Additional Director, Deputy Director, and APO (Press).

## NFR Strengthens Healthcare Infrastructure with Major Upgrades in 2025-26

**MALIGAON, 30 APRIL, 2026:**

Reinforcing its commitment to providing quality healthcare services to railway beneficiaries, Northeast Frontier Railway (NFR) has undertaken significant initiatives to upgrade medical infrastructure and enhance patient care across its network during the financial year 2025-26. In a major push towards modernization of healthcare facilities, several advanced medical equipments have been installed across key railway hospitals. The Divisional Railway Hospital at Katihar has been equipped with a Digital X-ray



system and a Fully Automated Auto Analyzer, substantially improving diagnostic accuracy and efficiency. At Rangapara North, a CR System X-Ray Machine has been commissioned, further strengthening diagnostic capabilities in the region. The Central Hospital at Maligaon has witnessed extensive upgrades with the installation of cutting-edge systems such as the Lasotronix Laser Diode, Super Inductive Physiotherapy System and a

modern Steam Sterilizer. These additions are expected to significantly enhance treatment quality and patient outcomes. In terms of infrastructure development, the Central Hospital at Maligaon has undergone notable improvements. A new Post Graduate Doctors' Hostel and Dormitory has been inaugurated, providing better residential facilities for medical professionals. Additionally, semi cabins have been renovated and key wards including Female Surgical, Orthopaedic Wards and the Burn Unit have been upgraded to ensure improved patient care and comfort. A major achievement during the year has

been the successful establishment of a Haemodialysis Unit at Central Hospital, Maligaon under Public-Private Partnership (PPP) mode. This facility marks a significant step in strengthening critical care services and will greatly benefit patients requiring regular dialysis treatment. These initiatives reflect NFR's continuous efforts to modernize its healthcare system, improve medical accessibility and ensure high standards of treatment for its beneficiaries. Northeast Frontier Railway remains committed to further strengthening its healthcare infrastructure in the coming years.



## Kanpur Police bust ₹125 crore cyber fraud, 8 held including bank staff

**KANPUR (UP): (APR 30)**

Kanpur Police on Thursday busted a high-tech cyber fraud syndicate and arrested its eight members, including five bank officials, for allegedly facilitating mule accounts and hawala transactions worth Rs 125 crore across the country, officials said. The action was initiated after alerts received through the National Cybercrime Reporting Portal (NCRP), following which the Barra police uncovered a well-organized network involved in cyber fraud, 'digital arrest' scams and routing illicit funds through fake firms and trust accounts. Police Commissioner Raghuraj Lal said the gang handled proceeds from multiple cybercrimes nationwide, and its links have emerged in at least 17 such cases.

## Swasth Haryana is the Foundation of Viksit Haryana- Chief Minister

**CHANDIGARH, APRIL 30**

Haryana Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini on Thursday underscored that a healthy population is the cornerstone of a developed state, asserting that "Swasth Haryana" is essential for achieving the vision of "Viksit Haryana." Addressing a two-day National Conference on best and replicable practices in the health sector in Chandigarh, he reiterated the state government's strong commitment to expanding and modernising public healthcare systems to ensure accessible, affordable, and quality services for all citizens. Highlighting the government's financial commitment, the Chief Minister said that approximately ₹14,000 crore has been allocated to the health sector in the current financial year, marking a 32.89% increase over the previous year. He noted that the state's health budget has seen a dramatic rise over the past decade—from ₹2,646 crore in 2014 to ₹10,500 crore in

**Health Budget Increased by 298% Since 2014, says Nayab Singh Saini**  
**CM addresses Two-Day National Conference on Best and Replicable Practices in Public Healthcare**



Haryana Chief Minister, Sh. Nayab Singh Saini addressing the gathering during the National Summit on Innovation and Inclusivity: Best Practices Shaping India's Health Future, at Chandigarh on April 30, 2026.

2025-26—an increase of nearly 298%. This, he said, reflects the government's focused and sustained efforts to strengthen healthcare delivery across Haryana. Describing the conference as a significant milestone, Saini said it serves as a vital platform for sharing innovative ideas and successful models from across the country. He expressed confidence that discussions at the event would contribute meaningfully to shaping the future of India's public health system. The conference also witnessed the presence of Union Health Minister Jagat Prakash Nadda as the chief guest, along with senior officials from the Centre and various states. The Chief Minister outlined several key initiatives undertaken by the state government. Among them is the Care Companion Programme, designed to train patient attendants in basic caregiving skills. So far, training has been conducted at 188 centres, with participants connected through a WhatsApp-based mobile care service for continued guidance and support. He also highlighted the success of digital health initiatives such

as e-Sanjeevani, which enables tele-consultations at Ayushman Arogya Mandirs. Currently, over 2,200 tele-consultations are conducted daily, allowing patients in rural areas to access specialist care from premier institutions like PGI Chandigarh. Additionally, platforms like U-WIN and eVIN have streamlined vaccination tracking and vaccine supply chain management, ensuring sustained immunisation coverage across the state. Addressing the shortage of medical professionals, Saini said the government has committed to establishing at least one medical college in every district. The number of medical colleges has increased from six in 2014 to 17 currently, while MBBS seats have risen significantly from 700 to 2,710. Parallel expansion has also been undertaken in nursing, physiotherapy, and paramedical education to strengthen the healthcare

workforce. Quality improvement in healthcare institutions has also been a major focus. A total of 1,479 health facilities in Haryana have been certified under National Quality Assurance Standards, with the goal of delivering world-class healthcare services close to citizens' homes. In maternal and child healthcare, the state has made notable progress. Modern maternal and child health wings are being set up in all district hospitals. Institutional deliveries have reached 98.80%, contributing to a decline in maternal and infant mortality rates. Impressively, full immunisation coverage has exceeded 100%, reflecting comprehensive outreach and service delivery. The Chief Minister also spoke about the 'Nirogi Haryana' initiative, under which nearly one crore citizens from Antyodaya families have undergone health screening.



## 6 drown after cruise boat with 30 onboard sinks in Madhya Pradesh dam; rescue on

**Emergency response teams rushed to the site and managed to rescue 15 people from the water, while four bodies have been recovered so far.**

A festive outing turned into a major disaster at Bargi Dam after a cruise carrying approximately 30 tourists capsized in the Narmada River backwaters. According to initial reports, the vessel was navigating the water when it was suddenly struck by powerful winds, causing it to lose balance and sink, leading to the loss of six lives. As per the authorities, the vessel sank in the dam after a sudden change in the weather was witnessed. The change triggered powerful winds that hit the vessel, leading to the tragic accident. As soon as

the news came to light, the emergency response teams rushed to the site and managed to rescue 15 people from the water. The collector of Jabalpur, Raghendra Singh, along with a senior police officer, is present at the spot, and under their supervision, rescue operations are presently ongoing. The officials confirmed to India Today that all the people who were rescued have been moved to local hospitals for treatment.

According to sources, the state authorities dispatched the State Disaster Response Force (SDRF) along with other specialised rescue units, who are presently working hard to trace the other passengers who were onboard the vessel from the reservoir's backwaters. The search is underway to locate the rest nine people.

## UAE left OPEC due to low size of oil quota: Ex-envoy Navdeep Suri

NEW DELHI

The UAE had been thinking of leaving the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) cartel for the last five years as the oil quota allotted to the country by the Saudi Arabia-dominated group was not considered sufficient, according to Navdeep Singh Suri, India's former Ambassador to the United Arab Emirates and Egypt.

In an exclusive interview with IANS, Suri said: "There were indications as early as July 2021 that they were not happy with the quota that was allocated to them, about 2.7 million barrels per day. And they had said that if the quota is not raised, they might consider leaving." "Eventually, the quota was raised to 3.4 million. But now, the UAE has invested quite a lot over the last few years in its production capacity. I think by next year.

# India and Italy expand defence ties, explore deepening industrial cooperation

NEW DELHI

India and Italy explored prospects for further developing industrial cooperation in the defence sector during a meeting between Defence Minister Rajnath Singh and his Italian counterpart Guido Crosetto in New Delhi on Thursday. Both ministers discussed ways to further develop mutually beneficial defence industrial cooperation under India's Atmanirbhar Bharat programme and Italy's defence cooperation initiative.

The two sides also exchanged a Bilateral Military Cooperation Plan (MCP) 2026-27 regarding military engagements between the armed forces of India and Italy.

"Happy to have welcomed my Italian counterpart Mr Guido Crosetto and held extensive talks with him in Delhi today. We discussed a wide range of regional and global issues including the current situation in West Asia.



We also discussed the avenues to further develop mutually beneficial defence industrial cooperation under India's Atmanirbhar Bharat programme and Italy's defence cooperation initiative. A Bilateral Military Cooperation Plan (MCP) 2026-27 was also exchanged regarding military engagements between the Armed forces of both countries," Singh

posted on X. Describing his meeting with Singh as "cordial and fruitful", Crosetto stated that several regional and global issues, including the current situation in the Middle East, were also discussed. "Cordial and fruitful meeting in India with my counterpart Shri Rajnath Singh. We discussed a wide range of regional

and global issues, including the current situation in the Middle East. During the meeting, we also delved into prospects for further developing industrial cooperation in the defence sector, based on shared interests and mutual benefit. Finally, the Bilateral Military Cooperation Plan 2026-2027 was exchanged, concerning commitments and collaborative activities between our Armed Forces," Italy's Ministry of Defence quoted Crosetto as saying.

Earlier in the day, the visiting minister laid a wreath at the National War Memorial and paid tribute to the brave soldiers who made the supreme sacrifice in service of the nation. Italy's Ministry of Defence has highlighted that the defence cooperation between Italy and India has gained further momentum following Singh's visit to Rome in October 2023. "Minister Crosetto's visit to India underscores the willingness of both countries to expand

existing cooperation and explore new areas of collaboration, particularly within the framework of industrial partnership," it stated.

Italy mentioned that the signing of India-EU Defence and Strategic Partnership in January 2026 signals increasing strategic convergence and has provided further impetus to defence industrial cooperation in areas of mutual interest.

According to the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA), initially, the defence ties between both nations were focused on import of defence equipment to India which has now expanded to include training, industry cooperation, including export of defence equipment, sharing of information, port calls, maritime exercises, maritime security, etc.

During his visit to Italy in 2023, Rajnath Singh had held discussions with Crosetto and both sides had signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on defence cooperation.



## South Korea and Australia agree to enhance cooperation on stable energy supplies

SEOUL

Top diplomats of South Korea and Australia held talks Thursday and agreed to enhance cooperation to ensure stable supplies of diesel and other energy resources amid global supply disruptions caused by the ongoing crisis in the Middle East.

South Korea's Foreign Minister Cho Hyun and his Australian counterpart, Penny Wong, countered a joint statement during their meeting in Seoul, covering high-level exchanges, economic security, defence cooperation and regional security issues.

"The ROK and Australia share deep concern over the situation in the Middle East and its consequences for our region, including impacts on energy, resources and other important commodities," the governments said in a joint statement. The ROK is the acronym of South Korea's official name, the Republic of Korea, Yonhap news agency reported.

The two sides reaffirmed their commitment "to working together to strengthen energy resource security, including efforts to maintain a stable, secure and reliable supply of diesel and other liquid fuels, energy resource commodities, including liquefied natural gas (LNG) and condensate."

They also promised to "no-

tify and consult each other on any potential disruptions as far as practicable," the statement read.

The two sides also vowed to deepen regional cooperation, accelerate energy transition, address unjustified import and export restrictions, and support open trade arrangements for energy resources and liquid fuels so as to strengthen energy supply chain resilience.

Australia is South Korea's largest LNG supplier and one of its key suppliers of condensate and critical minerals, while South Korea is one of Australia's major suppliers of diesel and a key supplier of refined petroleum products.

The conflict in the Middle East, which began in late February following the US-Israeli strikes on Iran, has escalated into a broader war, disrupting global supply chains and rattling markets, as the Strait of Hormuz, a key energy logistics route in the region, has effectively been shut. South Korea relies heavily on overseas supplies to meet its energy needs, while it is a major exporter of refined petroleum products.

During the talks, Cho and Wong also discussed ways to expand cooperation in the defence industry by building on momentum from a South Korean defence firm's establishment of the first overseas manufacturing hub in Australia, the ministry said.

## 'Humanitarian conditions deteriorate in Afghanistan due to clashes with Pakistan'

KABUL

Renewed border clashes between troops of Afghanistan and Pakistan have deteriorated humanitarian conditions in eastern Afghanistan, according to the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), local media reported on Thursday.

At least seven people were killed, and 79 others were injured in airstrikes and shelling in Afghanistan's Asadabad city and parts of Kunar province on April 27. The violence has caused damage to civilian infrastructure, including a fuel station, parts of a university dormitory, a religious affairs office, and a drug rehabilitation centre, according to the OCHA. The agency stated that such destruction



is further affecting already fragile public services, Afghanistan's leading news agency, Khaama Press, reported. OCHA stated that increasing damage to civilian facilities, especially health centres and schools, has been reported in recent weeks.

According to the agency, over 10,000 have been displaced in eastern and southeastern Af-

ghanistan due to ongoing clashes since February. Large-scale displacements have been witnessed in provinces, including Kunar, Nangarhar, and Khost, forcing local residents to flee with limited access to shelter, food, and medical care.

According to OCHA, at least 19 health facilities have been shut, suspended, or are func-

tioning at reduced capacity, impacting around 78,000 people. Water supply systems in several villages have also been disrupted, increasing the risk of disease outbreaks. More than 13,000 students have been affected in Kunar and Nangarhar as dozens of schools have been damaged, Khaama Press reported.

OCHA warned that continued insecurity, infrastructure damage, and limited humanitarian access are exacerbating the crisis and delaying recovery for impacted people.

Aid agencies have stressed that there is an urgent need for immediate relief as well as reconstruction and rehabilitation of damaged infrastructure, including schools, clinics, and water systems, to restore basic services.

## Former Afghan President Karzai raises alarm over UN report on education

KABUL

Former Afghanistan President, Hamid Karzai, on Thursday raised serious concerns over a recent analysis by the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF) which warned that Afghanistan risks losing up to 20,000 women teachers and 5,400 healthcare workers by 2030 amid continuing restrictions on girls' education and women's employment in the country.

The UN agency report also indicated that if the ban persists until 2030, more than two million girls in Afghanistan will be deprived of their right to education beyond primary school.

"Expressing deep concern over this matter, I would like to point out that the continuation of the ban on education and the



closure of the doors of schools and universities to girls will lead to the weakening of national capacity, creating severe needs and dependency on the outside for Afghanistan," Karzai wrote on X while reacting to the report.

The former President emphasised that Afghanistan's challenges must be addressed by its own educated citizens, underscoring the importance of equal access to education for both girls and boys.

## US military claims 42 vessels intercepted in ongoing blockade of Iranian ports

WASHINGTON

The US military has announced that its forces have intercepted 42 vessels as part of its blockade to prevent maritime commerce from entering or exiting Iranian ports. "Today, US forces achieved a significant milestone after successfully redirecting the 42nd commercial vessel attempting to violate the blockade," US Central Commander Brad Cooper said in a statement posted on social media X on Wednesday (local time).

He highlighted that the 41 tankers currently stranded as a result of the blockade hold an estimated 69 million barrels of oil, which is over 6 billion US dollars in potential revenue, further crippling Iran's ability to profit from its oil exports, reports Xinhua



news agency. "The blockade is highly effective, and US forces remain fully committed to total enforcement," Cooper said.

Iran condemned the seizure as a "flagrant act of piracy." The country's main military command, Khatam al-Anbiya Central Headquarters, explained that armed forces did not intervene at the time because the crew members' families were on board. The continued US maritime "piracy and banditry" in the form of naval blockade against Iran will soon be met with.

## Clandestine Khalistan push in Malaysia raises alarm

NEW DELHI

Malaysia has now become a hub for the pro-Khalistan elements and latter is purportedly carrying out its propaganda and also plotting attacks in India. The ISI took into consideration various aspects before moving the pro-Khalistan team into Malaysia and one of priorities for them was to position them, in any nation with close proximity to India.

This is yet another attempt by these elements to revive Khalistan movement in India. The other factor that the ISI took into account is that countries like Canada and the United Kingdom are no longer feasible for operations.

The Indian agencies are closely watching the development unfolding in Malaysia. An official said that the area to watch out for is the narcotic smuggling route. This will



be tapped by the ISI and these Khalistani elements to push drugs into India. The propaganda is not too much of a worry, as of now, but narco smuggling very much is, the official added.

Smuggling drugs into Punjab has become harder owing to the massive crackdown by the Indian agencies. Further attempts to smuggle narcotics using drones had achieved success at first, but today the detection rate by the agencies is much

higher. An Intelligence Bureau official says that the Malaysia module would not be as brazen as the ones we got to witness in Canada or the UK.

These persons will not take to the streets and chant anti-India slogans or indulge in vandalism. The ISI does not want this module to have a radical approach and come under the lens. Instead, it has suggested a sophisticated operation that would be hard for the agencies to trace.

The Malaysia module would be relatively smaller in nature. The members would be controlled remotely from Pakistan. Currently it is being handled by one Pardeep Singh Khalsa. He had recruited and radicalised several youth before sending them to Malaysia. The job of these persons would focus largely on raising funds discreetly and also smuggling narcotics into India. Another official said that the ISI wants to achieve something big in Punjab and hence would want this module to operate in a clandestine manner. The official added that the primary agenda would be to raise funds. The funding sources are gradually drying up owing to multiple drug busts in Punjab. Further the donors too have turned away as they have realised that the so-called movement is not meant to address a cause, but indulge in terror, the official also added.

## Former Indian envoy terms Iranian and US blockage of Strait of Hormuz 'illegal'

NEW DELHI

Iran and the US's blockage of the Strait of Hormuz is "illegal, and the breakdown of the rule of law and rules-based order", India's former Ambassador to the UAE and Egypt Navdeep Singh Suri said on Thursday.

In an interview with IANS, Suri stated that the recent developments in West Asia have a direct impact on the Indian economy. He called for seeing Strait of Hormuz going back to the status it enjoyed prior to February 28, when the US and Israel attacked Iran.

On how he assesses India's role in the Iran-US war, he said: "We are obviously very concerned about the developments. We are seeing that they have a direct impact on the Indian economy. From our perspective, I think, speaking at a very personal level, I think that you are seeing multiple breakdowns of

the rule of law, of the rules-based order. The US and Israeli attack on Iran was illegal. Iran's attack on its neighbours as a retaliatory step was illegal. Iran's blockage of the Strait of Hormuz is illegal, and the US blockading the blockage is illegal. So, I think, know, we really, we should be as a major country in the neighbourhood, we should be very concerned about this kind of lawlessness or a might-is-right policy that various countries in the region are adopting."

The tensions in West Asia escalated after the US and Israel carried out a joint military operation against Iran on February 28. The joint military strikes killed Supreme Leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, triggering a large-scale military operation by Iran against Israel and the US bases in the Gulf nations. The conflict also led to the closure of the Strait of Hormuz, which triggered a global energy



crisis. Iran and the US reached a two-week ceasefire starting on April 8. Later, the two nations held the first round of talks on April 11-12 aimed at ending the conflict. However, the talks collapsed after 21 hours of negotiations.

Asked about how he assesses the current situation in the conflict in West Asia, the former envoy said: "If you are looking at purely a military perspective, then obviously, the US is a superpower by any defi-

nition. Israel is the regional superpower if the US is the global superpower, and when the two of them together attack a country like Iran, which has been under sanctions for 47 years, it doesn't take a genius to guess that the military result will definitely be in favour of the US and Israel. But, beyond the battle that has been fought is the larger war, and I think that Iran, by virtue of executing its stranglehold on the Strait of Hormuz, has won a lot of tactical victories. So, at this point, I would say that strategically Iran seems to be the greater beneficiary or seems to be ahead, whereas tactically the US has won the military victories."

He stated that Iran, due to the conflict, has become aware of the leverage it holds by virtue of its chokehold on the Strait of Hormuz and urged India and other nations to act in concert so that the situation would be as it was

before February 28. On the future of the Strait of Hormuz, he said: "I would love to see the Strait of Hormuz going back to the status that it enjoyed before the 28th of February, when the US and Israel attacked Iran,

which means that it was an international waterway lying between Iran and Oman, and ships could go back and forth freely in an unrestricted manner. But, I think what this war has done is that it's made Iran aware of the leverage that it enjoys by virtue of its chokehold on Hormuz and having realised the tremendous global impact that this control has, I think Iran might be reluctant to give it up. So, you may see a different regime come into place where there's some form of tacit acknowledgement of Iranian, not sovereignty, but a degree of control going forward. I do not know what form or shape it will take, certainly, if you look at

the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea, it treats these international waterways in a certain fashion, and it is illegal for any country to restrict access or to apply tolls. But as I said, you are looking at a completely new situation."

"You are seeing a breakdown of international law and Iran is not a signatory to the UN Convention on the Law of Sea, nor is the United States for that matter and so both of them are acting in unilateral ways and so I'm concerned that Iran may end up controlling the Strait of Hormuz in a way that it is either able to apply tolls or management fees or maintenance charges or some other form of taxation that raises the cost of shipping for a country like India, which imports so much of its stuff from the Gulf and which exports, the Gulf is also a major market for Indian exports. So, I think we will end up as one of the losers."



## Russia has no 'aggressive intentions' towards Europe: Medvedev

MOSCOW

Deputy Chairman of Russian Security Council, Dmitry Medvedev said on Thursday that Moscow has no "aggressive intentions" towards European nations, local media reported.

In his remarks at the 'Knowledge First' federal educational marathon, Medvedev, a former President and Prime Minister of Russia, stated, "As for Europe, we have no aggressive intentions. But nevertheless, this flywheel keeps rotating, an enormous number of weapons are manufactured, and almost all the leaders of Europe, including the major states, keep saying that 'we do understand everything, we need to be ready to repel the aggression, the war is inevitable,'" Russia's leading news agency Tass reported.

He further stated, "You all do understand where this road leads to, no matter how unfortunate it sounds."

Medvedev stated that "if someone repeats every day that the war is inevitable, then it will eventually begin." He mentioned that there are a number of reasons and prerequisites and urged lawmakers in the world to "cool down and try to get onto the path of constructive negotiations," Tass reported.

Last week, the European Union (EU) Council adopted 20th package of measures comprising 120 further individual listings and economic

sanctions, targeting key sectors which fuel Russia's military action against Ukraine. In a statement, the EU stated that the package aims to cripple Russia's economy and war machine and demonstrates EU's "unwavering support for Ukraine and its people" in resisting the Russian offensive and brutal campaign targeting civilian infrastructure.

EU's High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, Kaja Kallas, stated, "On top of the €90-billion loan for Ukraine, we have also adopted the 20th sanctions package. The EU will provide Ukraine with what it needs to hold its ground while we inhibit those enabling Russia's illegal aggression. Russia's war economy is under growing strain, while Ukraine is getting a major boost. We must keep up this pressure until Putin understands his war leads nowhere." The EU has offered support to Ukraine and imposed sanctions against Russia since the conflict between Moscow and Kyiv began in 2022. In October, citing the drone incursions and other airspace violations, the European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen said that Europe is facing a "hybrid warfare" and must respond to these actions. Calling it a "deliberate and targeted grey zone campaign against Europe," she said that these incidents are not random harassment but a "coherent and escalating campaign" to unsettle people.



## Big EPFO update: Minimum pension may rise 7.5 times, ATM withdrawals soon

The government is considering a major hike in the minimum pension under the Employees' Pension Scheme (EPS-95), with proposals to raise it from ₹1,000 to ₹7,500. At the same time, the EPFO is planning to introduce ATM-based withdrawals, making it easier and faster for subscribers to access their funds.

The EPFO is also likely to offer an interest rate of 8.25% for account holders, pending approval from the Finance Ministry. Meanwhile, the organisation has reported strong performance in 2025-26, settling 8.31 crore claims, up from 6.01 crore last year, with faster processing driven by increased automation and digital initiatives.

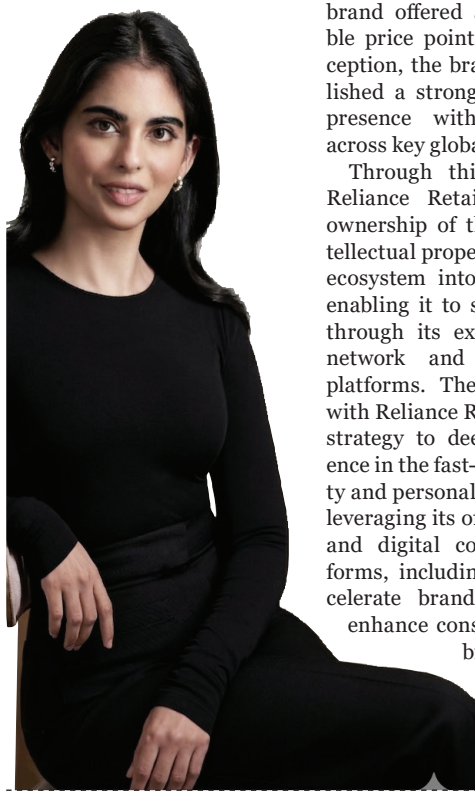
To further simplify processes, EPFO has launched the E-PRAAPTI portal, enabling users to activate inactive PF accounts and link them through Aadhaar, enhancing ease of access for millions of subscribers.

# Reliance Retail buys Priyanka Chopra's Anomaly brand

MUMBAI (INDIA), 30 APRIL 2026:

Acquires 'Anomaly' trademarks and digital assets to drive India and global growth To accelerate Omnichannel scale-up across retail network and Tira

Reliance Retail Limited (RRL) today announced the acquisition of Priyanka's global haircare brand Anomaly, including its trademarks, brand assets, and digital properties. The acquisition marks a significant expansion of Reliance Retail's



fast-growing beauty portfolio and reinforces its commitment to building and scaling high-growth consumer brands in India and globally. Founded by the global actor and entrepreneur in 2021, Anomaly is a clean, vegan, high-performance haircare brand offered at an accessible price point. Since its inception, the brand has established a strong international presence with distribution across key global markets.

Through this acquisition, Reliance Retail brings full ownership of the brand's intellectual property and digital ecosystem into its portfolio, enabling it to scale Anomaly through its expansive retail network and omnichannel platforms. The move aligns with Reliance Retail's broader strategy to deepen its presence in the fast-growing beauty and personal care category, leveraging its offline footprint and digital commerce platforms, including Tira, to accelerate brand growth and enhance consumer accessibility.

Ms. Isha Ambani, Executive Director, Reliance Retail Limited is a subsidiary of Reliance Retail

Priyanka will continue to play an integral role in the brand's evolution as Creative Director, driving innovation, brand vision, and product development. She said, "This is a defining moment for Anomaly. What began as a deeply personal journey has grown into a brand with real purpose and global ambition, and Reliance Retail's acquisition marks an exciting new chapter. Their scale, retail expertise, and commitment to innovation will allow us to bring Anomaly to far more consumers in India and around the world. I'm especially excited to be working alongside the inimitable Isha Ambani,

whose leadership I value tremendously. In my new role as Creative Director, I remain deeply involved in guiding Anomaly's evolution, ensuring we continue to grow and innovate while staying true to what we set out to build from the very beginning." This strategic alignment underscores Reliance Retail's continued focus on curating and scaling future-forward consumer brands within its beauty portfolio, while combining global brand equity with its market expertise, retail scale, and omnichannel capabilities to unlock the next phase of growth for Anomaly across India and international markets.

Ventures Limited (RRVL), the holding company of all the retail companies under the RIL (Reliance Industries Limited) group. RRVL, through its subsidiaries and affiliates, operates an integrated omnichannel network of 20160 stores and digital commerce platforms across Grocery,

Consumer Electronics and Fashion & Lifestyle and Pharma diverse consumption baskets. RRVL has a registered customer base of over 387 million. RRVL reported a consolidated turnover of ₹ 3,70,026 crore and EBITDA of ₹ 27,033 crore for the year ended March 31, 2026.

# L&T exits Hyderabad Metro venture, sells full stake

HYDERABAD, APRIL 30, 2026



Larsen & Toubro (L&T), on 29th April, signed an agreement with Hyderabad Metro Rail Limited (HMRL), a fully state-owned enterprise of the Government of Telangana, to divest its entire stake in L&T Metro Rail (Hyderabad) Limited (LTMRL). The divestment represents a value-driven monetisation of a mature infrastructure asset and is aligned with L&T's broader strategy of exiting the development projects portfolio and unlocking capital for redeployment in its core engineering and technology-led businesses. Hyderabad Metro, operated by LTMRL, is one of the largest Public-Private Partnership (PPP) metro rail

projects in the world. The project spans approximately 69 km across three corridors and has been a landmark urban infrastructure initiative undertaken in partnership with the Government of Telangana. Developed and executed by L&T, it represents a benchmark in engineering excellence, urban mobility solutions, and sustainable infrastructure. The project has significantly enhanced connectivity in Hyderabad and

has contributed to economic growth and urban development in the region. Post acquisition, HMRL has plans to expand the metro network which will further strengthen this asset's presence in India's fast-growing urban transit sector. Commenting on the development, Mr S N Subrahmanyan, Chairman & Managing Director - L&T, said: "This transaction reflects L&T's continued focus on creating

long-term value and strengthening its portfolio of core, technology-led businesses. Hyderabad Metro Rail project is a world-class asset and a good example of our ability to deliver large-scale infrastructure that transforms cities and improves quality of life. We are confident that under the stewardship of the Government of Telangana, the project will continue to grow and create long-term value for all stakeholders."

It has played a pivotal role in enhancing urban mobility and connectivity in the city. We are proud to have been part of this transformative journey and are confident that the company will scale new heights going forward", said Mr D K Sen, Advisor to L&T CMD, Development Projects.

### Background:

Larsen & Toubro is a USD 30 billion Indian multinational engaged in EPC Projects, Hi-Tech Manufacturing, and Services, operating across multiple geographies. A strong, customer-focussed approach and the constant quest for top-class quality have enabled L&T to attain and sustain leadership in its major lines of business for eight decades.



## Rupee sinks to record low as oil spike and Fed stance pile on pressure

The rupee fell to a record low of 95.23 against the US dollar on Thursday, hit by a surge in crude oil prices and a hawkish stance from the US Federal Reserve. Rising oil costs have increased India's import bill and demand for dollars, while stronger US yields have added pressure on emerging market currencies. Brent crude climbed above \$125 per barrel amid geopolitical tensions, further weighing on the rupee, which has declined over 5% so far this year. Analysts warn that a weaker rupee could push up inflation and trigger capital outflows, with global cues and oil prices likely to dictate its near-term trend.

# Bajaj Finserv posts strong FY26 growth, declares dividend

Bajaj Finserv has wrapped up BFY26 with steady growth across its lending and insurance businesses, along with a milestone move in its ownership structure. The company's board has also announced a dividend, giving shareholders a small but meaningful reward at a time when the group completes 100 years. The board of Bajaj Finserv has recommended a dividend of Rs 1.50 per share, which includes a special payout to mark the Bajaj Group's centenary year. The total payout stands at Rs 240 crore, higher

than Rs 160 crore in the previous year. One of the biggest highlights for the year is the group's move to take full ownership of its insurance arms. Bajaj Finserv, along with its promoter entities, completed the acquisition of Allianz's stake, making both its general and life insurance businesses fully owned. This marks the end of a long-standing joint venture and signals a shift towards complete control over strategy and operations. The company reported its highest-ever consolidated total income of Rs 150,530 crore



for FY26, with profit after tax at Rs 9,801 crore. Its lending arm, Bajaj Finance, continued to perform well. Loan bookings crossed 50 million during the year, while assets under man-

agement rose to over Rs 5 lakh crore. Profit also saw healthy growth, despite higher provisions. The insurance businesses showed mixed trends. Bajaj General Insurance maintained its position among the top private insurers, though higher claims impacted margins. Bajaj Life Insurance, on the other hand, improved profitability, driven by better product mix and cost control. Bajaj Finserv is also investing in newer areas such as health, digital platforms and asset management. These businesses are still in the

investment phase, leading to higher losses for the year, but the company sees them as long-term growth drivers. It has also set up a new arm for alternate investments, focusing on early-stage equity and real estate opportunities. Overall, Bajaj Finserv's performance reflects a mix of strong core growth and ongoing investments for the future. While the numbers remain robust, the company is clearly balancing expansion with long-term strategy as it steps into a new phase with full ownership of its insurance ventures.

# Jio Emerges as the Undisputed 5G Network Leader in Warangal

HYDERABAD, 30 APRIL 2026



Following the latest Independent Drive Test (IDT) conducted by the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) in March 2026, Reliance Jio Infocomm Ltd. (RJIL) has officially recorded the most superior and reliable 5G network performance in Warangal and Telangana. Cementing its position as the preferred network of choice, Jio outperformed all major competitors—Airtel, Vodafone Idea (VIL), and BSNL—across data speeds, voice quality, latency, and signal strength.

Jio users in the region experience unparalleled internet speeds. According to the TRAI report for AP & Telangana Telecom Circle, Jio recorded the

highest overall average download speed of 260.01 Mbps in auto-selection mode. This is significantly faster than its closest competitor, Airtel, which averaged 161.18 Mbps, while VIL and BSNL lagged far behind at 27.83 Mbps and 8.32 Mbps, respectively.

At critical hotspots across Warangal, Jio's performance is even more exceptional, de-

livering an average download speed of 308.92 Mbps. In 5G-specific tests, Jio reached blazing peak average speeds of 471.60 Mbps at the Hanamkonda Bus Stand and 456.67 Mbps at Reddy Colony.

### Unmatched Voice and Speech Quality

Jio continues to offer crystal-clear calling experiences, securing the highest Mean

Opinion Score (MOS) for speech quality at 4.46, comfortably beating Airtel (3.98), VIL (3.76), and BSNL (2.97). Furthermore, a dominant 86.74% of all Jio voice samples were rated as "Excellent", compared to Airtel's 82.79% and VIL's 48.81%. Jio also recorded the lowest silence call rate during mobile-to-mobile calls at just 0.29%, proving high stability during peer-to-peer conversations.

For gamers, streamers, and real-time application users, Jio provides the most responsive network with the lowest overall 50th percentile latency of just 21.94 ms. Competitors struggled to match this responsiveness, with Airtel recording 38.36 ms, VIL 43.70 ms, and BSNL 57.81 ms. When it comes to signal penetration, Jio logged the

highest percentage of "Excellent" signal strength in both voice (46% vs Airtel's 40% and VIL's 27%) and data testing (24% vs Airtel's 13% and VIL's 14%).

Jio guarantees a seamless connection when it matters most. Across Warangal's major hotspots—including Kakatiya University, NIT Warangal, and the Railway Station—Jio maintained a flawless 100% call setup success rate coupled with a perfect 0.00% drop call rate. Overall call setup time on Jio's network across the LSA was a lightning-fast 0.77 seconds.

With these unmatched metrics verified by the nation's telecom regulator, Reliance Jio firmly establishes itself as the fastest, most reliable, and highest-quality digital lifeline for the citizens of Warangal.

# Venu Vinod named IGBC Hyderabad Co-Chairman, to boost green building push

HYDERABAD, 30 APRIL 2026:



The Indian Green Building Council (IGBC), part of the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII), has announced the appointment of Mr. Venu Vinod, Managing Director of Cybercity Builders and Developers Pvt Ltd., as the Co-Chairman of the IGBC Hyderabad Chapter. His appointment comes at a time when Hyderabad continues to emerge as one of India's leading hubs for sustainable urban development and green building adoption.

With over two decades of experience and expertise in the real estate sector, Mr. Venu Vinod has been instrumental in driving environmentally responsible development practices. Under his leadership, Cybercity Builders and Developers Pvt Ltd. has consistently integrated sustainability principles into its projects, aligning with IGBC's green and net-zero frameworks to support a more sustainable built environment. A distinguished entrepreneur and a commerce graduate, with a business career spanning over four decades since 1982, he brings with him extensive cross-sectoral experience across real estate, engineering products, chemicals, and construction equipment. Hyderabad has played a pivotal role in advancing the green building movement, not only in Telangana but across the country. The city is home to a rapidly expanding portfolio of IGBC-certified green buildings across commercial, residential, IT parks, and institutional segments. Supported by progressive

government policies, strong industry participation, and increasing awareness among developers and consumers, Hyderabad has positioned itself as a benchmark city for sustainable construction practices in India.

Under Mr. Venu Vinod's leadership, Cybercity Builders & Developers has emerged as one of Hyderabad's leading real estate firms, recognised for its commitment to quality, innovation, and excellence. He is widely respected for his forward-looking approach, with a strong emphasis on sustainable development, future-ready design, and intelligent urban planning aligned with global benchmarks. We are confident that his leadership and experience will further strengthen the initiatives and impact of the IGBC Hyderabad Chapter.

In his new role, Mr. Venu Vinod will work closely, alongside Mr. Srinivasa Murthy, Chairman, IGBC Hyderabad Chapter, with the support from industry stakeholders, policymakers, and the IGBC community to accelerate the adoption of green building practices, promote net-zero concepts, and strengthen Hyderabad's leadership in sustainable urbanisation.



# Markets end lower as crude stays high, rupee hits record low

Stock markets ended lower on Thursday, as elevated crude oil prices and a weakening rupee kept investors cautious, even as selective buying in IT and pharma stocks limited the fall. The BSE Sensex declined 582.86 points, or 0.75%, to close at 76,913.50, while the Nifty 50 fell 180.10 points, or 0.74%, to end just below the 24,000 mark at 23,997.55.

### OIL, RUPEE PRESSURE DOMINATE SENTIMENT

Market sentiment remained under pressure through the day as crude oil prices stayed elevated. Brent crude was around \$116.08 per barrel, while WTI crude was at \$106.61. At the same time, the Indian rupee hit a record low of 95.33 during the session before recovering slightly to close at 94.91. The currency weakness added to concerns over inflation and capital outflows. Vinod Nair, Head of Research, Geojit Investments Limited, said global and domestic factors combined to weigh on markets. "Global sentiment deteriorated sharply as US-Iran tensions escalated and major maritime shipping routes faced continued disruption," he said. "Brent crude crossed the \$120 per barrel mark for the first time in four years, intensifying inflation concerns and pressuring global risk assets." He added that rising oil prices are a key risk for India. "In India, rising oil prices weighed on the INR and revived worries about capital outflows and widening deficits, given the economy's heavy reliance on crude imports," he said. Nair also pointed to global monetary conditions as another headwind. "The Fed kept rates

unchanged but maintained a firm policy stance, supporting the dollar and tightening conditions for emerging markets," he said. This has made global capital flows more uncertain for markets like India.

### BROAD-BASED SELLING ACROSS SECTORS

Selling was seen across most sectors. Nifty Metal fell 2.12%, PSU Bank declined 1.68%, and Realty slipped 1.50%. FMCG was down 1.35%, while Financial Services fell 1.07%. Consumer Durables dropped 1.57%, Private Bank index declined 0.88%, and Auto index fell 0.64%. Oil & Gas index also slipped 0.63%. IT was the only sector to end in the green, rising 0.37%, while pharma stocks also saw selective buying. "Autos, banks, metals, and real estate led the decline, while IT and pharma saw selective defensive buying," Nair said.

### BROADER MARKETS AND VOLATILITY

The broader market remained weak, with Nifty Midcap 100 falling 0.98% and Nifty Smallcap 100 declining 0.48%. India VIX rose 5.86% to 18.46, indicating increased volatility and cautious sentiment. Markets did attempt a mild recovery in the latter half of the session, but gains were not sustained. A mild recovery toward the end of the session offered limited respite, and overall sentiment remained cautious ahead of the extended holiday weekend," Nair said.

### SENSEX STOCKS: GAINERS AND LOSERS

Among Sensex stocks, Sun Pharma rose 1.64%, Infosys gained 1.20%, Bajaj Finance added 0.98%, Adani Ports rose 0.98%, and Tech Mahindra gained 0.95%.



# Is Fiber the New Protein?

The non-digestible, gut-friendly nutrient has a huge impact on your overall health and more in common with protein than you may realize. Is fiber the new protein? Sort of — both should be permanent fixtures in your diet. Here's why.

## Is Fiber Just a Fad?

The term "fibermaxxing" has risen to epic proportion on social media, surpassing more than two-billion views in recent months. While overdoing on fiber can leave you with a stomachache, the call to action to eat more fiber is worthwhile, since most Americans fall short of meeting the daily recommendations. Most people eat less than 15 grams per day, but the bar is much higher. Women are advised to eat 25 grams of fiber a day and for men, a whopping 38 grams. This large fiber gap can be made smaller by adding more whole foods, including fruits, vegetables, grains, nuts, seeds and legumes, to meals and snacks.

From beverages to crunchy snack foods, fiber is being added to more foods than ever before for grab-and-go convenience.

## Fiber and Protein Parallels

Fiber and protein provide numerous health benefits, and that's not where the similarities end. Protein is an essential macronutrient, while fiber is only found in foods that are rich in carbohydrates — another essential macro. Regularly getting enough fiber can help lower "bad" LDL cholesterol, reducing the risk of cardiovascular disease. Swapping higher fat meats for leaner protein sources can help reduce intake of saturated fat, which also has a positive impact on heart health.

## The Benefits of Fiber (and Protein)

Both fiber and protein are known for their ability to increase satiety — meaning they make you feel fuller longer. Eating fiber and protein-filled foods will help keep your energy and blood sugar levels stable for longer periods of time. More stable levels can help with weight management by keeping hunger at bay. Fiber also benefits digestion by supporting regularity, plus soluble fiber helps promote the growth and flourishing of healthy gut bacteria. On the other hand, be careful not to consume too much protein or fiber right before exercise as slowed down digestion can lead to stomach discomfort during workouts. Fiber and protein are typically found in foods with other nutritional prowess, but when you are looking for an extra boost, they are both available as supplements. Protein and fiber powders can easily be added to all kinds of homemade recipes including smoothies, cold-pressed juices, stacked waters, baked goods, energy bites and oat bowls, just to name a few. Nowadays, protein-spiked coffees and fiber-enhanced sparkling beverages are also front and center on restaurant menus and stocked on store refrigerator shelves.

## Is Fiber Better Than Protein?

Protein still dominates the wellness universe, but fiber is catching up, fast! Why has fiber taken social media by storm? Perhaps it is the emphasis on gut health and its carryover effect to other body systems. A healthy microbiome is linked not only to stellar digestion, but also to improvements in nutrient absorption, immunity, skin and mood — appealing benefits to just about anyone. Protein intake is associated with muscle mass, plus it plays an integral role in skin health and immunity, just like fiber.

## How much fiber do you need?

According to the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics, women should aim for about 25 grams of fiber per day, while men should aim for about 38 grams. To calculate more exact numbers, the recommendation is 14 grams of fiber for every 1,000 calories.

When adding more fiber to your diet, there are two things to keep in mind: Increase fiber-regularity, plus soluble fiber helps promote the growth and flourishing of healthy gut bacteria. On the other hand, be careful not to consume too much protein or fiber right before exercise as slowed down digestion can lead to stomach discomfort during workouts. Fiber and protein are typically found in foods with other nutritional prowess, but when you are looking for an extra boost, they are both available as supplements. Protein and fiber powders can easily be added to all kinds of homemade recipes including smoothies, cold-pressed juices, stacked waters, baked goods, energy bites and oat bowls, just to name a few. Nowadays, protein-spiked coffees and fiber-enhanced sparkling beverages are also front and center on restaurant menus and stocked on store refrigerator shelves.

## Whole-Grain and Bran Cereal

Cereal can add a hefty amount

## Overnight Oats

I love starting the day with overnight oats made with rolled oats, chia seeds, regular milk and berries," says Mascha Davis, M.P.H., R.D.N., author of Eat Your Vitamins and founder of Nomadista Nutrition, who adds a spoonful of ground flaxseed too. "This combo delivers soluble and insoluble fiber for steady energy and digestion support," says Davis who also explains that oats and flax provide beta-glucan and lignans (great for cholesterol and hormone balance), chia adds extra fiber and omega-3s, while berries bring antioxidants plus even more fiber.

## Avocado Toast

As a small business owner and single mom of three, Malina Malkani M.S., R.D.N., C.D.N., owner of Malina Malkani Nutrition, and author of Safe and Simple Food Allergy Prevention likes to pack as much nutrition — and fiber — into breakfast as she can, since lunch is often a grab-and-go situation. For breakfast, Malkani's go-to is a slice of toasted whole-wheat sourdough topped with mashed avocado and a fried egg, served with fresh blackberries and a glass of 100-percent prune juice (which contains four grams of fiber per serving). "It's simple, satisfying and delivers a balance of protein, carbs and healthy fats, plus nearly half my daily fiber needs, all in one meal."

## Breakfast Bowl

Bonnie Taub-Dix, R.D.N., host of the Media Savvy Podcast, creator of BetterThanDieting.com and author of Read It Before You Eat It: Taking You from Label to Table makes a breakfast bowl from a medley of fresh berries, a few heaping spoons of Greek yogurt, a few tablespoons of cottage cheese and a hefty sprinkle of high-fiber cereal, along with a light sprinkle of granola. Although protein is an important part of breakfast to help sustain you, Taub-Dix explains, "Protein foods generally lack fiber so the addition of berries and high-fiber cereals help to add crunch and a combo of flavors, colors and textures."

of fiber at the start of your day. Drew Hemler, M.Sc., R.D., C.D.N., F.A.N.D., health education consultant opts for whole-grain and bran cereal topped with flaxseed, walnuts and fruit. According to Hemler, "It's satisfying because — based on ingredient amounts — it combines nearly 15 grams of fiber, 20 grams of protein and a good dose of heart-healthy fats, while also delivering key minerals like magnesium, potassium and zinc that most people fall short on." In addition, this combination helps regulate blood glucose and cholesterol levels, supports regular bowel movements when combined with adequate fluid intake and supports healthy gut

bacteria.

## Tuna Salad with Prunes

Charleston-based registered dietitian Lauren Manaker M.S., R.D.N., L.D likes adding diced prunes to tuna or chicken salad. "Not only does that give my classic lunchtime staple some fiber, but it also fuels my body with polyphenols, which are compounds known for their anti-inflammatory and protective effects, including in the gut," explains Manaker. "These polyphenols that are naturally found in prunes interact with gut microbes to produce bioactive metabolites that support anti-inflammatory benefits." Plus,

Manaker says that data suggests that prune consumption may be linked to bone health support, thanks to their unique nutrient profile that includes potassium, vitamin K, boron and other nutrients.

## Salad with Beans

Gena Seraita, M.S., R.D., C.D.N., Dietetics Internship Program Director at New York University always keeps canned beans as a pantry staple to boost the nutrition profile on lunch with little effort. Seraita makes a simple salad with beans and fresh vegetables like cucumber, peppers, onion and tomato, then drizzles with vinaigrette for a satisfying lunch. "Beans are a great source of fiber with just half a cup providing seven to nine grams, which is roughly 25 to 30 percent of the recommended daily intake of fiber," says Seraita. "Beans also contain a nice balance of soluble and insoluble fiber, which is important for overall gut health, feeding the 'good' bacteria with quality prebiotics that support the microbiome." Finally, these pulses are also a great source of plant protein; combined with fiber, they make for a satisfying meal.

## Grain Bowl

"Grain bowls are a favorite lunch, especially to use up leftovers from dinners," says Mandy Enright, the FOOD + MOVEMENT Dietitian, worksite wellness specialist and author of 30-Minute Weight Loss Cookbook: 100+ Quick and Easy Recipes for Sustainable Weight Loss. To make a grain bowl, Enright starts with a base of whole grains or lentils, adds leftover cooked or chopped raw vegetables, then tops it off with microgreens, chopped scallions or fresh herbs for an extra sprinkling of fiber.

## Quinoa Salad with Beans

Jackie Topol, M.S., R.D., pre-diabetes expert and culinary nutritionist, follows a plant-based diet and includes beans at many meals. Topol's favorite lunch is a salad made with quinoa, black beans, corn, tomato, avocado, red onion and a zesty cilantro-lime dressing served over mixed baby greens. "Quinoa and black beans are both good sources of fiber and protein, which helps keep me full and energized," says Topol. "The avocado adds heart-healthy fat, some fiber and richness to make the salad even more satisfying."

## Edamame

For a simple snack, Manaker opts for edamame sprinkled with sea salt and lemon zest because it contains a high amount of fiber. "One cup of shelled and cooked edamame offers eight grams of fiber — or about one-third of the recommended daily fiber amount," says Manaker. "It is also a complete source of protein, providing all nine essential amino acids, and one cup only contains 188 calories." It's quick to prepare and perfect for munching on during busy afternoons or as a pre-dinner snack.

## Prunes with Almonds

"Prunes are a surprisingly high-fiber fruit (plus great for bone health!) and pairing them with nuts adds extra fiber, protein and healthy fats for satiety," says Davis.

## Whole-Wheat Peanut Butter Toast

LeBlanc gets creative with her snack, choosing a slice of whole-wheat toast with peanut butter, warm frozen raspberries, a sprinkle of chia seeds and a drizzle of honey. "This snack packs in around 10 grams of fiber to keep you full, and microwaving the berries makes a naturally sweet syrup."

## Batch-Cooked Quinoa Bowls

Nashville-based Chelsea LeBlanc, R.D.N., owner of Chelsea LeBlanc Nutrition makes her dinner a no-brainer by batch cooking quinoa at the start of the week and using it to build easy, no-cook meals with whatever is on hand. "My go-to combo is quinoa, chickpeas, cucumbers, tomatoes, tzatziki, feta and chopped pistachios," says LeBlanc who says this combination packs over 13 grams of fiber, thanks to the mix of whole grains, vegetables, legumes and nuts. Like other RDs, LeBlanc keeps canned beans on hand as a pantry staple as they're an easy way to add both fiber and plant-based protein to any meal — no cooking required. Plus, a study found that "swapping in pulses like chickpeas, lentils, or beans in place of other proteins can help boost fiber and lower cholesterol," says LeBlanc.

## Sautéed Salmon with Sorghum and Vegetables

For dinner, Taub-Dix loves sautéed salmon chunks and a side of chopped sautéed vegetables mixed with sorghum. "The fiber comes from veggies included in the salad and side dish, as well as, from whole grains, like sorghum," says Taub-Dix who also adds fruit or chickpeas as a fiber source.

## Burgers or Meatloaf with Added Beans

"Dinner is often when fiber falls short, since many quick end-of-day meals lean heavy on protein and starch but light on plants," says Hemler. The answer: Mixing beans into dishes like burgers or meatloaf is an easy fix. "Just one-half cup of beans has around six to eight grams of fiber along with plant protein, potassium and magnesium," explains Hemler who adds that beans also stretch the meal, help balance blood sugar and support heart and gut health while making comfort foods more nutritious.

# Best Egg Substitutes for Every Recipe



## Top Egg Substitutes for Baking

If you're allergic to eggs, ran out of eggs or are trying to save money as egg prices soar, turn to our handy guide of egg replacements. Eggs serve many different purposes in baking and cooking; thus, we've broken out each egg substitute by use case scenario. If you're looking for a list of other common baking substitutions, head over to our Baking Substitutions Guide. Eggs bring flavor, structure, tenderness and leavening to baked goods. They provide moisture, protein and color,

and sometimes they're the glue that keeps crystal sugar on a pie crust. In cooking, eggs bind ingredients together, emulsify dressings, thicken sauces and more. There isn't one egg substitute that can do everything an egg can do, but there's a list of egg substitutes to choose from that follows, and at least one of them will stand in for eggs based on its characteristics. Egg substitutes are typically more successful in baking than cooking. It's easy to understand why. When you're baking, you

mix the egg substitute with the rest of the ingredients and its flavors are masked. When you're cooking—say, making an omelet—the egg substitute needs to stand on its own and you can detect the flavor and texture difference more easily. You also might notice that almost every substitute is in a 1/4 cup increment. That's because 1 large egg (the size almost every recipe uses) equals 1/4 cup when whisked. Keeping the volume consistent is one of the keys to success.

### 1. Unsweetened Applesauce or Mashed Banana

**Works for:** Baked goods like waffles, quick breads and muffins; recipes where you'll be using the substitute as a source of moisture. Applesauce is a good choice when you don't want a strong flavor. If you're using mashed banana, you'll get a similar result with a more noticeable flavor. How to use it in place of eggs: For each egg you want to substitute use 1/4 cup of applesauce or banana.

### Try Making: Vegan Blueberry Muffins

Thanks to applesauce, these muffins are just as satisfying as regular muffins, with the same sweet, tender crumb. You can use fresh or frozen blueberries; the fresh may make the muffins slightly moister.

### Try Making: Vegan Banana Bread

This banana bread is eggless and dairy-free, but you'll hardly notice the difference — because mashed bananas themselves stand in for eggs. The crumb is moist and tender, and the flavor gets better each day (if it lasts!).

### 2. Ground Flax Seed or Chia Seed

**Works for:** Baked goods like muffins, quick breads, waffles and cookies. Don't add it to recipes where lightness and fluffiness is important (read: cakes) because flax and chia seeds make for slightly denser results than baked goods made with eggs. They also contribute a slight nutty flavor. How to use it in place of eggs: Measure 1 tablespoon flax or chia meal in a cup and add 3 tablespoons of water. Wait 5 minutes before adding it to the remaining ingredients.

### Try Making: Vegan Oat Milk French Toast

What we love about French toast: the fluffy, custardy center and contrasting crisp, golden edges. This vegan recipe leans on flaxseed meal as an egg replacement and replicates those heavenly qualities.

### 3. Arrowroot Powder

**Works for:** Arrowroot is a thickening agent, much like cornstarch. Its natural thickening properties make it a useful substitute for an egg when the eggs purpose is to bind and stabilize. Cookies, muffins and quick breads are good choices. How to use it in place of eggs: 2 tablespoons (18 grams) of arrowroot

powder whisked into 3 tablespoons of cold water will replace one egg.

### Try Making: Gluten-Free, Vegan Cranberry-Almond Tartlets

These tartlets are the perfect way to please everyone at the table. The filling leans on agar flakes and arrowroot to gel. As with most vegan and gluten-free tarts, they're best served the day they're made.

### 4. Vinegar and Baking Soda

**Works for:** When you're baking and need the outcome to be light and airy (think: cake, cupcakes or a jelly roll), the bubbles that baking soda and vinegar generate will do the trick—think grade school science project volcano.

**How to use it in place of eggs:** 1 teaspoon (7 grams) baking soda mixed with 1 tablespoon vinegar can take the place of one egg.

### 5. Plain Yogurt or Butter-milk

**Works for:** Cakes, muffins and quick breads. The acid in them will react with the leavener and give some lift in addition to adding the moisture. How to use it in place of eggs: 1/4 cup of either equals 1 egg. To achieve even more lift, add 1/4 teaspoon to the dry ingredients

as well.

### 6. Carbonated Water and Beer

**Works for:** In addition to adding moisture, the bubbles in carbonated water or beer will help baked goods achieve a light and fluffy rise. Beer bread is a quick bread recipe that has no eggs, just the beer. It has a texture similar to that of English muffins. How to use it in place of eggs: Use 1/4 cup (60 grams) of carbonated water or beer in place of each egg. **Try Making: Jalapeno-Cheddar Beer Bread**

### 7. Gelatin and Agar-Agar

**Works for:** Gelatin and agar-agar are gelling agents that can be used in most baking recipes, much like chia seeds or flax seeds. Gelatin is not vegan, and therefore can't be used in vegan dishes. For a vegan option, opt for agar agar, but note that it's derived from seaweed and therefore can bring that flavor to a dish. How to use it in place of eggs: 1 tablespoon (9 grams) of gelatin mixed with 3 tablespoons (45 grams) of cold water can re-

place one egg. 1 tablespoon (9 grams) of agar-agar mixed with 1 tablespoon (15 grams) water can replace 1 egg.

### 8. Nut Butter

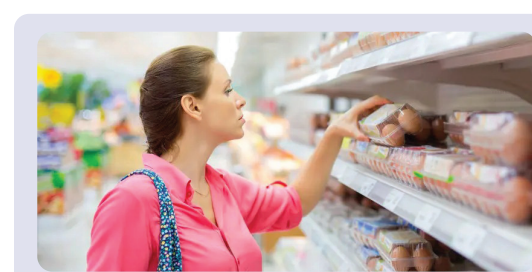
**Works for:** Compared to other egg substitutes, nut butters bring much more flavor. Use it in any quick bread where nuts might be used or would complement the other flavors. How to use it in place of eggs: 3 tablespoons (60 grams) of nut butter such as peanut, almond or cashew will replace 1 egg.

### 9. Soy Lecithin

**Works for:** Soy lecithin is a good substitute for recipes that call for just egg yolks. Derived from soy and other sources including sunflower seeds, lecithin is a strong stabilizer. **How to use it in place of eggs:** Use 1 tablespoon (14 grams) of soy lecithin to replace 1 egg yolk.

### 10. Aquafaba

**Works for:** Use it in recipes like meringues and macaroons that call for whipped egg whites. The protein in the liquid acts like the protein in egg whites when it is beaten with sugar: its chemical bonds rearrange, creating a "scaffolding" that holds its shape when baked.



## Top Egg Substitutes for Savory Dishes (that Can Also Be Used In Baking)

Food Network Kitchen tested all the major commercial egg substitutes on the market; check out our top 3 favorite egg substitute products here.

1. Liquid Commercial Egg Substitute
2. Dry Commercial Egg Substitute..
3. Tofu



## GT beat Royal Challengers Bengaluru by four wickets in IPL

AHMEDABAD

**Men's team edge past Slovakia as India maintain perfect start**



**LONDON:** Indian men staged a spirited comeback to edge past Slovakia 3-2 in a gripping Group 7 encounter at the ITTF World Team Table Tennis Championships here. With the win, India climbed to the top of the Group 7 standings and strengthened their position ahead of their next tie against Guatemala. The contest ebbed and flowed before India sealed victory through resilience and composure under pressure. Slovakia drew first blood as Lubomir Pistej, ranked 149, used his experience to outmanoeuvre Manush Shah, ranked No. 51, in a five-game opener 11-8, 5-11, 8-11, 11-5, 11-6, handing his side an early lead. India responded immediately through their highest-ranked paddler at 42, Manav Thakkar, who produced a composed and controlled display to defeat Jakub Zelinka in straight games 11-6, 11-8, 11-6, levelling the tie at 1-1. However, Slovakia regained the upper hand in the third rubber, as defensive player Wang Yang delivered a clinical performance to overcome Harmeet Desai 16-14, 11-5, 11-9. Mixing sharp variations in pace with precise counter-attacking.

Jason Holder was immense on the night, taking two wickets and three catches. Shubman Gill and Jos Buttler then backed his all-round performance with handy cameos as Gujarat Titans sealed a nervy four-wicket win over Royal Challengers Bengaluru in an IPL match here on Thursday.

Holder's two-wicket burst (2/29) and those sharp catches helped the Titans bowl out defending champions RCB for a modest 155 in 19.2 overs. But with Gill (43, 18b), Buttler (39, 19b) and later Rahul Tewatia (27 not out, 17b) leading the charge, GT ended up at 158 for six in 15.5 overs.

RCB remained second in the table with 12 points, while GT also stayed fifth but added two valuable points to take their tally to 10 after this game.

After the early departure of Sai Sudharsan, the Titans' charge to victory started with Gill's aggressive knock of 43 off 18 balls (4x4, 3x6). Taking on the new-ball attack, Gill hammered Bhuvneshwar Kumar for a four and a six before going after Josh Hazlewood, hitting the Australian with three fours and two sixes in a 24-run over as GT raced to 36 without loss in just two overs.

On the other hand, Buttler, who was dropped on 1 by wicketkeeper Jitesh Sharma off Hazlewood, made RCB pay instantly. He scooped the very next ball cleanly for a six over fine leg and never looked back.

Buttler finished the powerplay in style with a four and a six as GT surged to 69 for 2. He continued the charge after the field spread, smashing spinner Suyash Sharma for back-to-back sixes, one straight down the ground and another sliced over long-off, in a 17-run over. But Gill fell to Bhuvneshwar as his powerful shot found Kohli inside the circle. The veteran pacer soon struck again to dismiss Buttler and cap a fine spell.

In the process, Bhuvneshwar reached 352 wickets, becoming only the second Indian bowler after Yuzvendra Chahal (391) to cross the 350-wicket mark in T20s.

Walking in at 111 for five in 10.3 overs, Holder gave a semblance of stability,



launching a first-ball six off compatriot Romario Shepherd. With the required rate never climbing beyond four an over, Holder and Tewatia kept it simple before the Windies all-rounder got out for 12.

But Tewatia held his nerves to seal the chase as GT registered back-to-back wins.

Earlier, returning to the venue where they had lifted the title last season, RCB were cruising at a run rate in excess of 10 with Kohli leading the charge, smashing Kagiso Rabada for 21 runs in his opening over, which included five fours in a row.

But Gill persisted with his strike bowler and the call paid off handsomely.

Rabada (1/38) struck back to remove Kohli for a blazing 28 off 13 balls, triggering a collapse as RCB lost wickets in a cluster through the middle phase. Left-arm pacer Arshad Khan wrapped up the tail and returned with 3/22. From a strong 71/2 after seven overs, RCB slipped to 96/6 in 10.3 overs, losing Rajat Patidar (19), Jitesh Sharma (1), Tim David (9) and Krunal Pandya (4).

However, RCB stuck to their attacking approach despite the slide, which seemed to have cost them 20-30 extra runs, and they were bowled out in 19.2 overs.

Amid the collapse, Devdutt Padikkal looked set to anchor the innings, with Ro-

mario Shepherd playing second fiddle.

But the ever-reliable Rashid Khan produced a fine delivery to clean up Devdutt for 40 (24 balls), a skidding ball that cramped him for room and led to a chop-on. The Afghan returned with figures of 2/19. But the star of the show was Holder, who dismissed Shepherd and Jitesh, besides taking excellent catches to remove Patidar, David and Krunal.

Holder first pulled off a brilliant running catch near the deep square boundary to dismiss Patidar, holding on to the skier despite almost colliding with Rabada.

He then dismissed Jitesh before completing two smart catches at short mid-wicket to remove David and Krunal, capping an outstanding all-round effort.

The other standout moment was the Kohli vs Rabada contest. Kohli smashed the Proteas pacer for five successive boundaries. He began with a pull through mid-wicket, followed by a punch through mid-off, a crisp square drive and a stylish cut through backward point. Kohli then hit Mohammed Siraj for a flat six over mid-on to race to 28 off just 10 balls. But Rabada had the final say. Tightening his line, the South African forced Kohli into a mistimed pull when he charged down, and Rashid completed a good catch.

## Young India Physical Education & Sports University



Young India Sports Summit

HYDERABAD

The Young India Sports Summit 2026, organized under the auspices of the Young India Physical Education & Sports University at Gachibowli Stadium today, was successfully concluded.

The summit discussed sports policies in the country, education, research, and technological employment opportunities in the sports sector.

Inaugurating the summit, State Government Special Chief Secretary Jayesh Ranjan said that this is the first major program being conducted by the newly established university, which aims to build a strong and sustainable sports ecosystem in the state by providing higher-level education and training in sports and enhancing the skills of young athletes. He expressed happiness that sports experts, policymakers, and intellectuals participated in the event. He also stated that Telangana has excellent opportunities for sports development and that the Young India Physical Education & Sports University will act as a guiding force in the state's sports growth.

Chief Guest and State Government Sports Advisor A.P. Jitender Reddy said that the Young India Sports University will gain recognition not only in India but globally, and expressed hope that more sports-related programs will be conducted under its leadership.

Sports Authority Chairman Shiv Sena Reddy said that the establishment of the Young India Physical Education & Sports University is part of several sports development initiatives undertaken according to the vision of Chief Minister Revanth Reddy. He added that intellectual discussions have been initiated through this university and that its activities should be expanded to provide a better future for young athletes. Sports Authority Vice Chairman & Managing Director Dr. Soni Baladevi said that

over the past two years, the Sports Department of Telangana has been actively promoting sports development by establishing various sports institutions, increasing the number of academies, and conducting competitions from the grassroots level to identify rural talent.

Vice Chancellor of the Sports University, Dr. Kishore Gopinathan, stated that the university is working to provide comprehensive courses by integrating global best practices in sports education, research, science, and employment opportunities.

**Five key topics were discussed at the summit:**

“Telangana Sports Policy, Governance & Olympic Vision” – chaired by Prasad Mangipudi Sports Education, Career Opportunities & Market Demand – coordinated by Srishti Jain (CEO, Collearn)

Olympic Values & Physical Literacy – addressed by Amit Malik (Abhinav Bindra Foundation Trust representative)

Sports Science & Medicine – Education & Opportunities – by Naresh Kumar Padgimarri (CSSH)

Sports Leagues, Technology & E-Sports – by Karthik Yanamandra (360D Sports)

Para Sports & Education – by Dr. Sripadmini Chennapragada (Adapted Sports India Foundation)

In the closing session, former State Sports Advisor Dr. Chinnapareddy and Sports Authority officials Ravinder and Ashok Kumar participated.

Distinguished guests of the summit included Padma Shri Pallela Gopichand, Dronacharya Awardees Ismail Beg and Nagapuri Ramesh, Arjuna Awardee J. J. Shobha, Olympian Neha Agarwal, representatives of various sports associations, physical education teachers, sports experts, athletes, and several prominent personalities from the sports field.

## Shreyas Iyer named brand ambassador for Formula 1-backed sim racing programme



AHMEDABAD

Shreyas Iyer has been appointed as the official brand ambassador for a Formula 1-backed sim racing initiative in India, with Mumbai Falcons Racing Limited announcing his association ahead of the launch of the F1 Sim Racing India Open 2026. The programme, organised under an agreement granting Mumbai Falcons the rights to host an official Formula 1-sanctioned sim-racing competition, aims to create a structured national platform for emerging esports racing talent across the country. The initiative marks a significant step towards integrating motorsport and esports within India's broader sporting ecosystem.

Iyer, regarded as one of India's consistent performers across formats, has also built a strong connection with younger audiences beyond cricket, making him a strategic choice to represent the programme and its vision of engaging a new gen-

eration of athletes. “Sport has always been about finding your edge and staying disciplined enough to act on it. When I heard what Mumbai Falcons is building in terms of a real pathway that takes young Indians from where they are today to where they could go, I didn't need much convincing. This is the kind of initiative I would have wanted access to growing up, and I'm proud to be part of what's coming,” said Iyer, Brand Ambassador for the F1 Program in India led by Mumbai Falcons Racing Limited. The championship will be conducted on F1 25, the official game of the FIA Formula 1 World Championship, replicating real-world circuits, formats, and team environments to deliver an authentic racing experience. Explaining the vision behind the initiative, Ameet Gadhoke, Managing Director of Mumbai Falcons Racing Limited, said the project is designed to bridge structural gaps in India's sporting ecosystem.

## Parag fined 25 cent match fee, handed demerit point for vaping

NEW DELHI

Rajasthan Royals (RR) skipper Riyan Parag has been fined 25 percent of his match fee and handed a demerit point after being caught using a vape inside the dressing room during the IPL 2026 match against Punjab Kings in New Chandigarh. A statement from the IPL on Thursday said Parag admitted to breaching Level 1 of the IPL's Code of Conduct, which covers “conduct that brings the game into disrepute.” The incident occurred during RR's successful chase when cameras captured him vaping in the dressing room, leading to

huge outrage on social media and in the IPL ecosystem.

“The incident occurred during the second innings when Riyan was seen using a vape inside the dressing room. Riyan admitted to the offence and accepted the sanction imposed by the Match Referee, Amit Sharma,” further said the statement from the IPL. It is understood that after Parag's visuals of using the vape were brought to the attention of the authorities, on-field umpires Tanmay Srivastava and Nitin Menon reported the matter to match referee Sharma. The IPL's code does not explicitly mention vaping but stress-



es maintaining decorum in dressing rooms and player areas. The statement also said a process of taking a strict action on RR is also on the cards. “The Board of Control for Cricket in India

(BCCI) is also exploring other options to initiate proceedings for stringent action against the erring team, its officials and player/s to ensure that the reputation of IPL remains intact,” it further said. “Article 2.21 is intended to cover all types of conduct that bring the game into disrepute and which is not specifically and adequately covered by the specific offences set out elsewhere in this Code of Conduct, including Article 2.20. “By way of example, Article 2.21 may (depending upon the seriousness and context of the breach) prohibit, without limitation, the following: (a) public acts of misconduct; (b) unruly

public behaviour; and (c) inappropriate comments which are detrimental to the interests of the game. “When assessing the seriousness of the offence, the context of the particular situation, and whether it was deliberate, reckless, negligent, avoidable and/or accidental, shall be considered. Further, the person lodging the Report shall determine where on the range of severity the conduct lays (with the range of severity starting at conduct of a minor nature (and hence a Level 1 Offence) up to conduct of an extremely serious nature (and hence a Level 4 Offence),” says the IPL Code of Conduct.

## 'You're my best friend and soulmate': Ritika's special birthday wish for husband Rohit Sharma

NEW DELHI

Rohit Sharma's wife Ritika Sajdeh penned down a heartfelt message on his birthday as the Indian star turned 39, with wishes pouring in from fans, teammates, and well-wishers across the world.

Sharing an emotional note on Instagram, Ritika wrote, “Happy happy birthday, my Ro. I've spent every year saying you're my best friend, my soulmate, and the best part of us, and this year is no different. To many more lifetimes of everything we have in this one and more.”

A modern-day white-ball great, a two-time ICC title-winning captain and widely known as cricket's ‘Hitman’,



Rohit Sharma is celebrating his 39th birthday on Thursday. Since making his debut for India in 2007, Rohit has gradually built a remarkable career and established himself as one of the finest players of his generation.

Under his leadership, India lifted two major ICC trophies, the T20 World Cup in 2024 and the Champions Trophy in 2025. Over the years, he has

also created several records, including becoming the highest six-hitter in international cricket. At the franchise level, Rohit has enjoyed immense success as well, leading the Mumbai Indians to five Indian Premier League titles, further cementing his legacy as one of the most successful captains in the game.

Cricket fraternity and fans around the world took to social media to celebrate his birthday. The Board of Control for Cricket in India celebrated his achievements, posting: “508 int'l matches, More than 20,000 int'l runs, ICC Men's T20 WC 2007 winner, Winning Captain of ICC Men's T20 WC 2024 and ICC Champions Trophy 2025.

## India's Young Boxing Brigade Set for Asian U-15 and U-17 Championships in Tashkent

HYDERABAD

India's next generation of boxing talent will step into the international spotlight on Friday as a 56-member national contingent begins its campaign at the Asian Boxing Under-15 and Under-17 Championships in Tashkent, Uzbekistan.

The continental tournament will bring together some of Asia's most promising young boxers, offering them a valuable opportunity to gain exposure, test their skills against elite age-group opponents and take an important step in their sporting development.

India enters the championships with a strong and balanced squad across both boys' and girls' categories, underlining the country's growing emphasis on grassroots boxing and structured talent development.

In the Under-17 section, India will be represented by 13 boxers each in the boys' and girls' categories. The boxers will compete across weight divisions ranging



from 44-46kg to above 80kg. Each Under-17 squad will be supported by four coaches and a physiotherapist.

The Under-15 teams will have 15 boxers each in the boys' and girls' divisions, competing in categories ranging from 30-33kg to above 70kg. Five coaches and a physiotherapist will accompany each Under-15 team. Boxing Federation of India President Ajay Singh said the tournament would play a crucial role in shaping the careers of young Indian boxers.

“These championships are an important platform for our young boxers to gain international exposure and test themselves against the best in Asia.

Over the past two years, boxing has established itself as India's top-performing sport, consistently delivering the highest number of medals across major international events, including multi-sport competitions like the Youth Asian Games as well as World and Continental Championships,” Singh said.

The Asian U-15 and U-17 Championships are widely regarded as an important stepping stone for emerging boxers, with several participants expected to progress through the national pathway and represent their countries at higher-level international events in the future.

For India, the tournament will not only be about medals but also about assessing the depth of its youth boxing programme and preparing a strong pipeline for upcoming global competitions. With a large and competitive squad in Tashkent, Indian boxing will hope its young athletes can deliver confident performances and continue the country's rise in the sport.

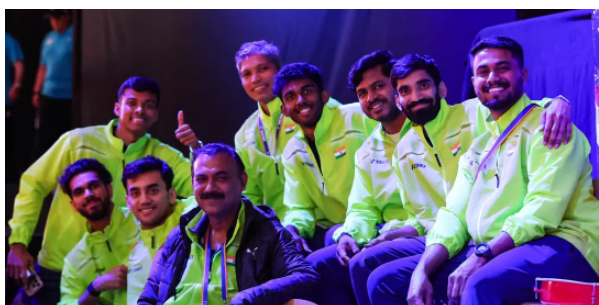
## India men drawn to face Taipei in Thomas Cup Quarter Final

HORSENS

Indian men's team has been drawn to face Chinese Taipei in the quarterfinal of the BWF Thomas Cup Finals after the knockout draw was made here on Thursday.

The 2022 champions finished second in Group A and had already qualified for the quarter-finals following 4-1 and 5-0 wins against Canada and Australia, respectively, in their first two matches. But they suffered a 3-2 defeat against China in their last group game on Wednesday.

Chinese Taipei did an in-



timidate dance with disaster before somehow scrambling through by the hardest route imaginable to take their place in the quarter-finals of the Thomas Cup.

Needing to win the final

Group C tie over hosts Denmark – who only needed to win one match – Chinese Taipei would have looked to their strength in second and third singles to see them through on Wednesday. Defending

champions China, who remained unbeaten to top Group A, will take on Malaysia. Group B toppers Japan will lock horns with France, who staged a stunning takedown of pre-tournament favourites and 14-time champions Indonesia. Meanwhile, host Denmark, who finished second in Group C, are slotted to face Thailand.

After Indonesia, China are the second most successful team with 11 titles. The Chinese, winners of five straight titles from 2004 to 2012, suffered a shock semifinal defeat in the 2014 edition to Japan,

who went on to take their first-ever title beating Malaysia in an exciting final in New Delhi.

It was then Denmark's turn to create history in 2016 as they became the first non-Asian country to win the Thomas Cup, which they did beating Indonesia in the final in Kunshan. The 2018 edition saw China once again storm to the title, beating Japan 3-1 in the final in Bangkok.

The 2020 edition was held in October 2021 due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Indonesia broke a 19-year drought, beating China 3-0 in the final.

## I can make a difference in Europe through ETPL, says Rhodes on buying Rotterdam franchise

NEW DELHI

Former South Africa cricketer Jonty Rhodes has seen European cricket from the inside, including coaching Sweden. Now, as co-owner of the Rotterdam franchise in the European T20 Premier League (ETPL), the legendary fielding icon said he is finally positioned to

convert everything he learned into a lasting impact and make a difference on the continent through the competition.

Apart from Rhodes, fellow South Africans Faf du Plessis, who will also captain the Rotterdam side in the inaugural season, and Heinrich Klaasen, are also on board as co-owners of the Rotterdam franchise.

“Actually, I lived in Sweden for two and a half years during the pandemic, during the lockdown, because Sweden didn't have a lockdown. “My wife and I, with the kids, shifted across to Sweden, and I coached the national team there. I was really involved, not just in the Nordics, because obviously we sort of were one.



**A**nupama Parameswaran takes on a striking rural avatar in "Bhogi," where she plays Kandula Sulochana Rani. The makers unveiled her first look, presenting her as a bare-foot village woman carrying a basket of leaves, dressed in a simple half saree. Her intense expression hints at resilience and inner strength, setting the tone for a powerful role. Sulochana earns her livelihood by making leaf plates from Moduga leaves and is portrayed as a spirited woman deeply connected to nature. The character is said to be central to the emotional core of the film. Directed by Sampath Nandi and starring Sharwanand in the lead, "Bhogi" is a period action drama set in the 1960s against a rural backdrop. The team has already completed major schedules across forest regions and is gearing up for the next phase of shoot.

## ANUPAMA TURNS RUSTIC AS SULOCHANA RANI

### DELAYS DENT RUKMINI'S BIG-LEAGUE ENTRY

**R**ukmini Vasanth is one of the fastest-rising young actresses, with her popularity soaring across social media and brand endorsements pouring in. She has also landed roles in major big-ticket films, but two of her most high-profile projects are now facing delays. She recently completed her part in Yash's "Toxic", which features a star-studded female cast including Kiara Advani, Nayanthara, and Huma Qureshi. The film was expected to boost her pan-Indian reach, given Yash's massive popularity. However, "Toxic" has been repeatedly postponed, first from March to June, and is now facing an indefinite delay. On the other hand, Rukmini also bagged what is considered the biggest project of her career in Telugu cinema, "Dragon", opposite NTR and directed by Prashanth Neel. Initially planned for a June 2026 release, the film has now been pushed to June 2027. Interestingly, the makers are yet to officially announce her inclusion.

### FAUJI NEARS COMPLETION TARGETS OCTOBER

**P**rabhas is making steady progress with his upcoming period action drama Fauji, directed by Hanu Raghavapudi. The film has already wrapped up nearly 80 percent of its shoot. Producer representatives revealed that most of the filming is complete, with only a few action sequences featuring Prabhas left to be shot. Once these high-intensity portions are wrapped, the project will move fully into post-production. Despite the pending action blocks, the makers are confident about meeting their planned October release timeline. Set in the 1940s during the British era, "Fauji" blends action with emotional depth while exploring socio-political tensions of the time.

## KRITHI SHETTY'S REGAL CHARM



**K**rithi Shetty turns heads in this elegant new portrait that perfectly blends ethnic charm with contemporary flair. Draped in a soft peach ensemble featuring intricate embroidery, the young star elevates traditional fashion with effortless grace. Her statement choker and matching earrings lend a regal touch, while her radiant smile and minimal makeup keep the look fresh and youthful. Set against a soothing, soft-toned backdrop, the frame exudes warmth and sophistication. On the work front, Krithi made a sensational debut with Uppena, earning widespread acclaim for her performance. She followed it up with notable roles in Shyam Singha Roy and Bangaraju, further cementing her place in South Indian cinema. Recently, the actress has been experimenting with diverse roles across Telugu and Tamil films, drawing attention for her evolving screen presence. With several exciting projects lined up, Krithi Shetty continues to build a promising and versatile filmography. This latest look is yet another reminder of her timeless appeal and growing influence, both on and off the screen.



### Speculation grows over PEDDI'S release date getting advanced

**W**ith Yash's "Toxic" pushed indefinitely without a new release date, speculation has intensified around Ram Charan's "Peddi" possibly advancing its release. Social media is abuzz with claims that the film could move up to June 4 to capitalize on the summer holiday window and the vacant slot left by "Toxic". However, an early release looks unlikely. Director Buchi Babu is known for prioritizing ample time for post-production. Having already announced June 25 as the release date, he is unlikely to prepone the film by nearly three weeks. Sources suggest that sticking to the original plan makes more practical sense. Meanwhile, the film has wrapped up its entire shoot, including the item song featuring Ram Charan and Shruti Haasan. The team is now fully focused on post-production work. While fans continue to speculate about a possible date shift, it remains to be seen whether the makers will officially stick to June 25 or consider June 4.



### POOJA TO MARRY HER BOYFRIEND?

**P**ooja Hegde is currently making headlines with her glamorous appearances while promoting her upcoming Hindi film "Hai Jawani Hai Toh Ishq Hona Hai," which is slated for release on June 5. Amid her professional buzz, there is growing speculation about her personal life. Reports suggest that Pooja has been in a steady relationship with Rohan Mehra for the past few years, fueling dating rumours. According to the latest buzz in Bollywood circles, their relationship has now turned serious, and the couple is said to be considering marriage. There are also reports claiming that family pressure may be a factor, with Pooja having crossed 35 and being urged to settle down. If Bollywood media reports are to be believed, an official announcement regarding her wedding plans could come later this year.

### BRYCE DALLAS JOINS AARON PAUL IN 'ANYTHING BUT GHOSTS'

**B**ryce Dallas Howard is getting ghostly. Howard is among the cast of Anything But Ghosts, the mysterious upcoming feature from writer-director Curry Barker and writer-star Cooper Tomlinson that wrapped production earlier this month. Plot details are unknown, but Barker co-wrote Ghosts with frequent collaborator Tomlinson, who stars opposite Aaron Paul, with Barker also acting in the movie.



Howard was among the leads of the Jurassic World trilogy, with her on-screen work ranging from the Elton John biopic Rocketman and M. Night Shyamalan's The Village to Tate Taylor's The Help and Matthew Vaughn's Argylle. She is also known for her directing work, helming key episodes of Disney+ Star Wars series The Mandalorian, The Book of Boba Fett, Ahsoka and Skeleton Crew.

As for Anything but Ghosts, the film turned heads in Hollywood when it was first announced in September, as it marked the first teamup between power horror producers Jason Blum and Roy Lee, who made a bet on young filmmaker Barker, now one of the hottest up-and-coming directors in town.

Focus Features recently acquired Ghosts as the studio gears up to release Barker's Obsession, the much-talked-about feature that was the toast of the Toronto Film Festival, landing the fest's biggest sale. The movie opens May 15. Barker also recently inked a deal to reinvent The Texas Chainsaw Massacre for A24. He came up through the world of sketch comedy, and earned Hollywood attention with this \$800k horror YouTube feature Milk & Serial.

Blum produces Anything But Ghosts via his Blumhouse-Atomic Monster, while Lee produces via Spooky Pictures with Parnormal Activity maestro Steven Schneider, as well as Adam Hendricks & Greg Gilreath for Divide/Conquer. Image Nation and Barker and Tomlinson's That's a Bad Idea also produce. Howard is represented by CAA, Entertainment 360, and Johnson Shapiro Slewett & Kole.

## Barunson Boards 'Zona Merah: Dead City'

**B**arunson E&A, the Korean production banner best known for backing Bong Joon Ho's multi-Oscar winner Parasite, has boarded Zona Merah: Dead City, a feature film adaptation of the hit Indonesian horror series Zona Merah. The Seoul outfit will handle international sales on the project, produced by Indonesia's Screenplay Films, and launch it at the upcoming Cannes Marché alongside Inherit, the new horror feature from Thai hitmaker Banjong Pisanthanakun. The deal extends Barunson's ongoing push into Southeast Asian cinema, as the Korean company continues to assemble a portfolio of saleable genre titles from the region.

The original Zona Merah debuted as an original series on Vidio, the Emtek Group-owned platform that has emerged as Indonesia's leading domestic streamer. Set in the fictional town of Rimalaya, the show follows Maya as she searches for her missing younger brother Adi amid a rapidly spreading zombie outbreak, racing to find him before authorities seal off the area as a "zona merah," or red zone. The series became one of Vidio's biggest hits, drawing more than 34 million views and a surge of new subscribers, according to the platform.

"Zona Merah showed us what's possible when a story truly connects with its audience - the kind of connection that extends beyond a single format," said Screenplay Films CEO Wicky V. Olindo. "Expanding it into a feature felt like a natural progression, both commercially and creatively."

The new feature is said to widen the scope, with another city falling and a fresh red zone emerging. Sidharta Tata and Fajar Martha Santosa, the team behind the original series, are co-directing, with Tata returning as screenwriter and Santosa overseeing story development. Much of the original cast is reprising their roles, including Aghniya Haque, Andri Mashadi, Maria Theodore, Devano and Lukman Sardi, joined by new additions Luna Maya, Bryan Domani, Shindy Huang, Myesha Lin and Derby Romero. Principal photography began April 7 and continues through May. Screenplay Films ranks among Indonesia's most established genre producers. Recent credits include Wait Until I Make It, currently the second-highest-grossing local film of 2026, and Joko Anwar's superhero origin Gundala, which premiered at TIFF's Midnight Madness in 2019.

