

HYDERABAD HEADLINES

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THURSDAY, MAY 7, 2026

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SRH HIT TOP GEAR TABLE PEAK

STADIUM 11

GOD OF WAR IT IS TIME FOR THE ARRIVAL OF MURUGA



BOX-OFFICE 12

SHORT TAKES



DMK to tie-up with arch-rival AIADMK?

The DMK has opened backchannel talks with the AIADMK as the TVK seeks allies in Tamil Nadu. The rare contact between the two rivals has stirred fresh buzz over shifting political equations in the state.

NEXT DOOR 05



Saffron Expansion and the New Avatar of Regional Satraps

Elections aren't just votes—they're mirrors of unfulfilled dreams. Tamil Nadu, Bengal, and Kerala's incumbents crashed due to youth disillusionment, industrial neglect, scandals, and arrogant leadership blind to ground realities.

OPINION 06



Reliance plans India's answer to Starlink

Reliance Industries is exploring a multi-billion-dollar LEO satellite venture under Jio Platforms to build an India-based rival to Starlink. The move could sharpen the satellite internet race as India pushes for domestic space and broadband capacity.

MONEY MATTER 09

"ATTACK ON CONSTITUTION": RAO TARGETS MAMATA, CONG

HYDERABAD, MAY 6

Telangana BJP President N. Ramchander Rao launched a scathing attack on the opposition, accusing West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee and the Congress party, of undermining democratic values and the Constitution. Participating in a wall-writing campaign at Lalapet in Secunderabad ahead of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's public meeting on May 10, Rao claimed that the political momentum is shifting in favour of the BJP nationwide. He alleged that Mamata Banerjee's refusal to

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2 >

CM Revanth urges Union Minister to approve Hyd Metro Phase-II

CM requests centre to join as partner in the metro rail expansion project Requests to undertake the Airport-Future City corridor under Phase-III.

CM Revanth Reddy meet Union Minister Manohar Lal Khattar today.

NEW DELHI, MAY 6



Chief Minister Shri A. Revanth Reddy urged Union Minister of Urban Affairs Manohar Lal Khattar, to approve the pending Hyderabad Metro Rail phase - II project. The Chief Minister briefed the union minister that Telangana Government has already formulated a comprehensive plan for Metro Rail-phase II project - comprising 7 corridors, and a Detailed Project Report (DPR) has been submitted to the Union Government.

The CM met with Manohar Lal Khattar in Delhi on Wednesday evening. During the meeting, CM Revanth Reddy discussed the pending approval of Metro rail phase II and Phase - III. The Chief Minister apprised the Union Minister of the urgent need of the expansion of the metro rail network to ensure safe public transportation and commu-

er convenience in the rapidly developing city of Hyderabad. Further, the CM explained to Manohar Lal Khattar that the State Government had taken full control of the metro rail phase -I from the L&TMRHL with the specific objective of ensuring the smooth and seamless execution of the Hyderabad Metro Rail Phase-II and Phase-III expansion projects.

Since the Phase-I project was taken over by the government, CM Revanth Reddy emphasized that the expansion of Phase-II and Phase-III would be facilitated easily. With an aim of expanding metro rail network, the Chief Minister said that the State Government has already submitted a comprehensive DPR for Phase-II—covering a total distance of 122.9 km across seven corridors—at an estimated cost of Rs 38,595 crore.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2 >

India-Vietnam Partnership Gets a Tech Boos

India and Vietnam have agreed on a new trade goal of 25 billion dollars by 2030 and are looking to reinforce cooperation at the level of governments and businesses for increasing two-way trade, investment and technological partnership. The Joint Statement on Enhanced Comprehensive Strategic Partnership between India and Vietnam said that Prime Minister Narendra Modi and President of Vietnam To Lam today emphasized the need to further enhance bilateral trade in a balanced and mutually beneficial manner.

Both the leaders reviewed the entire gamut of bilateral relations and exchanged views on regional and global issues of mutual interest. Acknowledging the evolving global geopolitical and economic landscape, the leaders underscored the growing strategic convergence between India and Vietnam to promote international order

based on international law, grounded in peace, stability, cooperation and prosperity in the region and beyond. Both leaders reaffirmed the importance of maintaining peace, stability, security and freedom of navigation and overflight in the South China Sea, while pursuing the peaceful resolution of disputes in accordance with international law, without resorting to threat or use of force. They decided that both sides will facilitate market access, including for agricultural products. They welcomed the decision to grant market access for Indian Grapes and Vietnamese Durians. They also agreed to expedite market access for Indian Pomegranates and Vietnamese Pomeelos. The leaders agreed that the ongoing review of the ASEAN India Trade in Goods Agreement, AITIGA should be concluded at the earliest.

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Govt Formation Race Picks Up Across States

NEW DELHI, MAY 7

Political activity intensified across Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Assam, West Bengal and Puducherry on Wednesday as parties and alliances that emerged victorious in the Assembly elections accelerated efforts to form governments and prepare for swearing-in ceremonies.

In Tamil Nadu, actor-turned-politician Vijay's Tamilaga Vettri Kazhagam (TVK), which emerged as the single-largest party, is yet to formally stake claim to form the government. Sources said the party is still working to secure the numbers required for a majority in the 234-member Assembly.

TVK won 108 seats, falling short of the majority mark by 10 seats. With Vijay ex-

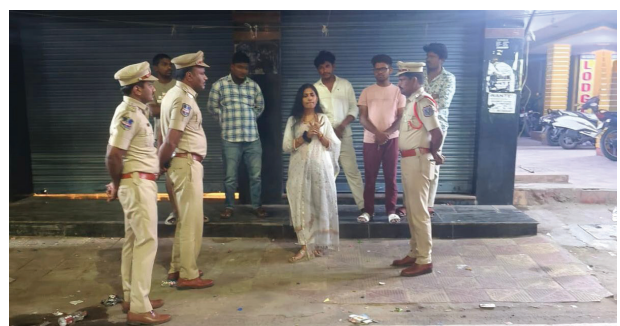
pected to vacate one of the two constituencies he won, the party's effective strength will reduce to 107. The party has, however, secured the support of five Congress MLAs. Congress, which contested the election as part of the DMK-led alliance, has now decided to back TVK.

Vijay met Tamil Nadu Governor Rajendra Arlekar at Lok Bhavan on Wednesday as part of government formation discussions. The TVK chief registered a remarkable electoral debut, winning from Tiruchirapalli East and Perambur, while disrupting the decades-long dominance of the DMK and AIADMK in the state.

Meanwhile, the AIADMK ruled out any possibility of supporting TVK. Party Deputy Coordinator KP Munusamy

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Malkajiri CP Sumathi conducts undercover operation, nabs eve-teasers at midnight



HYDERABAD, MAY 6

In a daring undercover operation, Malkajiri Police Commissioner B Sumathi has created a sensation across the state by personally carrying out an undercover operation to nab eve-teasers within her jurisdiction. She posed as an ordinary woman at the Dilukhnagar Bus Stand late Tuesday night to crack down on eve-teasing.

The newly appointed Commissioner, alone and without security, undertook the covert mission late on Tuesday

night (May 5) at the busy Dilukhnagar Bus Stand, an area often flagged for harassment incidents targeting women. Disguised as an ordinary woman and without any security personnel, Sumathi stood alone at the bus stand, blending in as a commuter waiting for a bus. Unaware of her identity, several miscreants approached and harassed her in the same manner they typically target women in public spaces. Through this daring operation, she experienced

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GOVT ANNOUNCES CHAIRPERSONS FOR CORPORATIONS

HYDERABAD, MAY 6

The Telangana government on Wednesday issued orders appointing several chairpersons and vice-chairpersons to various corporations for a two-year term from the date of assumption of charge.

The key appointments included:

Brahmin Samkshema Parishad: Baswaraju Srinivas, Chairman and Ponnada Subrahmanya Prasad, Vice Chairman

Washerman Co-operative Corporation Limited: Dr. Dasariraju Ajay Kumar, Chairman and Bangaru Babu, Vice Chairman

Toddy Tappers Co-operative Corporation Limited: Motukuri Chandrashekar Goud, Chairman, Kesam Nagaraju Goud, Vice Chairman

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2 >

"Procure Every Grain or Face Farmers' Fury: KTR

"BRS Will Not Rest Until Every Crop is Purchased, Says KTR at Warangala Rythu Sangrama Sabha"

WARANGAL, MAY 6 :

Bharat Rashtra Samithi (BRS) Working President K. T. Rama Rao issued a stern warning to the Congress government, demanding immediate procurement of farmers' produce and accountability on unfulfilled promises. Addressing the Rythu Sangrama Sabha in Warangal, he declared that the BRS would not relent until every grain cultivated by farmers is purchased. The meeting was organised to mark four years since the



Congress party announced its farmers' declaration in Warangal. KTR alleged that the declaration, made by Rahul Gandhi, had failed completely, with not a single promise implemented. He accused the Congress of betraying farmers and bringing back an agrarian crisis in Telangana. "Will you procure crops or

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2 >

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3 TIMES BETTER

G. Srijana IAS Leads Civic Review in KPHB 7th Phase



MEDCHAL-MALKAJIRI, MAY 06

In a significant step towards building a cleaner, safer and more sustainable neighbourhood, Cyberabad Municipal Corporation, Commissioner G. Srijana IAS visited the KPHB Colony 7th Phase basketball ground playground at 7:00 a.m. and reviewed key civic concerns raised during the Residents Welfare Association meeting.

The interaction focused on issues directly linked to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, especially SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities, SDG 6: Clean Water and Sanitation, SDG 3: Good Health and Well-being, and SDG 12: Responsible Consumption and Production.

During the meeting, residents highlighted the growing concern of road and footpath encroachments in KPHB Colony 7th Phase. Viswanatham stated that pedestrians are facing severe difficulty due to blocked footpaths and reduced walking space. Responding to the concern, Commissioner G. Srijana IAS assured that action would be taken to re-

move encroachments and restore public spaces for citizens.

Residents also raised concerns over alleged unauthorised constructions, including G+4, G+5 buildings being used as commercial space for hostels, outdoor cooking with wood stoves, and illegal parking on roads. Narasimulu pointed out that such parking is obstructing regular traffic movement and could also delay emergency vehicles. The Commissioner responded that unauthorised hostel activities would be examined and necessary action would be taken. She also stated that, in coordination with the Traffic Police, strict measures would be initiated against illegal parking.

A major sustainability-focused discussion was the need to introduce more rainwater harvesting pits across KPHB Colony 7th Phase. Dr. A. N. Rao proposed the idea of creating 100 harvesting pits in the colony to improve groundwater recharge and promote water conservation. Commissioner G. Srijana IAS appreciated the suggestion and said that the administration would work on promoting harvesting pits as part of sus-

tainable urban development.

Several public-spirited residents have already come forward to support this initiative. Anil, Srinivas Reddy, Suganachary, Satyanarayana, Chaitanya, Sateesh, Vamsi, Subramanya, Srinivas and Surya Kumari funded the installation of three rainwater harvesting pits for the benefit of KPHB Colony 7th Phase residents. Their contribution was appreciated as a model of community participation for sustainable civic improvement.

Addressing sanitation and urban cleanliness, the Commissioner informed residents that the government is in the process of procuring future-ready electric garbage collection vans. She said that more garbage collection vehicles would be deployed to improve service delivery and help citizens maintain cleaner surroundings.

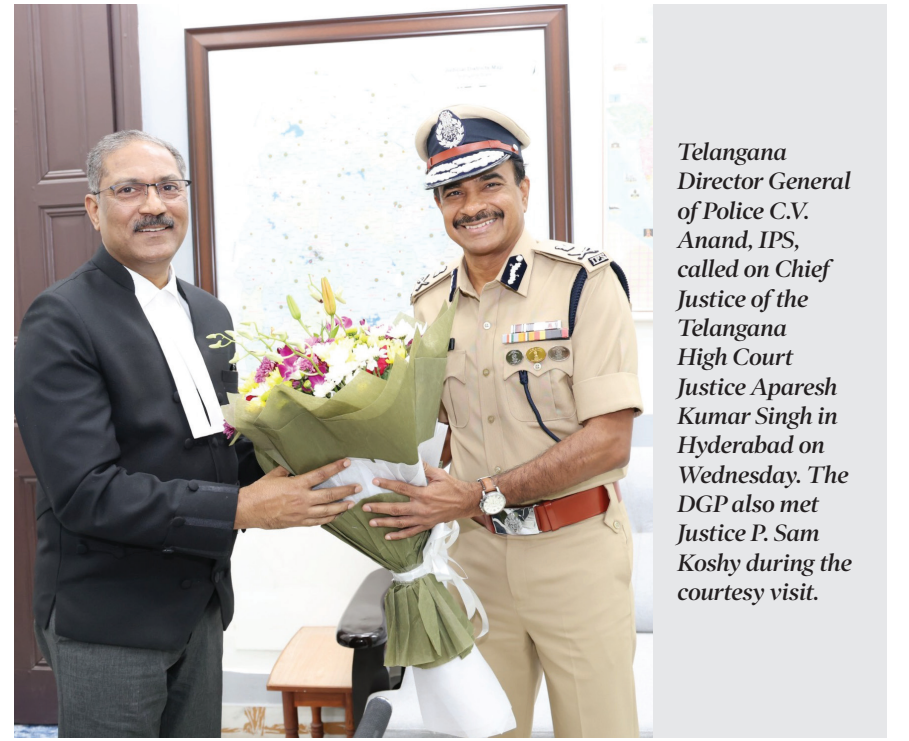
On the issue of street lighting, Commissioner G. Srijana IAS stated that new tenders for street light bulbs are being floated and that the works are expected to move forward in the coming month. This measure is expected to improve

safety and visibility in residential areas.

The meeting also discussed the disposal of packaging waste and bulky household waste such as abandoned sofas, thermocol, plastic waste and mattresses. The Commissioner said that CMC may consider providing a dedicated collection centre or collection van on a monthly basis to collect such materials and prevent open dumping.

Emphasising public health, the Commissioner urged citizens to prevent mosquito breeding by keeping their homes and surroundings free from stagnant water. She encouraged residents to observe Friday Dry Day, remove mosquito breeding points, and ensure that water does not stagnate in containers, open areas or unused spaces.

The visit highlighted the importance of active citizen participation, responsible governance and sustainable urban planning. With residents, civic authorities and public representatives working together, KPHB Colony 7th Phase is moving towards becoming a cleaner, safer and more environmentally responsible community.



Telangana Director General of Police C.V. Anand, IPS, called on Chief Justice of the Telangana High Court Justice Aparesh Kumar Singh in Hyderabad on Wednesday. The DGP also met Justice P. Sam Koshy during the courtesy visit.

Govt Formation Race Picks Up Across States



FROM PAGE 1

said the AIADMK would not extend support to Vijay's party "under any circumstances."

In Kerala, the Congress-led United Democratic Front (UDF), which secured a decisive mandate with 102 seats in the 140-member Assembly, is set to hold its first meeting of newly elected MLAs on Thursday. The Congress high command has appointed senior leaders Mukul Wasnik and Ajay Maken as observers to gauge the views of party legislators before selecting the legislative party leader.

In Assam, preparations are underway for the formation of the BJP-led NDA government, which retained power with a comfortable majority. Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma submitted his resignation to Governor Lakshman Prasad Acharya following the results. State BJP leader Dilip Saikia said Union Minister JP Nadda and Haryana Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini will arrive in Guwahati on May 9 to oversee the election of the BJP Legislature Party leader. The NDA meeting is scheduled for May 10, while the swearing-in ceremony is likely to take place on May 12.

In West Bengal, the BJP leadership held key meetings at Nabanna in Kolkata amid preparations for government formation. State BJP President Samik Bhattacharya said the

party is expected to elect its legislative party leader on May 8, with the swearing-in ceremony likely on May 9. Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Union Home Minister Amit Shah and other senior BJP leaders are expected to attend the event.

Amid the political developments, outgoing Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee declared that she would not resign from her post despite the election outcome. Addressing newly elected Trinamool Congress MLAs, Banerjee alleged widespread irregularities in the polls and accused central agencies and election authorities of bias.

Claiming that the Trinamool Congress had been "morally victorious," Banerjee said the election was marked by "atrocities" and alleged that over 1,500 party offices had been taken over. She also claimed she was "heckled and pushed" during the election period and vowed to continue her political fight.

"There is greater unity in the INDIA bloc after the Bengal results. I will not resign. Let them dismiss me," Banerjee reportedly told party legislators.

In Puducherry, AI NR Congress leader N. Rangasamy is set to return as Chief Minister for another term following his party's victory in the Assembly elections.

CONTINUATION FROM PAGE

Hyd Metro Phase-II

FROM PAGE 1

In view of the increasing demand for metro rail services, the CM appealed to union minister to expedite the approval for undertaking the Hyderabad Metro Rail Phase-II project as a joint venture between union government and Telangana government.

To meet the future requirements of the public transport,

CM Revanth Reddy also requested to Manohar Lal Khattar to take up the RGI Airport-Bharat Future City corridor under Metro Rail Phase-III. The Chief Minister apprised the Union Minister that the DPR pertaining to Metro Phase-III has already been submitted.

Union Secretary for Housing and Urban Affairs K. Srinivas,

Special Secretary to the Chief Minister B. Ajith Reddy, HMR-CL MD Sarfaraz Ahmed, State Government Advisor (Urban Transport) N.V.S. Reddy, Officer on Special Duty at Telangana Bhavan (Delhi) Sanjay Kumar, Secretary for Coordination of Central Government Schemes Advait Kumar Singh, and others participated in the meeting.

Malkajiri CP Sumathi conducts undercover operation, nabs eve-teasers at midnight

FROM PAGE 1

firsthand the challenges faced by women during late-night hours. During the operation, nearly 40 individuals allegedly surrounded the Commissioner and subjected her to verbal harassment, including inappropriate and lewd remarks. Many of them were reportedly students, with several under the influence of alcohol and marijuana.

The operation lasted from midnight until 3 AM, during which time no patrolling police personnel intervened. It was only around 3:30 AM that a beat constable arrived at the scene. As the offenders attempted to flee, police personnel detained them, counselled

them, and later released them.

Sources indicate that Commissioner Sumathi had been monitoring the area for three days following repeated complaints about women's safety near the bus stand. The operation involved identifying suspicious individuals, observing late-night movement, and assessing overall security conditions.

Police noted that the presence of numerous hostels, coaching centres and student accommodations in the Dilshknagar area contributes to heavy nighttime activity. Residents have expressed concern over increasing incidents of unruly behaviour, particularly during late hours.

GOVT ANNOUNCES CHAIRPERSONS FOR CORPORATIONS

FROM PAGE 1

Perika Co-operative Corporation Limited: Durgari Venkateswarlu, Chairman and Budagam Srinivas, Vice Chairman

Mera Co-operative Corporation Limited: Sanga Venkatarajam, Chairman and M. Laxmi Narayana, Vice Chairman

Valmiki Boya Co-operative Corporation Limited: Gattu Thimmappa, Chairman and Boya Nagesh Vice Chairman

Munnurkapu Co-operative Corporation Limited: Bomma Sriram, Chairman, Allam Bhaskar, Vice Chairman

Yadava Co-operative Corporation Limited: M. Raghunath Yadav, Chairman, Gajji Bhaskar Yadav, Vice Chairman

Vadderra Co-operative Corporation Limited: Gunja Renuka Narayana, Chairman and Bathula Venkatesh, Vice Chairman

Telangana Handloom Development Corporation Limited: Dudem Venkat Ra-

mana, Chairman and Jakkani Aneetha, Vice Chairman

Kamma Corporation Limited: Bandi Ramesh, Chairman and Paruchuri Murali, Vice Chairman

Padmashali Co-operative Corporation Limited: Guduru Srinivas, Chairman

Telangana Bhattaraja Co-operative Societies Federation Limited: Ch. Balraju, Chairman

Velama Corporation Limited: Juwadi Narsing Rao

Telangana Sheep & Goat Development Co-operative Federation Limited: Kolle Saritha, Chairman

Telangana Livestock Development Agency (TGLDA): Charan Koushik Yadav, Chairman

Telangana Telugu Academy: Prof. Venkata Narayana

Additionally, Sudini Rami Reddy was appointed Chairman of the Telangana Gram Panchayat Tribunal, with Krishna Kumar Naguluri and Boosa Venu Gopal Yadav as members.

"Procure Every Grain or Face Farmers' Fury: KTR



FROM PAGE 1

KTR expressed deep concern over the plight of farmers, stating that despite years in power, the Congress government had failed to deliver on key promises such as farm loan waivers, financial assistance, crop bonuses, and fertiliser supply. He alleged that the government was deliberately avoiding procurement to escape paying bonuses.

Appealing to farmers not to lose hope, KTR urged them not to resort to extreme steps like suicide and instead hold the government accountable through collective resistance. He called upon farmers to question elected representatives at the grassroots level.

Targeting Chief Minister Revanth Reddy, KTR said the

government must immediately respond to farmers' distress or face strong resistance.

He expressed anguish over recent farmer deaths, blaming the government's failure to address the ongoing crisis. KTR criticised the Congress for making false promises during elections, including a ₹50,000 crore farm loan waiver, and delivering only a fraction of it. He alleged that farmers were misled into taking loans with assurances of waiver, only to be abandoned later. Highlighting the worsening agrarian situation, KTR said Telangana was witnessing issues such as lack of procurement, pending dues, fertiliser shortages, and irregular power supply. He accused the government of focusing on events and publicity rather

than addressing real problems faced by farmers.

Recalling the achievements of the previous BRS government, KTR stated that Telangana had emerged as a model state in agriculture, but was now slipping back into crisis under Congress rule.

Demanding immediate action, KTR called for unconditional procurement of all crops, full implementation of the Warangal farmers' declaration, completion of farm loan waivers, payment of pending dues, and compensation for families of deceased farmers.

The Rythu Sangrama Sabha also passed several resolutions in support of farmers, intensifying pressure on the Congress government to act without delay.

India-Vietnam Partnership Gets a Tech Boos

FROM PAGE 1

Briefing the media after the bilateral talks in New Delhi this afternoon, Secretary East in the Ministry of External Affairs P Kumaran said Prime Minister Modi and President To Lam acknowledged the growing threats of terrorism, transnational crime, money laundering, and online scams. He said President To Lam conveyed Vietnam's support on the issue of terrorism and counterterrorism cooperation, and Prime Minister thanked Vietnam for their strong sup-

port on the Pahalgam attack. On defence cooperation, Mr Kumaran said both countries are looking at instituting a two-plus-two Dialogue, which will include the foreign ministry and the defence ministry on either side. He added that the member companies of the Society of Indian Defence Manufacturers visited Vietnam in March this year to explore opportunities for defence procurement by Vietnam, and to understand their needs.

"ATTACK ON CONSTITUTION": RAO TARGETS MAMATA, CONG

FROM PAGE 1

step down despite an "electoral defeat" was an insult to constitutional principles. Citing Article 172, Rao argued that continuing in office beyond the mandate violates the spirit of the Constitution.

Rao also took a swipe at Congress leader Rahul Gandhi, saying that despite frequently carrying a copy of the Constitution, he lacks understanding of its provisions. He termed the Congress' alliance with Mamata Banerjee as "shameful" and accused the party of shifting narratives from "vote theft"



to "seat theft".

Calling for public participation, he urged people to attend the Prime Minister's

rally at Parade Grounds, stating it would mark the beginning of a major political shift in Telangana.

Avoid inconvenience to public during my movements: CM Revanth Reddy directs DGP C.V. Anand

HYDERABAD

Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy has directed Director General of Police Sri C.V. Anand to ensure that no inconvenience is caused to the general public during the movement of the Chief Minister and other dignitaries across the State. CM emphasized that people should not be made to wait on roads for prolonged periods due to his convoy.

The Chief Minister expressed concern over the severe traffic congestion experienced near the airport on Wednesday while he was proceeding to Delhi. Taking serious note of the situation, CM instructed the DGP to initiate appropriate action against officials responsible for lapses and ensure that routine public movement is not disrupted for convoy arrangements. He also directed that vehicles coming from the opposite direction should not be unnecessarily stopped, and that traffic regulation should be handled in a manner that minimizes public inconvenience. The Chief Minister further stressed that strict action must be taken



en against officials found negligent in discharging their duties.

Following the Chief Minister's directions, DGP Sri C.V. Anand convened a video conference with all SI and above rank officers of L & O and Traffic Police in all the commissionerates and the Commissioners across the State and issued key instructions. DGP observed that the Chief Minister's repeated concern highlights the gravity of the issue and called upon field officers to address

it with utmost seriousness.

The DGP informed that a dedicated Traffic Bureau will soon be established under the leadership of an Additional DGP to strengthen traffic management across the State, and that modalities are currently being finalized. DGP advised officers to regulate traffic flow in a streamlined manner during CM convoy movements instead of completely halting vehicles, and to prepare alternative routes in

advance, particularly during peak traffic conditions.

DGP also stressed the need for heightened vigilance in areas surrounding the airport. In view of the upcoming monsoon season, DGP directed officials to take proactive measures to prevent water stagnation and avoid resultant traffic congestion. Traffic officers were instructed to remain on the ground, take prompt decisions, and instill confidence among personnel.

The DGP made it clear that illegal parking on the Outer Ring Road will not be tolerated. He further directed that Law & Order personnel should work in close coordination with traffic police, ISW and CSW wings to ensure effective traffic regulation.

Hyderabad CP Sri V.C. Sajjanar, Cyberabad CP Sri M. Ramesh, Malkajgiri CP Smt. B. Sumati, Future City Joint CP Smt. Chandana Deepthi, Railways & Road Safety IGP Sri Ramesh Naidu, ISW OSD Sri Kamalahasan Reddy, CMSG SP Sri Chakravarthy, and all commissioners of police participated in the video conference.

B. Shivadhar Reddy IPS (Retd.) assumes charge as Telangana State Security Advisor

Calls on Governor Sri Shiv Pratap Shukla at Lok Bhavan

HYDERABAD

Former Telangana DGP Sri B. Shivadhar Reddy, IPS (Retd.), officially assumed charge as the State Security Advisor (SSA) to the Government of Telangana on Wednesday at the Integrated Command and Control Centre, Hyderabad.

The Telangana Government recently appointed Sri B. Shivadhar Reddy as State Security Advisor for a period of three years. In this role, he will advise the Government on matters relating to Police, Law & Order, Internal Security, Crime Control, Narcotics Control and Road Safety.

Sri Shivadhar Reddy is regarded as a police officer with deep field experience in internal security and anti-Naxal operations. During his policing career, he handled several key assignments



connected to law and order, intelligence and security management, and is known for his role in strengthening counter-insurgency and field-level policing mechanisms. Soon after assuming charge, Sri B. Shivadhar Reddy called on Telangana Governor Sri Shiv Pratap Shukla at Lok Bhavan, Hyderabad.

Senior police officers including Hyderabad CP Sri V.C.

Sajjanar, Addl. DG Intelligence Sri Vijay Kumar, IPS, Malkajgiri CP Sri Sumathi, IPS, IG P&L Sri Gajarao Bhupal, IPS, along with other senior officers, called on Sri Shivadhar Reddy and conveyed their congratulations on assuming the new responsibility. Officials from the Home Department and Police Department were present on the occasion.

TSJU expresses gratitude to Chief Minister Revanth Reddy

For prioritizing journalists' welfare! Applause to the people's government for issuing accreditations and fulfilling the dream of house sites by June 2.

HYDERABAD

On behalf of the Telangana State Journalists Union (TSJU), we extend our heartfelt thanks to the state government, Hon'ble Chief Minister Sri Enumula Revanth Reddy, Revenue and I&PR Minister Sri Ponguleti Srinivas Reddy, and all cabinet colleagues for their sincere efforts to resolve long-pending issues of journalists in Telangana.

The government led by Chief Minister Revanth Reddy has taken a landmark decision to grant accreditation cards through G.O. 252 to print, electronic, and cable channel journalists, as well as veteran and freelance journalists who were neglected during previous governments. While the earlier government limited accreditations to only 23,352 individuals, the current people's government has expanded this opportunity to more than 46,000 eligible journalists, setting an example for the



entire country. Issuing orders to distribute cards through district collectors from May 1, setting May 10 as the last date for applications, and announcing the proper implementation of improved health and welfare schemes for all eligible journalists has given them immense confidence. Extending the validity of bus passes that were to expire on April 30 has also brought great relief.

House sites in Future City - resolution by June 2:

The steps being taken by the state government to fulfill the decades-long dream of house sites for journalists are historic. As per the directions of Chief Minister Revanth Reddy, Minister Ponguleti Sri-

nivas Reddy held a meeting with various journalist housing societies at the Secretariat and announced that the issue would be resolved without legal hurdles by June 2 (Telangana State Formation Day). TSJU expresses its happiness over this announcement. The Chief Minister's positive stance on allocating plots to journalists alongside MLAs and officials in the prestigious "Future City" reflects his visionary leadership. The minister's initiative to resolve, on a war footing, the 18-year-pending issues of societies including the Jawaharlal Nehru Housing Society, and to ensure justice even for eligible journalists who are not members of any association, is commendable. TSJU welcomes the minister's suggestion that all

groups should come together and form a Joint Action Committee (JAC). We also thank I&PR Special Commissioner Shri G. Mukunda Reddy and Media Academy Chairman Shri K. Srinivas Reddy, along with other officials, for implementing these decisions at the ground level.

CM Revanth Reddy - a leader who understands journalists' struggles:

During the previous BRS government, which suppressed press freedom and harassed journalists, we organized a massive protest at Indira Park under my (Purushottam Naraguni) leadership. At that time, the present Chief Minister Shri Revanth Reddy, then in the opposition, personally attended the protest and stood in support of our struggle and journalists. We recall that he witnessed the hardships of journalists firsthand as an opposition leader, and today, as Chief Minister, he is delivering these benefits.

TSJU extends its full support to Hon'ble Chief Minister Shri A. Revanth Reddy, Minister for Information and Public Relations Shri Ponguleti Srinivas Reddy, and the cabinet for their sincere efforts toward journalists' welfare.

Geetha Murthy Counter to Sureka Voices

HYDERABAD

Public meeting held in Hanamakonda, State Minister Konda Surekha stated that the Central Government is not providing funds and schemes to the state of Telangana. She also said that Union Ministers Kishan Reddy and Bandi Sanjay Kumar never speak about this issue. Furthermore, she made sarcastic remarks questioning whether chanting "Jai Shri Ram" by BJP leaders would make money fall from above.

Reacting strongly to these comments, BJP National Council member and former State President of the Mahila Morcha, Geetha Murthy re-



sponded sharply. She recalled that just last year, Kishan Reddy had presented a PowerPoint showing that the Central Government had given thousands of crores to Telangana.

She also pointed out that

Bandi Sanjay Kumar, through various media platforms, had stated that the Central Government allocated ₹1.08 lakh crore to Telangana, including ₹28,000 crore for roads, ₹5,000 crore for railways, and

₹6,300 crore for rural and urban development. Geetha Murthy noted that these details were reported in The Hindu on 20 February 2025, as well as in Andhra Jyothi, Eenadu, and Sakshi.

She sarcastically remarked that perhaps the state minister did not have time to read these major news reports. She further alleged that such comments were made out of fear, as the Prime Minister of India, Narendra Modi, is scheduled to visit Hyderabad on the 10th of this month.

Finally, she advised Konda Surekha to avoid making such derogatory statements and to protect her own reputation.

Will Modi's visit mark a historic turning point in Telangana...?



HYDERABAD

The timing of his visit has sparked an interesting discussion. After achieving a resounding victory in the recent elections, the party has reached a significant milestone. For the first time, it planted its flag in Bengal, the birthplace of one of its founders, Syama Prasad Mukherjee. It also played a role in ending communist rule in the country.

With "Operation Kagar," left-wing extremism has been dealt a severe blow.

Telangana, which once served as a stronghold for leftist movements, has now also recorded significant surrenders of such groups.

Adding to this, after assuming office as Prime Minister for the third time, this is his first visit to Telangana.

Given all these developments, the Prime Minister's tour has gained unprecedented importance.

As a result, state BJP leaders are preparing to organize Modi's visit on a scale never seen before. They are undertaking various programs to mobilize Telangana society.

Interestingly, even in the digital age, they are once again giving importance to wall writings. Recalling old practices, leaders—from state leadership and Union ministers down to grassroots workers—have taken up brushes in hand, creating visuals that captivate onlookers.

Despite the availability of modern campaign tools like flex boards, banners, digital displays, and social media, leaders seem unable to forget the traditional method of wall writing.

Overall, this has led to a wave of "Modi mania" across the state.

GITAM Scholar Awarded Ph.D. in Pharmacy

HYDERABAD

GITAM Deemed to be University has awarded a Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) in Pharmacy to P. Rajyalakshmi Devi for her research on the therapeutic potential of gut microbiota in managing metabolic disorders. Her doctoral thesis, titled "Role of Short Chain Fatty Acids (SCFAs) in Combination with Probiotics for the Treatment of Obesity and Diabetes in Rats," was conducted under the guidance of Dr. M. Vinyas, School of Pharmacy, Hyderabad.

The study highlights the promising role of short-chain fatty acids (SCFAs) and probiotics in addressing obesity and type II diabetes. Using established experimental models, the research demonstrated that combined treatment significantly improved key metabolic parameters, including body weight, lipid profile, insulin sensitivity, and glycemic control. Histological findings further confirmed improvements in liver and pancreatic tissues.

Notably, butyrate, one of the SCFAs studied, exhibited superior antidiabetic activity. Molecular docking analysis revealed its strong interaction with critical metabolic regulators such as leptin, insulin receptors, and neuropeptide Y receptors, underscoring its role in metabolic signaling pathways.

The findings suggest that SCFAs, particularly in combination with probiotics, hold significant potential as therapeutic agents for preventing and managing obesity, insulin resistance, and related metabolic disorders. Congratulating Dr. Rajyalakshmi on her achievement, university leaders including Prof. D. S. Rao, Pro Vice-Chancellor; D.V.V.S.R. Varma, Resident Director; and Prof.G. Shiva Kumar, Principal, School of Pharmacy, commended her valuable contribution to pharmaceutical research and innovation.



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Round Table Meeting on Quality Education – Fee Regulation

- It is our misfortune that the Chief Minister himself is also the Education Minister
- Even after school fees have increased from 50% to 120%, there is no concern
- In Telangana, which was achieved through the sacrifices of 1,200 people, governance has not reflected that sensitivity for the past 12 years
- A fee regulation law must be introduced within the month of May
- Free education and healthcare are our party's policy.
- Telangana Rakshana Sena (TRS) Chief Kalvakuntla Kavitha



We must question whether it is right for political leaders to own educational institutions. We need an immediate solution to fee exploitation. Parents are already anxious about paying fees again next month. Many parents are living in fear regarding fee payments. After Telangana was formed, the BRS government appointed the Tirupati Rao Commission for fee regulation.

The commission studied the issue and submitted a report. However, the BRS government did not take even a single step forward regarding fee reimbursement. It is not enough to say that Gurukul schools were established while ignoring the exploitation by private institutions. Out of 6.4 million students in the state, about 65% to 75% study in private schools.

But people cannot remain indifferent even when fees are increased excessively. In Punjab, students have been forced to sell liquor part-time because they cannot afford fees. Many educational institutions today operate with a business mindset, and most of them are linked to political leaders.

There will millions of parents get relief. A GO should be issued immediately ensuring that fees are not increased even by a single rupee compared to last year. Hyderabad Public School is located on government land.

This year, the school has increased fees by as much as 120% compared to last year. It is unfortunate that a school on government land has increased fees by 120%. What message is the Chief Minister sending by attending private school openings? Is the Chief Minister encouraging exploitation by private educational institutions?

There is a conspiracy to grab 30 acres of land belonging to Hyderabad Public School. Relatives of the Chief Minister and top officials are part of the committee there. A woman has held the same post in that school for 14 years and allegedly teaches corruption to new board members. Prominent alumni who studied at Hyderabad Public School are donating large sums. Recently, former student Satya Nadella made a significant donation. However, there is no

proper accounting for these funds. It is unfortunate that the Chief Minister is also the Education Minister. The Chief Minister must review the Hyderabad Public School issue, and the government must take a clear stand.

If fees have increased by 120% in Hyderabad Public School, how much will schools like Narayana and Chaitanya increase? In Telangana, many budget schools and colleges were run by individuals. Some youth came together to run institutions to reduce the burden on parents. But corporate schools have tried to eliminate such institutions.

We have no issue with schools that operate ethically. If Telangana society faces a problem, Telangana Rakshana Sena also considers it its problem.

All political parties must unite against fee exploitation. There is a need to hold protests in front of collectorates in all districts. The government is also conspiring regarding fee reimbursement. About ₹11,000 crore in fee reimbursements is pending, pushing colleges towards closure.

Statues at Traffic Junctions: When Public Memory Collides with Public Safety

India does not lack spaces to honour its icons, but it repeatedly chooses the most inappropriate ones. Traffic junctions are designed for speed, visibility, and split-second decision-making, yet they have increasingly been turned into sites of symbolism. Statues of leaders and cultural figures rise at the centre of intersections, often justified in the name of respect or beautification. The deeper question, however, is unavoidable: should public sentiment be allowed to override public safety in spaces meant exclusively for mobility? If one takes both law and evidence seriously, the answer is far clearer than what is reflected on our roads today.

and politics. Statues are not merely physical structures but symbols of identity, community pride, and political recognition. Any attempt to remove or relocate them is often perceived as an act of disrespect, even when done in the interest of public safety.

This perception creates administrative hesitation. Local authorities, wary of public backlash or political repercussions, often avoid decisive action even when legal backing exists. As a result, enforcement becomes selective, with some statues removed quietly while others remain untouched. The issue, therefore, is less about policy absence and more about the reluctance to implement it uniformly.

Data and Evidence: What the Numbers and Law Reveal

India's road safety crisis remains severe and persistent. According to the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways, the country recorded over 1.77 lakh road accident deaths in 2024 alone, underscoring the scale of the challenge. While accidents occur across varied settings, intersections are widely recognised as high-risk zones because they involve complex vehicle interactions, turning movements, and decision-making under time pressure. Even minor disruptions in visibility or road design at such locations can significantly elevate the risk of collisions.

Urban design research consistently points out that visual clutter and physical obstructions at junctions reduce driver reaction time and situational awareness. Traffic islands occupied by statues, fencing, or elevated platforms can block sightlines of signals, pedestrians, or approaching vehicles. In cities attempting to modernise traffic systems through signal-free corridors or redesigned roundabouts, one of the first corrective measures has often been the removal of such central obstructions to improve visibility and traffic flow.

The legal position is equally unambiguous. In 2013, the Supreme Court of India directed all states and Union Territories not to permit statues or any structures on public roads if they hinder movement or compromise safety. The Court emphasised that roads are public utilities and must remain free for their primary purpose—safe and efficient mobility. More than a decade later, however, the persistence of statues at major junctions points not to legal ambiguity but to gaps in enforcement.

Rethinking Commemoration: Safer and More Meaningful Alternatives

Addressing this issue does not require rejecting the idea of statues altogether; it requires rethinking their placement. Memorial parks, public squares, riverfronts, and institutional campuses offer far more appropriate and meaningful settings. In such spaces, statues can be contextualised with historical information, landscaping, and public engagement, allowing citizens to interact with them thoughtfully rather than merely passing by.



For statues already located at traffic junctions, a phased relocation strategy is both practical and necessary. This process must be accompanied by transparent communication that frames relocation not as removal, but as preservation with dignity. Community consultation can help reduce resistance, while clearly defined timelines can ensure that the process does not remain indefinitely stalled.

At a broader level, compliance with the directives of the Supreme Court of India must become non-negotiable. Regular road safety audits should explicitly identify visual obstructions, and accountability mechanisms must ensure that corrective measures are implemented consistently.

Respect That Does Not Cost Lives

A society's maturity lies not only in how it honours its past, but also in how responsibly it safeguards its present. Statues at traffic junctions reflect a failure to balance these priorities. They neither contribute to traffic efficiency nor offer meaningful public engagement, yet they occupy critical space in environments where clarity and safety are essential.

The choice, ultimately, is not between memory and modernity, but between symbolism and safety. Commemoration should elevate public life, not endanger it. Relocating statues away from traffic junctions is not an act of disrespect—it is a necessary step toward ensuring that public spaces serve the living without compromising their safety.

— D JAIRAM, Founder & Mentor
SRI JAIRAM Competitive Academy

Congress govt responsible for death of three farmers

HYDERABAD

BJP State President N Ramchander Rao today expressed deep grief over the tragic death of three farmers in Luxettipet Mandal, Mancherla district, who lost their lives due to heavy rains and winds at grain collection centers (Kallalu). In a strongly worded press statement, he held the Congress government's "incompetence" directly responsible for the death of farmers. Rao expressed his heartfelt sympathies to the families of the deceased farmers—Gundarapu Venkatesh, Tanugula Abhiram, and Lachanna while trying to protect their products. "It is heartbreaking to see farmers, who feed the nation, lose their lives while trying to protect their produce. This tragedy is a direct result of the Congress government's failure," Rao alleged and emphasized that "the nation survives only if the farmers survive. The Congress government must wake up to this truth. BJP state chief wanted to know why farmers were forced to wait for weeks at procurement centers to sell their harvest when central government bears the entire financial burden including MSP per quintal, Mandi Hamali (labor) and Transportation charges.

GWMC council clears Rs. 76.56 crore development works

Dr Srinivas Vooradi

WARANGAL

The Council of the Greater Warangal Municipal Corporation on Wednesday approved development works worth ₹76.56 crore at its general body meeting held at the corporation headquarters. The meeting, chaired by Mayor Gundu Sudharani, cleared 20 agenda items. It was attended by Warangal MP Kadiyam Kavya, MLC Basavaraju Saraiiah, MLAs Naini Rajender Reddy and K.R. Nagaraju, along with officials including in-charge Commissioner and District Collector Chahat Bajpai.

Addressing the council, the Mayor said Warangal had been placed on a comprehensive development path over the past five years through collective efforts cutting across party lines. She described the grounding of the long-pending underground drainage project as a key milestone, stating that substantial funds had been sanctioned with the support of Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy.



She noted that development works worth ₹3,331 crore had been taken up in the past five years, with many nearing completion. Projects under the Smart City programme, including modern infrastructure, smart roads, junction upgrades and lake beautification, have transformed the city's landscape, she said.

Measures had also been taken to ensure daily drinking water supply and improve sanitation. Plans were being implemented to prevent urban flooding through nala development and expansion, she added. The Mayor said works were being taken up with ₹100 crore SPV funds for roads, drains, bridges and lakes, while flood mitigation measures were underway

with ₹25 crore special funds and ₹550 crore UIDF support. Development of the Khila Warangal outer moat was also expected to reduce flood risk. She reiterated that focused efforts were being made for the integrated development of Warangal, Hanamkonda and Kazipet.

MP Kadiyam Kavya said the Congress government was committed to the holistic development of the historically significant Warangal city. She stated that the underground drainage project, pending for years, had been taken up with necessary funding. Key projects such as an airport, coach factory and a mega textile park were progressing, she said, adding that GWMC was prioritising sanitation and drinking water to improve living standards.

MLC Basavaraju Saraiiah said the government, under the leadership of the Chief Minister, was focused on developing Warangal on par with Hyderabad, with emphasis on core infrastructure, sanitation and water supply. He called for coordinated efforts between officials and public representatives to expedite works.

“We have undertaken recruitment for 18,000 posts in the Medical and Health Department”

NARAYANKED

As part of the Praja Palana – Pragati Pranalika program and the 99-day action plan implementation, State Minister for Medical, Health, and Family Welfare Shri Damodar Rajanarasimha attended as the chief guest.

Under this prestigious program of the Telangana State Government, the 99-day action plan event was organized grandly at the Bal Sadan in Narayankhed Municipality, Sangareddy district, under the leadership of the Department of Women, Child, Disabled, and Senior Citizens Welfare, and presided over by local MLA Dr. Sanjeeva Reddy. The new building of the Bal Sadan was inaugurated jointly by MLA Sanjeeva Reddy and MP Suresh Shetkar. Speaking on the occasion, Minister Damodar Rajanarasimha said:

After the formation of the people's government, around 18,000 posts have been filled in the Medical, Health, and Family Welfare Department. He stated that the results for Multipurpose ANM and Nursing Officer posts will be announced soon. Under the leadership of Chief Minister Revanth Reddy, the Telangana government is giving high priority to education, healthcare, women's empowerment, development, and welfare programs.

The minister stated that the government is committed to the welfare



of women, children, persons with disabilities, and the elderly. As part of this, protecting Bal Sadanams and Anganwadi centers is a major responsibility of the state government. He said Anganwadis will be strengthened and developed with government and CSR funds.

Through Anganwadi centers, the government is providing one nutritious meal daily to pregnant women, lactating mothers, and children aged 3 to 6 years. Take-home rations are being provided to children aged 7 months to 3 years. Pre-primary education is being offered to children aged 3 to 6 years, along with free nutrition, healthcare, preschool services, immunization, referral services, and health check-ups.

He highlighted the services of ANMs, Anganwadi teachers, supervisors, and ASHA workers in villages

and appreciated their contributions. During the program, the minister interacted directly with the girls of the Bal Sadan and inquired about their issues. He instructed officials to immediately set up an RO water plant at the Bal Sadan. Later, scooters were distributed to persons with disabilities.

As part of the Praja Palana – Pragati Pranalika program, officials informed the minister that various activities were conducted during the Welfare Department week, including cleanliness drives in child care institutions, identification of children above 18 years in CCIs, organizing health camps, conducting special camps for essential certificates and health cards, rehabilitation and follow-up of children discharged from institutions, and facilitating admissions into residential schools.

“Transfers should be conducted transparently”

Welfare Minister
Adhuri Laxman Kumar to officials

HYDERABAD

Prioritising employee convenience, equality, and transparency, Welfare Minister Shri Adhuri Laxman Kumar issued clear instructions to officials to ensure that the transfer process under the Welfare Department is conducted without any scope for disputes.

The Minister directed officials to implement the ongoing employee transfer process undertaken by the Telangana State Government in the Welfare Department in a completely transparent and impartial manner.

A review meeting held on Wednesday at Dr. B.R. Ambedkar State Secretariat was attended by senior officials from TGSWREIS, TGTWREIS, Ashram schools, the Scheduled Castes Development Department, and the Department of Persons with Disabilities.

During the meeting, the Minister said that priority should be given to employees who have served for long periods in remote areas, by posting them in locations of their choice as far as possible.

He instructed that cases involving employees with health issues and “spouse cases” where both husband and wife are working at the same location should be considered positively.



He stated that those who have worked in difficult conditions should be treated with a humane approach and given justice.

The Minister suggested that clear guidelines for transfers should be formulated and made accessible to employees.

He emphasized reducing human intervention by fully adopting digital systems at every stage of the process. He ordered the establishment of a dedicated grievance cell for the quick resolution of complaints. He made it clear that the process must continue impartially, without any pressure or personal influence.

He stated that staff balance in Gurukul institutions must be maintained so that the quality of teaching is not affected.

He also suggested special facilitation for women employees, persons with disabilities, and senior

employees. Officials brought to the Minister's attention the difficulties faced by employees due to GO 370 in Gurukuls. They noted that although GO 190 was issued, there are still implementation issues. Responding to this, the Minister said that the feasibility of implementing GO 190 should be thoroughly examined and efforts should be made to implement it effectively.

He instructed officials to ensure balanced decisions so that no employee is treated unfairly.

The Minister opined that creating an environment where employees work with satisfaction and peace of mind will further improve the quality of education. He directed officials to make the transfer process in the Welfare Department a model system.

The meeting was attended by Tribal Welfare Department Secre-

tary (FAC) Santosh, TGSWREIS Secretary (FAC) Sharada, TGTWREIS Additional Secretary N. Rajender Reddy, Joint Secretaries Nataraj, Venkanna, Lingareddy, Rajubabu, Venugopal, Director of the Department for Persons with Disabilities Shailaja, SCDD In-charge Secretary Sridhar, and others.

Prioritizing employee convenience, equality, and transparency, Welfare Minister Shri Adhuri Laxman Kumar issued clear instructions to officials to ensure that the transfer process under the Welfare Department is conducted without any scope for disputes.

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DIG Reviews Security in Maiden Zanskar Visit

ZANSKAR/JAMMU: (MAY 6)

Deputy Inspector General of Police (Ladakh Range) Koshal Sharma on Wednesday undertook his maiden visit to the newly created Zanskar district, marking a step towards strengthening policing and administrative coordination following its recent elevation. During the visit, Sharma reviewed arrangements for the upcoming display of holy relics scheduled for May 11 and 12, assessing preparedness in terms of security deployment, crowd management, and inter-departmental coordination to ensure the smooth and peaceful conduct of the event, officials said. Superintendent of Police Zanskar Rigzin Sangdop and SHO Inspector Tsewang Nurboo accompanied the DIG.

BJP Leader Suvendu Adhikari's Aide Shot Dead Near Kolkata

KOLKATA: (MAY 6)

In a shocking development within 48 hours of West Bengal assembly poll results, BJP leader Suvendu Adhikari's personal assistant, Chandranath Rath, was shot dead by unidentified assailants on the northern fringes of Kolkata on Wednesday night, triggering sharp political reactions and heightened tension in the area. The incident took place at Doharia in Madhyamgram's Doltala area in North 24 Parganas district, where Rath, who served as the executive assistant to the leader of the opposition in the state assembly, was shot at point-blank range by motorcycle-borne assailants, sources said. According to preliminary information, the attackers followed Rath's car, intercepted it, shot him through the rolled-up window from the opposite side and fled the scene immediately after carrying out the attack. He was seated in the front seat next to the driver.

TMC condemns murder of BJP leader Suvendu Adhikari's aide Chandranath Rath

KOLKATA: (MAY 7)

The Trinamool Congress condemned the killing of BJP leader Suvendu Adhikari's personal assistant Chandranath Rath by unidentified men on the northern fringes of Kolkata on Wednesday night and demanded a court-monitored CBI probe into the incident. "We strongly condemn the brutal murder of Chandranath Rath in Madhyamgram tonight, along with the killing of three other TMC workers in incidents of post-poll violence allegedly carried out by BJP-backed miscreants over the last three days, despite the Model Code of Conduct being in force," the party said in a statement. "We demand the strongest possible action in this matter, including a court-monitored CBI probe so that those responsible are identified and brought to justice without delay," it said.

THE MAN BEHIND TVK'S SURPRISE RISE

John Arokiasamy Emerges as the Mastermind Reshaping Tamil Nadu's Political Battlefield

While the spotlight stayed on Joseph Vijay and the surging crowds of Tamilaga Vettri Kazhagam, a quieter force engineered one of Tamil Nadu's biggest political upheavals. John Arokiasamy—the strategist who built the plan, the structure, and the momentum.

- Data-driven targeting
- Narrative control
- Organisational discipline
- Branding that cut across vote banks

THE AROKIASAMY STRATEGY

MICRO-TARGETING Constituency-level data analysis to identify voter sentiment and local issues.	FAN TO CADRE Converted fan clubs into disciplined, booth-level political units.	NARRATIVE CONTROL Consistent messaging around clean governance, youth empowerment, and change.	DIGITAL + GROUND Integrated social media outreach with strong grassroots mobilisation network.	BRAND POSITIONING Positioned TVK as the fresh alternative beyond traditional Dravidian politics.
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WHY TVK RESONATED

- ✓ Youth and first-time voters craved change
- ✓ Anti-incumbency without direct confrontation
- ✓ Clean image + strong leadership appeal
- ✓ Disciplined rollout, zero internal noise
- ✓ Rapid expansion across urban and rural belts

THE IMPACT SO FAR

- Massive rallies. Unprecedented youth participation.
- TVK's organisational network spread faster than expected.
- Established players forced to recalibrate strategies.
- Narrative of "fresh politics" gained strong statewide traction.

NOT JUST A POLITICAL RISE. IT'S A STRATEGIC DISRUPTION. TAMIL NADU WILL NEVER LOOK THE SAME.
THE INVISIBLE HAND, THE VISIBLE WAVE: HOW JOHN AROKIASAMY SCRIPTED TVK'S SHOCK ENTRY INTO TAMIL NADU POLITICS

BY C. SUBRAHMANYAM

A low-profile strategist turns a film star's fan base into a disciplined political force, unsettling Tamil Nadu's entrenched order. The rise of Tamilaga Vettri Kazhagam is not just a celebrity experiment but a calculated political intervention driven by precision planning, narrative control, and grassroots engineering. The big question now is whether strategy can outlast spectacle.

While the cameras stayed locked on Joseph Vijay and the swelling crowds around Tamilaga Vettri Kazhagam, the real action unfolded far from the stage. John Arokiasamy did not enter through the front door of politics. He built the house from the foundation up. This was not improvisation. This was architecture. Arokiasamy's approach cut through the noise that defines Tamil Nadu politics. He identified a vacuum that others were too comfortable or too

complacent to acknowledge. Voter fatigue had reached a tipping point. The electorate, particularly the youth, was no longer responding to legacy narratives. He converted that simmering dissatisfaction into a structured, measurable, and scalable political force.

THE CORE STRATEGY

1. Data-first constituency mapping
2. Narrative discipline across platforms
3. Conversion of fan clubs into booth-level units
4. Tight message control with zero ideological drift
5. Aggressive youth targeting

FROM FAN BASE TO POLITICAL MACHINE

What looked like organic momentum was anything but accidental. The rallies were not just gatherings. They were calibrated demonstrations of strength. Messaging was not emotional spillover. It was curated, tested, and deployed with precision. Arokiasamy understood a fundamental shift. In today's political battlefield, visibility without structure collapses. He en-

sured TVK had both. The fan clubs, once dismissed as mere celebrity worship hubs, were reorganised into functional political units. Digital outreach was not left to chance. It was synchronised with ground-level mobilisation. The result was a hybrid model where perception and organisation moved in lockstep. "This is not a wave. This is a designed surge."

DISRUPTING THE DRAVIDIAN STRONGHOLD

Tamil Nadu's political theatre has long been dominated by entrenched power centres, legacy narratives, and tightly controlled vote banks. Arokiasamy did not challenge this system head-on. He bypassed it. Instead of attacking established giants directly, he repositioned TVK as the alternative that did not carry historical baggage. Clean governance, fresh leadership, and disciplined messaging became the pillars. The pitch was simple but sharply executed: this is not a continuation, this is a reset. That distinction landed.

WHY TVK RESONATED

1. Anti-incumbency without direct confrontation
 2. Aspirational messaging targeting first-time voters
 3. Clean image projection with controlled communication
 4. Rapid organisational spread without internal noise
- HE HARD QUESTIONS NOW
Success in mobilisation is only the first test. Survival in politics demands far more. Can a strategy-driven formation withstand the pressures of governance? Can disciplined messaging hold when real-world compromises begin? Can internal coherence survive as ambition grows within the ranks? Most crucially, can Arokiasamy's blueprint remain dominant in a structure where star power naturally pulls focus? These are not theoretical questions. They are imminent realities. Traditional parties are already recalibrating. The ripple effect is visible in their outreach patterns, messaging tone, and youth engagement strategies.
- THE NEW PLAYBOOK OF TAMIL POLITICS

Arokiasamy's model signals a structural shift:

- Celebrity entry is no longer enough
- Organisation must precede expansion
- Digital and ground strategies must merge
- Narrative control is now central to survival

"In modern politics, the strategist writes the script. The star only delivers the lines."

John Arokiasamy has altered the grammar of political mobilisation in Tamil Nadu. Whether this becomes a lasting transformation or a short-lived disruption depends on what comes next. The stage has been set with precision. The machinery is in motion. But politics is not won in the build-up alone. It is tested in endurance. For now, one fact stands firm. The man who stayed away from the spotlight has forced everyone else to rethink their position under it. The battle has moved beyond speeches and slogans. It is now about structure, strategy, and staying power.

CM directs officials to prepare action plan to enhance income generation

through seaweed cultivation to SHG women and fishermen
Seaweed farming offers significant potential to create sustainable livelihood in coastal region: CM

AMARAVATI:

Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu directed officials to develop a comprehensive economic model to enhance income generation through seaweed cultivation and value addition to benefit women's self-help groups (SHGs) and fishermen in coastal regions.

During a review meeting at Secretariat today, the Chief Minister emphasised that seaweed farming offers significant potential to create sustainable livelihoods along Andhra Pradesh's long coastline. He instructed officials to take proactive steps to ensure that SHG women benefit from expanded income opportunities through seaweed cultivation. The Chief Minister highlighted promotion of seaweed farming among SHG women, creation of additional income streams for fishermen and coastal communities, development of commercial-scale production models. He stated that Andhra Pradesh has vast potential for seaweed cultivation, which can

be effectively harnessed to strengthen the coastal region. The Chief Minister held virtual discussions with senior officials from premier central institutions including Central Salt and Marine Chemicals Research Institute, National Institute of Ocean Technology, Central Institute of Brackishwater Aquaculture and Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute in this regard. He also directed collaboration with Amrita Vishwa Vidyapeetham to prepare a detailed report on seaweed cultivation practices and income potential for women. The Chief Minister underscored the need to promote value-added seaweed products, engage national and international organizations for commercial-scale production, position seaweed as a key marine resource for wealth creation. He noted that seaweed is a crucial raw material in Pharmaceuticals, Nutraceutical products and expressed confidence that Andhra Pradesh can tap into the global seaweed market.



DMK to tie-up with arch-rival AIADMK?

Secret talks spark buzz amid Vijay power bid

The DMK has opened backchannel talks with the AIADMK as the TVK seeks allies in Tamil Nadu. The rare contact between the two rivals has stirred fresh buzz over shifting political equations in the state.

through. The big question now is whether the DMK is willing to come on board in what would be an unprecedented shift in Tamil Nadu's politics. The DMK got 59 seats while the AIADMK managed 47. But there's a catch: even if the DMK and AIADMK join hands, their combined 106 MLAs would still fall short of enough numbers to govern. The majority mark is 118. For those unversed, the AIADMK was formed in 1972 after MG Ramachandran, or MGR, was expelled from the DMK by then-president M Karunanidhi following disputes over the party's corruption allegations. The split set the stage for the decades-long rivalry between the two Dravidian parties which defined Tamil Nadu's political landscape.

Andhra Pradesh to manufacture 80 pc of India's air conditioners by 2028: Lokesh

AMARAVATI, MAY 6

Andhra Pradesh's Information Technology and Electronics Minister Nara Lokesh on Wednesday said that 80 per cent of India's air conditioners will be manufactured in the state by 2028. Speaking at the groundbreaking ceremony of an air-conditioner manufacturing unit at Sri City in Tirupati district, Lokesh, projecting Andhra Pradesh as a major HVAC manufacturing hub, remarked that the state has already earned its unique distinction as the cool capital of India. He noted that nine leading AC manufacturers, 30-plus component and supply chain players already have their presence in Sri



City. "Close to Rs 12,000 crore worth of investments have gone into this rapidly expanding HVAC ecosystem." On future manufacturing targets, he said: "By 2027, we expect to manufacture 60 per cent of India's air conditioning requirement here in Sri City. By 2028, thanks to Carrier, we

and success of Sri City, Lokesh said that Sri City, spread across 8,500 acres, is home to 250 companies from 31 countries and over \$6 billion of exports coming out of this great land. On employment generation, he noted: "70,000 jobs have been created so far, but what excites me most is 50 per cent of those jobs have gone to women." "From automotive to electronics, food processing to precision engineering, Sri City represents the best of Make in India and Made in Andhra Pradesh," he said, adding that the new project adds another feather to its cap. Lokesh also outlined a vision to make AP a one-stop hub for all data centre needs, saying: "We are not just building data centres, but their

entire ecosystem." He emphasised that the state is not just focusing on attracting data centres but on creating a full manufacturing ecosystem around them. He highlighted the global race in data centres and artificial intelligence, expressing confidence that Andhra Pradesh will lead from the front. He noted that data centres require advanced cooling systems, high-efficiency chillers, power electronics, and precision manufacturing, making it essential to build a strong supporting ecosystem. He also welcomed the firm choosing Andhra Pradesh and Sri City as part of this broader vision, calling it a step toward strengthening the state's digital and industrial growth.

Mamata Banerjee may take Bengal fight to Supreme Court over rigging allegations

Announcing her shift towards legal activism, Banerjee further mentioned that she and the outgoing Minister of State for Health and Family Welfare, Chandrima Bhattacharya, would resume their legal practice in courts challenging the poll mandate.



In a high-stakes meeting of the elected Trinamool Congress MLAs at her Kalighat home, Trinamool Congress supreme Mamata Banerjee declared her intent to challenge the 2026 West Bengal poll mandate in the Supreme Court, sources close to the development told India Today. She also levelled serious allegations of electoral irregularities against the BJP, which

also asserted that despite a setback in the local polls, her eyes remain firm on consolidating the opposition India alliance in Delhi, something she mentioned in her press conference a day before. **WON'T RESIGN: MAMATA DOUBLES DOWN**
The outgoing Chief Minister took a firm stand against resigning, framing her decision to stay in office as a deliberate act of protest against what she described as a forcefully stolen mandate. She mentioned the same in her press conference, held a day ago. The sentiment was echoed by Abhishek Banerjee, who considered holding designations as a valid protest against the allegedly rigged Bengal mandate. He urged party leaders not to step down from

their previous designations. The Diamond Harbour MP also said that the party would seek legal help against the ongoing post-poll violence. After the meeting, Mamata Banerjee also said that the Centre is free to impose President's Rule if they wish, provided it goes on the official record. **RABINDRA SANGEET TO BE PLAYED IN TMC PARTY OFFICES ON MAY 9**
Mamata also urged TMC leaders to play Rabindra sangeet (Tagore songs) on May 9, when the swearing-in ceremony will be held in Kolkata Brigade Parade. She also strictly instructed all the winning candidates to remain in their respective constituencies and connect with the grassroots.

J-K LG calls for integrating Vedic wisdom with modern education

JAMMU: (MAY 6)

Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Wednesday emphasised the need to integrate ancient Vedic wisdom with modern education, asserting that the nation's true strength lies in its cultural consciousness. He was speaking after inaugurating Shri Narsingh Dev Sanskrit Gurukul at the historic Shri Narsingh Dev Temple in Ghaghal area of Samba district. "India is rapidly advancing in science, innovation and technology. The nation's true strength lies in its cultural consciousness, with Sanskrit playing a vital role in providing a balanced perspective rooted in ethics and duty," Sinha said.

Airlines get Rs 5,000-crore lifeline from government as jet fuel prices soar

The Centre has cleared a Rs 5,000 crore relief package for India's aviation sector, offering support to airlines hit by financial stress amid the West Asia crisis.



The Centre has approved a Rs 5,000 crore lifeline for India's aviation sector under the Emergency Credit Line Guarantee Scheme (ECLGS) 5.0, stepping in as airlines grapple with mounting financial stress triggered by the West Asia crisis. The move comes amid a sharp surge in aviation turbine fuel (ATF) prices, currency volatility and airspace restrictions in the wake of the Iran war, all of which have significantly raised operating costs and disrupted international routes. The strain has already begun to show, with Air India announcing a trimming of its international operations for June and July, citing certain routes as financially "unviable". According to the Ministry of Civil Aviation, the scheme is designed

to provide targeted credit support and immediate liquidity relief. Each eligible airline can avail loans of up to Rs 1,000 crore, with an additional Rs 500 crore linked to an equivalent equity infusion. The loans will have a tenure of up to seven years, including a two-year moratorium on repayments—offering breathing space to carriers struggling with cash flow pressures. The government said the scheme also allows up to 50 per cent of the interest to be converted into a Funded Interest Term Loan (FITL), further easing repayment burdens in the short term and improving liquidity. Civil Aviation Minister Ram Mohan Naidu said the decision reflects the Centre's intent to support airlines through a challenging global environment.

EDITORIAL

EVALUATING INDIA'S
PROJECT 17A AND THE NAVAL
CAPABILITY GAP

Valued at ₹45,000-crore, the Indian Navy's Project 17A aims to construct seven 'Nilgiri'-class frigates. Designed with multi-role anti-air, anti-surface, and anti-submarine capabilities, these vessels serve as a sophisticated upgrade to the 'Shivalik' class and a stepping stone toward the future Project 17B. While the recent delivery of INS Mahendragiri on April 30 marked a rapid streak of six deliveries within 17 months, the program's history is marred by systemic delays. Reports from the Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) of India highlight that previous warship classes suffered from hundreds of mid-construction design modifications. Furthermore, vessels have been commissioned on paper to meet deadlines despite lacking vital components like engines and sensors, resulting in hulls that are functionally unprepared for high-intensity combat. A 2025 CAG audit further underscored a disconnect in planning, noting that the Navy frequently inducts platforms without the requisite shore-based supporting infrastructure. Although Project 17A boasts 75% indigenization by value, the remaining foreign-sourced critical components often dictate the timeline, leaving India with limited control over the final integration of its fleet.

The Indian Ocean remains a volatile theater, facilitating the bulk of India's energy imports while hosting an increasing number of Chinese naval deployments. However, the existence of these threats does not automatically justify the current scale or nature of the Navy's procurement response. Following the 2008 Mumbai attacks, India established a Chain of Static Sensors—utilizing radar hardware dependent on imported parts—which has since expanded to include Mauritius, Sri Lanka, and the Seychelles. This network is intended to anchor a "detect-decide-respond" architecture. Yet, while satellites and underwater arrays handle the "detect" phase, the frigates' primary radars and sonars remain the most heavily imported and delayed elements. Consequently, adding more surface combatants under these conditions is akin to adding receivers to a network that is still transmitting a "fuzzy" operational picture.

While multi-role frigates are necessary for securing sea lanes and countering modern threats like Houthi drone and missile strikes, they are arguably overkill for policing piracy or smuggling. Furthermore, the 26/11-style infiltration risks are already being addressed through the Indian Coast Guard and heightened coastal surveillance. Regarding the People's Liberation Army Navy's growing submarine footprint, an Indian vessel lacking premium sensor suites is effectively incapable of countering Chinese underwater presence. This raises a fundamental question: what is the true objective of expanding the high-end frigate fleet? If the goal is merely to sustain domestic shipyards or absorb new tech, India risks allowing industrial preservation to override actual defense requirements. Ultimately, India possesses a response fleet hampered by delays, a sensor grid requiring urgent upgrades, and a domestic ecosystem still tethered to foreign imports—resulting in a naval investment strategy that remains out of sync with the evolving threat environment.

Mandate 2026

New Chessboard of Power: Saffron Expansion
and the New Avatar of Regional Satraps

The 2026 assembly election results in five states are not merely events of power shifts or re-orientations in the history of Indian democracy; rather, they serve as a comprehensive document of the country's shifting political direction and the evolving psychology of the voter, setting new benchmarks for future politics. These results have made it clear that the Indian voter is no longer entangled solely in emotional slogans or traditional vote-bank mathematics; instead, they are delivering verdicts based on administrative accountability, leadership credibility, and the solid ground of development. If one conducts a microscopic analysis of this political upheaval—stretching from the hills of the Northeast to the coastal plains of the South—it becomes evident that the eastern expansion of 'Saffron' politics is now at its peak, while in the South, an intriguing conflict has emerged between regional identity and a new political vision. This election results are a lesson for those political pundits who made predictions based only on old data, as this time, voters have initiated a 'storm of change' that has placed a question mark on the political futures of many stalwarts.

India's 2026 assembly election results have delivered a powerful message: voters are no longer swayed by rhetoric alone, but are decisively backing performance, credibility, and governance. From dramatic political shifts in the East to the rise of new forces in the South, the mandate reflects a changing voter mindset that prioritizes development, accountability, and strong leadership over traditional vote-bank politics, marking a defining moment in the country's democratic evolution.

The interpretation of the 2026 mandate remains incomplete without observing the 'mega-earthquake' in West Bengal's politics. The collapse of the Trinamool Congress, which held power for nearly a decade and a half, and the BJP crossing the 150-seat mark indicates that the people of Bengal were weary of the 'Syndicate Raj' and the culture of 'Cut Money.' This result in Bengal is not just a commercial victory but an ideological revolution, where voters accepted the coordination of 'National Development' alongside 'Bengali Identity.' Incidents like Sandeshkhali created a resentment against the administration that erupted like a volcano through the EVMs. The manner in which the BJP polarized Hindu votes and simultaneously organized the Matua and Rajbanshi communities in its favor tore down the TMC's perceived impregnable

fortress. In rural Bengal, central schemes like the 'Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana' and 'Jal Jeevan Mission' created a new 'beneficiary class' that found the transparency of Direct Benefit Transfer superior to the corruption-laden machinery of the state government. This election result also signals the end of Mamata Banerjee's charisma, once considered invincible, leaving Bengal's politics at a turning point where good governance and law and order have become the sole criteria for power.

Turning towards Assam, the situation is entirely different from Bengal but equally impactful. The 'hattrick' by the BJP under the leadership of Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma has proven that when development is coupled with cultural identity, it becomes an invincible formula. The BJP's victory in Assam is not just the continuity of power but a confirmation of the trust the public has placed in Sarma's effective and courageous leadership. The delimitation of constituencies altered the political geography such that the politics of infiltration and external influence were pushed to the margins, and a new form of 'Assamese Nationalism' emerged. Schemes like 'Orunodoi' established the BJP among women voters as a protector capable of providing solid solutions to their daily life problems. The Assam mandate sends a message that if leadership possesses vision and works aggressively on grassroots issues, the public grants them the opportunity to serve again. Here, the scattered strength of the opposition and the ideological vacuum of the Congress made the path easier for the BJP, making it clear that the BJP is no longer an alternative but a permanent force in the Northeast.

In the political landscape of South India, Tamil Nadu has captured the world's attention this time. The rise of a new political sun in the form of Thalapathy Vijay indicates that the people of Tamil Nadu sought liberation from the decades-old duel between the DMK and AIADMK.

Vijay's party, 'Tamilaga Vettri Kazhagam,' crossing the 100-seat mark is a political miracle, reminiscent of the MGR era when the confluence of cinema and politics became the key to power. Vijay presented himself not just as a film star, but as a 'troubleshooter' and a 'youth icon.' His courage to enter the electoral battlefield as a 'lone lion,' snubbing alliance politics, infused new energy into the Tamil youth. This result is far deeper than those of predecessors like Kamal Haasan or Vijayakanth because Vijay chose 'grounded and mass-appeal' politics over 'intellectual politics.' This mandate from Tamil Nadu is set to give a new direction to the future of Dravidian politics, where a 'third force' is no longer just a possibility but a reality.

The election results in Kerala were no less interesting, where the traditional custom of 'alternating power' ousted the LDF despite all the efforts of Pinarayi Vijayan. The resounding comeback of the UDF shows that Kerala's educated voters were in no mood to tolerate corruption and fiscal mismanagement. The various scams damaged the moral credibility of the LDF to an extent that its pro-people schemes could not compensate for it. Rahul Gandhi's activism in Wayanad and promises like the 'Nyay' scheme created a positive atmosphere for the Congress-led UDF. Most importantly, the dissatisfaction brewing among minority communities, especially Christians and Muslims, completely upset the balance of power. The Kerala voter is sending a message that they do not take any party 'for granted,' and the key to power always remains with the public, who review the administration ruthlessly every five years.

Puducherry, a small Union Territory, also demonstrated the importance of stability and coordination with the Center in politics. N. Ranganasamy's relatable image and his alliance with the BJP assured voters that for development, it is essential for the Center and the local government to be on the same track. The results in Puducherry proved that in smaller regions, per-

sonal contact and social equations draw the line between victory and defeat. The voter here values stability over administrative deadlock, which is why alliance politics hoisted its flag of success here.

When the results of all five states are viewed on a broad canvas, it is evident that Indian politics has entered the era of 'performance.' Elections can no longer be won simply by manipulating caste equations or through massive advertisements. The BJP's victory in West Bengal and its return in Assam show that the blend of 'Hindutva' and 'Development' remains the most powerful element in Indian politics. However, the results in Tamil Nadu and Kerala also caution that regional aspirations and the importance of local leadership will never diminish. These elections have served as a life-saver for the Congress under Rahul Gandhi's leadership in Kerala, while presenting the BJP with the challenge of seeking new allies in the South. Overall, this 2026 mandate has made it clear that the voter has become more expectation-centric. They do not only look at what the government has done but also at how credible the leadership is and what roadmap it possesses for the future. The welcoming of new faces like Thalapathy Vijay and the defeat of formidable leaders like Mamata Banerjee show that nothing is permanent in politics. In the coming times, only those parties and leaders will remain relevant who understand the aspirations of the people and establish a skillful balance between development, identity, and good governance.



YOGESH KUMAR GOYAL
senior journalist

THE INNER ROAD :
A LUMINOUS ASCENT



Where silence sows its argent seed,
A path awakens—pulse and need;
No mortal hand its course imparts,
It blooms, unbidden, in our hearts.
A ribboned road of dusk and gleam,
It bends like breath, it flows like dream
Through velvet vales in twilight cast,
To peaks where stars hold vigil fast.
Clouds are no curse—they crown the sky,
A sacred veil where sunbeams lie
For light grows deep in shadow's keep,
And stars are born where sorrows sleep.
Each step a stanza, each breath a rhyme,
Inscribed in ink of the unseen time
Tears, like pearls on night's soft thread,
Crown the living, wake the dead.
What is distance?—a fading shore,
Or will that whispers, "rise once more?"
What is defeat?—a passing scar,
Or fire that forges who we are?
The road bows low where spirits break,
It drinks the tears the weary make
Yet, like a hymn in hidden flame,
It lifts them—never quite the same.
For in each fall, a fire concealed,
In shattered truths, the self revealed
Life is a lyre with trembling strings—
Pain, the poet who makes it sing.
Seek not the end in distant light,
But walk till darkness kindles sight;
For between dusk and dawning breath,
We conquer life by crossing death.
And there—where silence turns to voice,
Where wounds and wonder both rejoice—
You find no fate in stars above,
But self reborn in fearless love.
Rise, Oh traveler—claim your way,
Let night refine the gold of day
For souls that dare through storm endure
Become their own bright, timeless cure.

...: Dr. Peruka Raju ...
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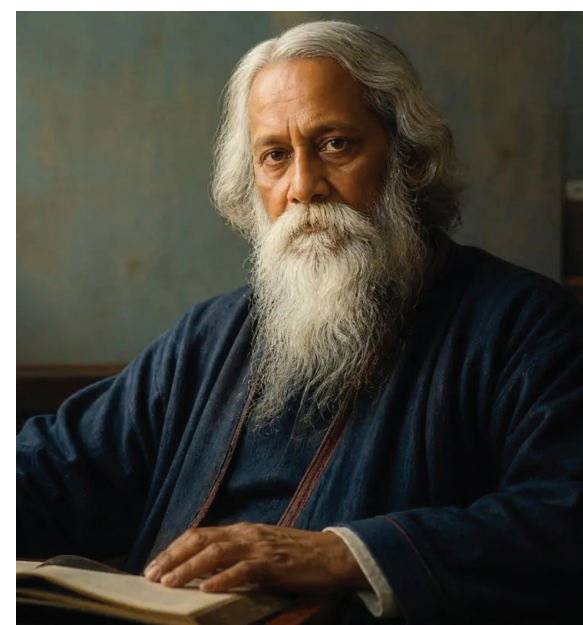
"A Beacon of National Consciousness –
Tagore's Enduring Inspiration"

In the cultural and intellectual history of India, Rabindranath Tagore stands as a towering figure who harmonised literature, philosophy, and human values. Born on May 7, 1861, in Kolkata, Tagore grew up in a spiritually rich and intellectually vibrant family environment, which shaped his creative genius from an early age. He was not merely a poet but also a novelist, playwright, musician, educationist, and painter. As the first Indian to receive the Nobel Prize, he placed India firmly on the global literary map. What makes Tagore truly unique is his ability to reflect not only the soul of India but also universal human values through his works. For him, a nation was not just a geographical entity but a living expression of love, mutual respect, and equality among people—this remains one of his most profound messages to our country.

On the birth anniversary of Rabindranath Tagore, we are reminded of a timeless visionary whose words and ideas continue to shape India's cultural and moral consciousness. More than a literary icon, Tagore's legacy lies in his profound humanism, his reimagining of education, and his belief in a compassionate, inclusive society—making his philosophy as relevant today as it was over a century ago.

Tagore's literary works deeply touch the human soul. His celebrated poetry collection, Gitanjali, brought global recognition to Indian thought and spirituality. Awarded the Nobel Prize in 1913, this work marked a historic moment for India and introduced the world to the depth of Indian literary sensibilities. His poetry seamlessly blends nature, devotion, love, and humanism, with each line gently awakening deeper reflection and emotional resonance in the reader.

His contribution to education was equally remarkable. Rejecting rigid and mechan-



ical systems of learning, Tagore envisioned an education rooted in nature, creativity, and freedom of thought. This vision took shape in the establishment of Visva-Bharati University at Santiniketan. The institution emerged as a unique centre where Indian traditions and global knowledge systems came together. Tagore believed that education should not merely prepare individuals for employment but should nurture them into complete human beings with sensitivity, creativity, and social responsibility.

In matters of nationalism, Tagore offered a nuanced and thoughtful perspective. While he opposed aggressive and narrow forms of nationalism, he upheld a deeper, humane love for the country rooted in universal values. His composition "Jana Gana Mana," which became the national anthem of India,

reflects this inclusive spirit. Notably, his song "Amar Shonar Bangla" was later adopted as the national anthem of Bangladesh, making him a rare figure whose creative vision resonates across national boundaries.

In today's fast-paced and technology-driven world, human relationships are often under strain despite increased connectivity. In such a context, Tagore's ideas acquire renewed relevance. He emphasised the importance of freedom of thought, liberation from fear, and a life guided by love and compassion. At a time when divisions and inequalities continue to challenge society, his humanistic philosophy serves as a guiding light.

Tagore's writings are not just literary expressions; they are life lessons. He encouraged individuals to discover their inner creativity and to live in a manner that

contributes meaningfully to society. His works inspire new ways of thinking and open pathways for personal and collective growth.

On this occasion of his birth anniversary, it is not enough to merely remember Tagore—we must strive to live his ideals. Promoting creativity in education, ensuring social equality, and respecting every individual are among the values he championed. Only by practising these principles can we offer him a true tribute.

In conclusion, Rabindranath Tagore is not just a historical personality but an eternal philosophy. His ideas transcend time and continue to influence generations. Whenever society finds itself at a crossroads, his vision stands like a lighthouse, guiding humanity towards harmony and enlightenment. Let us internalise his spirit and move forward with compassion, wisdom, and a commitment to human values—this would be the most meaningful homage to his legacy.



CHITIKENA KIRAN KUMAR
Eminent Poet,
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Build a large silo between Shahabad and Ambala for grain storage- Chief Minister

CHANDIGARH, MAY 6

Haryana Chief Minister, Sh. Nayab Singh Saini said that to prevent damage to food grains, it is essential to have an adequate number of warehouses and silos in the state. He directed the concerned departments to prepare a detailed action plan and find a permanent solution to the issue of grain storage at the earliest. He also directed that a plan be prepared to construct a silo (large warehouse) between Shahabad and Ambala. Sh. Nayab Singh Saini was chairing a review meeting with officers of various departments at the Haryana Civil Secretariat on Wednesday regarding grain storage across the state and water supply arrangements in the Palwal and Nuh regions. Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare Minister, Sh. Shyam Singh Rana, along with senior officers from various departments, also attended the meeting.

Directions issued to identify up to 100 acres of land between rail and road for silo construction

The Chief Minister said that farmers work tirelessly day and night to produce food grains, and therefore, adequate storage infrastructure is essential to ensure their safety. He directed officers to identify a location between Shahabad and Ambala for constructing a silo (large warehouse) situated between a railway line and a road. This would ensure cost-effective connectivity of the silo with the rest of the country. He further directed that up to 100 acres of land be acquired between the railway line and road as required. Officers were directed to complete the planning process for land acquisition and silo construction within one month.

Focus on safe storage plan for fruits and vegetables in Hisar

The Chief Minister said that due to the ongoing war in the Middle East, there is a significant demand for fruits and vegetables in that region. He directed the Warehousing Corporation to prepare a plan for setting up a silo or a large warehouse near Hisar Airport for safe storage of fruits and vegetables. These could then be supplied to the Middle East via Hisar Airport, enabling farmers to get better prices for their produce.

Plan canal-based water supply- CM

Officers of the Public Health Department informed that drinking water is currently supplied through tube wells in 108 villages of Palwal and Nuh, as well as in Punhana town. To maintain groundwater levels, the department plans to install seven Ranney wells and boosting stations, at an estimated cost of Rs. 765 crore. The Chief Minister directed that, in addition to this, a plan should be prepared to provide canal-based water supply in areas currently dependent on tube wells. He said that with the development of new industrial zones in Nuh and Palwal in the future, the demand for water will increase significantly.

Directions to plant large number of saplings under 'Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam' campaign

Keeping in view the upcoming monsoon season, the Chief Minister directed that large-scale plantation drives be carried out across the state. He said that under the 'Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam' campaign, tree plantation should begin immediately to increase green cover in the state. He also directed that tree guards be installed to protect saplings and ensure timely watering so that they grow properly. Officials were asked to prepare a comprehensive action plan for this.

BENGAL'S VERDICT ERUPTS, BUT DIDI DIGS IN DEFIANCE, DENIAL, AND A DEMOCRACY UNDER THE MICROSCOPE

BY C. SUBRAHMANYAM

A resounding electoral shift in West Bengal has triggered a political aftershock. Even as the BJP stakes claim to power with a decisive mandate, Mamata Banerjee refuses to concede defeat, alleging manipulation and institutional bias. The confrontation has opened a fierce national debate on electoral integrity, leadership accountability, and the limits of political resistance in a constitutional democracy.

The ballot has spoken in West Bengal with unmistakable clarity. The numbers are not ambiguous. The mandate is not fractured. It is decisive, emphatic, and politically transformative. Yet, standing amid this electoral earthquake is a leader who refuses to acknowledge the tremor beneath her feet. Mamata Banerjee's declaration that "we didn't lose" is not a routine political protest. It is a frontal challenge to the arithmetic of democracy itself. This is not a whispered dissent. This is a full-throated rejection of an outcome delivered through constitutional process. Let us be precise. In a democracy, defeat is not dishonour. But denial of defeat invites scrutiny. When a sitting Chief Minister, after losing both power and her own constituency, declines to accept the verdict, the issue moves beyond politics into the domain of institutional credibility.

THE CORE FLASHPOINT
1. CLAIM: Over 100 seats

allegedly compromised
2. TARGET: Election Commission and central forces
3. REALITY CHECK: No substantiated public evidence yet placed on record
4. IMPACT: Public trust faces a direct stress test
THE ALLEGATION STORM - HEAT WITHOUT DOCUMENTED LIGHT

The charges are serious. They cannot be brushed aside, nor can they be accepted at face value. Claims of electoral manipulation, coercion, and institutional bias must be examined with forensic rigour. That is the constitutional route. That is the only legitimate route. But here lies the crux. Allegations without verifiable evidence weaken their own credibility. When accusations outpace proof, they create more confusion than clarity. Bengal deserves facts, not fog. The Election Commission is not beyond question. No institution in a democracy is. But accountability must follow due process, not political impulse. If there has been wrongdoing, it must be established through lawful scrutiny, not public declarations alone.

"A mandate cannot be negotiated after it is delivered. It can only be challenged through evidence, not emotion."

THE POLITICS OF RESISTANCE OR THE RISK OF DISRUPTION

There is a fine line between resistance and destabilisation. A defeated leader has

every right to question. But that right carries responsibility. The tone, the timing, and the substance of the challenge matter. By refusing to concede, Mamata Banerjee is not merely holding ground. She is reshaping the political narrative into a confrontation between mandate and mistrust. This is combustible territory. If leaders begin to selectively accept electoral outcomes, democracy enters a dangerous zone where legitimacy becomes negotiable. That is not resilience. That is rupture.

WHAT IS AT STAKE
Democratic credibility Institutional trust Public faith in elections Political stability in Bengal

THE PEOPLE'S VOICE - DISMISSED OR DEFENDED?

At the heart of this storm lies the voter. The citizen who stood in queues, pressed a button, and trusted the system. What message does it send when that collective decision is questioned without substantiated proof? Democracy does not function on convenience. It functions on acceptance of outcomes, even when they are uncomfortable.

Rejecting a mandate without due process risks diminishing the very electorate that empowered the leadership in the first place.

"The ballot is not a suggestion. It is a sovereign command."

THE GROUND REALITY THAT TELLS ITS OWN STORY

Across districts in Bengal,

the voter turnout reflected engagement, not apathy. Polling stations reported orderly participation in most areas, with security deployment aimed at ensuring neutrality. Independent observers and local reports pointed to competitive intensity, but not systemic breakdown. While isolated complaints surfaced, no consolidated evidence of widespread tampering has yet been formally validated. This gap between allegation and substantiation is where the current controversy finds its sharpest edge. The narrative is being shaped faster than the facts are being verified.

DEMOCRACY DEMANDS COURAGE, NOT CONVENIENCE

This moment is bigger than one leader, one party, or one election. It is about how India negotiates disagreement within its democratic framework. If there are irregularities, they must be exposed with evidence and adjudicated through constitutional mechanisms. If not, the verdict must be respected in both letter and spirit. Defiance may energise cadres. Denial may delay acceptance. But neither can substitute the disciplined acceptance that democracy ultimately requires. Bengal stands at a crossroads where perception battles procedure. The nation watches closely. The truth will not emerge from rhetoric. It will emerge from proof. Until then, the mandate stands. And it demands to be honoured.



NFR Holds Stakeholder Meeting to Enhance Containerized Tea Movement by Rail

MALIGAON, 6 MAY, 2026:

In an effort towards enhancing transportation of tea through containerized movement by rail, Northeast Frontier Railway (NFR) held a meeting with major stakeholders of the tea industry including logistics operators, tea associations, exporters and producers at the Zonal Headquarters, Maligaon on 6th May, 2026. Assam produces nearly 160 million kg of export-oriented tea annually. Keeping in view the growing demand for efficient logistics support, the initiative aims to encourage greater movement of tea consignments through rail-based containerized services, which offer advantages such as cost-effectiveness, reliability, faster transit, reduced handling loss and eco-friendly transportation. NFR has been consistently working towards strengthening freight infrastructure and developing customer-oriented logistics solutions to cater to the requirements of the tea industry across the North Eastern region and adjoining areas.

During the meeting, senior railway officials, representatives from the tea industry, logistics operators and other stakeholders discussed various measures for improving rail connectivity, operational coordination and container handling facilities for tea movement. Discussions also focused on strategies to attract higher tea traffic to Railways through efficient, seamless and customer-friendly transporta-

tion services.

NFR has recorded a commendable performance in freight operations during FY 2025-26 by achieving a total freight loading of 11.4 million tonnes (MT), registering a growth of 6% over the previous financial year. Freight handling operations also witnessed substantial improvement, with unloading increasing by 688 rakes from 12,346 rakes in FY 2024-25 to 13,034 rakes in FY 2025-26. To further strengthen freight logistics infrastructure in the region, NFR is also developing and operationalizing modern freight terminals and multimodal cargo handling facilities. The new terminals at Sairang in Mizoram and Molvom in Nagaland along with others are expected to significantly improve freight accessibility and connectivity in the North Eastern states. In addition, development of Gati Shakti Cargo Terminals across the zone is enhancing the capability for efficient cargo aggregation, container handling and first-mile-last-mile connectivity, thereby creating greater opportunities for industries including tea producers and exporters to increasingly adopt rail transportation.

This initiative reflects NFR's continued commitment towards strengthening freight infrastructure, promoting sustainable transportation and providing customer-centric logistics solutions to support economic growth and industrial development in the North Eastern region.

Important matter: SC refuses to defer hearing on CJI exclusion from election panel

The Supreme Court refused the Centre's request to defer hearing petitions against the 2023 election commissioners law. The bench signalled the challenge would be heard on priority amid questions over the Election Commission's independence.

The petitions challenged the constitutional validity of the 2023 law, which removed the Chief Justice of India from the selection

committee. The Supreme Court on Wednesday declined the Centre's request to defer hearings on petitions challenging the 2023 law governing the appointment of election commissioners, underlining that the issue was "more important" than other matters listed before the court. A bench of Justices Dipankar Datta and Satish Chandra Sharma rejected Solicitor General Tushar Mehta's plea for adjournment, which was sought on the ground that he was engaged before

a nine-judge Constitution bench examining questions linked to religious freedoms, including the Sabarimala temple entry issue. Pushing back, the bench said the challenge to the Chief Election Commissioner and Other election commissioners (Appointment, Conditions of Service and Term of Office) Act, 2023 warranted priority. Justice Datta remarked that the court must proceed, adding that associates of the law officer could take notes while petitioners begin arguments. The



bench also directed petitioners to conclude their submissions by Thursday, with the Centre to respond later. "This matter is more important than any other matter," Justice Datta said. "Let your (solicitor general's) associates take notes today. Let the petitioners start. All matters are important. We read in the newspapers that there is an observation that the PIL in Sabarimala should not have been entertained by the court. So, with due respect to the judges, nine judges are occu-

ried in a matter where there is an observation that it should not have been entertained in the first place," he added. During the hearing, the court asked petitioners to furnish a list of constitutional posts where the presence of the Chief Justice of India in selection panels is considered necessary to ensure fairness in appointments. Senior advocate Vijay Hansaria, appearing for petitioner and Congress leader Jaya Thakur, said details were already part of the plea but assured the court a sepa-

rate compilation would be submitted before the court. The petitions challenged the constitutional validity of the 2023 law, which removed the Chief Justice of India from the selection committee tasked with appointing the Chief Election Commissioner and other election commissioners. Under the current law, the panel comprises the Prime Minister, a Union Minister nominated by him, and the Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha or the leader of the largest opposition party.

GYANESH KUMAR VERSUS THE LEGENDS - FROM SESHAN'S IRON FIST TO TODAY'S POLARISED REFEREE: THE UNSPARING COMPARISON INDIA MUST FACE

RECORD TURNOUT. NO BLOODSHED IN BENGAL 2026. FURIOUS CHARGES OF BIAS. THE ELECTION COMMISSION UNDER FIRE LIKE NEVER BEFORE.

GYANESH KUMAR: ADMINISTRATIVE STEEL. PEACEFUL POLLS. RECORD TURNOUT. HERO TO SOME, VILLAIN TO OTHERS.

T.N. SESHAN: THE ORIGINAL GAME CHANGER. HE MADE POLITICIANS TREMBLE.

SUNIL ARORA: TECHNOLOGY. INNOVATION. CREDIBILITY AT SCALE.

RAJIV KUMAR: PANDEMIC ELECTIONS. EXPERIENCE COUNTED.

O.P. RAWAT: STEADY HAND. FOCUS ON LOGISTICS. LOW DRAMA.

T.N. SESHAN: THE ORIGINAL GAME CHANGER. HE MADE POLITICIANS TREMBLE. BUILT THE COMMISSION'S SPINE. IRON FIST. ZERO COMPROMISE.

PEACEFUL POLLS OR PARTISAN REFEREE? INDIA'S DEMOCRACY DEBATES ITS BIGGEST QUESTION.

BY C. SUBRAHMANYAM

West Bengal 2026 has detonated a national argument over the Election Commission's credibility, authority and neutrality. Under Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar, Bengal witnessed record voter turnout, near-total collapse of election violence, and unprecedented deployment of administrative control. Yet the same election triggered furious allegations of voter deletions, selective scrutiny and institutional bias from the defeated political camp.

The comparison with legendary former Chief Election Commissioner T.N. Seshan is now unavoidable. One built fear inside the political system through uncompromising authority. The other is trying to enforce electoral order inside a hyper-polarised India where every administrative move is instantly dragged into ideological warfare. The question before India is no longer whether elections are being conducted. The question is whether institutions can still command trust when every verdict produces political rage from one side or the other.

THE MAN IN THE FIRING LINE

Indian democracy has entered a dangerous and fascinating phase where even the referee is now dragged into the political battlefield. The Election Commission was once treated as a distant constitutional authority. Today it is treated like a combat zone. And standing at the centre of this storm is Gyanesh Kumar. West Bengal 2026 did not merely produce a political result. It produced a national confrontation over the meaning of electoral neutrality itself. Record turnout touching nearly 92 percent. Women voters arriving in unprecedented numbers. Polling booths functioning without the familiar soundtrack of crude bombs, street murders and organised intimidation that haunted Bengal elections for decades. Central forces visible everywhere. Administrative vigilance operating at full intensity. For millions of ordinary voters, especially in violence-hit pockets, this election felt different. Yet at the very same moment, the defeated political establishment erupted with allegations of voter deletions, selective scrutiny and institutional bias. Black flags followed the Chief Election Commissioner. Angry protests intensified. Charges of political proximity began circulating at full speed. That is precisely why this comparison with the legends of the Election Commission cannot be avoided any longer.

THE GHOST OF SESHAN STILL WALKS THROUGH NIRVACHAN SADAN

TN Seshan did not merely regulate elections. He transformed the Election Commission from a sleepy office into a constitutional weapon. When India speaks of powerful Election Commissioners, one name still towers above the rest like a thundercloud: T. N. SESHAN. Seshan was not interested in polite bureaucracy. He arrived with confrontation in his bloodstream. Political parties feared him because he shattered the culture of impunity surrounding elections. He enforced the Model Code of Conduct with ruthless seriousness. He pushed voter identity reforms. He attacked muscle power and money power with almost theatrical aggression. Chief Ministers, Ministers and party bosses suddenly realised the referee was no longer decorative. That was the revolution. India needed that iron-fisted intervention in the 1990s because the institution itself lacked authority. Seshan gave it spine, teeth and public legitimacy. Now look at Gyanesh Kumar's Bengal operation. Massive deployment of central forces. Tight monitoring. Special Intensive Revision of voter rolls. Administrative crackdown on violence. Strict observer intervention. Aggressive polling management. The result was dramatic. Bengal witnessed one of its most peaceful Assembly elections in modern political memory. But here lies the crucial difference. Seshan frightened almost everybody equally. That created broad public legitimacy.

RECORD TURNOUT WITHOUT BLOODSHED CHANGES THE CONVERSATION

"For the first time in years, Bengal voted in huge numbers without the shadow of organised terror hanging over every booth." West Bengal's 2026 election produced extraordinary participation. Turnout crossed historic levels. Women voters surged. Large stretches of the state remained free from the large-scale political killings and bomb violence that had become almost ritualistic during earlier Bengal elections. And here the Election Commission under Gyanesh Kumar undeniably delivered results that cannot be casually dismissed. Previous Bengal elections often carried an atmosphere of intimidation. Entire regions lived under the psychology of fear. Violence became normalised to such an extent that peaceful polling itself began sounding like an impossible ambition. This time the atmosphere shifted visibly. That is not cosmetic administrative success. That is institutional impact.

BUT THE TRUST DEFICIT IS GROWING LIKE

A WILDFIRE Now comes the uncomfortable half of the story. Critics allege that Special Intensive Revision exercises disproportionately affected certain voter clusters. Opposition parties claim millions faced deletion threats or verification hurdles. Timing of revisions became politically explosive. Neutrality itself came under question. And once neutrality becomes disputed, the institution enters dangerous territory. This is where Gyanesh Kumar's tenure becomes historically significant. Not because he conducted polls. But because he is conducting polls during an age where institutional trust itself is collapsing into political tribalism. The attacks on him are not routine criticism. They are deeply personal, highly aggressive and politically weaponised. Impeachment murmurs. Street protests. Open accusations of bias. Few recent Chief Election Commissioners faced hostility at this scale. Sunil Arora and Rajiv Kumar handled massive national elections, including pandemic-era challenges and technology-heavy operations.

Pak forces kill two, forcibly disappear four civilians in Balochistan

QUETTA

As violence against civilians escalate across Balochistan, a leading human rights organisation brought to light the extrajudicial killing of two civilians and enforced disappearance of four others, allegedly at the hands of Pakistani forces. Condemning the brutal incidents, Paank, the Baloch National Movement's Human Rights Department, mentioned that the bullet-riddled bodies of Ajmal Baloch and Saeed Ahmed were dumped on May 3 in the Nalant area of Pasi in the Gwadar district.

According to the rights body, Ajmal was abducted from Gwadar city on August 21, 2025, by personnel of Pakistan's Frontier Corps (FC) and Military agencies. Following his abduction, he remained missing for nearly nine months, with no access to legal recourse or communication with his family.

Citing information, Paank mentioned that Saeed Ahmed was forcibly taken from his hometown in the Jiwani area of Gwadar on December 9, 2025, by personnel of the FC.

The rights body described the incident "as part of an ongoing pattern of enforced disappearances and extrajudicial killings in Balochistan" by Pakistani forces. Highlighting the atrocities against civilians across Balochistan, Paank revealed that two brothers, 41-year-old Ghulam Rasool and 47-year-old Abdulla Jan, were abducted by personnel of Pakistan's Counter Terrorism Department (CTD) on May 3.

President To Lam's visit reflects Vietnam's commitment to deepen ties with India: Report

NEW DELHI

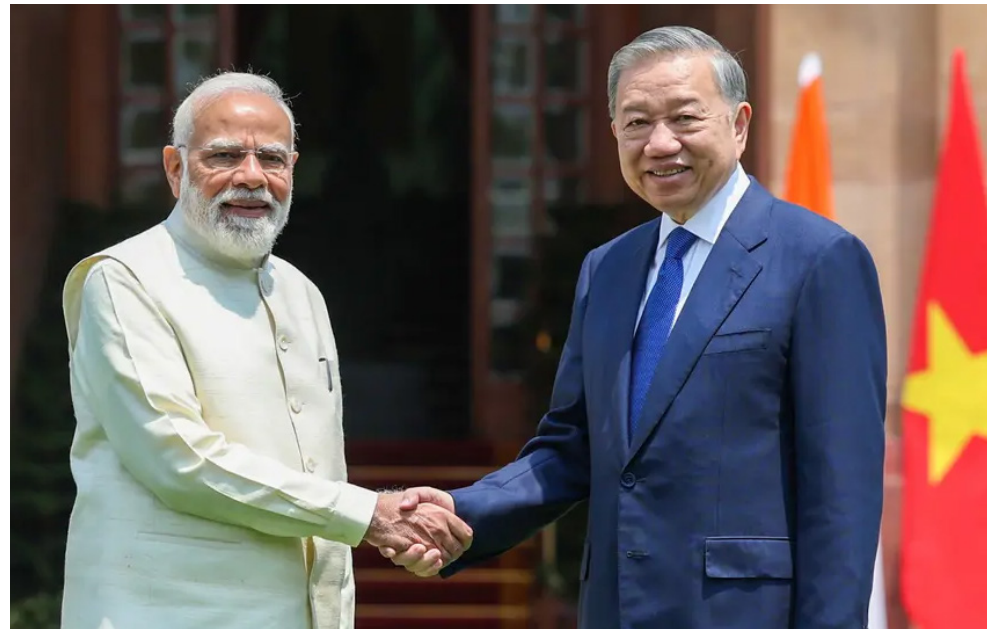
Vietnamese President To Lam's visit to New Delhi demonstrates the Southeast Asian nation's strong commitment to strengthen ties with India, elevating the relationship to a higher level that is more effective, robust and substantive, a report detailed on Wednesday.

President To Lam is on a State Visit to India at the invitation of Prime Minister Narendra Modi. This visit holds significance as 2026 marks the 10th anniversary of the Comprehensive Strategic Partnership between two nations, a landmark in the history of bilateral relations. This is President To Lam's second overseas visit after the National Assembly approved key state leadership appointments.

"In recent years, India has emerged as a notable success story in regional economic development, while steadily enhancing its international standing through a balanced and independent foreign policy. These factors have enabled the South Asian country to remain resilient and sustain strong growth amid an increasingly volatile and contested global environment," reported Nhan Dan newspaper, the central organ of Communist Party of Vietnam.

A flexible diplomatic policy has remained an important factor in India achieving significant achievements on its development path. India's role and position in the region and the world is increasing. India is following a multi-alignment foreign policy, sharing good and balanced ties with other countries.

"The South Asian nation is striving to affirm its role as a 'leader of the Global South', step up its 'Act East' policy, continue



strengthening its comprehensive strategic partnership with ASEAN, and commit to working with ASEAN to build a free, open and inclusive Indo-Pacific, in line with ASEAN's central role in the region," the report mentioned.

India and Vietnam have a traditional friendship and long-standing close ties. Buddhist links demonstrate the depth of historical, cultural, and religious exchanges and connections between India and Vietnam. India has offered support to Vietnam in its struggle for national liberation and in national construction and development, as per the report.

In 2003, both sides signed the Joint Declaration on the Comprehensive Cooperation Framework. In 2007, the two countries upgraded the relations to a strategic partnership while ties were elevated to a comprehensive strategic partnership in 2016. In 2020, India and Vietnam adopt-

ed the joint vision statement on peace prosperity and people. In 2024, the two countries adopted a joint declaration on strengthening the Comprehensive Strategic Partnership between India and Vietnam.

"Bilateral relations between the two countries across Party, State, National Assembly, and people-to-people channels have continued to expand and deepen. The two sides have actively promoted high-level visits. They maintain effective cooperation mechanisms such as the Viet Nam-India Joint Commission at the ministerial level of foreign affairs, the Viet Nam-India Joint Sub-Commission on Trade, political consultations and strategic dialogue, security dialogue, defence policy dialogue, foreign policy dialogue, and maritime security dialogue, among others," a report detailed.

Cooperation between two nations has expanded into information technology and dig-

ital services, with India having supported the establishment of IT centres in Vietnam. Indian investors have invested in 15 economic sectors of Vietnam, with capital primarily concentrated in electricity production, processing industry and manufacturing and distribution as well as mining, Nhan Dan report detailed.

Defence and security cooperation is an important and strategic pillar of India-Vietnam ties. The defence ministries of two nations are making efforts for the implementation of defence credit packages and non-refundable aid provided by the Indian government to Vietnam.

India has offered support to Vietnam in training, transferring used submarines, and defence equipment. Tourism cooperation and people-to-people exchanges between two nations have been strengthened. India is supporting Vietnam in the restoration of the Cham tower groups at the My Son heritage site.



Dutch naval ship delegation arrives in Kochi, to focus on deepening India-Netherlands maritime ties

KOCHI

The arrival of a Dutch naval ship in Kochi alongside a high-level delegation from the Netherlands underscores the deepening maritime cooperation between India and the European nation, said the Ministry of Defence on Wednesday.

The Royal Netherlands Navy Ship HNLMS De Ruyter (F804), a De Zeven Provinciën-class frigate, arrived on May 4, coinciding with the visit of the Dutch naval delegation to Southern Naval Command (SNC) in Kochi.

The delegation includes Major General (Royal Marines) Rob De Wit, Deputy Commander of the Royal Netherlands Navy (DCN), and Marisa Gerards, Ambassador of the Netherlands to India.

According to the Ministry, HNLMS De Ruyter was escorted by fast interceptor craft of the Indian Navy and accorded a ceremonial reception with a naval band on arrival at Kochi Harbour. The ship is presently on a five-month-long deployment to the Indo-Pacific region and will participate in various maritime exercises with partner nations.

The DCN of the Royal Netherlands Navy earlier participated in the 9th Indian Ocean Naval Symposium (IONS) Conclave of Chiefs, part of the MILAN exercise held at Visakhapatnam in February.

During the ongoing visit, the Dutch delegation called on Rear Admiral Prakash

Gopalan, Chief of Staff, Southern Naval Command. Both sides discussed matters of mutual interest in the maritime domain, including avenues for enhancing cooperation between the two navies. In a significant gesture coinciding with the National Remembrance Day of the Netherlands on May 4, Rob De Wit and Ambassador Marisa laid wreaths at the SNC War Memorial in Kochi, paying solemn tribute to those who sacrificed their lives for the nation.

The delegation is also scheduled to engage in a series of bilateral engagements focusing on enhancing training cooperation and sharing of best practices.

They will visit various professional training establishments at Southern Naval Command and witness demonstrations of advanced simulators and state-of-the-art training infrastructure.

The delegation is also scheduled to visit Cochin Shipyard Limited to gain insights into India's shipbuilding capabilities and explore avenues for industrial cooperation.

Additionally, a series of professional and social interactions between personnel of both navies has also been planned, the Defence Ministry mentioned.

On departure from Kochi, HNLMS De Ruyter will undertake a Passage Exercise (PASSEX) with an Indian naval ship, further strengthening interoperability and operational synergy.

Exiled East Turkistan authorities move to UN to designate China as 'colonial power'

WASHINGTON

The East Turkistan Government-in-Exile (ETGE) submitted a petition to the United Nations Special Committee on Decolonisation (C-24) requesting that the General Assembly designate China as the "occupying power" over East Turkistan.

The 25-page petition, submitted jointly by the ETGE and the East Turkistan National Movement (ETNM) on Tuesday, states, "The era of colonialism has not ended. It is being legislated."

The petition seeks inscription of East Turkistan, also known as the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region of China, as a "Non-Self-Governing Territory".

According to the ETGE, such a move would trigger a binding international framework obligating the UN to oversee East Turkistan's path toward self-determination. The exiled authorities said that no state or entity has ever formally challenged China as a "colonial power" before any UN body.

"More than eighty nations achieved their independence through the decolonisation framework. Today, the people of East Turkistan formally assert that same right before the United



Nations," said Mamtimin Ala, President of the ETGE.

Asserting that the very existing human rights accountability mechanism in global agencies has failed, the exiled authorities said that the "genocide" of Uyghurs, Kazakhs, Kyrgyz, and other Turkic peoples in Xinjiang is entering its thirteenth year later this month.

The exiled authorities highlighted that "mass internment, credibly documented organ harvesting, forced sterilisation, and the separation of nearly one million children from their families" by the Chinese authorities continue unabated in the region.

It added that China's own five-year plan for the "occupied territory" projected 13.75 million forced labour transfers

between 2021 and 2025.

The ETGE referred to warnings by UN Special Rapporteurs earlier this year that actual numbers of labour transfers have exceeded official projections and that such practices "may amount to enslavement as a crime against humanity".

"The ongoing genocide is rooted in China's colonial occupation of East Turkistan. Decolonisation and the restoration of our independence are the only effective guarantees of our people's survival," said Salih Hidayar, Foreign Minister of the ETGE and President of the ETNM.

The ETGE alleged that China is not only committing "genocide" but also working to make its "colonial domination irreversible".

Awami League flags spike in 'false and baseless' cases, delay in bail procedures

DHAKA

Bangladesh's Awami League on Wednesday expressed grave concern over the surge in "false and baseless" cases against ordinary citizens across the country, noting that detainees continue to face hardship in securing their release despite being granted bail from the court.

"The cases have now become a deadly trap for ordinary people. On one hand, there are widespread allegations of false and baseless cases being filed; on the other, even after securing bail from the court, detainees face unbearable suffering to obtain release. Bail on paper is being obstructed in practice



even after bail was granted." The Awami League said that under the law, authorities are required to implement bail orders promptly once granted by the court. However, it alleged that in practice, a fresh and prolonged process begins once the order reaches the administration.

"From the Deputy Commissioner (Prosecution) to divisional police offices, intelligence branches, and finally the concerned police station — delays are intentionally created before the report reaches the prison. Allegations suggest that large sums of money are demanded at each step," the party stated.

Tibet remains tightly restricted not due to logistical challenges but because openness threatens China's narrative of control. Permits, surveillance, and scrutiny ensures that Beijing retains its "monopoly on truth". As long as these barriers persist, Tibet will remain a land viewed through a narrow frame, its truth obscured and its voices unheard, a report has detailed.

Khedroob Thondup, the nephew of the Dalai Lama, wrote in European Times that for decades, Tibet has been portrayed by Beijing as a land of harmony and progress, a showcase of "ethnic unity" under Chinese rule. Yet, the reality for outsiders who attempt to enter tells a very different story. "Despite minor improve-

Bangladesh's trade pact with US faces criticism in Dhaka for being one-sided

NEW DELHI

The bilateral trade agreement signed by Bangladesh with the Donald Trump administration has come in for a lot of media criticism in Dhaka for being one-sided, as it gives the US a huge advantage while imposing too many restrictions on the South Asian country. In fact, many politicians and economists are demanding that the agreement be scrapped, according to a new report.

Leading Dhaka-based Prothom Alo newspaper says that "the trade agreement with the United States imposes obligations on Bangladesh in a one-sided manner. In comparison, the United States does not have to do much".

It further points out that illegal or contractual language, the use of the word "shall", indicates mandatory obligations, while "will" denotes discretionary actions. In the 32-page agreement, the word "shall" appears 179 times, whereas "will" appears only three times. Of these, "Bangladesh shall"



appears 131 times, while "US shall" appears just six times.

The Agreement on Reciprocal Trade (ART) between Bangladesh and the United States was signed on February 9, just three days before the national parliamentary election. Later, on February 20, the Supreme Court of the United States annulled the imposition of reciprocal tariffs.

Member of Parliament Rumeen Farhana has called for its cancellation while speaking in the country's parliament. Various political parties and organisations have also demanded that the trade deal be scrapped. Economists have suggested engaging in further discussions

with the United States to reach a suitable solution, the article further states.

The agreement has not yet come into force, but Bangladesh has already begun signing deals to import various goods from the United States under its provisions, which has also raised questions. The article highlights that the main agreement contains six articles, while details on its implementation are outlined in annexes, which are considered integral parts of the agreement.

The first article addresses tariffs and quotas. It states that Bangladesh shall impose fixed tariffs on US products, shall not apply quotas on them, and that the United States shall also impose tariffs on Bangladeshi goods at specified rates.

The section on non-tariff barriers includes 11 clauses. Its core principle is that Bangladesh cannot impose regulations, such as documentation requirements, permits, inspections, quality checks, or licensing, that would hinder trade beyond tariffs.

China limits foreign presence to shield its policies in Tibet from scrutiny: Report

BRUSSELS

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Khedroob Thondup, the nephew of the Dalai Lama, wrote in European Times that for decades, Tibet has been portrayed by Beijing as a land of harmony and progress, a showcase of "ethnic unity" under Chinese rule. Yet, the reality for outsiders who attempt to enter tells a very different story. "Despite minor improve-



ments in access, occasional group tours, carefully choreographed visits by diplomats, and tightly managed cultural showcases, Tibet remains one of the most restricted regions of China and among the most difficult places in the world for independent foreign access. The barriers are not incidental;

they are deliberate, designed to limit transparency, suppress journalism, and control international engagement," wrote Thondup.

"Unlike most provinces in China, Tibet requires special permits for foreign visitors. These are not automatically granted. Applications are

filtered through layers of bureaucracy, often requiring sponsorship by approved travel agencies. Independent foreign travel to the Tibet Autonomous Region is effectively impossible. Even when permits are issued, itineraries are rigidly controlled, with visitors confined to pre-approved routes and sites," it added.

The report noted that the message is clear: Tibet is not meant to be freely explored but remains a tightly "stage-managed exhibit", where those permitted entry face constant surveillance.

"Hotels are monitored, movements tracked, and conversations observed. Foreign journalists face particular hostility, with access routinely denied or curtailed. Tibetan-origin visitors, especially those from exile communities,

are singled out for even harsher scrutiny. Their family ties and cultural fluency make them 'dangerous' in the eyes of the state, capable of piercing the official narrative.

Many report being denied entry outright; those who succeed often find themselves shadowed, interrogated, or pressured to abandon their plans," the report mentioned. Emphasising that the restrictions on access are not merely a bureaucratic inconvenience but a strategic tool, the report said that Beijing limits foreign presence to shield its policies in Tibet from scrutiny. This included reported demolitions or removals of religious sites and symbols, the erosion of Tibetan-language education, the expansion of surveillance infrastructure, forced relocation programmes, and the silencing of dissent.



Singareni Team Triumphs at International Mines Rescue Competitions

Wins First Prize in Underground Rescue Category
Impressive Performance in Zambia
CMD Dr. Buddhaprakash Jyothi
Congratulates the Team
Employees and Officials Appreciate on Social Media
Singareni Reclaims International Recognition after Two Decades

HYDERABAD (SINGARENI BHAVAN), MAY 6, 2026

The Singareni Collieries Company Limited (SCCL) has once again demonstrated its excellence by securing First Prize in the Underground Mines Rescue Category at the International Mines Rescue Competitions held recently in Zambia. The Singareni team showcased outstanding skill and professionalism, competing against rescue teams from several countries across the world. From India, teams from Coal India Limited, SCCL, and other companies participated in the event. Notably, after nearly two decades, Singareni has once again delivered an exceptional performance at the international level, reaffirming its capability and strength in mine rescue operations.

The competitions were conducted from April 30 to May 5, 2026, with participation from teams representing various countries including India, China, Colombia, Zambia, Canada, Australia, and Poland. From India, teams from Coal India Limited, SCCL, and other companies participated. The underground rescue competition assessed teams on firefighting (20 marks), rescue operations (20 marks), and technical support (10 marks). The Singareni team excelled in all these areas and secured the top position.

As part of the events, a 90-minute technical test was conducted at the Mopani Central Training Centre in Mufulira. Representing Singareni, Sri CH. Sai Krishna successfully completed the task in just 52 minutes by rectifying and refilling a carbon dioxide absorbent canister.

After that, in another event held at the West Portal Mine, the team was tasked with locating and rescuing two individuals trapped in an underground mine

at a depth of 700 meters. Although 2 hours were allotted, the Singareni team completed the task in just 52 minutes. The team carried out key operations such as installing an L-bend in a pump, shutting down a sub-station, locating the victims using the given mine plan, reviving one unconscious person found near an LHD machine, and safely transporting another injured individual to the mine surface over a distance of more than 700 meters following full rescue procedures. The entire process was monitored by a panel of two judges.

The Singareni rescue team displayed remarkable alertness, discipline, and coordination, completing all tasks well within the stipulated time and earning appreciation from the judges.

Congratulating the team, SCCL Chairman and Managing Director

Dr. Buddhaprakash Jyothi appreciated their outstanding achievement and stated that winning 1st prize at the international level in underground mines rescue is a proud moment for the organization. He also congratulated the WCL rescue team of Coal India Limited for their performance.

The Singareni rescue team was trained under the leadership of General Manager (Rescue) Sri Srinivas Reddy at the Ramagundam Mines Rescue Station. The team members included Sri G. Pramod Kumar, Sri B. Nithin Kumar, Sri N. Bhanu Prasad,

Sri A. Shyam Kumar, Sri R. Srikanth, Sri CH. Sai Krishna, and translator Sri G. Rajender Reddy.

Notably, Dr. Rajeshwar from SCCL was invited by the international organizers to serve as a judge in the First Aid category.

The achievement has been widely appreciated by Singareni employees and officials, who expressed their congratulations across various media platforms.

Mukesh Ambani-led Reliance plans India's answer to Starlink: Report

Reliance Industries is exploring a multi-billion-dollar LEO satellite venture under Jio Platforms to build an India-based rival to Starlink. The move could sharpen the satellite internet race as India pushes for domestic space and broadband capacity.



SIX TEAMS WORKING ON PROJECT

WHY LEO SATELLITES MATTER

Reliance Industries is planning a major entry into the satellite communications business with a multi-billion-dollar investment in low earth orbit (LEO) satellites, according to a report by The Economic Times. The report said the move could position Reliance directly against global satellite internet players such as Starlink, Amazon Kuiper and Eutelsat OneWeb. According to the report, the satellite business will be housed under Jio Platforms, which already runs Reliance's telecom and digital operations. The company is said to be exploring both organic and inorganic expansion options as it looks to build India's answer to Starlink.

The Economic Times report said Reliance has formed six teams to work on different parts of the satellite project, including launches, payloads, satellites and user terminals. The report also claimed that Mukesh Ambani is personally leading the initiative along with senior executives including Reliance president PK Bhatnagar, Jio Platforms CEO Mathew Oommen and senior vice president Aayush Bhatnagar. According to the report, Reliance has also started discussions with the Department of Telecommunications (DoT) regarding orbital slot filings at the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), which allocates radio frequencies and orbital positions for satellites globally.

LEO satellites orbit much closer to Earth than traditional satellites and are considered important for high-speed internet connectivity, especially in remote and rural areas. Companies across the world are investing heavily in this segment as satellite internet is increasingly being seen as a strategic technology with both commercial and security importance. The ET report noted that the Indian government is also keen on building a domestic satellite communications ecosystem to reduce dependence on foreign companies. The report added that China has already filed plans for around 200,000 satellites across multiple LEO constellations at the ITU, while several countries are rapidly

expanding their satellite capabilities.

RELIANCE MAY EXPLORE ACQUISITIONS

According to the report, Reliance is also examining acquisition opportunities in the satellite space, especially companies that already own orbital slots and infrastructure. This could help the company speed up its entry into the market, where players like Starlink and OneWeb already have a presence. Reliance already has a partnership with satellite communications company SES for medium earth orbit satellite services. The report said discussions are still at an exploratory stage and no final timeline or investment amount has been decided yet. However, Reliance may look to have LEO satellites operational within the next two to four years. The development comes as the satellite internet race in India heats up, with telecom, technology and global space companies looking at the country as a major future market for broadband connectivity and digital infrastructure.

Raymond Lifestyle's Q4 loss widens to Rs 52 cr; FY26 revenue rises 10.6 pc

NEW DELHI: (MAY 6)

Raymond Lifestyle on Tuesday reported a widening of its consolidated net loss to Rs 52.06 crore in the March quarter of FY26. It had reported a net loss of Rs 44.96 crore in the January-March period a year ago, according to a regulatory filing from Raymond Lifestyle, a Raymond Group firm. Revenue from operations, however, rose 18.9 per cent to Rs 17,764 crore in the March quarter of FY26. It was at Rs 1,494.15 crore in the corresponding period a year ago.

Kansai Nerolac Paints Q4 net profit rises 7.3 pc to Rs 109.9 cr

NEW DELHI: (MAY 6)

Kansai Nerolac Paints on Wednesday reported a 7.3 per cent rise in its consolidated net profit to Rs 109.89 crore for the March quarter. The company had posted a net profit of Rs 102.43 crore in the January-March period a year ago, according to a regulatory filing by Kansai Nerolac. Its revenue from operations increased 7.54 per cent to Rs 1,953.71 crore in the March quarter of FY26.

Govt approves ECLGS 5.0 to support MSMEs, airlines amid global tensions

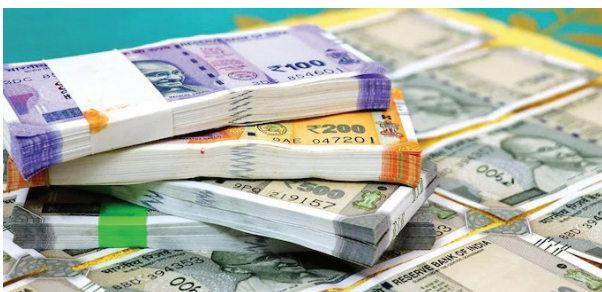
Under Emergency Credit Line Guarantee Scheme 5.0, the government will offer 100% credit guarantee for MSMEs and 90% for non-MSMEs and airlines.

At a time when businesses are feeling the heat of global uncertainty, the government has stepped in with fresh support. The Union Cabinet has approved the Emergency Credit Line Guarantee Scheme (ECLGS 5.0), a credit guarantee scheme aimed at helping MSMEs (Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises), airlines and other stressed sectors manage cash flow and continue operations.

A PUSH TO EASE LIQUIDITY STRESS

Announcing the decision, Ashwini Vaishnav said the scheme is designed to tackle liquidity challenges arising from the ongoing West Asia conflict. With an outlay of Rs 18,100 crore, the scheme is expected to unlock additional credit worth up to Rs 2.55 lakh crore. Out of this, Rs 5,000 crore has been set aside for the aviation sector.

Under the Emergency Credit Line Guarantee Scheme 5.0, the government will offer 100% credit guarantee for MSMEs and 90% for non-MSMEs and airlines. This guarantee will be pro-



vided through National Credit Guarantee Trustee Company Limited, giving lenders the confidence to extend loans without worrying about defaults.

WHO CAN BENEFIT AND HOW

The scheme will be available to MSMEs, non-MSMEs with existing working capital, and airlines with standard loan accounts as of March 31, 2026. Borrowers can take additional credit of up to 20% of their peak working capital used in the last quarter of FY26, capped at Rs 100 crore. For airlines, the limit goes up to Rs 1,500 crore. Loans will come without any guarantee fee. MSMEs and other businesses will get a five-year tenure with a one-year break on repayment, while airlines will have seven years with a two-year moratorium.

INDUSTRY SEES TIMELY RELIEF

Pallavi Shrivastava, Co-Founder of Progecap, said, "ECLGS 5.0 comes at a time

when many MSMEs are dealing with tighter cash flow cycles and increasing uncertainty in their day-to-day operations. What really matters in such moments is timely access to working capital and the 100% guarantee structure helps unlock that by giving lenders the confidence to move faster."

She added, "From what we see on the ground, demand for short-term, flexible credit is only increasing, and interventions like this play a critical role in helping businesses stay resilient, keep their operations running, and protect livelihoods across the value chain."

FOCUS ON JOBS AND CONTINUITY

The government believes the scheme will help businesses stay afloat, protect jobs and keep supply chains running smoothly. For many small firms and airlines, this could be the support they need to ride out the current uncertainty.

Internal SAIL notice shows plan to cut contract workforce by 40%. Read details

An internal communication issued by Steel Authority of India Limited (SAIL) has revealed plans to reduce its contract workforce by 40% by March 31, 2027, triggering concern among worker unions over possible livelihood, safety, and economic impacts.

Year 2025-26." The communication also referred to deliberations held at the level of Secretary (Steel) in the Ministry of Steel. "As you are aware, during recent deliberations held at the level of Secretary (Steel) in the Ministry of Steel, it has been decided that rationalisation of contract workforce needs to be continued during the 2026-27 also," the letter stated.

The internal letter dated April 18, 2026, reviewed by India Today, was sent by Director (Personnel) Krishna Kumar Singh to Bokaro Steel Plant Director-in-Charge Priya Ranjan.

WHAT DOES THE INTERNAL SAIL LETTER SAY?

The internal communication stated that SAIL had earlier communicated targets for "rationalisation of contracts and contract workers" in integrated steel plants in the works and non-works areas through letters issued in 2025. The letter further stated:

"Further, vide letter dated 12.02.2026, it was also communicated that the reduction of contractual workforce by at least 20% has to be achieved at SAIL level and not only by the five (5) Integrated Steel Plants. Accordingly, SAIL has already achieved a reduction of approximately 18.8% in contractual workforce against the target of 20%, with Integrated Steel Plants fulfilling the stipulated targets for reduction during the Financial

It added: "Accordingly, a target of reduction of additional 20% of contractual workforce based on the assessed strength as on 01/04/2025 has been assigned to be achieved by 31/03/2027 i.e. overall reduction of 40% of contract workforce." The document directed all plants and units to take "necessary actions" to ensure the overall reduction target was achieved by March 31, 2027. It also asked units to formulate a detailed implementation plan by April 30, 2026.

WHY IS SAIL REDUCING CONTRACT WORKERS?

The internal document also mentioned specific targets for Bokaro Steel Plant (BSL) and SRU (SAIL Refractory Unit). For Bokaro Steel Plant, the contract workforce strength was listed at 12,798 as of April 1, 2025. It was shown at 10,230 as of April 1, 2026, with a target to bring it down further to 7,678 by April 1, 2027. This implies a proposed reduction of 2,552 workers in the next phase.

Stock markets rally as oil prices decline amid progress in U.S.-Iran talks; Sensex jumps 940 points

Benchmark Sensex rallied by 940 points on Wednesday (May 6, 2026) following a sharp decline in crude oil prices after U.S. President Donald Trump claimed progress in negotiations with Iran towards an agreement to end the war. Helped by flag-end heavy buying, the 30-share BSE Sensex jumped 940.73 points, or 1.22%, to settle at 77,958.52. During the day, it surged 1,004.99 points, or 1.30%, to a day's high of 78,022.78. The 50-share NSE Nifty rallied 298.15 points, or 1.24%, to end at 24,330.95. A positive trend in global markets aided the rally in domestic stocks. From the 30-Sensex firms, InterGlobe Aviation, Trent, Asian Paints, State Bank of India, HDFC Bank, and Eternal were among the major winners. Reliance Industries, Larsen & Toubro, Power Grid and NTPC were among the laggards. U.S. President Donald Trump has suspended "Project Freedom," to escort ships through the Strait of Hormuz, claiming progress

in negotiations with Iran towards an agreement to end the war. In a post on Truth Social on Tuesday (May 5, 2026), Mr. Trump said, "Great progress has been made toward a complete and final agreement with representatives of Iran." "Based on the request of Pakistan and other Countries, the tremendous Military Success that we have had during the Campaign against the Country of Iran and, additionally, the fact that Great Progress has been made toward a Complete and Final Agreement with Representatives of Iran, we have mutually agreed that, while the Blockade will remain in full force and effect, Project Freedom (The Movement of Ships through the Strait of Hormuz) will be paused for a short period of time to see whether or not the Agreement can be finalised and signed," Mr. Trump said. Project Freedom was launched on Monday (May 4, 2026) to escort ships, stranded due to the closure of the Strait of Hormuz, to safety.

SheConnects Digital Accelerator to advance women's digital inclusion in India and Sub Saharan Africa

MUMBAI / DELHI, 6TH MAY 2026:

A new initiative to strengthen and accelerate women's digital inclusion - the SheConnects Digital Accelerator, was announced today by Reliance Foundation and the Gates Foundation. The Accelerator aims to improve lives and livelihoods of women and girls through adoption of proven, high-impact digital solutions. Over the next three years, the INR 200 crore initiative will provide an important Global South platform to support locally led innovations that advance women's digital inclusion. In India, the SheConnects Digital Accelerator will be supported by Reliance Foundation and will identify and scale high-impact evidence-backed solutions. Working together with Gates Foundation, the Accelerator will also help to promote South-South knowledge sharing, especially between India and Sub Saharan Africa. Over the last decade, India and Sub-Saharan Africa have made significant progress in enabling digital access, participation and opportunities for women. The

In India, the SheConnects Digital Accelerator will be supported by Reliance Foundation and Gates Foundation. SheConnects Digital Accelerator will also promote knowledge sharing in India and Sub-Saharan Africa. The INR 200-crore initiative will scale high-impact solutions over the next three years. The Accelerator includes grants to scale high-impact evidence-backed solutions for women's digital inclusion in India and Sub Saharan Africa



SheConnects Digital Accelerator aims to further advance solutions that are helping to reduce the gender digital divide through a three-pronged approach: i) scaling evidence-backed solutions through grants or awards and/or technical advisory support; ii) promoting South-South learning and collaboration among awardees; and iii) supporting the ecosystem to adopt practices that work. "Empowering women with the tools and confidence to participate fully in the digital world is essential to a more equitable future. When empowered women are at the

centre, they have shown that they drive more than their own journey and catalyse transformation in society. In India, Reliance Foundation will support the SheConnects Digital Accelerator to scale up solutions to close the gender digital divide, and enhance women's agency. Over the next three years, as we identify and support efforts to advance digital inclusion for women in India, we look forward to sharing innovations and learnings from India with the Global South," said Ms N Deepthi Reddy, Chief - Women Empowerment, Reliance Foundation.

"Across the Global South, women continue to face systemic barriers to accessing and benefiting from digital technologies. Countries like India and several African nations have made considerable strides in advancing digital inclusion, creating important momentum and lessons for broader adaptation. The SheConnects Digital Accelerator is an opportunity to support locally led innovations that address these challenges in contextually relevant ways. By fostering collaboration and learning across regions, we hope to accelerate progress toward a more inclusive digital future for women," said Ms Saachi Bhalla, Deputy Director - Gender Equality, Gates Foundation. The SheConnects Digital Accelerator in India builds on Reliance Foundation's long-standing commitment to women's inclusion and towards digital empowerment, since 2010. Over the past three years alone, Reliance Foundation has fostered inno-

native culturally rooted solutions that have improved access to digital technologies for over 600,000 women across India. Across Africa and India, Gates Foundation, in partnership with the government, has supported efforts to expand digital public infrastructure, strengthen digital ecosystems, and enable women's access to financial services, health information, and livelihood opportunities through digital platforms. Its work emphasizes closing gender gaps in access, affordability, digital skills, and safety, while partnering with governments, non-profits, and the private sector to scale inclusive and sustainable solutions. By advancing digital adoption for women, the SheConnects Digital Accelerator aims to contribute significantly to the global goal of halving the digital gender gap by 2030, as declared by G20 Leaders during India's presidency in 2023, for a more inclusive and prosperous future for all.

itel A100C New launched under ₹8K with military-grade durability

HYDERABAD, MAY 6:

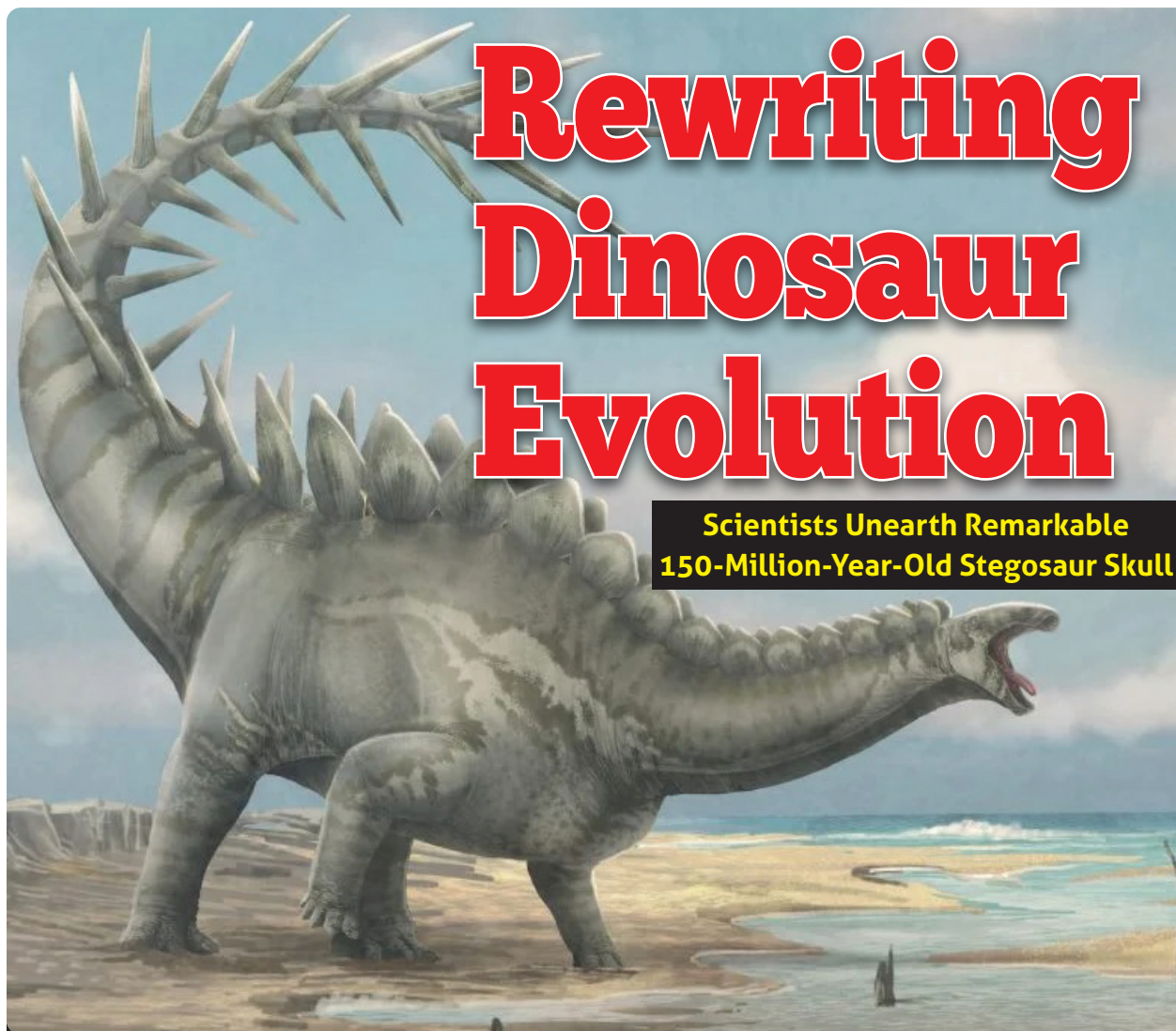
Budget tech brand itel has launched its new smartphone, the A100C New, targeting mass-market consumers with a focus on durability and affordability. Priced at ₹7,999, the device is being positioned as one of the most affordable smartphones in India with military-grade toughness (MIL-STD-810H certification). The A100C New comes with 2GB RAM (expandable up to 6GB with virtual RAM) and 64GB internal storage. It features a 6.6-inch HD+ display with a 90Hz refresh rate, offering smoother visuals for everyday use. The smartphone is powered by an octa-core Unisoc T7100 processor and runs on Android 15 Go edition. The device sports an 8MP rear camera and a 5MP front camera, along with DTS-supported audio for enhanced sound output. It also includes a "Dynamic Bar" feature for notifications and alerts. Security options include face unlock and a side-mounted fingerprint sensor. Backed by a 5000mAh battery with 10W charging support, the phone is designed to deliver all-day usage. It will be available in Silk

itel
A100C NEW
INDIA'S MOST AFFORDABLE
64GB ROM | 90Hz Refresh Rate

Green, Titanium Gold, and Pure Black across retail stores nationwide.

Speaking on the launch, itel India CEO Arijet Talapara said the company aims to make technology accessible to the masses while maintaining durability and performance despite rising global component costs.

The brand claims a strong presence in India with over 15 crore customers, more than 1.3 lakh retail outlets, and 1,000+ service centres.



Rewriting Dinosaur Evolution

Scientists Unearth Remarkable
150-Million-Year-Old Stegosaur Skull

A newly discovered stegosaur skull from Spain is offering rare insight into the anatomy and evolution of one of Europe's most iconic dinosaurs. A rare skull from Spain is giving scientists a clearer look at one of Europe's most important armored dinosaurs and reshaping ideas about how stegosaurs spread and evolved. Stegosaurs were plant-eating dinosaurs best known for the plates and spikes that ran in two rows along their backs and tails. They belonged to Thyreophora, the armored dinosaur group that also includes ankylosaurs, but stegosaurs were generally lighter built, walked on four legs, and carried some of the most recognizable body armor in the dinosaur world. In a new study published in *Vertebrate Zoology*, paleontologists from the *Fundación Conjunto Paleontológico de Teruel-Dinópolis* describe the most complete stegosaur skull ever found in Europe. The fossil was discovered at the "Están de Colón" site in Riodeva, Teruel, Spain, in rocks of

the Villar del Arzobispo Formation. These deposits date to the Late Jurassic, about 150 million years ago. The skull belonged to *Dacentrurus armatus*, a European stegosaur first described in 1875. That makes the find especially timely, since 2025 marks 150 years since the species was named.

Why Stegosaur Skulls Are So Rare

Skulls are among the rarest stegosaur fossils because their bones were thin and fragile. Many known species are based mostly on partial skeletons, which has made it difficult to understand how their heads, feeding anatomy, and family relationships changed over time. This new specimen preserves the back portion of the skull roof, including parts of the frontal, postorbital, squamosal, parietal, and supraoccipital bones. A neck vertebra found beside it helped confirm its identity. Sergio Sánchez Fenollosa, a researcher at *Fundación Dinópolis* and co-author of the study, said: "The detailed study

of this exceptional fossil has allowed us to reveal previously unknown aspects of the anatomy of *Dacentrurus armatus*, the quintessential European stegosaur, which in 2025 marks 150 years since its first description. Dinosaurian skulls are rarely preserved due to the extreme fragility of their bones. This discovery is key to understanding how stegosaurian skulls evolved." The fossil also revealed a previously unknown skull feature in *Dacentrurus armatus*: the supraoccipital, a bone at the back of the skull, was angled differently than in other known stegosaurs. The researchers suggest this may have been linked to the animal's unusually long neck and the way its head was held or supported.

Rethinking Stegosaur Evolution

The team also used the fossil to build a new evolutionary analysis of stegosaurs, comparing 115 anatomical traits across 30 fossil groups. Their results divide stegosaurs into two major branches, Huay-

angosauridae and Stegosauridae, and formally introduce a new group called *Neostegosauria*. This group includes later evolving, medium to large stegosaurs from Africa, Europe, North America, and Asia. The analysis also raises broader questions about stegosaur evolution. It supports the idea that *Isaberrysaura mollensis* from Argentina was a stegosaur, places *Alcovasaurus longispinus* and *Kentrosaurus aethiopicus* close to *Dacentrurus*, and suggests that some Asian stegosaurs survived into the Early Cretaceous. It also challenges the idea that *Wuerhosaurus* should be folded into *Stegosaurus*, pointing instead to the need for a fresh review of Early Cretaceous Chinese stegosaurs. Sánchez Fenollosa added: "Furthermore, alongside the anatomical study, we have also proposed a new hypothesis that redefines the evolutionary relationships of stegosaurs worldwide. As a result of this work, we have formalized the definition of a new group called *Neostegosauria*."

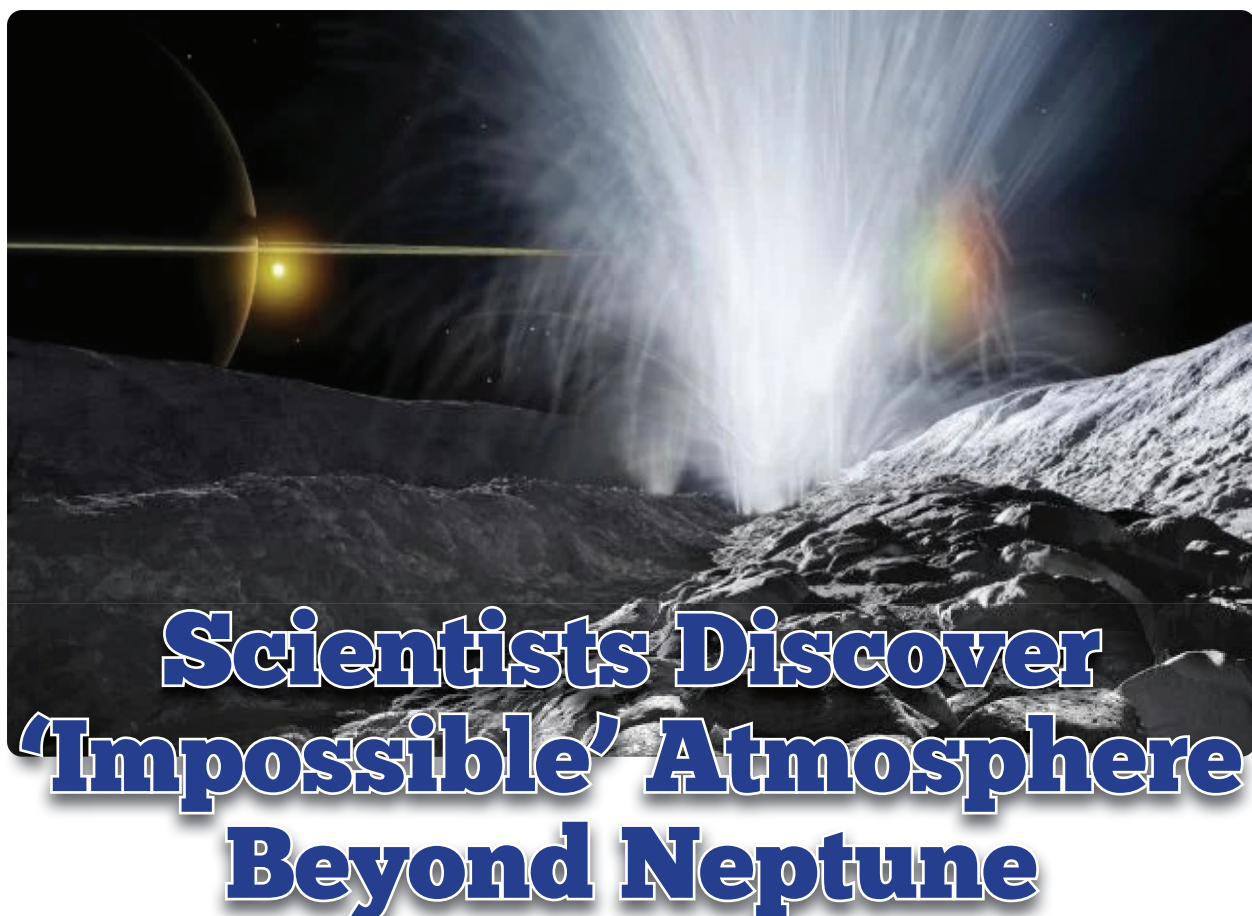
Alberto Cobos, managing director of *Fundación Dinópolis* and co-author of the paper, said: "This dual achievement, both the study of an exceptional fossil and the proposal of a new evolutionary hypothesis, positions this research as a global reference in stegosaurian studies." The Riodeva site has yielded about 200 fossils, including remains of at least two stegosaurs at different growth stages, as well as fossils from theropods, sauropods, ornithopods, crocodylomorphs, and fishes. More bones from the same adult *Dacentrurus* specimen are still being prepared, meaning this skull may be only the beginning of what the site can reveal. Cobos said: "This fossil site from

Riodeva continues to be a subject of research and still holds numerous relevant fossils, including more postcranial elements from the same adult specimen and, notably, juvenile individuals, a particularly rare combination in this

type of dinosaurs. These discoveries continue to exponentially increase the paleontological heritage of the province of Teruel, making it one of the iconic regions for understanding the evolution of life on Earth."



A Fossil Site Full of Potential



Scientists Discover 'Impossible' Atmosphere Beyond Neptune

In the wild unknown, out beyond the orbit of Neptune, astronomers have found a tiny world that defies our understanding of skies. This baffling object measures around 500 kilometers (310 miles) across, too small for its weak gravity to retain an atmosphere for long – yet an atmosphere it has. It's thin and tenuous, to be sure, but a world as small as (612533) 2002 XV93 shouldn't have

an atmosphere at all. It may not sound like much, but this relatively minuscule chunk of ice and rock in the cold, dark reaches of the Solar System may change what we know about atmospheric retention. In the process of studying the icy world, astronomers have showcased cutting-edge techniques for finding faint phenomena, so far away. 2002 XV93, as it is known for short, is a type

of object known as a plutino. It's a small body that shares an orbit similar to Pluto's orbital rhythm, at around 40 times Earth's distance from the Sun, in resonance with Neptune's orbit. These small icy worlds are thought to represent a fossil record of the early Solar System, recording information about what it was made of and how things moved around in it. The resonance with Nep-

tune, for example, shows that Neptune moved outwards, sweeping things up as it went.

But the space out beyond Neptune – the Kuiper belt – is a strange sort of no-man's-land for astronomy. It's filled with small, icy objects that are extremely difficult to find, let alone study in detail, because they're too far from the Sun to reflect much light we can detect.

Based on this dimming and brightening, the researchers built refraction models to understand what kind of atmosphere could have produced the signal. Using Pluto's atmosphere as a basis, they assumed a specific temperature structure and a composition mainly made up of methane, nitrogen, or carbon monoxide. Then, they simulated how dense that atmosphere would be at different altitudes, and how light would bend as it passed through. Their closest results suggested an atmosphere of just 100 to 200 nanobars – around 5 to 10 million times thinner than the atmospheric density of Earth at sea level. This is wild for several reasons. The first is that we now have instruments sensitive enough to detect refraction through a barely-there atmosphere from the far reaches of the Solar System. The second is that the team's models suggest such an atmosphere would be lost in as little as a few hundred to a thousand years. The most plausible way that it could have an atmosphere now is if that atmosphere is being replenished somehow. Given that there are many objects in the Kuiper belt, one scenario the researchers propose is that a comet smashed into 2002 XV93, releasing gas that has formed a temporary atmosphere that will soon dissipate. The other possibility is that, like Pluto, 2002 XV93 has active cryovolcanoes, which release icy sludge and volatiles from within the plutino, replenishing a constantly leaking atmosphere. Whatever it is, though, the object represents the first atmosphere detected in a small trans-Neptunian object (TNO), other than Pluto. The results suggest that even small bodies can host atmospheres, and, even more excitingly, with a bit of luck, we can detect them even when they are next to nonexistent. "This discovery suggests that the traditional idea that global dense atmospheres form only around larger planets must be revised," the researchers write in their paper. "Even a few-hundred-kilometer TNO can host, at least transiently, an atmosphere, challenging standard volatile-retention scenarios. Our findings suggest that a fraction of distant icy minor planets can exhibit atmospheres, potentially sustained by ongoing cryovolcanic activity or produced by a recent impact of a small icy object." The research has been published in *Nature Astronomy*.

Often, scientists need to rely on indirect detection methods. In the case of 2002 XV93, the method of observation relied heavily on chance: In 2024, astronomers led by Ko Arimatsu of the National Astronomical Observatory of Japan were in just the right place to watch it pass in front of a distant star – an event known as a stellar occultation. The researchers captured the occultation from three different locations in Japan, recording in minute detail as the star's light was temporarily snuffed out by the much closer plutino. For a bare rock, the way the star's light would change over the course

of the occultation is pretty stark and straightforward – suddenly winking out as 2002 XV93 slipped in front of it, and winking back as the occultation concluded.

However, that's not what the astronomers observed. The entire event lasted just 15 to 20 seconds, depending on the viewing location – and for about 1.5 seconds before and after totality, the light curve showed a gradual dimming and brightening, respectively.

This kind of gradual fading can only be explained if the starlight passed through an atmosphere, bending (refracting) as it went.



JWST Discovers A Surprising Massive Early Galaxy That Should Be Rotating – But It Is Not

Rotation seems to be one of those quintessential characteristics of galaxies. Whenever we see spiral galaxies, we can easily image them spinning. But not all galaxies rotate; repeated collisions and interactions with other galaxies can strip these cosmic objects of their angular momentum. This process is believed to take many billions of years, so imagine the face of scientists finding a non-rotating galaxy less than 2 billion years after the Big Bang. XMM-VID1-2075 was already known for being one of the most massive known galaxies in the early universe. This galaxy and several others were observed by W.M. Keck Observatory in Hawai'i as part of the MAGAZ3NE (Massive Ancient Galaxies at z>3 NEar-Infrared) survey. This object and two others of similar age were followed up with JWST to work out their motion. "This one in particular did not show any evidence of rotation,

which was surprising and very interesting," lead author Ben Forrest, from the University of California, Davis, said in a statement. "Previous MAGAZ3NE observations had confirmed this was one of the most massive galaxies in the early universe, with already several times as many stars as our Milky Way, and also confirmed that it was no longer forming new stars, making it a compelling target for follow-up observations." The three objects, while similar, present very different internal dynamics. One is clearly rotating, one looks a bit messy, and XMM-VID1-2075 of course shows no rotation, but very chaotic internal motions from its stars. Its size, lack of recent star formation, and lack of rotation might all come from the same mechanism. Instead of several small collisions that slowed the galaxy, the team suggests a single merger with a galaxy that was rotating pretty much in the opposite direction.

There is supporting evidence for this idea. "For this particular galaxy, we see a large excess of light off to the side. And so that's suggestive of some other object which has come in and is interacting with the system and potentially changing its dynamics," Forrest said. The finding is certainly surprising, and it is unlikely that this object is unique. By finding out how many such galaxies are out there, astronomers can test models of galaxy formation. "There are some simulations that predict that there will be a very small number of these non-rotating galaxies very early in the universe, but they expect them to be quite rare. And so this is one way in which we can test these simulations and really figure out how common they are, and that can then give us information about whether our theories of this evolution are correct," Forrest said. The study is published in the journal *Nature Astronomy*.

Scientists Just Built a Quantum Battery That Charges Almost Instantly

Scientists have built a quantum battery that could make charging almost instant. Australian researchers have achieved a major milestone in energy storage by designing and testing what is believed to be the world's first proof-of-concept quantum battery. Scientists say this emerging technology could reshape how energy is stored and delivered, potentially leading to devices that charge at extremely high speeds. The project was led by CSIRO in partnership with the University of Melbourne and RMIT, with the findings published in *Nature Light: Science & Applications*. Researchers from the University of Melbourne, including Associate Professor James Hutchison and Professor Trevor Smith, played key roles in the work. "Similar to conventional batteries, quantum batteries charge,

store, and discharge energy. But while everyday batteries rely on chemical reactions, quantum batteries leverage properties of quantum mechanics," Associate Professor Hutchison said. "The advantage of quantum is that the system absorbs light in a single, giant 'super absorption' event and this charges the battery faster."

Ultrafast Laser Experiments Confirm Charging Speed

To verify the prototype's performance, the team conducted experiments at the University's Ultrafast Laser Laboratory in the School of Chemistry. Using advanced spectroscopy methods, they were able to observe and confirm the system's rapid charging behavior. "The unique capabilities of our Ultrafast Laser Lab, including dual femtosecond laser amplifiers and tunable optical parametric am-

plifiers, were critical in enabling us to record ultrafast signals over orders of magnitude in time," Professor Smith said.

Quantum Energy Storage and Future Applications

The results provide an early look at how quantum-based energy storage could power future technologies. Dr. James Quach, quantum science and technology leader at CSIRO, led the team that built the prototype. "The research and proof-of-concept validates the exciting potential of quantum batteries to achieve rapid, scalable charging and energy storage at room temperature, laying the groundwork for next-gen energy solutions," Dr. Quach said. "Our findings confirm a fundamental quantum effect that's completely counterintuitive: quantum batteries charge faster as they get large."



CRICKET



Shikhar Dhawan registers marriage with Sophie Shine



NEW DELHI: Former India cricketer Shikhar Dhawan registered his marriage with Sophie Shine, with whom he tied the knot in February 2026, at the registrar's office in Gurugram on Wednesday. Dhawan, who hails from Delhi, completed the formalities at the marriage registrar's office along with his wife, Sophie Shine, signing the marriage documents in the presence of family members and a priest, according to news reports on Wednesday. The 46-year-old Dhawan had tied the knot with Sophie in an intimate ceremony in the Delhi-NCR region on February 21, 2026. The couple, who met in Dubai and dated for over a year, made their relationship public in 2025.

Asian U15 & U17 Boxing

India confirm 27 medals with multiple RSC wins



TASHKENT: India's young boxers have officially guaranteed an astonishing 27 out of 30 possible medals in the U-15 category at the Asian Boxing U15 & U17 Championships 2026 in Tashkent, Uzbekistan. Showcasing absolute dominance, the U-15 girls' contingent secured 14 out of 15 possible medals, while the U-15 boys nearly matched the feat by confirming 13 out of 15 medals, setting the stage for a historic overall podium finish for the country. Following this massive medal confirmation, the Indian boys delivered another day of ruthless performances, marked by a flurry of RSC (Referee Stops Contest) victories. Sastha Vasanth Ashok Kumar (37kg) and Parshant (49kg) led the aggressive charge.

CRICKET

Jamieson, O'Rourke, Sears return to Tests



AUCKLAND: The New Zealand selectors have bolstered their pace-bowling unit by deciding to bring back spearheads Kyle Jamieson and Will O'Rourke for a one-off Test against Ireland in late May and a three-Test series against England in June. The Canterbury quicks will join a large contingent of seam bowlers, with Zak Foulkes, Matt Henry, Nathan Smith, and Blair Tuckner named for both tours, while Michael Rae and the uncapped Kristian Clarke have been included for the Ireland Test only, along with Ben Sears, who will also head to England as the 16th travelling reserve. With the full support of New Zealand Cricket (NZC), reigning Sir Richard Hadlee Medal winner Jacob Duffy will miss the tours to remain in New Zealand as he and his wife await the birth of their first child.

All-round SRH soar to top of table with 33-run victory over PBKS

HYDERABAD

Sunrisers Hyderabad delivered a strong all-around performance to overpower Punjab Kings by 33 runs in Match 49 of the Indian Premier League (IPL) 2026 at the Rajiv Gandhi International Stadium, Uppal, in Hyderabad on Wednesday.

Their explosive batting, followed by disciplined bowling, played a key role, while PBKS' poor fielding proved costly in this high-scoring match. Dropped catches off both Ishan Kishan and Heinrich Klaasen came back to haunt Punjab. The pair capitalised on important half-centuries, helping SRH secure a commanding total and ultimately take control of the game.

Batting first, SRH again showed their aggressive approach right from the start. Abhishek Sharma and Travis Head set the pace with a quick beginning, continuing to dominate during the Power-play. They attacked early, pushing SRH forward and putting pressure on the PBKS bowlers. Even after losing an early wicket, the momentum hardly changed.

The real damage happened in the middle overs when PBKS let the game slip away. Ishan Kishan, benefitting from numerous lifelines - including dropped catches and a missed stumping - made the most of his opportunities. He scored a brisk 55, shifting gears effectively to keep the scoring rate high. Heinrich Klaasen also benefited from an early reprieve. He made Punjab pay with a fluent half-century, allowing SRH to easily pass the 200-run mark. Their contributions, along with some late acceleration, lifted Sunrisers



Hyderabad to a huge total, leaving Punjab Kings with a tough chase. The fielding mistakes, especially the dropped chances of two well-set batters, proved decisive moments that shifted the game solidly in SRH's favour.

In response, Punjab Kings struggled to find the sustained momentum needed for such a challenging chase. Although there were brief moments of brilliance, the innings lacked the consistency to challenge

SRH's large total. Sunrisers Hyderabad made a dream start with the ball, ripping through Punjab Kings' top order inside the first six overs to seize complete control of the chase.

The damage was swift and brutal as both openers, Priyansh Arya (1 off 3) and Prabhshimran Singh (3 off 4), were sent back within the first seven balls - marking their lowest combined return in 26 innings together. Pat Cummins set the tone

with clever captaincy, deceiving Arya with a short ball after pushing mid-on back, while Nitish Kumar Reddy struck immediately to remove Prabhshimran.

Eshan Malinga then piled on the pressure by dismissing Shreyas Iyer, who mistimed a hard-length delivery straight to mid-off. At 57/3 in the powerplay, despite the scoring rate, PBKS were already on the back foot, needing 179 runs off 84 balls. Amid the early collapse, Marcus Stoinis

and Cooper Connolly attempted to steady the innings with a counter-attacking 33-run unbeaten stand, both contributing 22 runs each. Stoinis took the aggressive route, smashing Sakib Hussain for 19 in an over, while Connolly found boundaries off Malinga to keep the scoreboard ticking. Their partnership helped PBKS recover to an extent, but with three key wickets already down, the chase remained an uphill task, leaving SRH firmly in command.

Cooper Connolly stood out with a steady knock, reaching a well-crafted half-century off 34 balls. He displayed maturity under pressure, trying to anchor the innings and keep PBKS in the game despite the increasing required rate.

However, the target continued to rise out of reach. At one point, they needed 106 runs off 31 balls, making the task seem nearly impossible. SRH bowlers maintained control, mixing their lengths well and taking advantage of the slowing pitch. Regular wickets further diminished Punjab's hopes and inhibited any late push.

Connolly's resistance remained one of the few bright spots in a challenging chase as he brought up his first T20 hundred, ending on an unbeaten 107 as Sunrisers Hyderabad soared to the top of the table with a 33-run victory.

Brief scores:

Sunrisers Hyderabad 235/4 in 20 overs (Heinrich Klaasen 69, Ishan Kishan 55; Yuzvendra Chahal 1-32) beat Punjab Kings 202/7 in 20 overs (Cooper Connolly 107 not out, Marcus Stoinis 28; Pat Cummins 2-34, Shivang Kumar 2-45) by 33 runs.

ISL 2025-26: Late own-goal sees Chennaiyin FC fall to a 1-0 defeat against Punjab



CHENNAI

Chennaiyin FC suffered a narrow 1-0 defeat away to Punjab FC in the Indian Super League (ISL) 2026 in Chennai on Wednesday, undone by a late own-goal despite showing sustained attacking intent throughout the contest.

Earlier, head coach Clifford Rayes Miranda recalled midfielder Mohammed Ali Bemammer to sit alongside skipper Alberto Noguera in the middle, while PC Laldinpuia joined Pritam Kotal in defence. Lalrinliana Hnamte accompanied Farukh Choudhary, Irfan Yadwad, and Daniel Chima Chukwu in the attack.

Eleven minutes in, Pritam produced an outstanding goal-line clearance early on to keep the scores level. Laldinliana Renthlei followed it up with a crucial block to deny a clear sight of the goal, as the Marina Machans stood firm against early pressure. At the other end, Chennaiyin carved out a promising 3v2 situation, but Hnamte's heavy touch let the opportunity slip. Chima was also presented with a half-chance soon after, only for the Punjab defence to recover in time.

As the half wore on, the contest settled into a midfield battle, with both sides struggling to assert control in a game that lacked a cutting

edge. After the break, the pattern continued, with Chennaiyin remaining compact defensively while searching for a breakthrough in attack. Noguera came closest to creating one, delivering a dangerous ball into the box that nearly led to an opening, with Chennaiyin also seeing appeals for a handball waved away.

The Marina Machans continued to probe in the final stages, working the ball into promising areas. Substitute Klusner Pereira floated a cross towards Irfan, whose header drifted over, before Noguera slipped Chima through on goal moments later. However, the striker's effort from close range was off target, summing up a frustrating evening in front of goal for Chennaiyin.

Mohammad Nawaz was then called into action for the first time, producing a fine save to concede a corner. Punjab capitalised on the resulting set-piece in the 84th minute, with the ball deflecting in off Hnamte for an unfortunate own goal. The Marina Machans continued to push in search of a late equaliser, but were unable to find a way through, eventually seeing out the game in defeat. Chennaiyin will face North-East United in their penultimate match of the season, before concluding the campaign at home against Bengaluru FC.

'It was a bit too much dropped catches today', says PBKS skipper Iyer

HYDERABAD

Shreyas Iyer was straightforward in his comments after Punjab Kings' 33-run loss to Sunrisers Hyderabad in the 49th match of IPL 2026. He said, "It was a bit too much because we dropped catches at the start. The wicket kept getting slower. They played good cricket and showed us how to win."

His remarks highlighted a night filled with missed opportunities and a strong performance from Sunrisers Hyderabad, leading to a 33-run defeat at the Rajiv Gandhi International Stadium, Uppal.

Punjab's early fielding mistakes set a negative tone for the game. Dropped catches of Ishan Kishan and Heinrich Klaasen proved costly, as both batters took advantage and scored crucial half-centuries. SRH started aggressively, with Abhishek Sharma and Travis Head putting pressure on the opposing team during the powerplay. Kishan then anchored the middle phase with a quick 55, while Klaasen's fluid knock helped Hyderabad exceed the 200-run mark, making the chase very difficult for PBKS. Reflecting on his team's performance, Iyer said, "I feel we got off to a great start in the



tournament, and everyone was in a good space... If we continue with the same form, that won't help us." Despite an encouraging start to the season, this defeat revealed issues that PBKS needs to fix. The chase never really gained traction for Punjab Kings. SRH's bowlers struck early, dismissing both openers within the first seven balls and quickly following up with Iyer's key wicket during the powerplay. At 57/3 after six overs, the required run rate had already risen sharply, putting the visitors on the back foot. Marcus Stoinis and Cooper Con-

nolly tried to steady the innings with a counterattacking partnership, but the task was still challenging. Connolly stood out, showing composure and skill under pressure. Iyer praised the young player, saying, "Connolly is phenomenal. His mindset is top-notch. He has a knack for scoring big runs in pressure situations."

Connolly went on to score a fantastic unbeaten 107, anchoring the innings until the end, but did not receive enough support. At one point, the requirement grew to 106 runs off 31 balls, making the chase nearly impossible.

Wang leads China's comeback win over Romania at ITTF World Team Table Tennis C'ships

LONDON

Wang Chuqin claimed two wins as China rallied to beat Romania 3-1 on Wednesday and reached the men's team quarterfinals at the 2026 ITTF World Team Table Tennis Championships Finals at the Wembley Arena in London.

China fell behind early when Liang Jingkun lost 11-5, 11-7, 11-6 to Eduard Ionescu, the highest-ranked player in Romania's lineup.

"I was a bit tight at the start, and he performed better. After he had some excellent shots, my mentality

was impacted, and I failed to catch up with him afterwards," Liang said. "As I don't have much advantage technically and tactically, I need to go all out against every opponent," he added.

Wang, the world No. 1, restored parity by beating Iulian Chirita in straight games. He took the first 11-5, then recovered from a 5-1 deficit in the second to level at 8-8 before edging it 12-10.

He closed out the match 11-5. "I prepared fully for this match. After trailing in the second game, I managed to turn the tables, which

boosted my confidence in the third," Wang said. Lin Shidong put China ahead with an 11-9, 11-6, 11-4 win over Ovidiu Ionescu in the third match. The 36-year-old Romanian called two TTR reviews in the second game, but both decisions went against him, reports Xinhua.

"The third match was quite crucial, but I didn't think too much about it. I was just focused on every point," Lin said. "I felt that I didn't truly brace for high-intensity competition in the group stage. Hopefully, I will be more pumped up in the upcoming matches," he added.

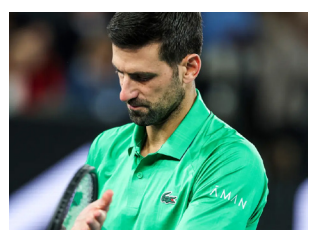
ATP Tour: Djokovic fine-tunes game in Piazza del Popolo ahead of Rome return

ROME

Former World No.1 and the most successful player in the Grand Slam tournaments, Novak Djokovic, will return to the ATP Tour this week at the Internazionali BNL d'Italia and will spend time on Tuesday practising on a temporary court at the famous Piazza del Popolo in Rome.

The 38-year-old Djokovic looked in a relaxed mood in the Italian capital, where he practised before signing autographs for the hundreds of fans watching from the square, according to a report by the ATP Tour's website.

Djokovic is set to compete for the first time since he lost to Jack



Draper in the fourth round in Indian Wells on 12 March. The Serbian has not played a tour-level match on clay since his Roland Garros semi-final defeat to Jannik Sinner last June.

The former No. 1 player in the ATP Rankings holds a 68-12 record in Rome, according to the Inforsys ATP Win/Loss Index, a tally that includes title runs at the

ATP Masters 1000 event in 2008, 2011, 2014, 2015, 2020 and 2022.

Djokovic, who is competing in Rome for the first time since his third-round exit to Alejandro Tabilo in 2024, will face Hungarian Marton Fucsovics or Croatian qualifier Dino Prizmic at the Foro Italico in his opening match. The 101-time tour-level titlist is also seeded to face Italian and eighth seed Lorenzo Musetti in the quarter-finals.

Musetti eyes the Rome crown Italian tennis has hit new heights in recent years. Jannik Sinner has climbed to No. 1 in the ATP Rankings and captured 28 tour-level titles.

Indian women's team to host Zimbabwe for maiden white-ball series

MUMBAI

The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) on Wednesday unveiled an expansive home season schedule, headlined by the India women's team hosting the Zimbabwe women's national cricket team in a white-ball series in October 2026.

"The schedule features a line-up of multi-format contests with India set to host Australia A (Men and Women), England A Women, Zimbabwe Women, Australia U19 Men, England U19 Women and Sri Lanka Women U19 during the upcoming domestic season," BCCI said in a statement.

The series comprises three T20Is in Raipur and three ODIs in Baroda and will be a key assignment in the upcoming domestic season.

Besides the senior women's fixtures, the calendar is packed with multi-for-



mat contests, with India A and U19 teams in both the men's and women's categories. The India A men's cricket team will face the Australia A cricket team in Puducherry. The series will

consist of two multi-day matches and three one-day games to be played between September and October 2026.

The India U19 men's cricket team will host the Australia U19 cricket team

for a five-match tour at the junior level. There are three one-day matches in Rajkot, followed by two multi-day matches in Rajkot and Ahmedabad, respectively.

Australia to send women's cricket team on India A tour. A women's cricket team for a multi-format series of three T20s, three one-day games and a multi-day match in Mohali and Dharmsala in September 2026.

They will then play the England A women's cricket team in another multi-format contest in Pune and Navi Mumbai. The India U-19 women's cricket team will host the England U-19 women's cricket team for a five-match T20 series in Baroda and Surat in November and December 2026. In June and July, they will play a six-match white-ball series against Sri Lanka's under-19 women's cricket team, to be held across Chennai and Puducherry.

Pooja & Mrunal To Clash With Peddi?

A potential box office clash is creating buzz as Peddi gears up for its grand release on June 4. The film, starring Ram Charan, is set for a wide pan-India rollout, including a strong push in the Hindi market backed by Jio Studios. With aggressive distribution plans, Peddi is expected to command significant screens across North India.

On the other hand, Bollywood entertainer Hai Jawani Toh Ishq Hona Hai, featuring Varun Dhawan, Pooja Hegde, and Mrunal Thakur, is also eyeing a similar release window. Interestingly, both Pooja Hegde and Mrunal Thakur were earlier considered for a special song in Peddi, but those plans were eventually dropped.

Now, the overlap in release timing has sparked interest in the big clash. Trade analysts believe that if Peddi opens to strong word-of-mouth, it could impact the performance of Varun Dhawan's film, especially in key Hindi circuits.

Given Ram Charan's growing popularity and the scale of Peddi, the competition is expected to be intense. With both films targeting mass audiences, the coming weeks will be crucial in terms of promotions and hype building.

The final outcome will largely depend on content, audience reception, and how each film positions itself ahead of release. Dawid Dhawan directs Hai Jawani Toh Ishq Hona Hai and Buchi Babu Sana directs Peddi.



GOD OF WAR

IT IS TIME FOR THE ARRIVAL OF MURUGA

NTR and Trivikram Srinivas decided to collaborate once again for an upcoming film, based on Lord Murugan. Tentatively titled God of War, the project was confirmed officially long ago. The fans are eagerly waiting for the project to hit the floors.

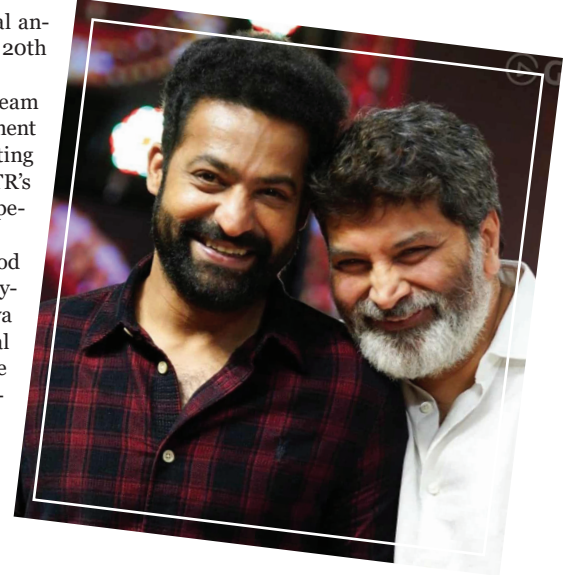
However, it will take more time for the film to hit the sets, but the team is planning to release an announcement video, marking the occasion of NTR's birthday.

As per the reports, the team is busy shaping the announcement

video. If satisfied with the VFX, the official announcement video will be released on the 20th of May.

Since it is a mythological drama, the team is adding a lot of VFX to the announcement video. The fans would naturally be expecting some announcements on the occasion of NTR's birthday and this one could be extremely special.

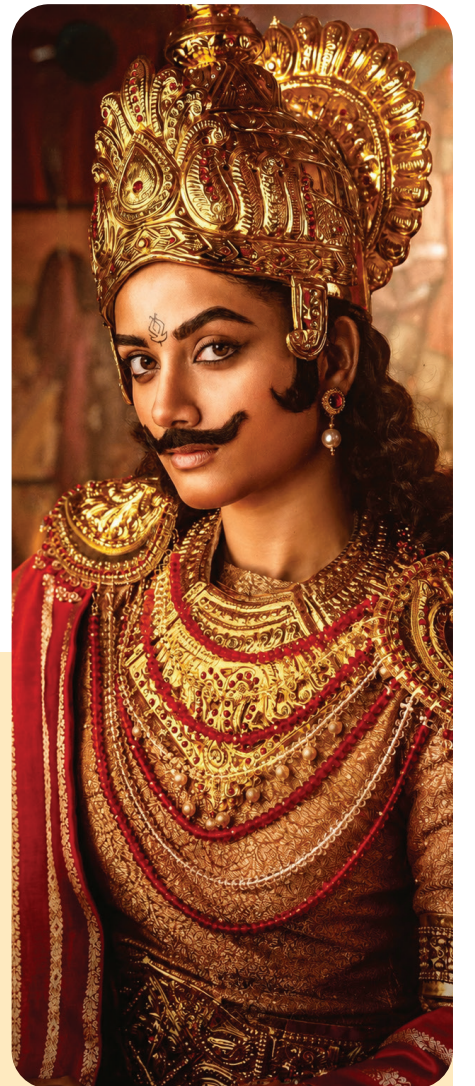
The film is described as a high-octane "God of War" themed spectacle based on the mythology of Lord Kartikeya (Subrahmanya Swamy), the commander of the celestial army. Reports stated that the film will be made on a big budget. Naga Vamsi is expected to bankroll the film under Sithara Entertainments in association with Haarika & Hassine Creations. If all goes as planned, an official announcement video is likely to arrive soon.



Bhagyashri with Sk

Bhagyashri Borse may not have scored a box office hit yet, but she continues to land promising projects. The actress has now secured a role opposite Sivakartheeyan, one of the rising stars in Kollywood. The film, titled "Seyon," is said to blend devotional elements with social drama. With strong references to Lord Murugan woven into the narrative, the makers hinted at the theme through Bhagyashri's birthday poster, which featured a peacock feather—symbolic of Murugan, also known as Kartikeya. Despite appearing in multiple Telugu films such as "Mr. Bachchan," "Kingdom," and "Andhra King Taluka," Bhagyashri is yet to taste commercial success. However, her consistent opportunities suggest that the industry continues to back her potential. She will next be seen in Akhil Akkineni's "Lenin." With both "Lenin" and "Seyon" in the pipeline, the coming phase could prove crucial in shaping her career trajectory.

Every now and then, a single look from a film cuts through the buzz. This time, it's Bhagyashree Borse stepping into a completely unexpected space. On the eve of her birthday today (May 6th), the makers of her upcoming film, Akhil's Lenin, has released a special poster, which is making huge noise now. For a key sequence in Lenin, a stage-drama-act, she appears in a moustache avatar, channeling a Duryodhana-inspired getup from the Mahabharatha. It's not just a costume change, but it's a sharp break from the image she's been building so far as a glamour diva.



Salman Effect? Prabhas Film Makes Sudden Exit

Whenever a big-ticket film announces its release date, it often creates a ripple effect and this time, it involves Prabhas's Spirit and Salman Khan's upcoming film with director Vamshi Paidipally (tentatively titled SVC63). Spirit, directed by Sandeep Reddy Vanga, was initially scheduled to release on March 5, 2027. However, according to trade sources, the film has now been pushed to December 1, 2027. The reason? Salman Khan has locked the Eid 2027 window falling in early March for his

next film, which reportedly stars Nayanthara. With that prime holiday slot taken, it did not make sense for Spirit to release in the same period. Industry insiders say this is a strategic move rather than a delay caused by production issues. Vanga's films typically depend on strong word-of-mouth and uninterrupted theatrical runs, making it important to avoid clashes. Interestingly, the new release date; December 1 holds significance for Vanga, as his previous blockbuster Animal (2023) was also released on the same day.

Spirit, which pairs Prabhas with Triptii Dimri, is currently under production. Sources say the director is maintaining an aggressive shooting schedule and aims to complete filming by early 2027. The shift also allows ample time for post-production work, including editing, background score, and preparing versions in multiple languages. Meanwhile, Prabhas is also busy with the sequel to Kalki 2898 AD, directed by Nag Ashwin, which is currently being shot in Hyderabad.

The development once again highlights a growing trend in the industry; big films are increasingly avoiding direct box office clashes to maximise returns.



Malaika Nailed In SHIMMER GLAMOUR

Malaika Arora has grabbed attention with her latest pictures from a travel magazine shoot. The actress appears in stylish resort looks against a beautiful beach backdrop, giving major vacation goals. From a yellow relaxed outfit to a bold green statement gown, she carries every frame with confidence and ease. The photos have a premium holiday vibe and fans are loving the glamorous presentation. In another

striking image, Malaika poses near the pool in an artistic green dress, while one more shot shows her standing by the sea with scenic islands behind her. Her fashion choices match the luxury setting perfectly. The magazine cover look, where she poses on a beach swing in a shimmering gown, adds a grand finish to the series. Every picture highlights her strong screen presence and polished style sense. Malaika has always remained a fitness and fashion icon, and these new visuals prove it once again. Even after years in the spotlight, she knows how to create fresh buzz with every appearance. Her latest shoot blends travel, elegance, and star power, making it one of her most talked-about style moments recently.

