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Miller, Axar and Ashutosh keep DC's IPL alive

STADIUM 11

Dimple's Bold Avatar In Sharwa's Bhogi



BOX-OFFICE 12



No power can make India bow or yield to pressure: PM Modi

At the Somnath Amrut Mahotsav in Gujarat on Monday, marking the 75th anniversary of the restored Somnath temple's inauguration, Prime Minister Narendra Modi asserted that no global power can force India to bow under pressure. Drawing parallels between the resilience shown during the 1998 Pokhran nuclear tests under Atal Bihari Vajpayee and the rebuilding of India's cultural heritage, Modi emphasized that national self-respect must always come first. The Prime Minister—who also performed a roadshow, 'Maha Pooja', and released a special commemorative stamp—reiterated that India's future lies in embracing both heritage and modernity in tandem.

SANJAY KUMAR holds safety review meeting

HYDERABAD, MAY 11

South Central Railway (SCR) General Manager Sanjay Kumar Srivastava held a detailed review meeting on train operation safety at Rail Nilayam, Secunderabad, along with Satya Prakash, Additional General Manager, and Principal Heads of Departments. Divisional Railway Managers (DRMs) of all six divisions—Secunderabad, Hyderabad, Vijayawada, Guntur, Guntakal, and Nanded—participated via video conferencing.

Srivastava stressed the importance of structured and phased inspections, including night inspections by officers and inspectors, focusing on strengthening safety in train operations and stations. He highlighted critical areas like level crossings and power supply systems, emphasizing maintenance of safety equipment and rail fittings to ensure secure train movement. Safety measures address both immediate operational needs and long-term safeguards for passengers and staff.

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CM unveils his mission to strengthen THE EDUCATION IN THE STATE

HYDERABAD, MAY 11

Chief Minister Shri A Revanth Reddy, who is also holding education portfolio, unveiled his mission to strengthen the education sector by introducing new Education policy and also a few more initiatives of enhancing the budget for education every year, introducing nursery to 12th standard in government schools, breakfast for students in all government educational institutions etc. Inaugurating Education week as part of Praja Palana-Pragati Pranalika today, the Chief minister said that the government allocated 8 per cent of the total outlay in the coming years. "The expenditure incurred on education should be considered as a productive investment in future generations. Our goal is to place Telangana as the number one state in the country in education in the government sector" the CM stressed that the government schools should be

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NEW EDUCATION POLICY SOON

- Budget allocations to education will be increased by 15 per cent in the coming years
- Expenditure incurred on education will be considered as a productive investment for future
- Warns of strict action against suppliers if substandard education kits supplied to the students in government schools
- 500 best teachers will be sent to foreign countries on study reforms in education
- Teachers should play a vital role in bringing out talents from the students
- Nursery to 12th standard in government schools to reduce drop outs after 10th standard from this year
- Niti Aayog praises Telangana for achieving targets in education
- CM Revanth Reddy inaugurated Education Week under Praja Palana - Pragati Pranalika at LB Stadium today.

HOME LAND 07

AUSHADHI EXPRESS MARKS MAJOR LEAP IN PHARMA LOGISTICS: KISHAN REDDY

HYDERABAD, MAY 11

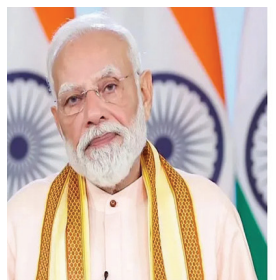
Union minister G. Kishan Reddy said Indian Railways has taken a significant step in pharmaceutical transportation with the launch of the country's first dedicated pharma cargo train, the "Aushadhi Express", under the Centre's ambitious PM Gati Shakti initiative. In a statement issued here on Monday, the Union Minister said the refrigerated train service, launched on May 2, will transport pharmaceutical products from Hyderabad - widely regarded as the Pharma Capital of India - to Jawaharlal Nehru Port Trust for domestic and international distribution. Kishan Reddy thanked Prime Minister



Narendra Modi and Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw for allocating the inaugural regular "Aushadhi Express" service to Telangana. The reefer train equipped with advanced cold-storage facilities would greatly benefit pharmaceutical companies

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VBG Ramji Scheme to Replace MGNREGS FROM JULY 1



New Delhi, May 12: The Centre has announced that the newly introduced VBG Ramji Scheme will come into force across the country from July 1, replacing the existing Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS). The Union Ministry of Rural Development issued an official notification confirming the rollout of the new programme in all states and Union Territories. The Ministry clarified that the transition to the new scheme would not disrupt employment opportunities for rural workers. Existing job cards issued under MGNREGS will continue to remain valid until new cards are distributed, provided beneficiaries complete the e-KYC process. At the same time, the Centre assured that workers whose e-KYC is still pending would also continue to receive employment without interruption.

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Telangana forms SIT to probe POCSO against Bageerath

HYDERABAD, MAY 11

The Telangana government has constituted a Special Investigation Team (SIT), headed by Kukatpally DCP Rithiraj, to investigate the POCSO case involving Union Minister Bandi Sanjay's son, Bandi Bageerath. The Chief Minister was briefed on the case details by DGP C.V.

Anand on Monday. During this meeting, Revanth Reddy instructed C.V. Anand to promptly commence an inquiry into the case filed against Bandi Bageerath at the Pet Basheerabad Police Station. The Chief Minister expressed concern to the DGP about the lack of action taken since the complaint was lodged on May 8.

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GHMC COMMISSIONER INSPECTS CENSUS OPERATIONS

HYDERABAD, MAY 11

GHMC Commissioner R.V. Karnan, accompanied by Zonal Commissioner and Additional Principal Census Officer B. Santosh, inspected the ongoing Census House Listing Operation at NBT Nagar, Banjara Hills in Hyderabad on Monday. Their aim was to evaluate the implementation at the field level

and to ensure that data collection is accurate. During the visit, the commissioner interacted with enumerators and supervising staff, and examined the procedures being followed for house listing and collection of demographic details and also directed to complete the process within one month, June 9, 2026.

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DELIMITATION WAR EXPLODES

STANFORD CLASH EXPOSES INDIA'S DEEPENING NORTH-SOUTH DIVIDE

SEATS, POWER & THE FIGHT FOR INDIA'S FUTURE

DELIMITATION AND THE GREAT INDIAN FAULT LINE

WHY THE THAROOR ANNAMALAI FACE OFF IN AMERICA MATTERS TO EVERY INDIAN VOTER

C. SUBRAHMANYAM

A sharp exchange between Congress MP Shashi Tharoor and BJP leader K. Annamalai at the Stanford India Conference on May 10, 2026 in San Francisco has brought India's simmering North-South divide into full public view. At the heart of the debate lies one politically explosive question. Should parliamentary representation be determined purely by population growth even if it reduces the relative influence of



Shashi Tharoor warns southern states risk being "disenfranchised" if Lok Sabha seats are redrawn on population growth. K Annamalai hits back: 'One person, one vote—North deserves its due.'

"A TYRANNY OF THE DEMOGRAPHIC MAJORITY CAN DISENFRANCHISE STATES THAT DID THEIR DUTY." SHASHI THAROOR

"DEMOCRACY IS ONE PERSON, ONE VOTE. THE NORTH HAS GROWN, IT DESERVES REPRESENTATION." K ANNAMALAI

southern states that successfully controlled population expansion over decades? The answer could redefine the balance of power inside the Indian Union after 2026. Sometimes the most important debates about India happen far away from Delhi's television studios and Parliament's noisy corridors. That is exactly what happened in San Francisco where two articulate political voices from opposite sides of the ideological spectrum ended up exposing one of the deep-

est anxieties inside the Indian republic. The occasion was a two-day Stanford India Conference. The subject was governance, growth and identity. But very quickly the conversation turned toward delimitation and from there it entered dangerous political territory. On one side was Shashi Tharoor, polished as always, framing the issue as a threat to cooperative federalism and warning that southern states may begin to feel politically alienated if parliamentary seats are redistributed solely on

the basis of population growth. On the other side stood K. Annamalai, blunt, data driven and unapologetic in arguing that democracy ultimately rests on numbers and that states with larger populations naturally deserve greater representation in the Lok Sabha. At one level, this was a civil intellectual disagreement. At another, it was a glimpse into the political battle India is heading toward in the next few years. Because delimitation is no longer just a constitutional exercise.

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Praja Palana – Pragathi Pranalika Opens with Green Initiatives and Educational Outreach



Hyderabad, May 11: Praja Palana – Pragathi Pranalika opened with a clear message of progress and sustainability as banners, brochures, and the Action Plan were unveiled by Chief Guest Sameena Begum, setting an inspiring tone for the year ahead. The event highlighted interdepartmental collaboration with the display of MOUs from all departments for the current academic year, while a green initiative saw saplings planted within the college campus to promote environmental awareness and sustainability.

The programme unfolded with strong college leadership and active participation from key members, including Vice Principal Dr. Mohd. Ghouse, IQAC Coordinator Dr. K. Sreedevi, Academic Coordinator Dr. P. Latha, and NSS Programme

Officers Dr. M. Pranitha, Dr. K. Shobha Rani, and L. Jesse, along with other faculty members who contributed to the smooth execution of the proceedings.

Following the campus event, faculty members and 50 students attended the Praja Palana Programme organized by the Government of Telangana at LB Stadium, where Revanth Reddy addressed the gathering in the presence of representatives from various educational institutions, underscoring a broader commitment to public governance and civic engagement. The day's activities reflected a robust emphasis on academic collaboration, environmental stewardship, and active participation in statewide civic initiatives, signaling a strong start to the Prajathi Pranalika agenda.

India Gains Global Recognition in Wildlife Conservation

Biodiversity conservation is essential for future generations: Governor Shiv Pratap Shukla

HYDERABAD

Telangana Governor Shiv Pratap Shukla stated that wildlife conservation is an integral part of Indian culture, traditions, and heritage. He said that India is playing a major global role in the conservation of big cat species such as tigers, leopards, Asiatic lions, and snow leopards. He emphasized that wildlife protection is extremely important for safeguarding forests and securing the future of coming generations.

A two-day workshop of the International Big Cat Alliance (IBCA), themed "Shared Stripes – Shared Future," was organized on Monday at Nehru Zoological Park under the joint auspices of the Ministry of External Affairs and the Telangana Forest Department. The Governor attended the event as the chief guest and inaugurated the workshop.

Speaking on the occasion, the Governor said that Nehru Zoological Park is one of the largest and finest zoological parks in the country. He praised the park for playing a crucial role in wildlife conservation, breeding programs, and creating public awareness. He added that the "Shared Stripes – Shared Future"



program reaffirms the commitment of both the country and the state toward nature and wildlife conservation. The Governor said that Indian culture has always promoted respect for nature, environmental balance, and coexistence with wildlife. He noted that wildlife conservation is not merely an environmental responsibility, but also a symbol of civilization itself.

He appreciated the Tiger Safari at Nehru Zoological Park and the

measures being taken to conserve endangered species. Such initiatives, he said, demonstrate that environmental balance can only be restored when humans and nature coexist harmoniously.

Governor Shukla further stated that under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, India is spearheading historic initiatives like the International Big Cat Alliance (IBCA). Through this platform, countries around the world are able

to exchange knowledge, research, and conservation experiences. He said India's experience in wildlife conservation is serving as an inspiration to countries in Asia and Africa.

The Governor also highlighted that Telangana is home to rich biodiversity. He said that tiger conservation areas such as Amrabad Tiger Reserve and Kawal Wildlife Sanctuary reflect the state's ecological significance. He added that the state government is giving importance to

green development and public participation in conservation efforts.

The Governor congratulated the Ministry of External Affairs, the Telangana Forest Department, and partner organizations for successfully organizing the event. He remarked that the platform had successfully brought together scientists, policymakers, and young conservationists for a common cause.

He concluded by saying that the future of wildlife depends on the decisions and commitments made today, and called upon everyone to work collectively to preserve the natural heritage.

State Forest Minister Konda Surekha said that the state government under Chief Minister Revanth Reddy is giving high priority to forest protection and wildlife conservation. Later, the Governor visited the zoological park and observed tigers and other wild animals. He also viewed an exhibition of wildlife photographs organized at the zoo.

Governor's Special Chief Secretary M. Dana Kishore, along with senior officials from the Ministry of External Affairs and the State Forest Department, participated in the program.

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DELIMITATION WAR EXPLODES

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It is becoming a referendum on power itself.

UNDERSTANDING THE ROOT OF THE CONFLICT

To understand why emotions run so high on this issue, one has to go back several decades. India froze the number of Lok Sabha seats based on the 1971 Census. The logic then was straightforward. States that worked hard to control population growth should not be punished politically for doing the right thing. So even as populations changed dramatically over time, parliamentary representation remained frozen. That freeze continues until after 2026. Now comes the difficult part. Northern states such as Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh have witnessed far higher population growth compared to many southern states. If parliamentary seats are redrawn strictly according to current population figures, the Hindi heartland stands to gain substantial political weight in Parliament. Southern states fear exactly that scenario. Their argument is not emotional alone. It is also political and economic.

These states point out that they invested heavily in public health, education, women's empowerment and family planning. Fertility rates came down. Literacy improved. Governance indicators strengthened. Economies expanded faster in several sectors. Now they worry that success may become a political disadvantage. That is the central anxiety that Tharoor articulated.

THE SOUTH'S FEAR IS NOT JUST ABOUT NUMBERS

There is a tendency in some political circles to dismiss the South's concerns as exaggerated regionalism. That would be a mistake. For many southern leaders, this debate is not simply about losing a few seats in Parliament. It is about the future balance of power inside the Indian Union. If northern states acquire overwhelming numerical dominance

in the Lok Sabha, then national policymaking itself could begin tilting more decisively toward the political and cultural priorities of the Hindi belt. This is where the language issue quietly enters the debate. Tamil Nadu in particular carries the historical memory of anti Hindi agitations very strongly. The Dravidian movement was built around resisting perceived cultural domination from the North.

Even today, language remains an emotionally charged political subject. So when leaders in the South hear arguments based purely on demographic arithmetic, they also hear a deeper fear beneath it. They worry about whether India's cultural diversity can survive if parliamentary power becomes heavily concentrated in one demographic region. That explains why Tharoor used phrases such as "tyranny of the demographic majority." He was essentially warning against majoritarian politics acquiring a permanent structural advantage.

ANNAMALAI'S COUNTER ARGUMENT CANNOT BE IGNORED

At the same time, Annamalai's argument also carries democratic legitimacy. After all, representative democracy is based on the principle that every citizen's vote must carry equal value. If some states today have far larger populations than they did in 1971, can India indefinitely deny them proportionate representation? That becomes increasingly difficult to justify in a functioning democracy. This is why the BJP and several northern political voices insist that delimitation is ultimately about fairness. From their perspective, a citizen in Uttar Pradesh cannot permanently remain underrepresented merely because another state performed better in population control decades ago. Annamalai also attempted to soften the political blow by speaking about expanding the total number of Lok Sabha seats rather than reducing existing representation for south-

ern states. That is politically important. The idea is to increase the overall size of Parliament so that southern states retain their present strength while northern states gain additional seats reflecting population growth. But even that formula does not fully calm southern concerns because relative influence still changes dramatically. And politics is often about relative power more than absolute numbers.

THIS IS ALSO A STORY ABOUT MONEY AND FEDERALISM

There is another layer to this debate which rarely gets discussed openly but dominates conversations in political circles. Money. Several southern states believe they contribute disproportionately to the national economy and tax pool while receiving less favourable returns in central allocations. This perception has grown stronger in recent years especially around Finance Commission formulas and resource distribution debates. As a result, a feeling has emerged in parts of the South that economically productive states are being asked to subsidise poorer regions while simultaneously facing the prospect of reduced political influence. That combination creates a potent political narrative. And once economic grievance merges with regional identity, the political consequences can become serious.

THE BJP'S SOUTHERN CHALLENGE

For the BJP, this issue requires extremely careful handling. The party has invested enormous political capital in expanding across southern India. It has made gains in Karnataka and Telangana and is aggressively trying to grow in southern states. Any perception that the BJP is enabling northern domination could damage those efforts. That is why leaders like Annamalai are trying to frame the issue not as North versus South but as democratic correction. The Congress and

regional parties, however, see an opportunity to mobilise southern sentiment around federalism and regional rights. Expect this issue to become louder as the next census approaches. Every debate on language policy, education reforms, fiscal transfers and representation will now increasingly be viewed through this North South lens.

THE BIGGER QUESTION BEFORE INDIA

Ultimately this debate forces India to confront a difficult constitutional and moral question. Should parliamentary representation depend entirely on population alone? Or should governance success and demographic responsibility also matter? There are no easy answers. A democracy cannot permanently ignore demographic realities. But a federal union also cannot afford to create the feeling among certain regions that they are becoming politically irrelevant despite strong developmental performance. India's strength has always rested in balancing diversity with unity. The delimitation debate will test that balance like never before.

INDIA'S BATTLE OVER REPRESENTATION HAS NOW BECOME A BATTLE OVER TRUST IN THE UNION ITSELF

The Tharoor-Annamalai exchange was important because it revealed how sensitive and complicated this issue has become. Both men, in their own way, were speaking uncomfortable truths. One was warning about the dangers of demographic domination. The other was defending the democratic logic of representation. The challenge before India is to find a middle path that protects democratic fairness without weakening the federal compact that holds this extraordinarily diverse nation together. Because if handled badly, delimitation could become more than a political controversy. It could become a defining test of India's national cohesion in the decades ahead.

VBG Ramji Scheme to Replace MGNREGS FROM JULY 1

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Registration of new applicants without job cards will continue through gram panchayats, officials said.

The Ministry stated that detailed operational guidelines covering wage payments, work procedures, and grievance redressal systems under the VBG Ramji Scheme will be released shortly after consultations with states and Union Territories.

Describing the initiative as a "historic transformation in rural development," the Ministry said the scheme is aligned with the vision of Viskit Bharat 2047 and aims to strengthen livelihood security, increase rural incomes, and improve village infrastructure. Under the new framework, wage payments will be made directly into workers' bank or post office accounts through the Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) system to ensure transparency.

The government said wages must be credited either weekly or within 15 days of the closure of the muster roll. Compensation provisions for delayed payments will also be included.

According to earlier announcements by the Centre, the VBG Ramji Scheme will guarantee 125 days of employment to rural households in a financial year – 25 days more than the current 100-day guarantee provided under MGNREGS. The government maintains that the enhanced employment guarantee will contribute significantly to livelihood security, income generation, and rural infrastructure development across the country.

AUSHADHI EXPRESS MARKS MAJOR LEAP IN PHARMA LOGISTICS

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located in Hyderabad's Genome Valley, Jeedimetla Industrial Area, Patancheru Pharma Zone and Future City in Mucherla by ensuring safe and timely transport of temperature-sensitive medicines, he added.

According to the Minister, the service operates from the Inland Container Depot at Sanath Nagar under Container Corporation of India Limited (CONCOR). Diesel-powered reefer containers are being used throughout the journey to maintain uninterrupted refrigeration and preserve drug quality.

Kishan Reddy said the initiative strengthens cold-chain connectivity, reduces transit time and lowers operational costs while improving the pharmaceutical supply chain ecosystem. He added that though the train currently operates once a week, efforts are underway to increase the frequency to twice weekly based on market demand and trade requirements.

Telangana forms SIT to probe...

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The DGP updated the Chief Minister on the case specifics, explaining that the police force had been fully engaged in security measures due to Prime Minister Modi's upcoming visit to Hyderabad.

In response, the Chief Minister ordered the DGP to form specialised teams to carry out a thorough investigation of the matter. Following the Chief Minister's directive, a Special Investigation Team (SIT) has been formed, entrusting IPS officer Rithiraj with the task of probing the case. The victim, a

17-year-old girl, along with her parents, reported to the police that Bandi Bageerath had acted inappropriately towards her at a party on new year's eve at a farmhouse in Moinabad. She also alleged that he had exhibited inappropriate behaviour on other occasions.

Meanwhile, a separate case has been filed against the victim and her parents at a police station in Karimnagar, following a complaint from Bandi Bageerath alleging that the victim's family demanded Rs. 5 crore and attempted to blackmail him.

GHMC COMMISSIONER

INSPECTS CENSUS OPERATIONS

FROM PAGE 1

RV Karnan emphasised the importance of conducting the Census exercise with utmost transparency, accuracy, and dedication, as the data collected plays a vital role in planning developmental activities and welfare schemes. He instructed the field staff to ensure that every household

is covered without omission and requested citizens to cooperate with the enumerators by providing correct information. The Commissioner directed the deputy commissioners to cooperate with the census staff and assign the concern field level officers, including Bill Collectors and tax inspectors.

SEVERAL MMTS SERVICES CANCELLED, PARTIALLY CANCELLED IN HYD



HYDERABAD, MAY 11

Several MMTS Hyderabad train services were cancelled and partially cancelled on May 11 and 12 due to operational reasons.

Railway authorities cancelled services including Umdanagar–Lingampalli, Lingampalli–Falaknuma, Falaknuma–Lingampalli and Lingampalli–Umdanagar routes.

Some services were also partially cancelled between Secunderabad, Falaknuma and Umdanagar sections.

Meanwhile, a few services were restored. Train No. 47121 Ramachandrapuram–Hyderabad and 47145 Lingampalli–Hyderabad will run normally, while Train No. 47142 Ramachandrapuram–Hyderabad will originate from Telapur instead of Ramachandrapuram.

CM UNVEILS HIS MISSION TO STRENGTHEN THE EDUCATION...

FROM PAGE 1

strengthened more and compete with the private institutions. 19 lakh poor students were studying in 27,000 government schools and the total number of students in 12,000 private schools is 3.8 million.

Stating that the government would introduce a new education policy soon, CM Revanth Reddy said that the policy should be a role model for the country. The government was introducing nursery to 12th standard in the government schools from this academic year in view of increasing dropouts after the 10th class.

Taking serious note of the fact that students from underprivileged backgrounds are attending school on empty stomachs, the Chief Minister said that nutritious food in-

cluding milk and Ragi Java (finger millet porridge) would be served to school students. As a pilot project, the breakfast scheme was already introduced in schools in Kodangal assembly constituency. Some people are speaking thoughtlessly, claiming that the Department of Education lacks a Minister.

The CM took strong exception to the criticism by the opposition that there was no full time minister for education. He deliberately retained the Education portfolio with an objective to provide quality education to the students and groom them as the responsible citizens in the country. With the specific objective of providing quality education to the poor, Dalits, and tribal communities residing in the Thandals, hamlets, and remote villages of Telangana, he

personally retained the education portfolio and took proactive steps. The Chief minister appealed to the officials of the education wing to consider him as education minister and not CM during the review meetings. Some more constructive decisions would be taken to strengthen the education sector in the future.

CM Revanth Reddy highlighted the steps taken to strengthen education which included the recruitment of 11,000 teachers in just 60 days, promotions to 22,000 teachers and the transfer of 36,000 teachers without any controversy. The Chief minister noted that the NITI Aayog also commended the state for the achievements in the education sector. 1,50,000 teachers are currently employed. There is one teacher for every 17 students. 25 government

teachers were already sent to Finland to study the education system. We will select 500 teachers who have demonstrated exceptional performance and send them abroad in the future. We will also facilitate the best teachers on the occasion of the State Formation Day on June 2.

Further, the CM said that the government would distribute one set of school uniforms to the students on the first day of the academic year and the second set will be distributed at the end of the month. Stating that the government was spending Rs ₹1,000 crores on education kits this year, the chief minister warned that stringent action would be taken against the suppliers if the kits are in poor quality. He will blacklist any companies that supply

substandard goods and put them behind the bars. The government also launched a development plan worth ₹1,700 crores to enhance infrastructure in educational institutions located within the Outer Ring Road area.

CM Revanth Reddy also highlighted the increase of cosmetic charges by 200 percent and diet charges by 40 percent and spending hundreds of crores of rupees to provide state-of-the-art facilities in our universities. "We firmly believe that the future of Telangana resides within the classrooms of our government schools." Salaries are being paid on the first day of every month to the teachers in addition to providing them with necessary infrastructure and facilities. The Chief minister stressed that for gov-

ernment teachers, it is not merely a job, but a matter of deep emotional commitment. Teaching profession should not be a burden but a sacred responsibility. To witness the joy in the eyes of underprivileged parents, teachers must be willing to dedicate just one extra hour of work each day, the CM said, calling on the teaching community to strive with a resolve to make Telangana's education system a shining model for the entire country.

The government was also constructing 100 'Young India Integrated Schools' across 100 constituencies, at a cost of 20,000 crore rupees, the Chief minister said that his ultimate goal is for the children of the poor in Telangana to be able to proudly place their hands on their hearts and declare:

"I Studied at a Young India Integrated School."

CM Revanth Reddy recalled that, during the first phase Telangana movement of 1969 and the second phase movement of 2009, university students spearheaded the agitation with immense vigor. Students from Osmania and Kakatiya universities took the path of agitation to address the issues confronting Telangana society mainly funds, employment opportunities, and political representation. Telangana society will inevitably weaken if the universities and the education sector are neglected, the CM said that the Government schools are not orphanages and they are platforms for development and progress. We will take tough decisions and implement them resolutely.

“Is Bandi Sanjay a Minister for the Police or a Minister for Thieves?”: Y. Satish Reddy, Former REDCO Chairman

HYDERABAD

Former REDCO Chairman Y. Satish Reddy questioned whether Bandi Sanjay is a Union Home Minister or a minister protecting criminals. He said that if the police themselves are saying that the Union Minister's son has absconded, then where is law and order in the country?

He stated that it is shameful that a person serving as Home Minister — whose duty is to catch criminals — allegedly allowed his own son to go into hiding. He asked what answer Prime Minister Narendra Modi would give regarding this issue.

Satish Reddy said that many doubts had already arisen when Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Chief Minister Revanth Reddy shared the stage with Bandi Sanjay even after a POCSE case had been registered. He alleged that the Union Home Minister and the State Home Minister

appeared to have worked together to help the accused escape. He further expressed suspicion that Bandi Sanjay's son, Bhagirath, might even have been taken out of the state on the same aircraft in which Modi arrived in the state.

Satish Reddy said that Bandi Sanjay is unfit to hold the Home Ministry position. He demanded that, if Bandi Sanjay has any sense of morality, he should immediately resign from the Union Minister post.

He also said that if Bandi Sanjay claims his son has done nothing wrong, then he should immediately hand him over to the police. “If he has committed no mistake, why is he afraid? Why was he made to flee?” he asked.

Finally, Satish Reddy demanded that Prime Minister Narendra Modi immediately dismiss Bandi Sanjay from the Union Cabinet. Otherwise, he said, people would believe that Modi too is supporting the accused and denying justice to the victim in this matter.

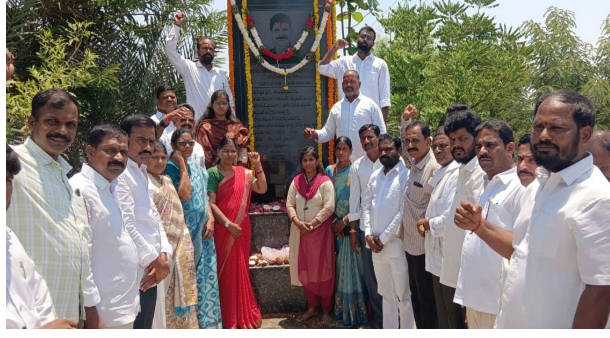
Bahujan Rule Inspired by the Spirit of Martyrs

Let us unite for the state envisioned by the martyrs: TRP Party State Women's President Patel Vanaja

HYDERABAD

Telangana Rajyadhikara Party (TRP) State Women's President Ms. Patel Vanaja called upon people to create awareness among the masses and establish Bahujan rule in Telangana inspired by the spirit of martyrs who sacrificed their lives for the liberation of oppressed people. She participated in the 12th death anniversary program of former Maoist leader Comrade Ramulu held at Dasireddygudem village in Valigonda mandal of Yadadri Bhuvanagiri district. Paying floral tributes at the memorials of Ramulu and Sambashivudu and offering homage to the martyrs, Patel Vanaja addressed the gathering.

She said that people should continue the ideals of the martyrs who sacrificed their lives for the liberation of oppressed communities across the Telugu



states and India, and unite to fight for the establishment of Bahujan rule inspired by their spirit. She stated that Sambashivudu and Ramulu, who belonged to the same family, sacrificed their lives for oppressed people.

She alleged that while the rulers call upon activists to join mainstream society, they continue to harass those who integrate with the people, and also got many activists like Belli Lalitha, Sambashivudu, and Ramulu killed through criminals like Nayeem. She urged people to work towards establishing Bahujan rule in Telangana inspired by such martyrs.

She said that Bahujans, who

uation must be reversed and political power handed over to the majority people. She added that Mallanna's goal is to send people who have never entered the Assembly before into the legislature, and called upon Bahujans to join his leadership in large numbers. Speaking on the occasion, TRP State Working President Vatte Janayya said that the sacrifices of Sambashivudu and Ramulu can never be forgotten. Inspired by their sacrifices, he said, people would be mobilized in every village to build alternative politics in the state, establish a government for the poor, and set an example for national politics.

Among those who participated in the program were Kunapuri Ramulu's associate, former Market Committee Chairperson Kavitha, his son Kranti, Sambashivudu's daughter Kavya, TRP state leaders Giragani Bikshapathi, All India OBC JAC Chairman Sayini Narendra, advocates Jannu Padma and Karu Pavan, and movement associates Srisailam, Shankaranna, Rasala Balaswamy, and others.



Hyderabad Press Club Requests Master Health Check-up Camp at NIMS

State Health Minister Damodar Rajanarsimha Responds Positively

Press Club Executive Members Thank Minister Damodar Rajanarsimha

HYDERABAD

On the occasion of the Telangana State Formation Day celebrations on June 2, Hyderabad Press Club President S. Vijay Kumar Reddy, General Secretary Ramesh Varikuppala, and Vice President Aruna Attaluri met State Medical and Health Minister Damodar Rajanarsimha at the State Secretariat and submitted a memorandum requesting the organization of a free master health check-up camp for all Press Club members at Nizam's

Institute of Medical Sciences in Somajiguda. Responding positively to the request made by the Hyderabad Press Club governing body for a special master health check-up at NIMS, Minister Damodar Rajanarsimha said that journalists, who are constantly available to serve the public, should take care of their health. He advised journalists to undergo regular health check-ups.

The minister directed Government Secretary Christina to make the necessary arrangements for conducting the health check-up camp at NIMS.

The Press Club executive committee expressed gratitude to Minister Damodar Rajanarsimha and the state government for responding positively to the proposal for organizing the master health check-up camp for Press Club members.

Women's Political Participation Must Be Strengthened Further

Mahila Congress State President Errabelli Swarna

KUKATPALLY

Mahila Congress State President Errabelli Swarna stated that there is a need to further strengthen women's participation in politics. A district-level review meeting of the Medchal-Malkajgiri Mahila Congress was held on Monday at NKR Gardens in Kukatpally under the chairmanship of District Mahila Congress President Rajanolla Lakshmi.

Errabelli Swarna attended the programme as the chief guest. Mahila Congress National General Secretary Kamalakshi Rajanna, Congress Party District President Thotakura Vajresh Yadav, Congress Party Parliament In-charge Patnam Sunitha Mahender Reddy, TPCC Vice



President and Kukatpally Constituency In-charge, Telangana Kamma Corporation Chairman Bandi Ramesh, Qutbullapur Constituency In-charge Kolan Hanmanth Reddy, Market Committee Chairman Pushpa, Aliabad Municipal Chairman Sirisha Krishna Reddy, state executive members, district presidents, Mahila Congress leaders, and public representatives also participated in the meeting. During the meeting,

a comprehensive review was conducted on strengthening the Mahila Congress organizational structure, expanding the party from the village level, and implementing upcoming programmes.

Speaking on the occasion, Errabelli Swarna said that women's political participation must be strengthened further. She called upon every Mahila Congress worker to play a key role in taking the ideology of

the Congress Party to the people. She also urged everyone to work collectively to make Mahila Congress stronger from the grassroots level.

Later, demanding the immediate implementation of the Women's Reservation Bill, leaders and activists conducted a postcard signature campaign with the slogan “Mahila Aaraksan Bill Aaj Karo Abhi Karo” and sent the signed postcards to the Prime Minister's Office.

Vaddera body thanks CM Revanth over Renuka's appointment

HYDERABAD

All India Vaddera Welfare Association has thanked Telangana chief minister A. Revanth Reddy for appointing Gunja Renuka Narayana as Chairperson of the State Vaddera Cooperative Corporation. Addressing a press conference here on Monday, Association State President Ramesh Manjala described the appointment as a historic step towards empowering the highly marginalized Vaddera community. He also expressed gratitude to Mahesh Kumar Goud for supporting the decision. Ramesh alleged that the previous Bharat Rashtira Samithi government neglected the Vaddera Federation by failing to allocate funds or establish a corporation for the community. He praised the Congress government for appointing a woman leader from the community to head the corporation and warned against criticism targeting the move. He recalled the efforts of former Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister Y. S. Rajasekhara Reddy in recognizing the backwardness of the Vaddera community and sanctioning welfare loans through the federation.



Popular Anchor Suma Kanakala Visits Samatha Murthy at Muchintal

SHAMSHABAD

Popular television anchor and actress Suma Kanakala visited the Samatha Murthy statue at Muchintal near Shamshabad on Monday. She offered prayers with devotion at the 216-foot-tall Statue of Equality.

After the darshan, Suma participated in the annaprasadam distribution program at the venue and added cheer to the occasion. She personally served annaprasadam to devotees.

Interacting warmly with the devotees present there, she mingled with them like an ordinary visitor and won everyone's admiration.

She praised Sri Chinna Jeevar Swamiji, the 108 Divya Desams, and the magnificent architectural style of the Samatha Murthy center. Speaking on the occasion, she said, “The atmosphere here is extremely peaceful and spiritual. The message of equality propagated by Ramanujacharya is truly inspiring for everyone.”

We Will Stand by the Welfare of Small Newspapers

Grand Felicitation to Accreditation Committee Members

Efforts Underway to Resolve CA Certificate Issue: Virahat Ali

HYDERABAD



Telangana Union of Working Journalists State President Virahat Ali stated that their union would stand like a mother in support of the welfare of small and medium newspapers and magazine editors.

Members appointed from small and medium newspapers to district accreditation committees were felicitated grandly on Monday at the Basheerbagh Press Club under the banner of the Telangana Small Medium Newspapers and Magazines Association.

Speaking as the chief guest at the event chaired by Association President Yusuf Babu,

Virahat Ali said that they are sincerely working to bring the problems faced by small newspaper managements to the government's attention and resolve them.

He stated that discussions had been held with the Information Department Commissioner regarding the CA certificate rule, which has become a hurdle in the issuance of accreditations, and expressed hope that the issue would be resolved soon.

Virahat Ali further said

that efforts would be made to bring pending advertisement bills and issues related to the monthly release of government advertisements to the notice of the Information Department Minister and Commissioner for resolution.

He advised the newly selected committee members to work actively at the grassroots level to ensure that all eligible journalists receive accreditation cards. He added that efforts are underway to ensure the quick release of pending

advertisement bills for newspapers and emphasized that rights can be achieved only through unity.

Later, the accreditation committee members were felicitated with shawls.

During the event, Udayam Daily Editor Augustine rejoined the union and was warmly welcomed by Virahat Ali, who handed over the membership personally.

The felicitation program, organized under the leadership of Association General Secretary Ashok and Accreditation Committee Members Coordinator Balaraju, was attended by TUWJ state vice presidents Faizal and Madhu Goud, HUIJ President Shankar, Small Newspapers Association Treasurer Azam Khan, Rajireddy, Dayanand, Alwal Hanmanthu, SSK Hussain, Matangi Das, Daivadynam, Balakrishna, Golla Ramesh, Aman, Venkataiah, and others.

SOUTHERN RAILWAY
Chennai Division (Mechanical Branch)
GeM Bid No.: GEM/2026/B/7431472, Dated: 13.04.2026
Corrigendum No. 02 Dated: 07.05.2026

Name of the Work: Mechanized cleaning at Tambaram Railway Station on Manpower basis for 1461 Days and Tambaram Colony on outcome basis for 1253 Days.

Corrigendum: 02
(A) Bidders can pay EMD amount in the following account numbers:
BENEFICIARY NAME: Sr.DFMMAS, SOUTHERN RAILWAY, PARK TOWN, CHENNAI - 600003
1. Account No. 012910300004374 IDBI bank Ltd. IFSC code: IBKL0000907
2. Account No. 1186402609 Central Bank of India IFSC code: CBINO280876

(B). Size of work force:

Sl.No.	Details	Existing	To be read as
01	Instruction to bidder uploaded in GeM Bid Document, in which Sl.No. 4 of clause 1.5.1.3	Size of work force: The bidder must have a minimum number of personnel (as defined by Railway administration) on the organization's pay roll. Minimum required work force of this work is 34 no's.	Size of work force: The bidder must have a minimum number of personnel (as defined by Railway administration) on the organization's pay roll. Minimum required work force of this work is 102 no's.

Tender closing date and time : 14.05.2026 at 17:00 Hrs.
Tender opening date and time : 14.05.2026 at 17:30 Hrs.

Senior Divisional Mechanical Engineer / Chennai

SOUTHERN RAILWAY
SALEM DIVISION
E-TENDER NOTICE No. SA-E3-2026-27-W1-W3, Dated: 09.05.2026

Divisional Railway Manager / Electrical / Salem Division, Salem - 5 for and on behalf of the President of India invites E-Tender for the under mentioned works. Online bids only will be accepted. For detailed NIT, qualification criteria, bidding document, tender submission etc., can be viewed / downloaded from website portal www.ireps.gov.in

E-Tender Notice No, Date and Name of Work	Details
1) SA-E3-2026-27-W1 Dated: 09.05.2026 Replacement of Air conditioner at Control Room and Meeting hall at Divisional Manager's Office at Salem.	Approx. Cost - ₹ 68,99,818.00/- EMD - ₹ 1,38,000.00/- Completion Period - 6 Months
2) SA-E3-2026-27-W2 Dated: 09.05.2026 Salem Division - Provision of 12 Mtr FOB at Erode Railway station under Amrit Bharat Station Scheme - Electrical Arrangements.	Approx. Cost - ₹ 29,61,560.00/- EMD - ₹ 59,200.00/- Completion Period - 6 Months
3) SA-E3-2026-27-W3 Dated: 09.05.2026 Salem Division - Energy Conservation Measures, Adoption of Smart Metering System for Service Building and Private Stalls.	Approx. Cost - ₹ 59,58,303.00/- EMD - ₹ 1,19,200.00/- Completion Period - 6 Months

For all the works Closing Time & Date : 15.00 hrs. on 01.06.2026
For all the works Bids Opening Time & Date : 15.30 hrs. on 01.06.2026

All Addendum / Corrigendum, Time extension, Clarifications, etc. will be uploaded in the website portal www.ireps.gov.in only and will not be published separately in Newspapers. Bidders should regularly visit website to keep themselves updated.

Divisional Railway Manager (Electrical) / Salem

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SHORT TAKES

Massive Modi rally reflects BJP's rising strength in: BJP chief

HYDERABAD: State BJP president N. Ramchander Rao on Monday claimed that the huge turnout for Prime Minister Narendra Modi's public meeting at Secunderabad Parade Grounds reflects the growing popularity of the Bharatiya Janata Party in Telangana. Addressing the media here, Rao thanked the party workers, citizens and the media for making the meeting a grand success. He said the large crowd during a non-election period indicated that political change in Telangana was becoming inevitable. Rao said the participation of saints, women from Banjara and Lambadi communities.

AISF demands resignation of Bandi Sanjay over POCO allegations against his son

KARIMNAGAR: All India Students Federation (AISF) state president Kasireddy Manikanta Reddy on Monday demanded the resignation of Union Minister of State for Home Affairs Bandi Sanjay Kumar, alleging moral responsibility in connection with a sexual assault case reportedly involving his son and a minor girl. Addressing a protest organised by AISF at Telangana Chowk in Karimnagar, Manikanta Reddy alleged that despite a complaint being lodged under the POCO Act at Pet Basheerabad Police Station on May 8, authorities had failed to register a case or initiate an investigation. He further accused the Telangana government of negligence and alleged attempts to dilute the case. He also criticised Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy for retaining the Home portfolio. AISF leaders demanded a judicial probe through a fast-track.

Steps accelerated for construction of Koheda Integrated Market: Tummala

Measures being taken to make services available from December 9: Minister Tummala

HYDERABAD

State Agriculture, Marketing, Cooperation, Handlooms and Textiles Minister Mr. Tummala Nageswara Rao said that the construction works of the Koheda Integrated Market, considered crucial for modernizing the agricultural produce marketing system in the state, have reached the final stage.

Following the directions of Chief Minister Mr. Revanth Reddy, Minister Tummala conducted a comprehensive review meeting at the Secretariat today with marketing officials regarding the revised layout of the Koheda Integrated Market. He stated that the project design has been made more efficient by taking into account the needs of farmers, traders, and other stakeholders.

The Minister said that an action plan has been prepared to



complete the project in three phases. He added that the first phase of construction works would be completed within the stipulated timeframe, with the target of making the market operational for farmers from December 9 this year.

The Minister stated that all necessary arrangements are being made for the smooth shifting of transactions currently taking place at the Batasingaram Market to the Koheda Integrated Market. He said that the transfer process would be carried out in coordination to ensure that farmers and traders do not face

any inconvenience. He added that steps are being taken to commence trading activities at the Koheda Market from December 9 itself.

Minister Tummala said that the Koheda Integrated Market is being developed with state-of-the-art facilities. Special focus is being placed on providing open platforms, truck docking sheds, drying yards, wide roads, transportation facilities, technological infrastructure for transparent transactions, and all necessary services for farmers. He opined that the integrat-

ed market would help farmers secure better prices for their produce, reduce the influence of middlemen, and establish a transparent marketing system. He stated that the Koheda Integrated Market would become a milestone in the development of the state's agricultural sector.

The Minister further said that all concerned departments are working in coordination to complete the entire project within the stipulated timeline. He revealed that the final proposal related to the project is being submitted to the Chief Minister for approval.

PM Modi's Secunderabad Meeting Signals Political Shift in Telangana, Says BJP Leader Attikari Mallesh

MEDCHAL-MALKAJGIRI

Senior BJP leader from Kukatpally constituency, Attikari Mallesh, said Prime Minister Narendra Modi's recent public meeting in Secunderabad has created a new political momentum in Telangana and reflected the growing public support for the Bharatiya Janata Party in the state.

Mallesh described the large turnout at the meeting as a "clear indication" that people are looking for a change in Telangana's political direction. He thanked the citizens, BJP workers, supporters, and leaders who participated in large numbers and contributed to the success of the event.

Speaking on the impact of the Prime Minister's visit, Mallesh said the enthusiasm witnessed at the Secunderabad meeting was similar to the BJP's growing support in other parts of the country. He stated that people have developed strong confidence in Prime Minister Modi's leadership and governance model.

Mallesh praised the Prime Minister's vision of "Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas," saying that Modi has emerged as a leader for all sections of society. He said the Central Government's welfare schemes have benefited the poor, youth, women, farmers, and marginalized communi-

ties without discrimination of caste or religion. "Prime Minister Modi is truly 'Andari Vadi' — a leader for everyone. His governance has ensured that welfare and development reach the common people directly," Mallesh said.

He further stated that Modi's visit was not merely a political rally but a message of development, good governance, and national progress. According to him, the BJP is increasingly being seen as the only strong alternative capable of delivering development-oriented governance in Telangana.

Mallesh also said the meeting has brought new energy among BJP cadres across the state. He added that the party will further strengthen its presence in the Kukatpally constituency under the leadership of State Executive Member Vaddepalli Rajeshwar Rao.

"The Secunderabad meeting has made one thing clear — the people of Telangana want development, and the BJP is ready to deliver it," Mallesh said. "The political signs are visible, and the people are preparing to bring the BJP to power in the state."

He concluded by saying that the massive response to Prime Minister Modi's meeting marks an important moment in Telangana politics and will play a key role in shaping the BJP's future strategy in the state.



Welfare of Workers is the Goal of Governance

Deputy Chief Minister Bhatti Vikramarka

HYDERABAD

Deputy Chief Minister Bhatti Vikramarka said that the Indiramma Praja Government is sincerely committed to improving the conditions of workers employed in various sectors across Telangana and ensuring better living standards for them.

A Cabinet Sub-Committee meeting on the revision of minimum wages was held on Monday at Mahatma Jyotirao Phule Praja Bhavan in Hyderabad. Along with Deputy Chief Minister Bhatti Vikramarka, Ministers Gaddam Vivek Venkataswamy, Ponnampalabhar, Duddilla Sridhar Babu, Rajya Sabha member Vem Narendar Reddy, Labour Commissioner Dasari Hari Chan-



dana, Finance and Planning Secretary Gaurav Uppal, and other senior officials participated in the meeting.

The Deputy Chief Minister stated that the government wants wage revision in Telangana to be scientific and practical. In this context, the committee thoroughly examined minimum wage policies being implemented in other major states across the country. The members also held detailed discussions on the possible impact of the new

Labour Code that the Central Government is planning to implement nationwide.

The committee decided that workers' wages should not merely be revised numerically, but should reflect their real-life needs. It also resolved that wages must be aligned with rising prices and increasing cost of living. The Cabinet Sub-Committee expressed the view that the government is firmly determined to implement the best wage models in Telangana.

Success of PM public meeting during non-election period testament to the growing popularity of BJP

HYDERABAD

BJP Telangana State President N Ramchander Rao today extended his heartfelt thanks to the people of Telangana, party workers, and the media for making the massive public meeting of Prime Minister Narendra Modi held yesterday at the Secunderabad Parade Ground a grand success.

Addressing a press conference at state office here Rao stated that the people of Telangana turned out voluntarily in massive numbers for Prime Minister Narendra Modi's rally.

He noted that such a sea of humanity during a non-election period was a testament to the growing popularity of the BJP in Telangana. Rao attributed the success of the meeting to the tireless day-and-night hard work of party workers, leadership coordination and the commitment of the cadre.

BJP state chief asserted that just as people across the country supporting the BJP, a political change in Telangana is becoming inevitable. The presence of Swamijis from the Sadhu Samaj, women from the Banjara and Lambadi commu-

nities, doctors, nurses, paramedical staff, lawyers, youth, and women turned the meeting into a grand celebration. Every section of Telangana society is looking toward the BJP with hope, he said.

Rao expressed confidence that PM Modi's leadership will bring a new political direction to Telangana and that the BJP will emerge as a strong alternative in the coming days.

"The current Congress government was moving forward with anti-people, anti-women, and anti-youth policies. They came to power in the name of

'Guarantees' but have completely ignored them," he alleged.

He, however, clarified that "Modi's Guarantee" means the development of Telangana, job opportunities for the youth and the state's economic progress.

BJP state chief condemned the criticism regarding the voter list revision process (SIR) stating it was a routine process under the supervision of the Election Commission of India. The goal was to remove fake, duplicate, and deceased voters without harming the rights of genuine voters.

Caring for Nurses Strengthens Economies

(On the occasion of "International Nurses Day" on 12 May)

Every day, nurses step into hospitals, clinics, and various community settings with quiet strength, steady hands, and hearts full of compassion. Nurses are at the heart of healthcare systems worldwide. They spend their most of the time with patients, providing essential care, and support throughout the treatment process. Whether it's assisting with daily activities, administering medications, or offering emotional support, nurses are integral part of patients recovery and well-being. To honour the unwavering dedication and vital role of nurses play

in healthcare, "International Nurses Day" is observed annually on 12 May. The theme of 2026 International Nurses Day is "Our Nurses, Our Future. Empowered Nurses Save Lives", underscores the critical importance of supporting nurses for their well-being and also benefit the global health systems. This day in 2026 has been the 206th birthday of Florence Nightingale.

Challenges Faced by Nurses

The key issues such as nursing education, migration, working conditions, and leadership, providing essential data that can help shape future policies to strengthen primary healthcare systems worldwide. Nurses are more than just caregivers, they are

healthcare leaders, educators, and advocates for patients. Nurses face numerous challenges like physical, mental, emotional and ethical, and it is imperative that we address these challenges in a way that promotes their overall health. The International Nurses Day is a timely reminder of the invaluable role nurses play in healing, comforting, and standing beside patients through some of the life's most difficult moments. It is also a tribute to healing hands and selfless service.

History of International Nurses Day

The International Nurses Day officially established in 1974, recognising the need to appreciate pivotal role played by nurses across the globe. Nurs-

es are playing wide spread roles in critical care, surgery, maternal care, outpatient services, and community health. Hospitals must support its nursing staff through continuous training, developmental specialisation, round the clock support, and patient centres ethos. Nursing as one of the quiet strengths of healthcare, which is built on compassion, skill, and tireless dedication. Their role is not just treat, but to listen, support, and stand by patients. On this day, we must honour their selfless service and the lasting impact they create in every hospital ward and clinic hallway.

— DR BURRA MADHUSUDHAN REDDY
9949700037

Minister Komatireddy Conducts Marathon Review on HAM Projects

Seeks detailed report on tender process, excess bids and rising construction costs

HYDERABAD

State Roads & Buildings Minister Komatireddy Venkat Reddy on Monday held an extensive review meeting on the progress of Hybrid Annuity Model (HAM) road projects in Telangana and sought a detailed explanation from officials on the tender process, project costs and excess bids.

The three-hour meeting held at the State Secretariat focused on the execution of HAM road works, quality standards, financial implications and infrastructure expansion across the State. Officials informed the Minister that Telangana's excess bids in HAM projects were significantly lower compared to sev-



eral other states implementing similar projects.

During the review, officials explained that the HAM model introduced by the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways and implemented by the National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) since 2016 has already been adopted in states such as Maharashtra, Gujarat, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh and Bihar. Across the country, over 374 HAM projects worth nearly ₹4-5 lakh crore are under implementation, they said.

The officials also clarified

that Gujarat recorded excess bids of up to 66 per cent, while Maharashtra witnessed nearly 47 per cent excess in HAM projects. Similar trends were observed in several NHAI projects as well, they added.

A major point of discussion during the meeting was the sharp escalation in construction costs. Officials informed the Minister that bitumen prices increased from ₹44,000 per metric tonne at the time of tendering to nearly ₹89,000 per metric tonne at present, reflecting almost a 100 per cent rise. The increase in GST burden, maintenance obligations, fuel prices and global economic conditions had significantly impacted project costs, they explained.

According to officials, the Roads & Buildings Department is executing 441 road development works under HAM Phase-I at an estimated cost

of ₹13,006 crore. The projects cover 6,092 km in 34 packages. In addition, the Panchayat Raj Department is implementing 2,162 road works spanning 7,450 km at a cost of ₹6,250 crore under 17 packages.

Officials further stated that HAM projects involve additional expenditure due to advanced machinery, modern engineering designs, long-term maintenance responsibilities, ambulance and patrolling services, independent engineer charges and GST liabilities. Addressing the officials, Minister Komatireddy Venkat Reddy said quality road infrastructure was crucial for industrial growth, improved connectivity and employment generation in Telangana. He said the State Government was committed to strengthening road infrastructure with long-term planning and quality execution.

GITAM to host residential programme for Physics teachers from June 1

HYDERABAD

The Department of Physics at GITAM School of Science, in association with the Indian Physics Association and with academic participation from the School of Education, GITAM, will organise a three-day Residential Professional Development Programme (RPDP) for Physics teachers from June 1 to 3 at GITAM Hyderabad. The programme, themed "Advanced Concepts, Pedagogy, and Educational Tools," aims to strengthen Physics education at school and undergraduate levels through conceptual learning, experimental methods and modern teaching practices.

The RPDP will feature sessions on electromagnetic theory, photonics, quantum computing, superconductivity, magnetism, nuclear radiation, experimental demonstrations, DIY physics kits, classroom pedagogy and learning assessment techniques. Eminent academicians and researchers from premier institutions will participate as resource persons, including S. Anantha Ramakrishna, B.V.R. Tata, T.S. Natarajan, Vibhor Singh, G. Ravi Kumar, G.A. Rama Rao, Vanaja and Deepa Chari. The organisers said the programme would provide exposure to advanced Physics concepts, low-cost experimental techniques, ICT-enabled teaching methods and innovative classroom practices. The programme is being coordinated by G. Sai Preeti and T. Vishwam. School-level Physics and Science teachers interested in participating may contact the coordinators for registration and further details.

Month-Long TRS Flag Festival Announced

TRS flags to be unveiled from the State Capital to Ward Level

Telangana Rakshana Sena Chief Kalvakuntla Kavitha calls upon party cadre

HYDERABAD

I call upon party cadre to organize a month-long flag festival from May 20 to spread the ideology of the "Telangana Rakshana Sena" party to the grassroots level.

From May 20 to June 20, large-scale flag festival programs should be conducted across the state capital, district headquarters, constituency and mandal centers, and villages. TRS flags should be hoisted in all wards. The party policies and the Panchajanya principles announced during the TRS formation meeting should be explained to the people.

Even after 12 years since the formation of the state, Telangana contin-



ues to face several critical challenges. We have been betrayed in achieving the Telangana movement slogans of "Water, Funds, and Employment."

We are once again witnessing the adverse consequences reminiscent of the era of colonial domination.

Every section of society that believed their lives would change after achieving Telangana statehood is now struggling with uncertainty. We, who tirelessly fought for the achievement of a separate Telangana

state, must now struggle for the reconstruction of Telangana and the development of all sections of society. That is why the Telangana Rakshana Sena flag must reach every locality, and the party's ideology must reach every doorstep.

I call upon the leadership that joined us in large numbers even three months before the party's formation, along with Telangana Jagruthi leaders across the state, to make the flag festival a grand success.

Netakani Seva Sangham Urges Minister Vivek to Correct 'Netakani' Caste Name in Government Gazette

HYDERABAD

Representatives of the Netakani (Mahar) Seva Sangham met State Labour, Employment and Mines Minister Dr. G. Vivek Venkataswamy and requested him to correct the caste name "Netakani" in government gazettes and official records.

The association representatives stated that in some official documents and registration processes, the caste name is being wrongly recorded as "Malasale/Netkani" instead of "Netakani." They said this



incorrect recording has been causing several difficulties for members of the community.

In a memorandum submitted by State President Durgam Swamy and Durgam

Siddhartha Rammurthy, they explained that people belonging to the Netakani caste are spread across nearly 35 Assembly constituencies in the state, including districts such as

Khammam, Mancherial, Warangal, Karimnagar, Adilabad, and Nizamabad. They requested the minister to issue appropriate instructions to Scheduled Castes Welfare Department officials to ensure that the name "Netakani" is uniformly recorded in official records, gazette notifications, and caste certificates. Responding to the request, Minister Dr. G. Vivek Venkataswamy assured them that he would discuss the matter with the concerned officials and take necessary steps to make the required corrections.

Summer Special Trains

CHENNAI, MAY 11:

The following Special trains (Trains on demand) will be operated to clear extra rush of passenger during Summer as detailed below:

- Train No. 06028/06027 Podanur** - Dr MGR Chennai Central - Podanur Tri-Weekly Express Specials: Train No. 06028 Podanur - Dr MGR Chennai Central Tri-Weekly Express Special will leave Podanur at 07.40 hrs on 13th, 14th & 15th May, 2026 (Wednesday, Thursday, Friday) and reach Dr MGR Chennai Central at 16.45 hrs, the same day (3 Services) In return direction, Train No. 06027 Dr MGR Chennai Central - Podanur Tri-Weekly Express Special will leave Dr MGR Chennai Central at 17.45 hrs on 13th, 14th & 15th May, 2026 (Wednesday, Thursday, Friday) and reach Podanur at 03.00 hrs, the next day (3 Services)

Kerala CM Suspense Deepens Amid Delhi Talks

The Congress high command has called more Kerala leaders to Delhi as it weighs its chief ministerial choice after the UDF's election sweep. The delay, amid competing claims and all unease, has intensified pressure to finalise government formation.

More than a week after the Congress-led United Democratic Front (UDF) swept the Kerala Assembly elections, suspense over who will become the state's next Chief Minister continues, with the party high command yet to take a final call.

The Assembly election results were declared on May 4, but the Congress leadership has still not announced the name of the Congress Legislature Party leader. The delay has triggered intense political discussions within the party and among alliance partners, even as consultations in Delhi continue. In the latest development, the Congress high command has summoned several senior Kerala leaders to the national capital to seek their opinion on government formation and the chief ministerial pick.

Senior Congress leader and MLA-elect K Muraliedharan, a former Kerala Pradesh Congress Committee (KPCC) president, has been asked to reach the AICC headquarters in Delhi on Tuesday. Speaking to reporters, Muraliedharan said the decision on the Kerala Chief Minister was expected within the next 48 hours. Apart from Muraliedharan, the party has also called KPCC vice presidents AP Anil Kumar, Shafi Parambil and PC Vishnunadh, along with senior leader Thiruvanchoor Radhakrishnan, for discussions in Delhi.

Chhattisgarh constable ends life in Dhamtari over marital dispute

DHAMTARI: (MAY 11)

A 35-year-old Chhattisgarh Armed Force (CAF) constable, who had just returned from poll duty in West Bengal, allegedly committed suicide at his rented house in Chhattisgarh's Dhamtari city, apparently following a dispute with his wife, police said. Constable Jagdishwar Prasad Thakur was found hanging from the ceiling of his room in Sapna Pink City colony in the wee hours of Monday, a police official said.

TMC claims SIR deletions impacted Bengal poll results, Supreme Court responds

CM Mamata Banerjee alleged BJP workers filed thousands of fraudulent Form 6 applications to enrol non-residents in Bengal's voter rolls.

The Supreme Court was hearing multiple petitions challenging aspects of the SIR exercise. The Supreme Court on Monday said former West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee and others were free to file fresh applications over claims that deletions during the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls may have affected poll outcomes in several Assembly constituencies in the state.

A bench led by Chief Justice Surya Kant and Justice Joymalya Bagchi was hearing a batch of petitions related to the SIR exercise when senior advocate and Trinamool



Congress MP Kalyan Banerjee argued that the revision process had significantly impacted election results in West Bengal. Appearing for the Trinamool Congress, Kalyan Banerjee told the top court that in 31 Assembly seats, the margin of victory was lower than the number of voter names deleted during the SIR adjudication process. He cited one constituency where,

according to him, his party candidate lost by just 862 votes while more than 5,000 names were removed from the electoral rolls. The Trinamool MP further submitted that the overall vote difference between the TMC and the BJP in the state was around 32 lakh votes, while appeals against deletions exceeded 35 lakh. He argued that there was growing concern that

adjudication of such appeals could take years. Responding to the submissions, the bench observed that if the victory margin in constituencies was indeed lower than the number of deleted votes, fresh applications could be moved before the court. During an earlier hearing too, the apex court had indicated it would examine cases where the difference between winning and losing margins was smaller than the disputed deletions. Appearing for Trinamool Congress, senior advocate and Rajya Sabha MP Menaka Guruswamy told the bench that, at the current pace, appellate tribunals could take nearly four years to clear pending appeals linked to additions and deletions in electoral rolls.

The Election Commission of India opposed the submissions, maintaining that the le-

gal remedy in such cases was through election petitions. Counsel for the poll panel told the court that "law is clear" on election-related disputes and argued that every issue arising out of the SIR process could not be separately litigated. The bench, however, noted that the mechanism for adjudication of appeals could still be improved and said timely disposal of such cases remained important.

The Supreme Court was hearing multiple petitions, including one filed by Mamata Banerjee, challenging aspects of the SIR exercise conducted in West Bengal just before the recently concluded Assembly elections. In the 294-member West Bengal Assembly, the BJP won 207 seats, while the TMC secured 80. The elections recorded a voter turnout of over 90 per cent.

Temporary Diversion and Regulation of Train Services

HUBBALLI, MAY 11:

Central Railway has notified temporary diversion and regulation of the following train services due to doubling project works in the Akolner-Ahilyanagar-Nimblak section over Pune Division.

1. Train No. 12630 Hazrat Nizamuddin-Yeshwantpur Express, journey commencing on 15.05.2026, will be diverted via Manmad, Nashik Road, Igatpuri, Kalyan, Panvel, Karjat, Lonavala and Pune.

2. Train No. 17323 SSS Hubballi-Banaras Express, journey commencing on 15.05.2026, will be diverted via Solapur, Kurduwadi, Latur Road, Parbhani, Chhatrapati Sambhajanagar and Manmad.

3. Train No. 12627 KSR Bengaluru-New Delhi Karnataka Express, journey commencing on 15.05.2026 and 17.05.2026, will be diverted via Solapur, Kurduwadi, Latur Road, Parbhani, Chhatrapati Sambhajanagar and Manmad.

4. Train No. 20657

SSS Hubballi-Hazrat Nizamuddin Express, journey commencing on 15.05.2026, will be diverted via Solapur, Kurduwadi, Latur Road, Parbhani, Chhatrapati Sambhajanagar and Manmad.

5. Train No. 20658 Hazrat Nizamuddin-SSS Hubballi Express, journey commencing on 17.05.2026, will be diverted via Manmad, Chhatrapati Sambhajanagar, Parbhani, Latur Road, Kurduwadi and Solapur.

6. Train No. 22685 Yeshwantpur-Chandigarh Express, journey commencing on 16.05.2026, will be diverted via Pune, Lonavala, Karjat, Panvel, Kalyan, Nashik Road and Manmad.

7. Train No. 12780 Hazrat Nizamuddin-Vasco-da-Gama Goa Express, journey commencing on 15.05.2026 and 16.05.2026, will be regulated for 1 hour 30 minutes in the Manmad-Nimbalak section. The same train, journey commencing on 17.05.2026, will be regulated for 1 hour in the Manmad-Nimbalak section.

Folded hands, hugs and bouquets

Vijay meets ex-Tamil Nadu CM MK Stalin

A day after taking oath as Tamil Nadu Chief Minister, TVK chief C Joseph Vijay met former CM MK Stalin and Udhayanidhi in Chennai ahead of the crucial May 13 Assembly floor test.

Newly appointed Tamil Nadu Chief Minister C Joseph Vijay on Monday called on his predecessor and DMK supremo MK Stalin, along with Stalin's son Udhayanidhi Stalin, a day after the actor-turned-politician took oath following his unprecedented victory in the



warped residence. The meeting was Vijay's first interaction with Stalin after both his electoral triumph and assumption of office as the Chief Minister.

also shared a few words of advice with the newly appointed Chief Minister. "Honourable Mr. Vijay, who has assumed the role of Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu, met

me with political courtesy and received my greetings. I extended to him my heartfelt congratulations as well as my advice," Stalin said. Vijay's brief interaction with Stalin and Udhayanidhi came just days before the crucial floor test in the Tamil Nadu Assembly on May 13, where the TVK government is set to prove its majority in the House. Notably, Viduthalai Chiruthaigal Katchi (VCK), the Indian Union Muslim League (IUML) and Left parties, which have backed Vijay's TVK government, are also constituents of the DMK-led alliance. In the

Assembly, TVK has 107 seats (after Vijay's resignation from Tiruchirappalli East) and the support of 13 MLAs of Congress, VCK, IUML and the Left parties.

Soon after taking oath, Vijay launched a sharp attack on the previous DMK government over the state's alleged Rs 10 lakh crore debt burden. The Chief Minister had also taken an indirect swipe at the DMK over the existence of "multiple power centres", asserting that under his TVK government, he alone would remain the sole centre of power.

ED arrests TMC leader and ex-minister Sujit Bose in municipal recruitment scam

According to the Enforcement Directorate (ED), Bose had allegedly recommended around 150 candidates for various posts under the South Dum Dum Municipality in exchange for monetary benefits.

Former West Bengal minister Sujit Bose was arrested by the Enforcement Directorate (ED) in connection with the alleged Municipality Recruitment Scam, sources said on Monday. Bose is expected to be produced before a Special Court on Tuesday. According to the ED, Bose allegedly recommended around 150 candidates for various posts under the South Dum Dum Municipality in exchange for

monetary benefits. The agency claimed it had traced proceeds of crime in the form of flats allegedly acquired by Bose in return for facilitating municipal jobs for several individuals. Investigators also alleged that large cash deposits were found in bank accounts linked to him. The arrest came hours after the former minister appeared before the ED for questioning in connection with the alleged scam. Bose reached the ED office at the CGO Complex in Salt Lake at around 10.30 am, accompanied by his son, Samudra Bose.

BOSE SKIPPED PREVIOUS SUMMONS
This was not the first time the central agency had summoned Bose as part of its probe into alleged recruitment irregularities



in the South Dum Dum Municipality. According to sources, Bose received multiple ED notices during the West Bengal Assembly election campaign, including one on April 6, the day nomination papers were filed. He had earlier approached the Calcutta High Court seeking exemption from appearing before the ED, citing his involvement in election campaigning. Follow-

ing the elections, Bose appeared before ED officials at the CGO Complex on May 1. Following an FIR registered by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) on the directions of the Calcutta High Court, the ED conducted raids at 13 locations on October 10, 2025, including Bose's office, during which investigators allegedly recovered incriminating documents and seized Rs 45 lakh in cash.

HOW THE SCAM WAS UNEARTHED
The case relates to recruitment irregularities in various municipalities across West Bengal and emerged from the ED's investigation into the Primary Teachers Recruitment Scam. During the 2023 probe, the ED carried out searches at multiple

premises linked to TMC aide Ayan Sil and others, recovering incriminating documents and digital evidence. The agency's scrutiny of these materials suggested that the alleged scam was not limited to teacher recruitment but also extended to irregularities in several municipal appointments, including in South Dum Dum and other civic bodies. The recruitment pertained to posts such as labourers, sweepers, clerks, peons, ambulance attendants, assistant mistries, pump operators, helpers, sanitary assistants and drivers. The ED further alleged that contracts related to various municipal bodies were awarded to a single company, M/s ABS Infozon Pvt Ltd, where Ayan Sil was a director.

Huge Opportunities for Youth in Future Technology Sectors

AMARAVATI, MAY 11

Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu shared his views on X on the occasion of National Technology Day. "On the occasion of National Technology Day, heartfelt greetings to the scientists, innovators, entrepreneurs, and youth who are shaping India's future through technology and innovation. Today is a day to remember India's scientific achievements and commemorate the success of Pokhran. The Pokhran success demonstrated our nation's capability, strength, and talent to the world. It constantly reminds us that sustainable development is possible through knowledge, research, innovation, and human resources. Andhra Pradesh is moving firmly in that direction. The state is committed to building a strong ecosystem in future technologies and fos-

World-class technology access through deep-tech skilling
Massive Deep-Tech Skilling Mission in Andhra Pradesh on Technology Day
Congratulations to AP students who excelled in NPTEL examinations



tering an environment conducive to innovation," the Chief Minister stated. He expressed happiness in announcing a large-scale deep-tech skilling initiative across the state in collaboration with IBM SkillsBuild, Andhra Pradesh State Council of Higher Education, Andhra Pradesh State Skill Development Corpora-

tion, and Amaravati Quantum Valley. The program will cover areas such as Quantum Technologies, Artificial Intelligence, Data Analytics, Cybersecurity, and Entrepreneurship, with a target of training 2 lakh students by 2026-27. The government has also designed the program with a long-term goal

of training 10 lakh people over the next five years. The Chief Minister said the initiative would be implemented through digital learning platforms, industry-integrated training, and internationally recognized certifications. To further strengthen the technology ecosystem, the National Institute of Electronics and Information Technology Innovation & Skilling Centre at Acharya Nagarjuna University will play a key role. The center will focus specifically on Quantum Computing, Artificial Intelligence, Quantum Communication, and Semiconductor Technologies. Its operations are expected to begin during the current academic year. He stated that the center would provide world-class infrastructure,

advanced laboratories, and industry-oriented training, benefiting thousands of students, researchers, and innovators. On the occasion of National Technology Day, the Chief Minister congratulated Andhra Pradesh students who won 4 gold medals and 14 silver medals in the National Programme on Technology Enhanced Learning national examinations. "These achievements reflect the talent, hard work, and emerging technological ecosystem of our state. As we shape Andhra Pradesh through the Quantum Valley vision to embrace the future, I encourage more students to participate in advanced learning platforms, emerging technology courses, and national-level competitions," he added.

PM Modi arrives in Guwahati for Assam gov't's swearing-in ceremony

GUWAHATI, MAY 11

PM Modi arrived in Guwahati on Monday night to attend the swearing-in ceremony of the new Assam government, scheduled for April 12. The Prime Minister landed at the Lokpriya Gopinath Bordoloi International Airport at Borjhar, where he was warmly received by Chief Minister-designate Himanta Biswa Sarma, along with state Bharatiya Janata Party President Dilip Saikia and other government officials. Notably, Chief Minister-designate Himanta Biswa Sarma on Monday announced the names of four legislators who will take oath as Ministers along with him on Tuesday, while senior Bharatiya Janata Party MLA Ranjit Das has been chosen as the National Democratic Alliance candidate for the Assam Legislative Assembly. In a post on X, Sarma

said that former Union Minister Rameswar Teli, Asom Gana Parishad President Atul Bora, United People's Party Liberal leader Charan Boro, and senior Bharatiya Janata Party leader Ajanta Neog will be sworn in as Ministers in the new Council of Ministers. "Happy to announce that the following four colleagues of mine will take oath as Ministers tomorrow, along with me, in the august presence of Hon'ble PM Modi," Sarma wrote on the social media platform. The Chief Minister-designate also announced that Bharatiya Janata Party MLA Ranjit Das will be the ruling National Democratic Alliance's candidate for the Speaker's post in the newly constituted Assembly. "I am also happy to share that Shri Ranjit Das, Hon'ble MLA, will be our candidate for the post of Speaker of the Assam Legislative Assembly," he added.

EDITORIAL

The Alarming Surge of Crime and the Challenge of a Safe Society

HEALTHY ON PAPER, VULNERABLE ON THE GROUND

The Union Labour Ministry has made a significant announcement declaring that it will extend a free annual health check-up programme to workers who are 40 years of age or older, aligning with an existing provision laid down in the new Labour Codes. This welfare programme is scheduled to be executed directly through the administrative network of the Employees' State Insurance Corporation (ESIC). For individuals employed in hazardous working conditions—such as those tasked with handling toxic chemical substances or operating heavy industrial machinery—these medical check-ups will be strictly mandatory; furthermore, in cases where a health complication or illness is diagnosed, ESIC-run hospitals and dispensaries will step in to provide treatment entirely free of charge.

On paper, India is already home to a few statutory worker health obligations. These include protective mandates under the Factories Act of 1948 (which limits its jurisdiction strictly to workers within factory premises), the ESIC Act of 1948, and the newer Occupational Safety, Health and Working Conditions (OSH) Code of 2020. The capital required to finance this new diagnostic programme will be drawn from the financially well-endowed ESIC fund, even though the government is currently still in the process of shoring up its actual healthcare capacity—specifically the availability of hospital beds and qualified medical doctors—by utilizing PMJAY-empowered healthcare facilities. Under the current circumstances, operational evidence strongly indicates that formally insured workers will emerge as the primary beneficiaries of this rollout.

While this developmental initiative is undoubtedly commendable, its ultimate success is far from guaranteed. At present, only about 31 crore out of India's estimated 94 crore total workers are registered on the government's e-Shram portal, and the integration of this database with the ESIC platform remains in its very early, lagging stages across many states. Furthermore, Union Labour Minister Mansukh Mandaviya failed to clarify or address how a woman working within an informal garment home unit or employed as a domestic worker is supposed to realistically access longer maternity leave benefits when she lacks a legally defined "employer."

In addition, providing annual health screenings for female workers warrants specific medical staff, privacy standards, and specialized needs, whereas the majority of existing ESIC camps remain overcrowded and heavily dominated by men. Mirroring the gaps of many of its historical predecessors, this programme completely fails to address the heavy opportunity costs that workers face when trying to access healthcare, which ultimately forces daily-wage laborers to continue contending with lost wages just to see a doctor.

Compounding this, an ESIC diagnostic facility may routinely refer a worker to an external, secondary center if the initial clinic lacks the laboratory resources for specific specialized tests. This structural gap leads to repeat visits, translating into added travel time, physical exhaustion, and extra out-of-pocket costs for the patient.

Moreover, the new programme focuses predominantly on non-communicable diseases, such as diabetes and hypertension. Extreme heat-related illnesses, which are a major threat, are still not explicitly recognized as occupational diseases under the ESIC Act, despite the fact that construction laborers and agricultural workers are the most severely at risk of suffering from them. On the other end of the occupational spectrum, waste-pickers and sanitation workers face a much greater, daily threat of contracting dangerous infectious diseases like hepatitis and leptospirosis; yet, this scheme only offers basic screening and fails to mandate proactive, preventative vaccinations. If this program is to succeed, the government must actively meet workers where they are. This can be achieved by deploying mobile occupational health units directly to communities and—as already stipulated for organized sector workers under the OSH Code of 2020—providing screenings directly at their places of work. Additionally, the state should issue financial compensation tokens to offset the wages lost during the time spent undergoing these check-ups. Without these systemic adjustments, any new welfare scheme of this nature will fail to improve upon what is already a highly deficient healthcare system.

Today, we dream of a "Developed India," an "Atmanirbhar Bharat," and a "Vishwaguru Bharat" by 2047. Yet these dreams can only be realized when society becomes free from fear, violence, and crime. A society plagued by crime can never evolve into a healthy, balanced, and ideal civilization.

The latest figures released by the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) are not merely statistical records; they expose the dark and disturbing reality of our society that is often concealed beneath the glitter of development, modernization, and political achievements. The crime data for 2024 clearly indicate that while India may be progressing economically, technologically, and globally, it continues to face grave social and moral challenges. When a country witnesses a murder every 17 minutes, a kidnapping every five minutes, a rape every 18 minutes, and an economic offence or fraud almost every two minutes, the issue ceases to remain merely one of law and order. It becomes a serious indictment of the entire social structure, moral values, and administrative system. Today, we dream of a "Developed India," an "Atmanirbhar Bharat," and a "Vishwaguru Bharat" by 2047. Yet these dreams can only be realized when society becomes free from fear, violence, and crime. A society plagued by crime can never evolve into a healthy, balanced, and ideal civilization. If the social atmosphere is filled with insecurity, fear, distrust, and violence, all developmental plans ultimately become hollow. The NCRB statistics are warning us that unless the roots of crime are identified and decisively addressed in time, the situation may become even more explosive in the future.

One of the gravest concerns is the increasing crimes against women. The fact that Rajasthan has remained at the top for the sixth consecutive year in crimes against women is deeply alarming. The state ranks first in rape cases, second in forced abortions, and third in female foeticide. Rajasthan also stands fourth in cases of kidnapping women for marriage. In this category, Bihar ranks first, followed by Uttar Pradesh and Punjab. Bihar is also infamous for the practice of "Pakadwa Vivah," where men are abducted and forced into marriage. If murder rates are analyzed in proportion to population, smaller states such as Jharkhand and Chhattisgarh emerge at the top, while Uttar Pradesh—often associated with crime debates—stands at the twelfth position. Madhya Pradesh

ranks sixth and Rajasthan seventh in this regard. Crimes such as rape, female foeticide, forced abortions, and kidnapping for marriage reveal a dangerous decline in social consciousness and moral values. Respect, sensitivity, and security for women are steadily weakening.

It is indeed ironic that while campaigns such as Beti Bachao Beti Padhao and slogans celebrating "women empowerment" are widely promoted, crimes against women continue to assume horrifying proportions. This is not merely the failure of law enforcement, but also the result of a distorted social mindset. The nature of crime itself is rapidly changing. Earlier, crimes were largely confined to streets and neighborhoods, but the rise of the internet and digital technology has given crime an entirely new dimension. Cybercrime, digital fraud, online scams, and data theft are increasing at an alarming pace.



We are now entering the era of "software crime," where criminals can swindle millions without weapons and often without physical risk. This makes it evident that conventional policing alone is no longer sufficient. Police and investigative agencies must now be equipped with modern tools such as digital forensics, cybersecurity systems, and data analytics. Combating the new world of crime requires new thinking and advanced technological preparedness.

Although some serious crimes have shown marginal decline, it would be self-deception to consider this a major achievement. Experts believe that after the implementation of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), several offences were removed from the category of cognizable crimes, resulting in statistical reductions. Therefore, a superficial reading of crime figures is inadequate; what is needed is deeper review and analysis. Crime is not merely a legal issue—it is a complex challenge rooted in social, economic, psychological, and cultural causes. One

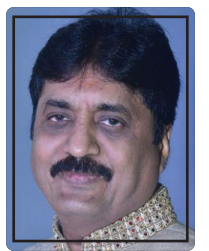
of the biggest factors behind rising crime is substance abuse. Particularly worrying is the increasing trend of addiction among women. Equally alarming are the growing cases of suicide among students and unemployed youth. These developments reveal a deepening atmosphere of despair, insecurity, and uncertainty about the future. Unemployment, intense competition, academic pressure, family expectations, and social comparisons are pushing young people toward severe mental stress. When the youth begin to perceive life as meaningless, it is not merely a personal tragedy but a warning bell for the future of the nation itself. Therefore, issues such as crime and suicide cannot be left solely to the police and courts. Education systems, families, society, and governments must work collectively to address them.

Another major reason behind increasing crime is the erosion of moral values. Consumerism, materialism, and the blind race for instant success have made individuals increasingly insensitive and self-centered. Today, wealth and power have become the sole measures of success. When honesty, restraint, compassion, and ethics are replaced by deceit, greed, and ruthless competition, crime naturally proliferates. Communication within families has weakened, moral upbringing has declined, and the sense of social responsibility is fading. Social media and many entertainment platforms have further encouraged violence, obscenity, and the culture of instant gratification. In such an environment, it is hardly surprising that the younger generation loses direction. It is also true that many criminals no longer fear the law. Prolonged delays in court cases, political patronage, corruption, and weak investigation mechanisms embolden offenders. When criminals begin to believe they can easily escape punishment, controlling crime becomes extremely difficult. Therefore, the justice system must become faster, more transparent, and more effective. A policy of zero tolerance toward crime is the need of the hour. Fear of law can only be restored when criminals receive swift and impartial punishment.

However, society cannot absolve itself of responsibility by blaming

only the government and police. A crime-free society can emerge only through collective awareness and active social participation. Social reformers, educators, religious institutions, social organizations, and families must all play their part. Children and youth must be nurtured with moral education, sensitivity, coexistence, and human values. Society must move toward a positive direction where individuals are conscious not only of their rights, but also of their duties and social responsibilities. Today, the need is not merely to prevent crime, but to eliminate the conditions that give rise to crime. Poverty, unemployment, addiction, illiteracy, social inequality, family disintegration, and mental stress create fertile ground for criminal tendencies. Unless these root causes are seriously addressed, reducing crime rates will remain difficult. Development, therefore, cannot be confined merely to economic progress. True development is one in which society becomes secure, balanced, and humane.

The NCRB statistics place before us a harsh and undeniable truth. This is not the time for formal expressions of concern over numbers; it is the time for deep introspection and decisive action. If India genuinely aspires to become an ideal, developed, and civilized nation by 2047, then building a crime-free society must become a national priority. An environment of moral consciousness, social sensitivity, and respect for the law must be cultivated. Only then can we envision an India where development is reflected not merely in infrastructure and technology, but also in human values, social harmony, and public safety.



LALIT GARGG
Writer, Journalist,
Columnist

Digital India Cannot Succeed Without Digital Gender Equality

Technology must become a bridge to women's empowerment, not another layer of exclusion. India today stands at the centre of one of the world's fastest digital transformations. From governance and banking to education and healthcare, technology is reshaping the everyday lives of millions. The government's ambitious Digital India programme has expanded digital infrastructure at an unprecedented pace, bringing internet connectivity and online services closer to ordinary citizens. Yet behind this success story lies an uncomfortable question: can India truly become a digital superpower when a significant section of its women still remains on the margins of the digital revolution?

In many parts of the country, a smartphone in the hands of a young boy is seen as a tool for learning and opportunity. In the hands of a girl, however, it is often viewed with suspicion, restriction or control. This contrast captures the reality of India's digital gender divide — a divide that is not merely technological, but deeply social and economic.

A Digital Revolution With Unequal Access:

India's digital revolution still carries a visible gender fault line. According to NFHS-5 and other national surveys, only around one-third of Indian women actively use the internet, compared to nearly 57% of men. Smartphone access follows a similar pattern. While smartphone usage among men has crossed 70%, women's access remains significantly lower, hovering around 45%. The divide becomes even sharper in rural India, where less than 30% of women have regular internet access. These numbers reveal an uncomfortable reality: digital inequality in India continues to mirror the country's wider social inequalities.

Digital literacy presents another challenge. A large number of women may have limited access to smartphones, but far fewer possess the skills required to participate meaningfully in the digital economy. Industry estimates suggest that women represent

barely 10–15% of the workforce in emerging technology domains such as artificial intelligence, cybersecurity and advanced computing. Even within India's globally celebrated IT sector, where women account for roughly one-third of the workforce, leadership positions continue to remain overwhelmingly male-dominated.

This gap is not simply about access to technology. In today's world, exclusion from digital spaces increasingly means exclusion from opportunity itself — from education, employment, financial independence and even access to welfare services.

Why Digital Gender Equality Is an Economic Necessity:

Digital inclusion for women is often framed as a matter of social justice. It certainly is. But it is also an economic necessity. Studies by institutions such as the World Bank and McKinsey Global Institute suggest that reducing gender gaps in digital participation and employment could significantly boost India's economic growth, with some estimates projecting gains of up to 1.5% in GDP. Greater participation of women in the digital economy would strengthen productivity, expand entrepreneurship and improve workforce participation across sectors. The rise of e-commerce platforms, digital payments and online marketplaces has already demonstrated how technology can transform women's lives. Women from small towns and rural communities are increasingly finding customers beyond local markets. Many are building home-based businesses through social media and digital platforms, gaining financial independence in ways that were unimaginable just a decade ago.

When technology reaches women meaningfully, it does not merely connect them to the internet — it connects them to agency, confidence and economic freedom.

The Barriers Go Beyond Technology: However, the roots of India's digital gender divide lie far deeper than infrastructure alone. Poverty and lack of education continue to limit women's access to smartphones and internet services. In many households, even where

digital devices are available, women do not have equal control over them. Several studies on rural digital access have shown that women are often the last members of the family to gain independent access to phones or the internet.

Social norms and patriarchal attitudes continue to shape how technology is perceived for women, particularly in conservative and rural settings. Concerns around online safety further deepen the divide. According to NCRB data, cybercrimes in India have steadily risen in recent years, with women increasingly becoming targets of online harassment, cyberstalking and digital abuse. For many women, the internet still appears less as a space of opportunity and more as a space of vulnerability.

The underrepresentation of women in STEM education also contributes to the problem. Although more women are entering higher education today, their presence in advanced technical disciplines and innovation-driven careers remains disproportionately low. India cannot aspire to become a global technology leader while excluding half its population from shaping that future.

Building a More Inclusive Digital Future:

Bridging the digital gender divide requires more than isolated schemes and symbolic campaigns. It demands a comprehensive national effort. The first step is expanding reliable internet infrastructure, especially in rural and remote regions. Affordable smartphones and low-cost data access for women should become a policy priority rather than a market afterthought.

Digital literacy programmes must also move beyond basic awareness. Women need practical digital skills that improve livelihoods, employability and financial independence. Training in emerging sectors such as artificial intelligence, cloud computing, cybersecurity and digital entrepreneurship can open entirely new pathways for women in the workforce.

Equally important is creating safer online spaces. Stronger cyber laws, faster grievance redressal systems and dedicated support mechanisms for women facing online abuse are es-

sential. Digital confidence grows only when digital spaces feel secure.

Education, too, has a central role to play. Encouraging girls to pursue STEM subjects from an early age, offering mentorship opportunities and creating visible female role models in technology can gradually dismantle long-standing stereotypes.

Workplaces must also evolve. India's technology sector needs not only more women employees, but more women leaders, founders and innovators. Representation at the top matters because it shapes the culture of the entire industry.

The real test of digital india:

India often measures its digital success through internet penetration, startup valuations and technological innovation. But the true test of Digital India lies elsewhere. It lies in whether a young girl in a remote village can access the same digital opportunities as a boy in a metro city. It lies in whether women can use technology freely, safely and confidently to shape their own futures.

A digital revolution that leaves women behind cannot truly be called transformative. Technology becomes meaningful only when it expands equality rather than deepens exclusion.

As India moves toward becoming a global digital power, digital gender equality must no longer remain a peripheral concern. It must become central to the national development agenda. Because when women are left behind in the digital world, the country's future is held back with them. And when women move forward, the nation moves forward too.



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HUNGER'S CRY

Behind the rusted ribs of a garbage bin, a child kneels before the republic of waste, gathering abandoned grains of rice as though salvaging the final alphabets of survival. Those trembling fingers are not fingers at all—

they are the fractured manuscripts of humanity's failed conscience.

Beneath a shirt torn open by poverty's invisible claws, it is not the night wind that shivers; it is history itself, cold and ashamed against naked bone. Inside the hollow cathedral of the ribs, hunger circles endlessly—

a burnt-winged bird beating itself against the bars of existence. Meanwhile, cities bloom in electric gold. Crystal chandeliers drip their artificial constellations

above tables swollen with excess, where appetite has long ago ceased to be hunger

and become spectacle. The privileged lift silver spoons like ceremonial weapons, while somewhere beyond the glass, a child swallows saliva

to silence the riot inside his stomach. A hand stretched outward for a fistful of bread

is treated as a stain upon civilization; yet the same society folds its hands before speechless idols, begging heaven endlessly:

"Give us more. More wealth. More fortune. More blessings."

Milk floods marble altars. Fruits rot beneath golden domes. Perfumed offerings suffocate the sanctuaries of stone.

Yet outside the temple gates, a mother with an empty womb of hunger watches her child collapse slowly into the arms of dust.

The coin dropped into the offering box never lands in a starving palm. It does not become warmth

inside a widow's kitchen, nor medicine inside a dying body, nor bread

inside the trembling hands of the forgotten. According to their abundance, they decorate heaven with gold;

yet before a hungry human being, their generosity suddenly becomes fragile. Their compassion—conditional. Their mercy—ceremonial.



... Dr. Peruka Raju ...
7810032847



O worshipper of comfort! How easily your devotion rises like incense toward the sky, while your humanity lies buried beneath your feet.

What holiness survives inside a prayer that cannot hear the scream of hunger outside its own door?

Barefoot figures wander through the debris of progress, their ribs visible

like the cracked architecture of ruined temples. Their eyes—

vast deserts where tears have long ago evaporated. And from those silences deeper than language,

one unbearable question rises: "Before offering food to your god, did you offer dignity to the living?"

Hunger is not merely suffering. It is the slow crucifixion of the poor upon the glittering machinery of civilization.

It is the funeral fire hidden beneath the silk carpets of privilege. It is history's most ancient scream,

echoing still through every modern street. One grain of rice

can rescue an entire tomorrow. One act of compassion

can rebuild the collapsing spine of humanity. For kindness is not charity—

it is the final proof that the human soul has not completely abandoned itself. Cathedrals may rise

high enough to bruise the heavens. Empires of faith may glitter with gold-plated holiness.

But before the hand that feeds the hungry, every monument becomes dust. Because perhaps God

has never truly lived inside stone sanctuaries at all. Perhaps He survives instead in those tiny trembling fingers searching through the earth for discarded crumbs—

hungry, forgotten, and still crying among us.

Manoj Agarwal Set to Be Chief Secretary in Suwendu-Led BJP Govt

KOLKATA: (MAY 11)

West Bengal's Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) Manoj Agarwal was appointed the chief secretary of the Suwendu Adhikari-led BJP government in the state, according to an official order issued on Monday. Agarwal, a 1990-batch IAS officer of the West Bengal cadre, helmed the EC-mandated SIR exercise in the state in the run-up to the assembly polls in which around 91 lakh voters were removed from the electoral rolls. Incumbent Chief Secretary Dushyant Nariala was named Principal Resident Commissioner in New Delhi, the order stated.

IAF Marks Operation Sindoor Anniversary With 88-Hour Delhi Run

NEW DELHI: (MAY 11)

Commemorating the 88th anniversary of the successful air operations conducted during Operation Sindoor that lasted nearly 88 hours, the Indian Air Force organised an 88-hour run in a continuous relay format from May 7-10 in Delhi. The route encompassed important landmarks in the capital, including the India Gate, Brigadier Hoshiyar Singh Marg, Air HQ Vayu Bhawan, Nehru Park and the New Moti Bagh Road, before concluding at the Air Force Station in New Delhi, officials said. Operation Sindoor was launched in the early hours of May 7, 2025, to avenge the Pahalgalam terror attack, with Indian forces conducting precision strikes on multiple terror infrastructure in Pakistan and Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK).

PDP leader Iltija Mufti's X account withheld after sedition case

SRINAGAR: (MAY 11)

The account of PDP leader Iltija Mufti on X was withheld in India following a legal demand, nearly two weeks after authorities registered a case of sedition against her for posting a video of former Hurriyat Conference leader Syed Ali Shah Geelani. The withholding of the X handle of the young PDP leader comes in the wake of an FIR registered by the cyber police on April 30 after Iltija Mufti had posted a video clip of Geelani on her handle.

Poll Results Show Rise of Hindutva Forces: MA Baby

NEW DELHI: (MAY 11)

The CPI(M) on Monday said the recent assembly election results reflected the "ascendancy of Hindutva-communal, right-wing forces" in the country. The party said that though the Left Democratic Front (LDF) suffered a "serious setback" in Kerala after a decade in power, it secured 37.6 per cent votes in the state and would continue to resist "communal forces". The CPI(M) Politburo, which met here on May 10 and 11, accused the BJP of misusing constitutional institutions, manipulating electoral rolls and delaying the notification of labour codes until after the

No power can make India bow or yield to pressure

SOMNATH (GUJARAT), MAY 11:

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday drew parallels to the 1998 Pokhran nuclear tests, asserting that no power in the world can make India bow or succumb under pressure. Addressing a gathering here at Somnath Amrut Mahotsav, marking 75 years of the inauguration of the restored temple dedicated to Lord Shiva, he also said that "forces" in the country continue to prioritise appeasement politics over national self-respect. A similar mindset was witnessed during opposition to the construction of the Ram temple in Ayodhya, the PM noted. "While India attained Independence in 1947, the Pran Pratishtha (consecration ceremony) of Somnath in 1951 served as a proclamation of India's liberated consciousness," he said. Modi stressed that the 'Amrut Mahotsav' of Somnath is not merely a commemoration of the past, but it is also a festival of inspiration for India for the next thousand years. May 11 is a significant date as it not only marks the consecration

PM Modi at Somnath Amrut Mahotsav.. Performed 'Maha Pooja' and other rituals at Somnath temple. Held a roadshow for nearly 1.5-km.. Watched an airshow by IAF's Suryakiran aerobatic team



of the Somnath temple, but also India's nuclear tests in 1998 under the leadership of then Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee, he said. "On May 11, 1998, the nation conducted its nuclear tests. Our scientists demonstrated India's capabilities and potential to the entire world," Modi pointed out. The tests "sent shockwaves across the globe" and triggered angry reactions from several countries, he said. "Who is India to conduct nuclear tests? The world reacted with anger," Modi said, referring to the international response following the Pokhran tests. He said

global powers then tried to isolate India through sanctions and economic pressure after the tests. "Global powers mobilised to suppress India. Various sanctions were imposed, and every passage to avert a potential economic crisis was blocked," the PM said. Many countries would have succumbed under such circumstances, but India stood firm, he highlighted. "Anyone else would have faltered. When the world's major powers launch such a massive offensive, it becomes difficult to find a path ahead. But, we are built differently," Modi as-



serted. India went ahead with two more nuclear tests on May 13, 1998, despite mounting pressure from the international community, he noted. "On May 11, our scientists had completed their task. However, on May 13, two more nuclear tests were conducted. This demonstrated to the world just how unwavering the political will of India truly is," Modi said. He praised the then Vajpayee-led government for refusing to bow to global pressure. "At that time, India faced immense pressure from the entire world. Yet, under the leadership of Atal ji, the BJP

government demonstrated that for us, the nation comes first. No power on earth can make India bow down or succumb to pressure," he said. Somnath reminds us that no nation can remain strong unless it is connected to its roots, the PM said. On the occasion, Modi also released a special stamp on the completion of 75 years of the inauguration of the restored Somnath temple, located in Gujarat's Gir Somnath district. "Invaders attempted to erase the splendour of the Somnath temple; this temple was demolished time and again, yet it kept being rebuilt," he

Chief Minister meets Union Ministers in New Delhi, seeks release of funds for AP

Release of Rs 285 crore for restoring 297 water resources under Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana:CM

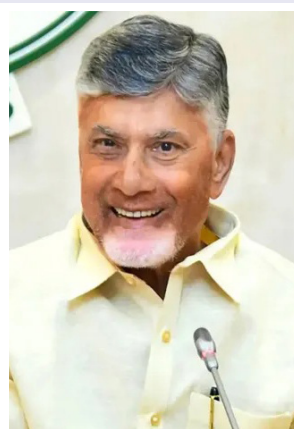
CM seeks central support to complete Polavaram project before 2027 Godavari Pushkarams

CM urges Union Minister not to issue gazette notification for increasing height of Almatti dam until Supreme Court final verdict

NEW DELHI:

Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu urged the Central Government to release funds for various centrally sponsored schemes and fulfil earlier financial commitments made to the state. The Chief Minister during his Delhi visit today met Union Home Minister Amit Shah and Union Jal Shakti Minister C.R Patil, seeking support for pending projects. During his meeting with Union Home Minister Amit Shah, the Chief Minister requested financial assistance for pending bifurcation-related commitments, along with support for various infrastructure and development projects in Andhra Pradesh. He appealed for continued cooperation beyond allocations made in the current Union Budget to accelerate the state's development. Later, in his meeting with Union Jal Shakti Minister C.R Patil, the Chief Minister

sought Central support to complete the prestigious national project before 2027 Godavari Pushkarams. He emphasised the importance of completing structures required for storing water up to 41.15 metres in the first phase. Chandrababu Naidu informed the Minister that he had personally visited the Polavaram project site five times to monitor progress. The Chief Minister noted that the new diaphragm wall construction was completed on April 2, 2026, while major works related to the Earth-cum-Rock Fill (ECRF) dam in Gap-1 and Gap-2 are progressing rapidly. He urged the Union Jal Shakti Ministry to permanently withdraw the 2011 stop-work orders, which were issued due to pending public opinion collection in Odisha and Chhattisgarh. The Chief Minister informed the Union Minister that, considering irrigation requirements, the carrying capacity of both the left



and right canals of Polavaram has been increased to 17,500 cusecs, higher than originally planned. He stated that 95 per cent of right canal works have been completed, 78 per cent of the left canal works have been completed. He requested reimbursement of additional expenditure incurred due to the increased canal capacity and sought further financial support for upcoming stages of the project. The Chief Minister also submitted another letter seeking Central assistance under

the Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana (PMKSY) for the restoration, modernization and rehabilitation of irrigation systems across Andhra Pradesh. He requested release of Rs 285 crore for restoring 297 water resources across the state. Chandrababu Naidu urged Union Minister C.R Patil to issue a gazette notification for increasing the height of the Almatti Dam until the Supreme Court delivers its final verdict. He cautioned that increasing the dam height from 519.60 metres to 524.256 metres would adversely affect Andhra Pradesh's water interests and requested that no technical or administrative clearances be granted in the interim. The Chief Minister also sought directions to Karnataka to halt land acquisition and preparatory works under the Upper Krishna Project Phase-III, maintaining the status quo until the Supreme Court's final judgment. The Chief Minister requested Central approval for the Polavaram-Banakacherla Link Project, aimed at addressing water scarcity in Rayalaseema and South Coastal Andhra Pradesh. He explained that the project is designed to divert 200 TMC of surplus Godavari floodwaters that currently flowing into the sea, thereby enhancing irrigation and drinking water availability. On the Vamsadhara Neradi Barrage, the Chief Minister said Andhra Pradesh would proceed in accordance with the issued gazette notification and proposed the construction of a right-side head sluice with a carrying capacity of 8,000 cusecs to meet the state's water requirements. He further requested the Union Jal Shakti Ministry to direct Odisha to facilitate the required land acquisition for the project. Minister for Water Resources Nimmala Ramanaidu and senior officials accompanied the Chief Minister during the meetings.

Chief Minister attends State-Level "Somnath Swabhiman Parv" at Arunai in Pehowa

CHANDIGARH, MAY 11

Haryana Chief Minister, Sh. Nayab Singh Saini on Monday attended the state-level "Somnath Swabhiman Parv" programme as the Chief Guest at Shree Sangmeshwar Mahadev Temple located at Arunai in Pehowa, district Kurukshetra. On this occasion, the Chief Minister offered prayers in the temple and prayed for the happiness, prosperity and well-being of the people of the state. During the programme, the Chief Minister flagged off a grand Kalash Yatra comprising 101 women. A large number of devotees participated in the spiritually vibrant procession held amidst a devotional atmosphere. On the occasion, the Chief Minister welcomed and felicitated the saints and sages who

Offers prayers at temple, prays for peace, prosperity and well-being of the state. 101 women participate in grand Kalash Yatra. Chief Minister inaugurates newly renovated Arunai Langar Hall



had specially come from various pilgrimage sites of the 48 Kos region. He also sought their blessings. The Chief Minister said that such religious and cultural events play an important role in strengthening the country's rich traditions, cultural heritage and social harmony. During the programme, the Chief Minister also inaugurated the newly inaugurated Arunai Langar Hall in the temple premises. The Chief Minister also inaugurated and visited a special exhibition organised by the Information, Public Relations and Languages Department, Haryana on the theme "Somnath Swabhiman Parv". The exhibition showcased the glorious history and cultural heritage of the Somnath Temple, along with various aspects related to

the nation's faith and pride through attractive visuals and informative displays. The Chief Minister said that such exhibitions help connect the younger generation with the country's rich history and culture. Earlier, Sh. Nayab Singh Saini visited Jyotisar, the sacred land associated with the message of the Bhagavad Gita, where he offered prayers and wished for the prosperity and welfare of the people of the state. During the visit, he also reviewed the ongoing development works at Jyotisar. The Chief Minister said that the development of religious and historical sites remains among the top priorities of the state government so that better facilities can be provided to devotees and tourists visiting from across the country and abroad. Swami Shri Gyananand Ji Maharaj, Mahant Ravindra Puri Ji Maharaj, Bansi Puri Ji Maharaj, former Minister of State Subhash, Sh. Sudha, BJP District President, Sh. Tejender Goldy, Additional Director, Information, Public Relations and Languages Department, Smt. Varsha Khangwal, Additional Director, Information, Public Relations and Languages Department, Sh. Manish Lohan, Director, Shaheed Smarak, Ambala, Dr. Kuldeep Saini, representatives of various religious organisations, saints, dignitaries and a large number of devotees also remained present during the event.

said. Some "forces" in the country continued to prioritise appeasement politics over national self-respect, Modi alleged, adding that a similar mindset was witnessed during the construction of the Ram temple in Ayodhya. He said politics had often been played over issues linked to national pride and identity, citing the reconstruction of the Somnath temple after Independence. "There are countless examples across the world where foreign invaders destroyed sites linked to a nation's identity. Whenever people got an opportunity, they restored their heritage and upheld their dignity," said the PM in his address. "Yet, in our country, politics was played even over issues linked to national self-respect, and the Somnath temple stands as a prime example," he added. Modi said Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel and India's first President Dr Rajendra Prasad made immense efforts to rebuild the temple, but faced opposition from then Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru. The "forces" promoting appeasement politics were still active in the country, he said. "We witnessed this same phenomenon during the construction of the Ram temple and the manner in which it was opposed. We must remain vigilant against such a mindset and leave this kind of parochial politics behind us," Modi said. "We must move forward by embracing both development and heritage in

tandem. The neglect of our cultural centres has, in fact, served as an impediment to our progress," he noted. In India, heritage and modernity are inseparable; both go hand in hand, PM Modi added. Earlier, PM Modi performed 'Maha Pooja' and other rituals at the Somnath temple as part of the Somnath Amrut Mahotsav. Before the event, he also held a roadshow along the nearly 1.5-km route from the helipad to Veer Hamirji Circle near the temple. A large number of people lined up to greet him. They waved flags and raised slogans as his convoy passed through the area. After holding a roadshow here, the prime minister entered the temple and performed 'Maha Pooja' and 'Jalabhishek', the ritual of pouring holy water gathered from prominent pilgrimage sites across the country was sprinkled atop the temple's 'shikhar' (towering spire) using a crane. The prime minister, accompanied by Gujarat Chief Minister Bhupendra Patel and his deputy Harsh Sanghavi, watched an airshow performed by the Indian Air Force's Suryakiran aerobatic team (SKAT) over the temple. Using indigenous smoke pods, the jets of the Suryakiran team released saffron, white and green smoke to create the image of the tricolour in the sky.

Increasing farmers' income top priority of government: Meghalaya CM

SHILLONG, MAY 11

Meghalaya Chief Minister Conrad K. Sangma on Monday inaugurated a bio-char plant at Umsli in Bhoirymbong, saying that improving farmers' income remains one of the state government's foremost priorities and that value addition to agricultural produce is essential for strengthening the rural economy. The biochar plant, set up at the Eastern Ri Bhoi Organic PPC Processing Plant in Ri Bhoi district, is being projected as a community-focused carbon removal initiative aimed at boosting sustainable agriculture, improving soil health and generating additional income opportunities for farmers and bamboo growers. Addressing the gathering, Sangma said the government has undertaken several interventions at different levels to enhance agricultural productivity and support farmers across Meghalaya. "One of the most important agendas of the government is to ensure improvement in the income of farmers," the Chief Minister said, adding that multiple schemes, projects and missions have been launched to support farmers through better soil manage-



ment, timely availability of quality seeds and working capital assistance. He stressed that value addition to farm products is crucial for increasing farmers' earnings and ensuring long-term sustainability in the agriculture sector. Referring to the newly inaugurated biochar plant, Sangma said the project would have multiple environmental and economic benefits for the state. "The soil condition of our state is acidic, we receive heavy rainfall and we have an abundance of bamboo. Therefore, production of biochar is a feasible proposition," he said. The Chief Minister noted that the two pyrolysis units installed at the plant would play a major role in carbon sequestration by locking carbon in the process, while by-products such as bio-oil and synthesis gas (syngas) could also be utilised in environmentally beneficial ways.

Himanta Biswa Sarma names four Ministers, picks Ranjit Das as NDA candidate for Speaker's post

GUWAHATI, MAY 11

Assam Chief Minister-designate Himanta Biswa Sarma on Monday announced the names of four legislators who will take oath as Ministers along with him on Tuesday, while senior BJP MLA Ranjit Das has been chosen as the NDA candidate for the Speaker's post in the Assam Legislative Assembly. In a post on X, Sarma said that former Union Minister Rameswar Teli, Asom Gana Parishad (AGP) president Atul Bora, United People's Party Liberal (UPPL) leader Charan Boro and senior BJP leader Ajanta Neog will be sworn in as Ministers in the new Council of Ministers. "Happy to announce that the following four colleagues of mine will take oath as Ministers tomorrow along with me in the august presence of Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi Ji," Sarma wrote on the social media platform. The Chief



Minister-designate also announced that BJP MLA Ranjit Das would be the ruling NDA's candidate for the Speaker's post in the newly constituted Assembly. "I am also happy to share that Shri Ranjit Das, Hon'ble MLA, will be our candidate for the post of Speaker of the Assam Legislative Assembly," he added. Congratulating the leaders, Sarma said the new team would work collectively for the development and prosperity of the state. "My heartfelt congratulations and best wishes to all of them. Together, we will continue to work with full dedication for a stronger, more developed and prosperous Assam," the BJP leader stated.

Pakistan: Death toll in deadly attack on police post rises to 15

ISLAMABAD

The death toll from an attack on police personnel at a checkpoint in the Bannu district of Pakistan's Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province has climbed to 15, local media reported on Monday.

A militant outfit identified as Ittehad-ul-Mujahideen Pakistan (IMP) claimed responsibility for the bombing through social media channels. Reports suggest that between Saturday and Sunday night, the armed group rammed an explosives-laden vehicle into the Fateh Khel police checkpoint in Bannu, reducing the structure to rubble in the massive blast.

According to police, the militants resorted to indiscriminate firing from multiple directions after the blast, resulting in hours of heavy gunfire, further explo-



sions, and widespread panic across the area. Bannu Regional Police Officer (RPO) Sajjad Khan said that a total of 18 police personnel were deployed at the checkpoint during the attack.

"Of them, 15 embraced martyrdom on the spot, while three sustained serious injuries," leading Pakistani daily Express Tribune quoted the police official as saying.

The explosion also resulted in extensive damage to residential buildings and other structures in the vicinity.

Trump says Xi likely to raise Taiwan issue during China visit

WASHINGTON

US President Donald Trump on Monday said he expected Taiwan and energy security to dominate discussions during his upcoming visit to China, while praising his relationship with Chinese President Xi Jinping and expressing confidence that tensions over Taiwan would not escalate.

Speaking during a White House maternal healthcare event, Trump said his administration was now "doing great with China" after accusing previous US administrations of allowing Beijing to take advantage of the United States.

"We are doing a lot of business, but it's smart business," Trump said. "We used to be taken advantage of for years with our previous presidents, and now we're doing great



with China." Trump repeatedly praised Xi during the interaction with reporters. "I have a great relationship with President Xi," he said. "I respect him a lot, and hopefully he respects me." The President said Xi "didn't respect our previous government" and criticised former US President Joe Biden over US-China relations. "The guy couldn't talk,"

Trump said. "It was ridiculous how that ever happened."

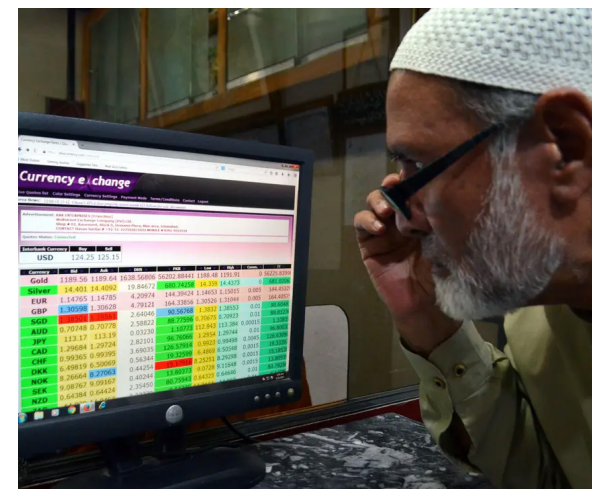
Trump linked his China-related remarks to broader tensions in West Asia and concerns over energy flows through the Strait of Hormuz.

He said China relied heavily on oil shipments moving through Hormuz and suggested Beijing wanted regional stability. "In Hormuz, they get

a big percentage, 40 per cent of their oil from Hormuz," Trump said. "He'd like to see it get done. He doesn't want to see it."

Trump said energy and Iran would be major topics during the summit-level discussions with Xi. "We'll be talking about energy and about the very beautiful country of Iran," he said. On Taiwan, Trump acknowledged that the issue would likely arise during discussions with Xi.

"He'll bring up Taiwan, I think, more than I will," Trump said. "But I think we will be fine." Trump argued that strong US leadership would help prevent a crisis over Taiwan. "If you have the right president, I don't think it'll happen," he said. The President also pointed to support for Taiwan from regional allies including Japan.



Pakistan extends austerity, fuel conservation measures until June 13

ISLAMABAD

Amid uncertainty over the conflict in West Asia, Pakistan's federal government on Monday extended austerity and fuel conservation measures till June 13, local media reported. The cabinet division released a notification after Pakistan's Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif approved the extension on the recommendations of the implementation committee, Pakistan's leading media outlet Geo News reported. As per the notification, a 50 per cent cut in fuel supply for official vehicles will remain in effect during the extended period. As part of the measures, the government has decided to keep 60 per cent of official vehicles off the roads.

On March 9, Shehbaz Sharif in a televised address announced austerity plan applicable in all federal government institutions, including ministries, departments, state-owned enterprises, autonomous bodies, the legislature, defence organisations and the judiciary. He made the announcement days after the government increased prices of petrol and diesel by 20 per cent.

According to the plan, the government offices functioned

for a four-day week, while the banking sector and essential services were exempt. Federal and provincial government departments were asked to cut non-essential expenditure by 20 per cent during the final quarter of the current fiscal year, Geo News reported.

A ban has been placed on official foreign visits by ministers, parliamentarians, and government officials, except for obligatory trips. Up to 50 per cent of government employees were to work from home on alternate days, except those working in essential services. Furthermore, the measures included mandatory economy-class travel for officials and holding virtual meetings instead of physical meetings to reduce costs.

Iran, US and Israel reached the ceasefire on April 8 following 40 days of fighting which began with the US and Israeli joint strikes on Iran on February 28.

After the ceasefire, Iran and the US held first round of negotiations on April 11-12, however, it failed to lead to an agreement. The tensions have continued in and around the Strait of Hormuz, a critical global energy route.

Four dead, 32 wounded amid clashes in province

KABUL

At least four people were killed and 32 wounded in clashes across Badakhshan province in northeastern Afghanistan, local media reported on Monday. The clashes were reportedly a result of growing tensions among Taliban forces, local residents and armed opposition activity.

"The clashes stemmed from separate disputes involving poppy cultivation, control of mining sites and what sources described as armed resistance against the Taliban," Afghan media outlet Amu TV reported. Two people were killed, and eight were wounded in the Argo district during clashes linked to Taliban efforts to destroy fields of poppy, the report mentioned citing local sources.

India's strategic outlook, military superiority during Operation Sindoor discussed in Tokyo

TOKYO

R Madhu Sudan, Charge d'Affaires at the Indian Embassy in Japan, on Monday visited the National Institute of Defence Studies (NIDS) in Tokyo where, during a discussion, he highlighted India's strategic might and military superiority demonstrated during the success of Operation Sindoor and zero-tolerance stand towards terrorism.

In his interaction at the NIDS, Sudan spoke about cooperation in the Indo-Pacific which aligns India's Vision Mahasagar with Japan's Free and Open Indo-Pacific. Senior officials from Japan's Ministry of Defence (JMOD), Japan's Self-Defence Forces (JSDF) and Friendly Foreign Countries also attended the interaction. "Charge d' Affaires R Madhu Sudan visited NIDS on



11 May 26 and addressed senior officials from JSDF, JMOD and Friendly Foreign Countries undergoing the National Security Strategist Studies Programme on India's Strategic Outlook and India-Japan Relations. The interaction highlighted cooperation in the Indo-Pacific aligning India's MAHASAGAR with Japan's vision of FOIP, India's goal for a Viksit Bharat

and expanding Security and Economic engagement between India and Japan," the Indian Embassy in Japan posted on X.

Indian armed forces launched 'Operation Sindoor' in May 2025 in response to the heinous April 22 Pahalgam terror attack. They carried, what officials termed as, focused, measured and non-escalatory

military action targeting terror bases in Pakistan and Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK).

Sudan also met NIDS President Imakuyrei Manabu and discussed ways to strengthen ties between India and Japan.

"Charge d' Affaires R Madhu Sudan met with Mr. Imakuyrei Manabu, President of the National Institute of Defence Studies of Japan, and discussed ways to strengthen India-Japan relations, including in the area of defence exchanges and technology collaboration," the Indian Embassy in Japan wrote on X.

On May 8, Sudan delivered the Commemorative Address at India Day organised by the University of Electro-Communications (UEC) in Tokyo.

In a statement on X, the Indian Embassy in Japan stated, "UEC President Prof. Masakazu Muramatsu gave

the Opening Address, underscoring the strong India-Japan partnership in science & technology.

The event featured overview of global opportunities specially with India for UEC by Ms Tomomi Matsuhisa of UEC, insightful industry sessions by leaders from Musashi Engineering and TDK, a presentation on India's S and T Ecosystem by Dr Yashwant Dev Panwar, Counsellor S&T and a Graduate & Alumni Session was moderated by Dr Kali Prasanna Nayak, showcasing the contributions of Indian researchers at UEC and beyond."

Last month, India and Japan discussed defence cooperation measures while outlining future interactions across various sectors. The discussions were held during eighth India-Japan Army-to-Army Staff Talks held from April 22-24.

Launch Pilot Project for Singapore-AP Port Trade Corridor: Minister Lokesh

SINGAPORE

Andhra Pradesh Minister for Education, IT and Electronics Mr. Nara Lokesh met Gloria Oo, CEO of the Singapore-based Commodities Intelligence Centre (CIC). During the meeting, Minister Lokesh stated that the Andhra Pradesh government is seeking cooperation with CIC in areas such as trade connectivity in seafood, agriculture, minerals, and pharmaceuticals, integration of MSME exporters, and exchange of commodity intelligence information.

He requested the launch of a pilot digital trade corridor between Singapore and either Visakhapatnam or Krishnapatnam Port using CIC's blockchain platform to facilitate paperless trade processes and transparency in cargo movement. Lokesh also suggested organizing an AP-Singapore Joint Commodity Trade Roundtable by bringing together



exporters from Andhra Pradesh, CIC, Enterprise Singapore, and SGX to identify products suitable for export from Andhra Pradesh, especially chillies. He noted that Andhra Pradesh is India's largest aquaculture-producing state and contributes 40-45% of India's chilli exports. He added that the state also has a strong presence in marine products, minerals, and pharmaceuticals. "We are currently focusing on port-led industrialization. Through this, we aim to export our products glob-

ally. CIC platform capabilities will help Andhra Pradesh evolve into a digitally integrated trade and logistics hub connected to Asian and global commodity markets," Lokesh said.

Referring to earlier efforts, the minister stated that before COVID-19, attempts were made through CIC to facilitate chilli trade between Andhra Pradesh and China, but the initiative faced setbacks due to lack of institutional support during the pandemic. He urged CIC to

support the revival of this trade corridor through its platform, which would open new markets for Guntur chillies. For this purpose, Andhra Pradesh Farmer Producer Organizations (FPOs) would handle aggregation, grading, standardization, and supply of produce, while CIC would facilitate buyer connectivity and export financing.

Lokesh requested CIC to initially launch a chilli pilot project and activate its China buyer network and trade finance mechanisms to implement it successfully. Speaking on the occasion, CIC CEO Gloria Oo said that the Commodities Intelligence Centre is a digital B2B marketplace connecting verified buyers, sellers, logistics providers, and financiers across the globe. She explained that CIC provides services such as commodity intelligence, trade data search engines, import-demand forecasting, price signal monitoring, blockchain-based document security, one-click customs clearance, and end-to-end traceability.

She added that CIC also addresses supply chain finance, credit assessment, and working capital constraints faced by MSME exporters. Gloria Oo further stated that CIC would support sustainability-linked trade tools aligned with Andhra Pradesh's green hydrogen and renewable energy ambitions, and assured that the AP government's proposals would be examined.

Any restart of fighting would have terrible consequences: UN Chief

NAIROBI

UN Chief Antonio Guterres on Monday appealed for the Strait of Hormuz to be completely open and the ceasefire to be maintained.

"My strong appeal is for the negotiations to go on until that diplomatic solution is found, the ceasefire to be maintained, and in between, the Strait of Hormuz to be completely open...Any restart of the fighting would have terrible consequences," Guterres said while attending a groundbreaking ceremony for a conference facility at the UN office in Kenya's Nairobi.

He insisted that the Middle East emergency is not a "distance crisis" as around 13 per cent of Africa's imports move through the key waterway.

He also added that many African nations are still waiting



for fertilisers and other agricultural inputs from the Gulf. "Without fertilisers, you can imagine that we risk having a serious food security problem next year," he explained. He noted that the price of Urea has risen by more than 35 per cent in a month, the world's most widely used fertiliser.

He said that keeping the Strait of Hormuz completely open is a must for the interests of the international com-

munity, noted the UN news. "That is the only way to bring energy prices and fertiliser prices back to the levels that we had before the war," Guterres highlighted.

Earlier on Monday, US President Donald Trump sharply rejected Iran's response to a new US proposal aimed at ending the conflict in the Gulf region, calling Tehran's position "TOTALLY UNACCEPTABLE".

Costa Rica: MoS Margherita holds discussions with key ministers, interacts with Indian community

SAN JOSE

Minister of State for External Affairs, Pabitra Margherita held a meeting with Costa Rica's Minister of Science, Innovation, Technology and Telecommunications Paula Bogantes Zamora on Monday, India time, with both sides exploring ways to deepen bilateral ties.

Following their meeting, Margherita wrote on X: "Met the Minister of Science, Innovation, Technology and Telecommunications of Costa Rica H.E Paula Bogantes Zamora. There was discussion to explore the many ways India and Costa Rica can deepen their ties. From supporting Indian businesses in Costa Rica, to capacity building and Quick Impact Projects, the conversations reflected a shared commitment to a stronger, more meaningful bilateral relation-



ship." MoS Margherita also met members of the Indian community in the country.

"A truly heartwarming evening with our vibrant Indian family in Costa Rica! Met members of the diplomatic corps, business community, media and proud ITEC alumni. The Indian diaspora continues to serve as a shining symbol of India's values, talent and goodwill across the world," he posted on X.

Nepal: UN experts concerned over forced evictions of settlements in Kathmandu's riverbeds

KATHMANDU

Human rights experts appointed by the United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC) on Monday expressed grave concern over the forced eviction and displacement of several thousand residents from informal settlements along riverside corridors in Kathmandu, as the Nepali government bulldozed those settlements.

The government began the campaign to remove the settlements by bulldozing houses starting on April 25, drawing both praise and criticism from different sections of society. The government moved to demolish those structures, claiming that many of the people living on the riverbeds were falsely posing as landless individuals. Following the evictions, several affected families have been kept in temporary housing centres



across the Kathmandu Valley. However, the move by Nepal's new government has raised concerns among domestic and international human rights bodies. The UN human rights experts are among those expressing concern. In a statement issued on

Monday through the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), the experts said they were deeply concerned about the forceful eviction of people living along riverbanks in Kathmandu.

"We are deeply troubled

by reports that thousands of people — many of whom are internally displaced and in situations of acute vulnerability — are being evicted without adequate safeguards," the experts said. "Such actions risk violating Nepal's obligations under international human

rights law and its own constitutional protections."

They reminded that Nepal is a State party to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), which guarantees the right to adequate housing, including protection against forced evictions.

"Under international standards, evictions are permissible only in exceptional circumstances and must comply with strict safeguards," the statement said.

The statement pointed out that Nepali authorities issued only a 24-hour notice to residents in the Thapathali, Manohara, and Sinamangal settlements of Kathmandu, followed by rapid demolition.

"Such short notice fails to meet the requirements for meaningful consultation and adequate preparation," the experts said. "Affected communities must be informed,

consulted, and provided access to legal remedies and assistance."

Evictions have continued in Balkhu, Bansighat, Balaju, Sankhamul, the Anamnagar area alongside the Dhobikhola corridor, and in the Kapan area of Kathmandu district. The UN experts said they were appalled that two residents were found dead during the demolition drive.

However, in a recent Facebook post, Prime Minister Shah stated that no one would be rendered homeless and that the constitutional right to housing would be ensured. He urged the public not to be misled by rumours or panic unnecessarily. "The steps taken by the government are not aimed at displacing citizens, but at ensuring the right to housing and finding a sustainable solution," he wrote, appealing to people to avoid confusion and misinformation.

Rupee crashes 79 paise to close at all-time low of 95.28 against US dollar

MUMBAI: (MAY 11)

The rupee tanked 79 paise to settle at its record low of 95.28 against the US dollar on Monday after US President Donald Trump rejected Iran's response to the West Asia peace proposal, leading to a surge in crude oil prices. Prime Minister Narendra Modi's appeal to citizens to avoid buying gold and embrace austerity measures further dented market sentiments. A strengthening US dollar and steep foreign capital outflows also pressured the local unit, according to forex traders.

Q1 fuel losses may eliminate entire fiscal-year earnings

NEW DELHI: (MAY 11)

India's state-run fuel retailers are staring at first-quarter losses large enough to wipe out profitability for the full fiscal year, as soaring crude prices and a government-led freeze on pump prices squeeze marketing margins, according to a top government source. Since the war broke out in the Middle East 10 weeks ago, state-owned oil marketing companies (OMCs) have ensured uninterrupted supplies of petrol, diesel and cooking gas LPG at rates that are way below cost, unlike many global energy systems that imposed rationing or passed through steep price increases. This has resulted in the three OMCs - Indian Oil Corporation (IOC), Bharat Petroleum Corporation Ltd (BPCL) and Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Ltd (HPCL) - running record high under-recoveries (the difference between cost and retail selling price), the source, who wished not to be named, said.

Sensex ends 1,313 points lower, Nifty below 23,900

Benchmark stock market indices closed lower on Monday, as rising crude oil prices, fresh tensions in West Asia and concerns over the economic impact of higher energy costs triggered heavy selling across sectors.

The BSE Sensex plunged 1,312.91 points, or 1.70%, to close at 76,015.28, while the Nifty 50 fell 360.30 points, or 1.49%, to settle at 23,815.85, slipping below the key 24,000 mark. The selloff was broad-based, with banking, auto and metal stocks witnessing strong pressure during the session. Investor sentiment turned weak after crude oil prices jumped again following US President Donald Trump's rejection of Iran's peace proposal. Brent crude rose above \$103 per barrel, while WTI crude traded near \$97. Higher crude oil prices are negative for India because the country imports most of its oil needs. Rising oil prices increase the



import bill, put pressure on the rupee and raise inflation concerns. Markets also reacted cautiously to Prime Minister Narendra Modi's remarks asking people to conserve fuel, avoid unnecessary foreign travel and postpone gold purchases for weddings for one year. Investors appeared concerned that prolonged high oil prices could affect economic growth, inflation and corporate earnings.

HEAVY SELLING IN BANKING, AUTO STOCKS
Among Sensex stocks, Titan Company was the worst performer, falling 6.83%. Titan shares came under pressure after concerns emerged that reduced gold purchases could impact jewellery demand following the Prime Minister's remarks.

Other major losers included:

- Bharti Airtel, down 4.18%
- State Bank of India, down 4.52%
- Reliance Industries, down 3.31%
- Eternal, down 4.08%
- IndiGo parent InterGlobe Aviation, down 4.69%
- Mahindra & Mahindra,

down 2.48%

Banking stocks also saw sharp losses, with:

- HDFC Bank down 2.13%
- ICICI Bank slipping 0.11%
- Bajaj Finance falling 1.98%
- Only a handful of stocks managed to close higher.
- Sun Pharma gained 1.36%, while Hindustan Unilever rose 0.85%.

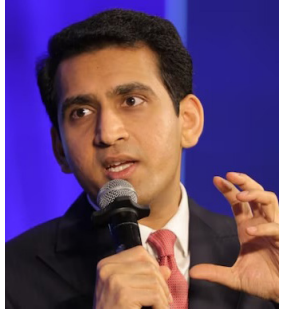
Defensive sectors such as FMCG and pharma saw relatively better buying compared to the broader market.

BROADER MARKETS ALSO UNDER PRESSURE
The broader market also ended weak. The Nifty Mid-cap 100 index fell 1.05%, while the Nifty Smallcap 100 declined 1.13%. India VIX, which measures market volatility, jumped more than 10% to 18.55, indicating rising nervousness among traders. Vinod Nair, Head of Research at Geojit Investments Limited, said rising geopolitical tensions and concerns over crude oil prices weighed heavily on markets. "The bench-

mark index slipped below the 24,000 mark as renewed Gulf tensions, following Trump's rejection of Iran's peace proposal, weighed on investor sentiment," he said. According to Nair, the market mood turned more cautious after the Prime Minister's remarks on conserving energy and reducing non-essential spending. "The cautious mood deepened after the PM's appeal to conserve energy and avoid non-essential foreign travel, prompting investors to reassess the economic impact of higher crude prices, INR weakness, and pressure on the current account deficit," he added. Nair said India's strong fiscal position and forex reserves are helping absorb the current oil shock, but warned that prolonged geopolitical tensions could increase economic pressure. "Meanwhile, rising bond yields and persistent FII outflows are likely to keep markets range-bound in the near term," he said.

India's best defence is to electrify everything, says Sagar Adani

Sagar Adani said India's long-term constraints, water security, food systems, and digital growth, all run into the same bottleneck: reliable, affordable energy.



As tensions rise in the Middle East from the ongoing US-Iran war and risks grow around key shipping routes, energy markets have been reminded how quickly price shocks can travel. India, a major importer of fossil fuels, is exposed whenever the world's supply lines tighten.

At the Economist's Resilient Futures Summit in New Delhi, Sagar Adani, Adani Group Executive involved in the group's energy portfolio delivered a plain insight—in this century, energy access will decide resilience, and India's best defence is to electrify everything.

"We've all seen how conflict in one region can disrupt supply chains across continents," he said, warning that energy shocks can hit economies overnight.

Adani said India's long-term constraints, water security, food systems, and digital growth, all run into the same bottleneck: reliable, affordable energy. He pointed to a wide gap in consumption: India's per-capita energy use is about one-third of the global average and roughly one-fifth of China's, he said. To become a developed economy by 2047, India would need to add nearly 2,000 gigawatts of new capacity over the next two decades, while keeping energy affordable and increasingly clean, he added. The International Energy Agency has said India will be the largest source of global energy-demand growth through 2035, as urbanisation and rising incomes push consumption sharply higher. That means what India builds, and how fast it electrifies, will shape global energy markets for years. The message had a clear policy shape. Renew-

ables must scale fast, Adani said, but land limits and intermittency mean India also needs a broader mix — hydro, efficient thermal power and nuclear — to ensure firm supply when conditions are not ideal. At 31, Adani has become one of the public faces of the group's energy push. Public profiles say he joined the Adani Group in 2015 after studying economics at Brown University, and has been credited within the group with building out its solar and wind portfolio at Adani Green Energy. The work, though, did not start in boardrooms. After Brown, he went straight into the field, beginning with the group's first solar plant in the interior of south India. He spent months living at the site as the project took shape. Over the past decade, he has moved from that early stint to overseeing the group's wider energy agenda, now heavily focused on renewables and the green transition. Adani framed the group's role as execution at scale. He cited Gautam Adani's public commitment of over \$100 billion towards the energy transition and said the approach is meant to be integrated—renewables, storage, transmission and green hydrogen — rather than isolated projects. His broader claim was geopolitical. "If India can build abundant, affordable and cleaner power fast enough, it will not only protect 1.4 billion people from external shocks, but also add stability to a global economy that increasingly depends on India's growth," said Sagar Adani.

Titan shares fall over 6%

Why jewellery stocks are under pressure today

Titan and other jewellery stocks fell sharply after Prime Minister Narendra Modi urged people to avoid buying gold for weddings for a year. The remark added to concerns over gold demand, imports and pressure on the rupee amid elevated crude prices.

Shares of Titan Company fell sharply on Monday, slipping more than 6% in early trade as investors reacted to Prime Minister Narendra Modi's remarks asking people to avoid buying gold for weddings for one year amid rising global economic pressure. Titan shares dropped 6.28% to Rs 4,230 during the session, down Rs 283.40 from the previous close of Rs 4,513.40. The stock opened at Rs 4,350 and touched an intraday low of Rs 4,220. The fall came as jewellery stocks across the

market witnessed heavy selling after the Prime Minister's comments over the weekend. According to a report by The Economic Times, stocks such as Titan, Kalyan Jewellers and Senco Gold fell sharply after the remarks.

WHY ARE TITAN SHARES FALLING?
The main trigger behind the fall appears to be concerns that any slowdown in gold purchases could affect jewellery demand in India.

Speaking at an event in Hyderabad, PM Modi urged people to reduce fuel usage and avoid buying gold for weddings for one year as the country deals with pressure from rising global crude oil prices and foreign exchange outflows. The Prime Minister's appeal was linked to the ongoing global energy shock caused by tensions in West Asia and disruptions around the Strait of Hormuz.



Economists say India imports both crude oil and gold in large quantities, and both are paid for in US dollars. Higher imports increase pressure on India's foreign exchange reserves and can weaken the rupee.

Markets appear worried that the comments could temporarily affect sentiment around jewellery demand, especially during the wedding season.

JEWELLERY STOCKS SEE BROAD SELLOFF
According to the ET re-

port, Senco Gold was among the worst-hit stocks, falling nearly 9%, while Kalyan Jewellers dropped around 8%. The report noted that India imported an average of 60 tonnes of gold every month during FY26, translating into a monthly import bill of nearly \$6 billion.

The comments from the Prime Minister came at a time when India's gold imports are already facing pressure.

FALL DESPITE STRONG Q4 RESULTS

Interestingly, the sharp fall in Titan shares came despite strong March quarter earnings. Titan reported a consolidated net profit of Rs 1,179 crore in Q4FY26, up 35% from Rs 871 crore in the same period last year. The Tata Group company's total income rose 46% year-on-year to Rs 20,300 crore during the quarter. EBIT also increased 28% to Rs 1,875 crore. Sim-

ilarly, Kalyan Jewellers also posted strong earnings with net profit more than doubling to Rs 409.5 crore in Q4FY26. Despite the strong numbers, investors focused more on the possible impact of lower gold demand and rising economic uncertainty.

GOLD PRICES AND IMPORT CONCERNS IN FOCUS

The broader concern remains India's rising import bill as crude oil prices stay elevated. Gold imports are often closely watched during periods of economic stress because India is one of the world's largest consumers of gold. Any rise in gold imports increases dollar outflows from the country and can add pressure on the rupee during times of global uncertainty. That appears to be the larger economic message behind the Prime Minister's remarks and the sharp reaction seen in jewellery stocks today.

Olectra Adopts Dassault Systèmes' 3DEXPERIENCE Platform

HYDERABAD, MAY 11 :

Olectra Greentech Limited, India's leading electric bus manufacturer, and Dassault Systèmes announced that Olectra will adopt Dassault Systèmes' 3DEXPERIENCE platform. This marks a significant step toward building a globally benchmarked, digitally integrated product development ecosystem for electric mobility. Olectra's decision reflects a shared vision to accelerate innovation in the electric vehicle (EV) sector by leveraging advanced digital technologies. By combining Olectra's leadership in electric mobility and Dassault Systèmes' expertise in virtual twin and platform-based engi-

to Advance Digital Product Development in Electric Mobility



neering, both companies aim to redefine how electric vehicles are designed, developed, and delivered at scale. The 3DEXPERIENCE platform connects people, data, design, simulation, and manufacturing within a uni-

fied, collaborative environment, enabling a real-time, end-to-end view of the entire product lifecycle. Through this adoption, Olectra will transition toward a model-based, platform-led approach to product development

aligned with global OEM standards. As part of this engagement, Olectra will unlock a fully digital, model-based product development approach. Seamless collaboration across engineering, manufacturing, and ecosystem partners, Virtual simulation and validation prior to physical prototyping, Accelerated innovation cycles and reduced time-to-market, Enhanced scalability for future mobility platforms. This collaboration underscores a broader industry shift from traditional, component-level engineering to system-level digital orchestration, enabling companies to oper-

ate with greater agility, precision, and innovation velocity. Mahesh Babu, Managing Director, Olectra Greentech Limited, said, "At Olectra, we see the future of mobility being shaped by electrification and digital engineering. As part of our commitment to transforming mobility through accessible innovation and a pragmatic future, we are making significant investments in developing new bus and truck platforms. Our collaboration with Dassault Systèmes and adoption of the 3DEXPERIENCE platform will play a vital role in building these to global standards and aligning with global benchmarks. This enables us to move faster, design smarter, and deliver with world

class precision. As India accelerates its EV transition, we remain focused on leading in both deployment and engineering excellence." Deepak NG, Managing Director, India, Dassault Systèmes, added, "At Dassault Systèmes, we believe the next era of mobility will continue to be engineered in the virtual world before it moves on roads. Our collaboration with Olectra reflects a forward-looking shift toward integrated, platform-driven innovation, enabling faster, smarter, and more sustainable electric vehicle development. Together, we aim to strengthen the transformation of India's mobility ecosystem through virtual twin experiences and next-generation engineering practices."

Syrma SGS posts Rs 119 crore profit in Jan-Mar quarter, revenue jumps 58 pc

NEW DELHI: (MAY 8)

Electronics manufacturing services firm Syrma SGS Technology posted a consolidated profit of around Rs 119 crore for the fourth quarter ended on March 31, 2026, on higher revenue and consolidation of high-margin segments, according to a company filing. The company had posted a loss of Rs 71.45 crore in the same period a year ago. The consolidated revenue from operations of Syrma SGS grew by about 58.48 per cent to Rs 1,465 crore during the reported quarter from Rs 924.36 crore in the March quarter of FY25.

7Seas Expands Into AI Gaming & Digital Content

HYDERABAD, INDIA MAY 11, 2026

7Seas Entertainment Ltd. announced its strategic expansion into AI-powered game development and cinematic content creation, positioning itself among India's early adopters of AI-driven gaming innovation. The company is integrating AI across game design, UI/UX, 3D character creation, environment generation, animation, voice generation, automated testing, and multilingual content production. "AI will transform gaming through faster development, enhanced visuals, smarter gameplay, and immersive storytelling," said L M Shankar.

Early Leadership in AI-Powered Gaming
7Seas Entertainment Ltd. is among the early gaming companies in India to strategically enter the AI-powered gaming segment with next-generation development pipelines. The company has integrated AI across game design, 3D char-



acter modeling, environments, NPC behavior, racing physics, voice localization, QA automation, asset generation, and personalized gameplay. According to the company, AI adoption has accelerated development timelines while enhancing realism, efficiency, scalability, and immersive player experiences.

AI Gaming and AI Video Industry Growth
The global AI Gaming market is projected to grow from about USD 4.3 billion in 2025 to over USD 51 billion by 2033, driven by rapid advances in generative AI, automation, and immersive digital experienc-

titles ahead of the Christmas holiday season.

Treasure King
An ambitious open-world action-adventure strategy game featuring immersive exploration, strategic gameplay, dynamic environments, and AI-enhanced storytelling.

Formula Rush
A next-generation car racing game designed with realistic racing physics, advanced AI opponent systems, and visually immersive racing experiences.

Upgraded Simulation Games
Enhanced versions of the company's simulation gaming portfolio featuring improved graphics, AI-powered gameplay systems, smarter environments, and enhanced player engagement features.

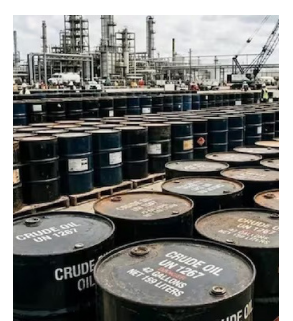
Vision for the Future
7Seas Entertainment Ltd. aims to build an AI-powered entertainment ecosystem combining gaming, cinematic storytelling, AI-generated content, and immersive digital ex-

periences for global audiences. The company stated that while AI enhances production and innovation, human creativity and storytelling will remain at the core of entertainment. Supporting this vision, the company is expanding its technology infrastructure and specialized AI teams through phased investments. 7Seas Entertainment was also recognized at the LK International Short Film Festival 2026 for its AI short film Sand and Fire, reflecting its growing focus on AI-assisted cinematic storytelling and next-generation digital content.

About 7Seas Entertainment Ltd.
7Seas Entertainment Ltd. is an India-based gaming company focused on mobile games, interactive entertainment, and AI-powered digital content. The company is actively integrating AI into game development and cinematic content creation to build next-generation entertainment experiences for global audiences.

No petrol or diesel shortage

During an inter-ministerial briefing on the situation in West Asia, government officials said India has enough fuel stocks and has taken steps to reduce the impact of the ongoing conflict in the region.



The government on Monday said there is no shortage of petrol, diesel, LPG or crude oil in the country and urged people not to panic, a day after Prime Minister Narendra Modi appealed to citizens to conserve fuel amid global tensions. During an inter-ministerial briefing on the situation in West Asia, government officials said India has enough fuel stocks and has taken steps to reduce the impact of the ongoing conflict in the region.

GOVT SAYS FUEL STOCKS ARE SUFFICIENT

Speaking at the briefing, Joint Secretary (Marketing & Oil Refinery), Ministry of Petroleum & Natural Gas said India has sufficient stocks of crude oil, LPG, petrol and diesel. She said around 90% of India's energy imports were coming from the affected region, but the government had quickly taken measures to minimise any disruption. Sharma said there is no need for panic buying as the country has enough fuel supplies of all kinds. She added that the Prime Minister's recent appeal should be seen as an effort towards energy conservation and reducing the economic burden on the country during a period of global uncertainty. "There is no shortage," she said,

adding that the government has taken adequate steps to ensure minimum impact on supplies.

PM'S APPEAL AIMED AT CONSERVATION

Officials said Prime Minister Modi's message on reducing unnecessary travel and conserving fuel should be viewed in the spirit of saving energy rather than as a response to any supply shortage.

The government stressed that the appeal was intended to encourage responsible fuel use while global geopolitical tensions continue to affect energy markets.

INDIA SOURCING ENERGY FROM MULTIPLE COUNTRIES

MEA spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal said India is trying to buy energy from several nations as part of its energy conservation and supply efforts. On questions related to Iran's Foreign Minister visiting India, Jaiswal said Foreign Ministers of BRICS nations and partner countries are expected to visit India, and details will be shared once plans are finalised.

He also reiterated India's stand on the West Asia situation, saying the country has supported peace and dialogue from the beginning.

The Eternal Shrine

A Comprehensive Guide to Somnath Temple Tourism, History, and Modern Resurgence. Rising majestically on the western coast of Gujarat where the mythical Saraswati, Kapila, and Hiran rivers merge into the Arabian Sea, the Shree Somnath Temple stands as a timeless monument of faith, resilience, and civilizational survival. Revered as the first (Prathama) of the twelve sacred Jyotirlingas of Lord Shiva, Somnath is much more than a holy destination—it is a living symbol of India's cultural confidence. Despite suffering wave after wave of destructive foreign invasions over a thousand years, the temple has risen from its ashes each time, embodying the spirit of the "Eternal Flame of Bharat." Today, under modern spiritual leadership and state-backed developmental initiatives, Somnath is experiencing a golden age (Suvarna Yug), attracting millions of global pilgrims and tourists annually.

Conclusion: A Spiritual Awakening by the Sea

Standing on the Samudra Darshan path, watching the sunset cast a golden glow over the 1,666 gold-plated Kalash on the temple spire while the waves of the Arabian Sea crash against the stone fortress walls, is a deeply moving experi-

ence. Somnath is not merely a destination for religious ritual; it is a profound testament to the victory of light over darkness, creation over destruction, and faith over time. For the modern traveler, a pilgrimage to Somnath is an unforgettable journey into the very heart of India's enduring soul.



1. The Mythological and Historical Significance

The name Somnath translates to "Lord of the Moon" (Soma). According to Hindu scriptures, particularly the Skanda Purana, the temple's origin is tied to a celestial legend.

The Legend of the Moon God

Soma (the Moon God) was married to the twenty-seven daughters of Daksha Prajapati. However, he favored only one queen, Rohini, neglecting the others. Angered by this injustice, Daksha cursed Soma to lose his luster and gradually wither away. Desperate to regain his glory, the Moon God descended to Earth and performed intense penance to Lord Shiva at the Prabhas Teerth (the site where the temple now stands). Pleased with his devotion, Shiva partially relieved the curse, allowing the moon to wax and wane in cycles. Out of gratitude, the Moon God built a magnificent temple made of gold dedicated to Lord Shiva. Scriptures state that the temple was later rebuilt by Ravana in silver, by Lord Krishna in sandalwood, and eventually by King Bhimdev of Gujarat in stone.

2. The Crucible of Invasion: A Saga of Destruction and Defiance

The historical narrative of Somnath is a turbulent chronicle of foreign iconoclasm and unwavering Indian resistance. The temple's strategic coastal position and vast wealth made it a primary

target for several waves of plunder and demolition:

TIMELINE OF DESTRUCTION & RESURGENCE

- [1026 AD] —Mahmud of Ghazni Plunders & Destroys the Temple
- [1299 AD] —Alauddin Khalji's Army (Zafar Khan) Attacks the Shrine
- [1395/1412 AD] —Repeated Destruction under Sultanate Rulers
- [1706 AD] — Mughal Emperor Aurangzeb Demolishes the Rebuilt Temple
- [1951 AD] —Inauguration of the Modern Kailash Mahameru Temple

The First Major Invasion (1026 AD): The most devastating attack occurred in January 1026 AD, led by Mahmud of Ghazni. Enticed by descriptions of the temple's gold, silver, and gemstone-studded sanctum, Ghazni laid siege to Prabhas Patan. Despite a fierce defense by local warriors—including regional heroes who sacrificed their lives defending the gates—Ghazni plundered the temple, broke the Jyotirlinga, and burned the wooden superstructure. The Medieval Invasions: True to its resilient nature, the temple was rebuilt in stone shortly after by King Bhoj of Malwa and King Bhimdev I of Anhilwara. However, destruction followed again in 1299 AD during the reign of Alauddin Khalji's generals, followed by attacks from Zafar Khan of the Gujarat Sultanate (1395 and 1412 AD). The

Mughal Demolition (1706 AD): The last major blow was dealt by Mughal Emperor Aurangzeb, who ordered the complete demolition of the functional temple in 1706, converting the site into a ruined structure that stood neglected for nearly two and a half centuries.

3. The Grand 20th-Century Reconstruction

The modern revival of Somnath is a triumph of national unity. Immediately after India gained independence in 1947, India's first Deputy Prime Minister and Home Minister, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, visited the ruins of Prabhas Patan. Moved by the sight of the desecrated monument, Patel resolved to reconstruct the temple to restore India's historical and spiritual confidence. Supported heavily by public donations, the reconstruction began under the supervision of the newly formed Shree Somnath Trust. Renowned architect Prabhakar Sompura designed the current temple in the magnificent Māru-Gurjara (Kailash Mahameru Prasad) architectural style of Hindu temple design. On May 11, 1951, India's first President, Dr. Rajendra Prasad, performed the Pran Pratishtha (consecration ceremony) of the Jyotirlinga, declaring: "The power of reconstruction is always greater than the power of destruction."

4. Modern Connectivity & State Government Initiatives

In recent years, the Government of Gujarat, in tandem with

the Shree Somnath Trust, has implemented extensive infrastructure and environmental initiatives to transform Somnath into a world-class pilgrimage hub.

Upgraded Physical & Digital Connectivity

The Vande Bharat Express: Travel times from major hubs have drastically decreased with the introduction of the semi-high-speed Sabarmati-Veraval Vande Bharat Express, which links Ahmedabad directly with the Veraval railway station, situated just 5 km from the temple.

Road Infrastructure: The state completed the ₹828-crore Jetpur-Somnath four-lane highway, offering high-speed expressway efficiency for road travelers originating from Rajkot or Ahmedabad.

Air Connectivity: Improved connectivity through Keshod Airport (approx. 55 km away) and Rajkot International Airport has significantly smoothed the transit of international and domestic tourists. Premium Tourism and Environmental Initiatives: Swachh Iconic Place: Recognized as a "Swachh Iconic Place" by the central government, the temple features advanced sustainability systems. Under the Mission LIFE project, plastic waste is converted into 4,700 paver blocks monthly, and organic temple flowers are converted into rich vermicompost to nourish 1,700 sacred Bilva trees on site. The Sound and Light Show: Every evening, a state-of-the-art Light and Sound Show nar-

rated by legendary voices brings the dramatic 1,000-year history of the temple to life, drawing over 10 lakh visitors in just the last three years. Samudra Darshan Path: A beautifully paved coastal walkway allows pilgrims to take peaceful walks alongside the Arabian Sea. It features a spectacular 16-foot statue of Lord Hanuman and 202 local craft stalls under the "Maruti Haat" initiative.

5. Tourist Footfall: Demographics and Annual Statistics

Somnath is officially listed among India's top 10 most-searched and visited spiritual destinations. Its growing popularity is reflected in its massive annual footprint:

Annual Footfall: Somnath welcomes between 92 lakh to 97 lakh pilgrims annually, with the annual numbers steadily climbing toward the 1-crore mark.

Daily Visitors: On an average weekday, the temple experiences a footfall of 25,000 to 30,000 devotees.

Festivals & Special Occasions: During major spiritual occasions like Maha Shivratri and the sacred month of Shravan, single-day attendance routinely crosses 3.5 lakh to 4 lakh devotees.

Global Digital Footprint: The temple trust's digital services—including live online darshan, e-pooja bookings, and postal dispatch of Soganga Abhishek Jal (purified Gangajal used in rituals)—garnered over 1.37 billion impressions globally in 2025

alone.

6. Popular IRCTC Tourism Packages for Somnath

For a hassle-free, comfortable pilgrimage, the Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation (IRCTC) offers highly reliable and structured packages. Two of the most sought-after itineraries include:

A. The Dwarka Somnath Jyotirlinga Tour Package (Land Package)

Perfect for families, senior citizens, and individual pilgrims arriving in Gujarat via Rajkot.

Duration: 3 Nights / 4 Days
Route: Rajkot - Dwarka - Porbandar (Kirti Mandir) - Somnath - Rajkot

Package Cost: Starting from approx. ₹14,100 per person (prices vary based on occupancy).

Inclusions: Accommodation (2 nights in Dwarka, 1 night in Somnath), daily breakfast and dinner (MAPAI plan), dedicated AC vehicle transfers, travel insurance, and guided assistance.

B. "Divya Dwaraka Somnath Yatra" (Bharat Gaurav Special Tourist Train)

A grand, long-distance luxury train journey that links major cities across Southern/Western India to the major shrines of Gujarat.

Duration: 9 Nights / 10 Days
Route: Covers Dwarka (Dwarkadhish Temple, Bet Dwarka), Nageshwar Jyotirlinga, Somnath Jyotirlinga, Bhavnagar

(Nishkalankeshwar Temple), and a relaxing halt in Goa.

Package Cost: Starting from approx. ₹28,760 per person (Comfort Category - 3AC).

Inclusions: 3AC train travel, comfortable hotel stays, vegetarian meals, local road transfers, tour escorts, and comprehensive travel insurance.

7. Practical Travel Tips for Your Somnath Pilgrimage

To ensure a seamless visit, keep the following practical aspects in mind:

Temple Timings: The temple is open for darshan from 6:00 AM to 10:00 PM daily. High aarti rituals are performed at 7:00 AM, 12:00 Noon, and 7:00 PM.

Strict Security Regulations: Electronic items, including mobile phones, cameras, smartwatches, and leather items like belts, are strictly prohibited inside the main temple complex. Massive, secure locker facilities are provided by the trust near the entrance free of charge.

Dress Code: Devotees are expected to dress respectfully. Extremely casual beachwear, shorts, or revealing outfits are not permitted inside the sanctum.

Accommodation: The Shree Somnath Trust manages several budget-friendly to premium guest houses right next to the temple. The ocean-facing Sagar Darshan Atithi Gruh offers premium rooms, while Lilavati Atithi Gruh provides comfortable AC and non-AC rooms at highly affordable rates (ranging from ₹750 to ₹5,000 per night).

Hidden Himachal Gem for Easy Adventure Escapes



Khajjiar, often called the "Mini Switzerland of India," is not just known for its postcard-perfect beauty but also for the exciting outdoor adventures it offers. Located near Dalhousie in Himachal Pradesh's Chamba district, this scenic hill destination becomes a popular summer getaway for travellers who love combining nature with light adventure. Surrounded by rolling green meadows, dense deodar forests, and distant snow-capped peaks, Khajjiar offers the perfect setting to enjoy the outdoors while beating the summer heat. With pleasant weather, open landscapes, and a relaxed pace of life, Khajjiar attracts adventure lovers, families, and first-time hill travellers alike. Whether you enjoy flying high over valleys, walking through forest trails, or exploring meadows at a slow pace, this hill town offers something for everyone.

Known for Its Adventure Activities

Khajjiar is known for offering gentle yet thrilling adventure activities that suit travellers of all age groups. The natural terrain of open meadows, forested paths, and soft slopes makes it ideal for outdoor experiences without being too extreme. Many visitors choose Khajjiar precisely because it lets them enjoy adventure in a safe, calm, and scenic environment.

From aerial views to ground-level exploration, adventure in Khajjiar feels close to nature and easy to enjoy, especially during the summer months when the weather remains comfortable throughout the day.

Adventure Activities To Do In Khajjiar

- **Paragliding** Paragliding is one of the most popular adventure activities in Khajjiar. Soaring over green meadows and pine forests offers breathtaking views of the valley below. This activity is especially popular during summer when clear skies make flying conditions ideal.
- **Horse Riding** Horse riding across Khajjiar's open grasslands is a relaxing yet enjoya-

ble way to explore the surroundings. It allows visitors to cover scenic areas comfortably while soaking in the peaceful charm of the landscape.

Trekking

Khajjiar offers easy trekking routes through nearby forests and gentle hills. These short trails are perfect for beginners and nature lovers who want a taste of adventure without challenging climbs.

Zorbing

Zorbing adds a fun and playful adventure element to the trip. Rolling down soft grassy slopes inside a transparent ball is a favourite among kids, families, and young travellers.

Camping

Camping in and around Khajjiar lets visitors experience nature at its quietest. Spending nights under starry skies, enjoying bonfires, and waking up to mountain views makes camping a memorable

adventure experience. **A Great Adventure Spot for Families**

Khajjiar is a family-friendly adventure destination that offers safe activities, open spaces, and easy walks. Children can enjoy zorbing and horse rides, while adults can relax in the meadows or try paragliding. The calm environment, clean air, and scenic picnic spots make it suitable for family holidays where fun and comfort go hand in hand.

Best Time To Visit Khajjiar

Summer (March to June) Summer is the best time to visit Khajjiar for adventure activities, sightseeing, and outdoor exploration due to pleasant temperatures.

Monsoon (July to September) The landscape turns lush green, though slippery roads may limit some activities.

Winter (October to February) Snowfall attracts travellers who enjoy winter scenery, though adventure options are limited.

Khajjiar perfectly blends natural beauty with easy-going adventure, making it an ideal summer destination in Himachal Pradesh. Whether travelling with family or friends, this hill town offers a refreshing mix of thrill, calm, and unforgettable mountain views.





CRICKET

Stonehouse called up for England's ODIs against NZ



NORTHAMPTON: Uncapped left-arm fast bowler Alex Stonehouse has been drafted into England's squad as cover for the remainder of the ODI series against New Zealand, the England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) announced on Monday. Alex will link up with the squad in Northampton ahead of training on Tuesday and will be available for selection for the second match on Wednesday. Alex, 21, was a member of England's squad in the 2023 ICC Under-19 Women's T20 World Cup, where she picked six wickets in five matches at an average of 11.33.

Bengal T20 League

Mita Paul emerges as highest women's pick



KOLKATA: Mita Paul emerged as the highest Women's pick at ₹3 lakh as the Bengal T20 League completed its biggest-ever player auction with franchises spending over ₹4.5 crore across their Men's and Women's teams. More than 250 players secured contracts from an auction pool of over 1000 cricketers ahead of the 2026 season. Across the two auctions, franchises completed 136 player signings in the men's and 128 player signings.

Skipper Axar Patel, David Miller's fifties and lower-order blitz keep Delhi Capitals alive



DHARAMSALA

Delhi Capitals accomplished the highest successful chase in IPL history by overhauling 210 runs with six balls to spare against Punjab Kings in Match 55 of the Indian Premier League (IPL) 2026 at the Himachal Pradesh Cricket Association Stadium, Dharamsala, on Monday. A strong performance from captain Axar Patel, an aggressive innings from David Miller, and a bold late cameo from IPL debutant Madhav Tiwari. Delhi Capitals chased down 211 after facing early setbacks at 14/2 and later 138/5.

The chase started poorly. Before this, the highest successful T20 chase in Dharamsala had been South Africa's 200 against India in 2015. In the IPL, Chennai Super Kings' 193 against Kings XI Punjab in 2010 set the record. PBKS' opening bowlers seemed ready to defend 210 as Arshdeep Singh conceded only six runs in the first over, despite an edged boundary. The first blow came quickly. Playing his first game of the season, Shardul Thakur bowled Abishek Porel with a well-placed ball that knocked the middle stump out of the ground.

Things got worse when KL Rahul top-edged a pull shot off Arshdeep, allowing Marco Jansen to sprint from first slip to make a spectacular diving catch ahead of Prabhsimran Singh. At 14/2 after three overs, DC was under

significant pressure. Debutant Sahil Parakh briefly lifted the mood.

After almost getting out on his second ball against Bhuvneshwar Kumar, he opened his account with a six over long-off Thakur and later contributed a boundary in a 20-run fourth over that also included two fours from Tristan Stubbs. But Arshdeep returned in the third Power-play to dismiss Parakh for 14. The batter mistimed a ramp shot towards short fine leg, where Yuzvendra Chahal nearly dropped a simple catch before securing it.

DC stood at 38/3 after five overs, but Axar and Stubbs began to build a solid partnership. However, PBKS's fielding mixed moments of brilliance with mistakes.

Arshdeep dropped Stubbs at long-off Ben Dwarshuis, while Suryansh Shedge later misjudged Axar's shot at deep square leg. Eventually, Stubbs was run out after a mix-up, with Cooper Connolly making a sharp direct hit at the bowler's end.

Miller then entered the game and, along with Axar, reignited the chase. Dew settled in, making the ball slippery, which led PBKS to change it after giving away 15 wides in 13 overs. Axar, who had scored just 44 runs in eight innings before this match at an average of 6.3, finally found his rhythm. He hit Marcus Stoinis for three consecutive boundaries, reaching a 28-ball fifty, and added a six off

Dwarshuis as DC reached 113/4 after 12 overs.

Arshdeep performed well, finishing with 2/21 after allowing only five runs in the 15th over, but Miller kept DC's hopes alive. He hit Jansen for a six and a four before Ashutosh Sharma contributed another boundary in a 15-run over. Chahal, trying to stop one of those boundaries, appeared to injure his left shoulder and didn't bowl for the rest of the innings.

The match shifted again in the 17th over. Miller hit two huge sixes off Jansen, putting DC in a stronger position. However, attempting a third six, he top-edged a pull shot, and Prabhsimran made a diving catch near short third. Still, the game had one more twist. IPL debutant Madhav Tiwari displayed remarkable composure under pressure. After hitting a boundary through a backward point, he partnered with Ashutosh to score 19 runs off Stoinis in the 18th over. Tiwari's 18 runs off just eight balls changed the game and kept DC in the fight.

Needing 17 runs in the final two overs, Tiwari started with another boundary before Ashutosh hit a six, only to get out immediately after. A no-ball boundary shifted the momentum again. Auqib Nabi finished the chase with a massive six, allowing DC to complete the highest successful IPL chase in Dharamsala and keeping their play-off hopes alive.

I was made a 'scapegoat': Lionel Messi tour organiser seeks impartial probe

KOLKATA

Lionel Messi's GOAT India Tour organiser Satadru Dutta on Monday demanded an impartial investigation into the chaos that erupted during the football icon's event in Kolkata, alleging that he was made a "scapegoat" to shield others from embarrassment.

Speaking to IANS, Dutta claimed that the previous Special Investigation Team (SIT) probe into the incident was a "farce" and alleged that key individuals were never questioned.

"I'll only ask the new government to do an impartial investigation. I should also be investigated. I am there with all the documents and everything. But the investigation which happened previously, by the SIT, was a farce," Dutta claimed.

He further alleged a conflict of interest in the earlier probe. "The CP who was show-caused was part of the SIT. Nobody called former minister Aroop Biswas or anybody else. There are so many people on the ground, it is there in the public domain," he added.



Dutta also blamed the police and security apparatus for the chaos at the event, calling it a "complete failure" of the system despite extensive preparations and multiple security meetings.

"In a nutshell, it was a complete failure of police and security. A Z category of security was issued by the Home Ministry to the state government, and that failed. The Chief Minister enjoys Z plus security, so there was a huge security failure," he said.

He added that as an organiser, he believed the event would receive the highest level of protection because of the presence of international and national celebrities. "Lionel Messi, Shah Rukh Khan, the Chief Minister and Sourav Ganguly were all

expected at the event. I thought it would be one of the most secure events possible. We held 16 to 20 meetings, took all permissions and shared the entire show flow with the police, including accreditation details and who would be allowed on the field of play," Dutta said.

Defending the organisation of the event, Dutta said he had not taken any financial support from the government and had conducted the programme legally. "In this event, I had not taken one penny from this government. I booked everything legally, I paid money, and my books are neat and clean. I had the best sponsors and did the event," he said.

Dutta said bringing the Argentine football legend to India had taken him three years of effort and described it as Messi's "first private event".

"It was very tough to convince him. After so much effort, I was put in jail just to save somebody's embarrassment," he claimed. Blaming the police administration for the security lapse, Dutta compared the situation with security arrangements during major film festivals.

Srinath, Menon retained as ICC keeps elite panel of umpires, match referees unchanged for 2026-27

DUBAI

India's Javagal Srinath and Nitin Menon are amongst the elite panel of match referees and umpires kept unchanged by the International Cricket Council (ICC) for the 2026-27 international cricket season.

The decision comes after an annual review and selection process was conducted comprehensively by the ICC's Umpire Selection Panel, which determined that the current group of elite officials would continue in their roles, reflecting satisfaction with their strong contribution over the past year.

"The decision to retain the Emirates ICC Elite Panel for the 2026-27 season reflects the consistency and high standards that have come to define officiating at the international level. Over the past year, the panels have



demonstrated a strong blend of accuracy, composure, and professionalism, which is critical to maintaining the integrity of the game. "What stands out is not just the quality of decision-making, but the ability to operate with clarity and confidence in high-pressure situations, across formats and conditions. That consistency provides assurance

to players, teams, and fans alike. "On behalf of the ICC, I would like to congratulate all members of the panels on their re-selection. Their performances over the past season have fully justified this continuity, and we look forward to seeing them build further on these standards in the year ahead," said ICC CEO Sanjog Gupta.

East Bengal, Punjab FC share spoils after goalless draw

KOLKATA

East Bengal FC and Punjab SC played out an engaging yet goalless draw in their Indian Super League (ISL) 2025-26 encounter at the Vivekananda Yuba Bharati Krirangan in Kolkata on Monday.

Despite the absence of goals, the contest was far from uneventful, with both sides creating several openings with a cumulative 29 attempts made and seven saves. The result ensures East Bengal remain at the top of the table with 22 points from 11 matches, while Punjab FC climb to sixth with 19 points from the same number of matches. East Bengal keeper Prabhshukhan Singh was awarded Player of the Match.

Punjab FC made a bright start to the contest and nearly found an early breakthrough in the sixth minute when their captain Dani Ramirez's long-range



strike skimmed the near post. The visitors looked composed in possession, with Ramirez pulling the strings in midfield, while Manglenhang Kipgen provided support through intelligent movement.

East Bengal gradually settled into the rhythm of the game, using the width effectively through midfielders Bipin Singh and PV Vishnu. However, Punjab's defensive unit, marshalled well by Bijoy V and supported by Khaiminhang Lhungdim, remained

compact and disciplined to deny clear openings.

The Red and Gold Brigade came closest to breaking the deadlock in the 30th minute. A precise through ball from Miguel Figueira released Bipin Singh behind the defence, but Punjab keeper Arshdeep Singh reacted sharply, rushing off his line to make a crucial block and keep the scores level.

Chances at the other end were largely speculative, with Punjab attempting efforts from

a distance. Kipgen tested Prabhshukhan Gill, while Ramirez continued to probe, but the East Bengal goalkeeper remained assured. The first half concluded with both teams evenly matched, reflecting the balance in possession and opportunities.

The tempo increased after the restart, with the Shers enjoying a strong spell. Within minutes, Kipgen and Ramirez forced successive saves from Gill, who was called into action repeatedly.

The most notable moment came in the 53rd minute when Shami Singamayum's diving header, following a well-weighted cross from Lhungdim, was brilliantly tipped away by the East Bengal custodian.

Punjab maintained the pressure, with Ramirez dictating play and delivering dangerous balls into the box. Yet, East Bengal's backline, led by Kevin Sibille and Anwar Ali, held firm under sustained pressure.

IFL 2025-26: Real Kashmir defeat Aizawl FC to end campaign on a high

HYDERABAD

Real Kashmir FC finished their campaign on a winning note, clinching a 2-1 win against Aizawl FC in their Indian Football League (IFL) 2025-26 Relegation Phase match at the Deccan Arena in Hyderabad on Monday. Christian Moses and Junior Traore scored from the spot in the first and second-half, respectively, to guide the Snow Leopards to three points. Lalitanzova scored the only goal for Aizawl.

The win allows Real Kashmir to finish as the top-placed team in the Relegation Phase with 14 points, while Aizawl stays a place below with 11 points.

Zomuansanga provided the first attacking spark of the game inside the opening



20 seconds as the Aizawl forward drove into the Real Kashmir penalty area after a bright start from his side.

Both teams approached the contest with attacking intent from the outset, pressing aggressively and looking to move the ball quickly through transitions. With relegation safety already

secured for both sides, the match was played at a high tempo with little hesitation in possession.

Aizawl looked to create openings through Vanlalhrizual K and Eric Remruatpuia Chhangte on the flanks, while Real Kashmir responded with Ahteab Ahmad Dar and Moses mak-

ing repeated runs down the wings in search of early deliveries into the box.

Real Kashmir continued to hold a high defensive line, prompting Aizawl to target quick counters with Zomuansanga leading the transitions whenever space opened up behind the defence. However, the Snow Leopards managed to recover well and prevented the hosts from creating any major opening.

The deadlock was finally broken deep into added time after Real Kashmir were awarded a penalty just before halftime. Moses stepped up in the eighth minute of the first half injury time and calmly sent Vanlal Hriatpuia the wrong way to hand the Snow Leopards the lead heading into the break.

Indian U-17 girls enter 8 finals, 4 boxers win bronze medals in Tashkent

TASHKENT

India's U-17 girls continued their strong run at the Asian Boxing U17 Championships 2026, with eight boxers advancing to the finals and four boxers finishing with bronze medals after the semifinals in Tashkent, Uzbekistan.

Rakhi (46kg) led the charge with a commanding RSC win in the third round against Yating Zhang of China (CHN). In 48kg, Khushi Chand secured a dominant 5:0 victory over Mungunzul Altamgadasa of Mongolia (MGL).

In the 52kg category, Mamta Murlidhar Raut went down 0:5 against Yaxin Qiu of China (CHN), while Laxmi Manjunath Lamani (54kg) lost 1:4 to Kum-

riniso Muhammadova of Uzbekistan (UZB).

Navya (57kg) advanced to the final with an RSC win in the second round against Dagiimaa Chuluutumur of Mongolia (MGL). In the 60kg, Ishika lost a closely contested 2:3 bout to Balyim Gabitkyzy of Kazakhstan (KAZ). Diya (63kg) secured a dominant first-round RSC victory over Jia-En Song of Chinese Taipei (TPE).

In the 66kg category, Harnoor Kaur went down 0:5 against Ayulym Ospanova of Kazakhstan (KAZ). Himanshi (70kg) won by RSC in the first round against Jude Habi of Jordan (JOR). In 75kg, Jyoti progressed with an RSC win in the first round against Cheng-Hui Zou of

Chinese Taipei (TPE). Vanshika (80kg) registered a solid 4:1 victory over Feruzabonu Kamolova of Uzbekistan (UZB).

In the 80+kg category, Gurseerat Kaur sealed her place in the final with a first-round RSC win against Xin-Ying Huang of Chinese Taipei (TPE).

With eight finalists confirmed and four bronze medals secured, the Indian U-17 girls' team will now aim to convert their strong performances into gold medals in the finals. India's U-15 boys delivered a solid performance in the semifinals at the Asian Boxing U15 Championships 2026, with six boxers advancing to the finals and seven boxers finishing with bronze medals in Tashkent, Uzbekistan.

Rahul Dravid named owner of ETPL franchise Dublin Guardians

DUBLIN

Former India captain and head coach Rahul Dravid was on Monday announced as the owner of the European T20 Premier League (ETPL) franchise Dublin Guardians, completing the league's six-team structure ahead of its highly anticipated 2026 launch.

ETPL completed its six-team franchise line-up at a landmark event in Dublin, where Rahul Dravid was officially unveiled as owner of the Dublin franchise ahead of the league's 2026 launch. The event brought together franchise owners from across the league, including Vipul Aggarwal of Glasgow Franchise, and Jonty Rhodes and Madhukar Shree of Rotterdam Franchise, alongside ETPL co-founders Abhishek Bachchan, Sourav Banerjee, Priyanka Kaul, and Dhiraaj Malhotra. Also, in attendance were



senior leaders from European cricket, including Brian MacNeice, Chair of Cricket Ireland; Sarah Keane, CEO of Cricket Ireland; Roland Lefebvre, Director of High Performance of Cricket Netherlands; and Trudy Lindblade, CEO of Cricket Scotland, underlining the strong institutional backing and

growing momentum behind Europe's first ICC-sanctioned multi-country franchise T20 league.

Launched in partnership with Cricket Ireland, Cricket Scotland, and the Royal Dutch Cricket Association, ETPL introduces a first-of-its-kind cross-border franchise model fea-

turing teams from Dublin, Belfast, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Rotterdam, and Amsterdam. The league is expected to feature international stars, including Mitchell Marsh, Tim David, Mitchell Santner, Liam Livingstone, Glenn Maxwell, Faf du Plessis, Heinrich Klaasen, among others, creating a unique opportunity for emerging players from Europe and other Associate Nations to compete and share the dressing room with some of the biggest names in world cricket.

Speaking at the launch, Abhishek Bachchan, Co-Founder of ETPL, said, "For ETPL, having legends like Rahul Dravid associated with this journey is incredibly special because our vision goes beyond building a league; it is about creating a platform that can inspire and nurture the next generation of talent emerging from Irish and broader European Cricket ecosystem."

MANDARAM

Dimple's Bold Avatar In Sharwa's Bhogi

Charming Star Sharwanand has joined hands with Sampath Nandi for the highly anticipated pan-India film Bhogi. The makers have recently released Sharwa and leading lady Anupama Parameswaran's character looks. Both of them have created high anticipation and now, they have introduced leading lady, Dimple Hayathi, character. Dimple Hayathi looks absolutely fierce and stunning in a bright red saree. In the poster, she is seen seated with a palm-leaf hand fan in a rustic, vintage setup that perfectly reflects the film's 1960s backdrop. The makers officially introduced her on social media with a powerful quote: "Introducing MANDARAM. Beauty the world desired.. A soul it never understood." Mandaram is designed to be a bold and powerful woman who does not care about what the rest of the world thinks. She has a highly flammable attitude that matches the bloody and fiery theme of the film. Produced by KK Radhamohan on a massive scale, this intense drama is set on the borders of Telangana and Maharashtra. Bhogi is currently gearing up for a grand worldwide release in multiple languages on



Peddi trailer on MAY 18

Peddi, starring Ram Charan, is gearing up to unveil its much-awaited trailer. The makers today officially announced that the trailer will be released on May 18. With the film aiming for a massive pan-Indian reach, the team is planning an aggressive promotional campaign across North India and other key markets. The makers strongly believe "Peddi" has the potential to connect with audiences beyond regional and language barriers and emerge as a nationwide blockbuster. Directed by Buchi Babu Sana, the rural sports action drama is

scheduled to hit theaters on June 4. With just 23 days left for release, the promotions are now set to shift into high gear starting with the trailer launch event. Following the trailer release, Ram Charan is expected to fully dedicate his time to the film's nationwide promotional activities. "Peddi" has Janhvi Kapoor as the heroine. AR Rahman is scoring the music. The film is produced by Venkata Satish Kilaru on Vriddhi Cinemas banner in association with Mythri Movie Makers and Sukumar Writings.

TRISHA TO JOIN KOLLYWOOD'S BIGGEST MULTISTARRER?

Ulaganayagan Kamal Haasan and Superstar Rajinikanth are joining hands for a prestigious project under the direction of Nelson Dilip Kumar. The project's announcement video stunned everyone big time with both the actors featuring in it, oozing swag, and upping their game. Now, there is an interesting buzz about the film's cast that Trisha will be a part of the movie. Trisha who started scoring hits again after 96 got to be a part of multiple

biggies in the recent past. She is actively doing films in both Telugu and Tamil and has become the star on demand. Already, the biggest multistarrer is drawing a huge buzz in the film circles, and the addition of Trisha will also take the hype to the next level.

As of now, there is no clarity on Trisha's role whether she will be paired with any of the superstars. But, it is heard that the role carries a lot of significance in the film and will surely help to draw crowds to theatres. Anirudh Ravichander is the music director of the movie and an official confirmation on the same is awaited.



Jagapathi Babu Comes Out Of 'Rich Father' Trap

There was a phase when the family hero of the early 2000s, Jagapathi Babu, almost disappeared as a hero. Then came Balakrishna's Legend and everything changed overnight. His villain avatar clicked massively, and from there, Jagapathi became one of the busiest senior actors in Telugu cinema. Though he got busy as a costly character artist, another problem quietly started. Film-makers began repeatedly casting him in the same kind of "rich father" roles. Stylish businessman father. Elite family head. Classy emotional dad. Films like Srimanthudu made that image even stronger, and eventually, the industry simply stopped seeing him beyond that template. Interestingly, Jagapathi himself openly admitted multiple times that he had become bored with both ultra-modern villain roles and repetitive father characters. He even expressed disappointment that younger filmmakers were not considering him for ordinary, grounded characters in small



films. He announced to work even at reduced remuneration if such roles are offered. Finally, he got his thirst met through the film Godari Gattupaina. Inside the film, he plays Shyam Babu, a middle-class Christian father working as a night watchman. No luxury. No designer costumes. No larger-than-life elevation scenes. Just a simple man whose entire world revolves around his daughter, the heroine. While his performance worked out, the lack of a story in the movie and the routine narrative made it a boring watch. Though the film hasn't given relief to the team, Jagapathi might have felt happy for coming out of the rich-father and stylish-villain trap.



Rakul Raises Mercury Levels

One one side we have already seen our dusky siren Pooja Hegde has stunned everyone with her viral bikini looks from the song of the upcoming film, Varun Dhawan starrer, Jawani Hai Tho Ishq Hona Hai. At a time when her curvaceous looks in skimpy outfits are going viral, contrary to her remarks that South demands more navel and midriff show from her, here comes the master stroke from Rakul Preet Singh. In a film that has three heroines, including the likes of Sara Ali Khan and Wamiqa Gabbi, along with Rakul Preet, many thought that the latter wouldn't get a chance to showcase her talents. However, inside the movie Pati Patni Aur Woh Do, which is hitting cinemas this Friday, there's this special sensuous song Angdayi, where Rakul got to show her curvaceous and seductive looks. Slipping into seductive, shimmering blouses and saree-like bottoms that are way below her midriff zone, Rakul has raised mercury levels to the next high. Even before the massive heat wave swept most of India on May 12th, Rakul Preet already brought a massive temperature rise with her extra-spicy dance moves, looks, and titillating glamour. After Pooja Hegde took social media by storm, Rakul's pictures and screen grabs from the song are now going ultra viral.

Well, for any film these days, Rakul Preet is coming up with such songs. Even when she came up with such a spicy song for Ajay Devgan's De De Pyaar De 2, her bra-blowse act became a sensation. Hope this revamped glamour turns into a hit for the 35-year-old actress at the box office.

Venky-Anil Script & Release Date Talk

While pan-India action dramas are dominating headlines, directors like Anil Ravipudi still strongly believe entertainment and comedy can shake the box office bigger than anything else. After delivering a ₹300+ crores gross this Sankranti, through Megastar Chiru's Mana Shankara Varaprasad Garu, he's now coming up with his next dynamite, targeting the same season next year.



The much-talked-about multi-starrer featuring Venkatesh Daggubati and Nandamuri Kalyan Ram is now gearing up to begin shoot from July as per insider reports. After wrapping the script, Anil's team is busy with pre-production work, and the inside buzz itself is sounding explosive. Apparently, the script is loaded with hilarious situational comedy, if Anil Ravipudi manages to transfer that same energy onto screen, theatres could literally erupt with laughter.

Venkatesh is already one of Telugu cinema's finest timing-based entertainers. Already, Anil worked with him twice, on F2 and

F3 movies, so definitely they will be rocking it. On the other hand, Kalyan Ram usually carries a more serious and intense image, and he has to do a lot more comedy now to get into Anil-Venky groove. Guess what, Anil is once again targeting next Sankranti, as he is confident that the film's shooting will be wrapped in just 4 months span. Interestingly, G. V. Prakash Kumar is composing music for the film.

Money Heist 6 Happening: What's Netflix Doing?

It is already known that Netflix is one of the leading OTT platforms, not just in India, but also across the globe. The kind of global content that they create is beyond ordinary, and they are now coming up with something interesting. The latest video footage released by Netflix gives a look at the sixth season of Money Heist, which happens to be one of the most popular action oriented series in the world. A few hours back, Netflix shared a new video trailer for their upcoming show, and this is evidently regarding the



sixth season of Money Heist. Subsequently, this video went viral on social media almost immediately. Apparently, this video is from the extension series of the famous franchise that was created by Netflix earlier. This is a pleasant surprise to everyone, considering the fact that people thought that the fifth season that was released last year would be the final part from

this franchise. However, Netflix appears to have understood the popularity of this show, and that is the reason why they have decided to extend it for another season. This is great news to the followers of the action drama franchise as great things were expected of it in the first place, and finally appears to have understood its full potential.