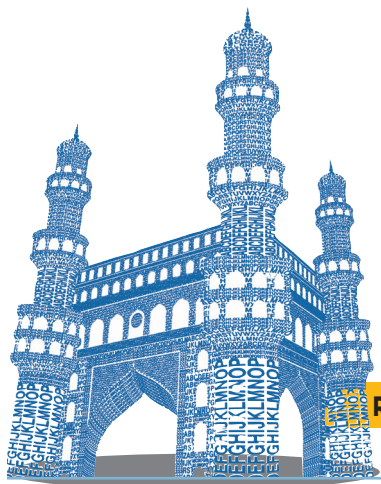




HYDERABAD HEADLINES

RNI NO.APENG/2010/33328

VOL NO.17

ISSUE NO.: 33

RANGAREDDY (HYDERABAD)

PAGES: 12

RS. 1/-

FRIDAY, MAY 29, 2026

WWW.HYDERABADHEADLINES.COM



INVEST IN
WORLD
PEACE

HOME LAND

7

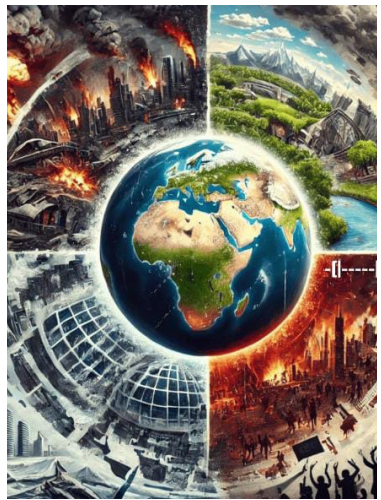
SPIRIT TO
SPOTLIGHT
TRIPTI DIMRI



BOX -OFFICE

12

Record-Level Heat by 2030 is Certain: WMO



ZENIVA

The United Nations' World Meteorological Organization (WMO) has warned that there is a very high chance of a record-breaking hot year being recorded by 2030. It stated that there is an 86% probability that one year between 2026 and 2030 will become the hottest year on record. The organization said that increased carbon emissions caused by the use of fossil fuels, along with the El Niño effect, are the main reasons for this. It also warned that if emissions are not reduced, the situation could become even more dangerous.

Unified Card for every citizen

CM Revanth Reddy orders creation of a one-stop multi-purpose Unified Card with details of all welfare benefits, and other government touch points across departments

AI-based system for dynamic tracking of 360-degree beneficiary data

Unified Card aimed at enabling end-to-end data analytics to power "AI in governance"



Hyderabad, May 28: Chief Minister Shri A. Revanth Reddy ordered officials to take

immediate measures for creating a multi-purpose Unified Card with details of all welfare

benefits and other government touch points across departments embedded. The card would be designed in such a way that it carries details of every individual's benefits drawn across schemes and government departments.

He instructed for initiating a special drive to collect individual and family-oriented data of all citizens in the state. The data collection drive shall act as a precursor to the creation of the first-ever

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2 >



NTR Statue Unveiling a Memorable Occasion

The CM objects criticism on the unveiling of the statue of Congress nemesis NTR
Forme CM NTR groomed many leaders including KCR

CM takes a dig at BRS leaders for criticising installing NTR statue

The People's Government will remain in power until 2034

CM Revanth Reddy unveiled the NTR statue in Hyderabad today

02

"FUTURE CITY PROJECT BEING BUILT TO MATCH GLOBAL STANDARDS"



HYDERABAD, MAY 28

Minister for IT, Industries, and Legislative Affairs Duddilla Sridhar Babu stated that the State government is moving forward with a clear vision to develop the prestigious Future City project into a world-class global city in the future and

every decision and every activity undertaken here is being aligned with global standards.

Sridhar Babu, along with Minister for Revenue, Housing, and Information Ponguleti Srinivasa Reddy, on Thursday visited the under-construction office building of the

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2 >

KTR challenges Congress govt to deliver 20 lakh houses before seeking votes

Hyderabad, May 28: BRS working president K.T. Rama Rao launched a sharp attack on Revenue Minister Ponguleti Srinivasa Reddy over his recent remarks on housing construction in Hyderabad and challenged the Congress government to fulfil its promise of constructing 20 lakh Indiramma houses before seeking votes from the people.

Recalling the Minister's earlier statement that the Congress would seek votes only after providing 20 lakh Indiramma houses, KT Rama Rao questioned whether the Minister has the courage and commitment to stand by his own words. He said making loud challenges and later



escaping responsibility has become a habit for unethical Congress leaders.

In a statement here on Thursday, KTR asserted that mere promises and dramatic declarations are not enough, and demanded that the Congress government prove its sincerity through action.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2 >

BRS TO OPPOSE 'RYTHU DISCOM' PROPOSAL AT ERC PUBLIC HEARING TODAY

Hyderabad, May 28: The Bharat Rashtra Samithi (BRS) is set to take part in a public hearing organised by the Electricity Regulatory Commission (ERC) in Hyderabad on Friday, concerning the Congress government's proposed 'Rythu DISCOM'. A delegation from the BRS, headed by party Working

President KT Rama Rao, will be present at the hearing, which is scheduled to start at 10 am. Other notable attendees will include former energy minister G Jagadish Reddy, former agriculture minister S Niranjana Reddy, and additional senior leaders and elected representatives.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2 >

CM REVANTH'S POLICIES LIKE TUGHLAQ RULE: EATALA



02

Karnataka CM Steps Down

BENGALURU: Marking the end of an era in Karnataka's immediate political landscape, Chief Minister Siddaramaiah on Thursday submitted his formal resignation to the Governor's office, concluding his second high-profile tenure (2023-2026).

The veteran leader handed over his resignation letter to Prabhushankar, the Special Secretary to Governor Thawarchand Gehlot, at the Lok Bhavan in Bengaluru. The submission took place ahead of the Governor's scheduled return from a brief personal visit



to Indore, Madhya Pradesh. Expressing absolute institutional confidence, Siddaramaiah stated it remains the ad-

ministrative responsibility of the Governor to swiftly accept the transition to clear the deck for the state's next leadership.

While the high-stakes exit triggers an immediate change of guard within the ruling Congress party, Siddaramaiah firmly dismissed any speculation regarding his retirement or a shift to national politics. He revealed that he had politely declined an offer from the Congress high command to enter the Rajya Sabha. "With humility, I have told them that I am not interested in national politics, and that I want to continue in State politics," he affirmed, pledging to fight communal forces until his last breath.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2 >

TGIIC's Mega Raidurg e-Auction Rewrites History

Commands Record-Smashing INR 237 Crore Per Acre



HYDERABAD, MAY 28

In a landmark achievement for Telangana's real estate sector, the state's Industrial Infrastructure Corporation (TGIIC) has established an unprecedented benchmark in land value realization. The marquee Raidurg e-auction commanded an exceptional price of approximately INR 237 crore per acre, marking a substantial 70.5% surge above the reserve price of ₹139 crore per acre and setting a new all-time record for the region.

The spectacular outcome was achieved for Plot No. 1A & 1/F, a prime 6.29-acre multi-use land parcel located in the heart of Hyderabad's thriving Raidurg growth corridor. The high-profile auction witnessed extraordinary participation and intense competitive bidding from leading national developers, culminating in a staggering overall transaction value of nearly INR 1,490.73 crore.

Surpassing the previous benchmark from TGIIC's 2025 auction—where prime land reached INR 177 crore per acre—this transaction marks a further increase of ~34%, thereby setting a new gold standard for land pricing in Hyderabad and reinforcing Telangana's emergence as one of India's most attractive investment destinations.

The auction was conducted through the MSTC e-Auction platform, ensuring a transparent, robust, and highly competitive digital bidding process. JLL acted as the exclusive transaction advisor for the landmark transaction.

The record-shattering result is a

strong testament to Telangana's visionary governance, progressive industrial policies, world-class infrastructure creation, and Hyderabad's growing stature as a global investment and innovation hub.

Commenting on the successful auction, Shri. K. Shashanka, IAS, Vice Chairman & Managing Director of TGIIC said:

"The phenomenal response to the Raidurg e-auction is a reflection of the extraordinary confidence that investors and developers have in Hyderabad and Telangana. Achieving a historic price discovery of approximately INR 237 crore per acre for this marquee multi-use land parcel marks a defining moment in the state's growth journey and demonstrates the immense strength of Telangana's investment ecosystem."

"We express our sincere gratitude to the Shri A. Revanth Reddy Hon'ble Chief Minister and Shri D. Sridhar Babu, Hon'ble Minister for Industries & Commerce, Government of Telangana, for their visionary leadership, unwavering support, and relentless focus on creating a transparent, investor-friendly, and future-ready business environment. This landmark achievement further reinforces Hyderabad's position among the most preferred global destinations for investment, infrastructure, and large-scale development."

TGIIC continues to play a pivotal role in catalyzing industrial and infrastructure-led growth across Telangana through strategic land development, transparent alloc

CEMENTING DREAMS WITH SUPERIOR STRENGTH.

GERMAN TECHNOLOGY
ROBOTIC QUALITY CONTROL
TAMPER PROOF PACKING

3 TIMES BETTER

NTR Statue Unveiling a Memorable Occasion

HYDERABAD , MAY 28

Chief Minister Shri A Revanth Reddy is overwhelmed by unveiling the statue of matinee idol and former Chief Minister of erstwhile united Andhra Pradesh NT Rama Rao, popularly known as NTR, in Hyderabad today.

Speaking on the occasion, the Chief Minister said that " Unveiling the statue of NTR, who was affectionately called as Anna (Brother), is a great memory that will remain etched in my mind for a lifetime. It is not merely a statue but also an in-



spiration that rises above the realm of politics"

The CM took strong exception to questioning him for unveiling the statue of Congress party rival NT Rama Rao. The former CM NTR was a leader of whom the nation is proud of him above caste , religion and region.

CM Revanth Reddy noted that NTR groomed numerous leaders including former Chief Minister K Chandrashekhar Rao. The Chief Minister took a dig at KTR, who was christened as Taraka Rama Rao inspired by NTR, for criticising the

statue of NT Rama Rao which was installed in the city. There is no need to pay any heed to the words of such impostors, the CM charged.

CM Revanth Reddy remembered the yeoman services rendered by NTR which included abolishing the Patel-Patwari system and enabled the poor to live with dignity. Launch of fine rice distribution is the continuation of the legacy of "Rs. 2 per kilo rice scheme" introduced by NTR. Saree distribution to the women, giving political opportunities to weaker sections was also the idea of NTR which brought qualita-

tive changes in the lives of people.

The Chief Minister also recalled the valuable contribution of the "3 Gems" - Dr Ambedkar, Indira Gandhi and NTR to the country. We all should seek inspiration from the 3 popular national gems. Babasaheb Ambedkar drafted the Indian Constitution and empowered the poor by granting them the right to vote. Indira Gandhi introduced land reforms, distributed land to the poor, and secured their rights. NTR was a leader defined by integrity, honesty, and an iron will. These three national gems will undoubtedly continue

to be remembered. " Indira Gandhi is a generation and NTR an era "

The decisions taken by the People's Government and the delivery of people centric governance are the reflection of the spirit of Indira Gandhi and NTR, the CM said that the government was already striving to empower one crore women to become Millionaires. It was Rajiv Gandhi who introduced women's reservation and NTR implemented in true spirit.

Stating that his government was working to elevate the farmer to the status of King, CM Revanth Reddy

listed numerous schemes including filling 65,000 government posts, Rs 60,000 crore spent on women welfare. The Chief Minister sought the cooperation of people and reiterated that the People's Government will remain in power until 2034.

The CM reaffirmed that Hyderabad is being developed at international standard and the Bharat Future City will be developed in 30,000 acres. Global corporate companies have been invited to invest in the Future City which will create employment opportunities for the youth.

Venkaiah Naidu hails Suravaram Pratapareddy as pioneer of Telugu Renaissance



HYDERABAD, MAY 28

Former Vice President of India Muppavarapu Venkaiah Naidu on Thursday described Suravaram Pratapareddy as a multifaceted genius and a pioneering force behind the Telugu renaissance, stating that he played a historic role in awakening social consciousness during the Nizam era. Speaking at the 130th birth anniversary celebrations of Suravaram Pratapareddy held at the Suravaram Pratapareddy Auditorium in Basheerbagh here, Venkaiah Naidu said that at a time when people feared even speaking Telugu under Nizam rule, Pratapareddy boldly founded Golconda Patrika and worked tirelessly for the cultural and literary awakening of Telugu society.

The event was organised by the Suravaram Pratapareddy Sahitya Vajjayanthi Trust under the chairmanship of Pro-

fessor Elluri Siva Reddy.

Venkaiah Naidu said Suravaram Pratapareddy was among the greatest personalities produced by the Telugu community and recalled that the names of Kandukuri Veesalingam, Gurajada Apparao and Suravaram Pratapareddy immediately come to mind while speaking about Telugu heritage. Highlighting his literary contributions, Naidu said Pratapareddy compiled the landmark Golkonda Kavula Sanchika, documenting the biographies of 354 Telangana poets to counter claims that Telangana had no literary tradition. He termed the work "a historical mirror of Telangana's literary heritage."

Expressing concern over the present media environment, Venkaiah Naidu criticised sections of the media for succumbing to political influence, neglecting public issues and spreading falsehoods. He

warned that democracy would weaken if journalistic values declined.

Speaking at the event, Telangana State Media Academy Chairman K. Srinivas Reddy recalled that Suravaram Pratapareddy established Golconda newspaper in 1926, describing it as a revolutionary achievement during a period when Telugu lacked institutional support in the Hyderabad State. Writer Nandini Sidda Reddy, who received the Suravaram Pratapareddy Award at the function, described him as a visionary who led Telangana society from darkness towards enlightenment and emerged as a torchbearer of the Telugu language and culture. Dr. Varaprasad praised Suravaram Pratapareddy as a rare visionary who dedicated his life to preserving and promoting Telugu culture despite linguistic discrimination during the Nizam period.

Devotional News Post: Post-Ceremony Reflections on the Pradosham Rudrabhishek

MEDCHAL-MALKAJGIRI, MAY 28

In the gentle hush that follows a blessed evening, the Pradosham Rudrabhishek at the Kashi Vishwanath Temple in 7th Phase, KPHB Colony, concluded with hearts quietly lifted in gratitude. The sacred observance, held on the 28th of May, 2026, drew devotees to the temple precincts to honor Lord Kashi Vishwanath and Lord Nandishwar through ceremonial ablutions and devotion.

A Sacred Conclusion and Fresh Beginnings: The Rudrabhishek, performed during the Pradosham ceremony, offered a time-honored practice of purification and renewal. As water and sacred substances were poured over the divine forms, many felt a cleansing of burdens and a release from lingering doshas, inviting a renewed sense of peace and spiritual clarity.

Devotion as a Path to Health and Harmony: Beyond the rites, devotees carried the belief that the act of worship brings not only spiritual merit but also holistic well-being. The blessings invoked during the rite were seen as a balm for mind, body, and spirit, fostering a sense of harmony that lingers beyond the temple walls.

Inner Reflection and Forgiveness: The evening's program encouraged quiet introspection—acknowledging faults, seeking forgiveness, and renewing commitments to faith. In this reflective space, many found a gentle invitation to realign their hearts with steadfast devotion and compassion.

Community and Shared Blessings:



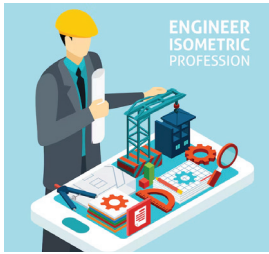
Attendees from the local community and visiting devotees shared the experience, reinforcing a sense of togetherness in devotion. The temple's inclusive invitation reminded all participants that sacred practice is most transformative when carried forward with humility, gratitude, and service to others.

Grace of Lord Vishwanath and Lord Nandishwar: As the last chants faded, the collective prayer lingered: may the divine grace of Lord Vishwanath and Lord Nandishwar bless every seeker with peace, healing, and renewed faith. The evening's blessings encouraged continued devotion, mindful living, and a heart open to transformative grace.

Pradosham Rite: Sacred De-

tails and Reverence: Pradosham Rudrabhishek was performed for the Lord Kashi Vishwanath and Lord Nandishwar with Vedic mantras, following the traditional invocation and hymns. The ceremony was richly adorned with Milk, turmeric, saffron, coconut water, and aromatic water offerings to honor the deities. Later, Lord Kashi Vishwanath and Lord Nandishwar was dressed in silk clothes and garnished with flowers, with incense lamp offerings presented to both Lord Shiva and Lord Nandishwar, marking a fitting culmination to the rites. A large assembly of devotees participated, gathered at the sacred places of Lord Kashi Vishwanath and Lord Nandishwar to witness and receive blessings.

Times Engg Institute Ranks--TS



Hyderabad, May 28 (NSS): ICFAI Tech, Hyderabad, has secured 8th rank in the Times All India Engineering Institute s Ranking Survey 2026. Anurag University and Gokaraju Rangaraju Institute of Engineering and Technology, both of Hyderabad, have jointly bagged the 20th rank. Vardhman College of Engineering, Hyderabad, has been placed at 28th place.

The ranking was determined through a multi-phase methodology comprising three key modules: desk research, perceptual survey, and Factual Survey (participatory survey).

Andhrapradesh

KL University, Guntur, has the distinction of bagging the second slot in the Ranking. Vignan's foundation for Science, technology & Research (Deemed to be University), Guntur, has secured the 17th place. SRM University-AP, Amaravati, has been placed in 21st rank.

CONTINUATION FROM PAGE 1

CM REVANTH'S POLICIES LIKE TUGHLAQ RULE, SAYS BJP MP EATALA

Hyderabad, May 28: BJP MP Eatala Rajender on Thursday launched a scathing attack on the Telangana government, comparing Chief Minister Revanth Reddy's policies to the "erratic rule of Tughlaq". During the BJP's "Rythu Gosa – BJP Bharosa" tour in Nirmal district, Rajender alleged that farmers across the region were suffering due to poor procurement management and unrealistic crop purchase limits. Farmers were forced to wait for transport and procurement facilities and that the tenant farmers were facing hardships because of biometric verification rules linked to landowners, he remarked. Questioning the government's handling of maize, white sorghum and sunflower procurement, Rajender demanded that the Congress government fulfil its promise of purchasing every grain produced by farmers.

Participating in this tour were BJP Legisla-



tive party leader A Maheshwar Reddy; MLAs Ramarao Patel, Harish Reddy and Venkatramireddy; MLCs Malka Komaraiah, Anji Reddy, and AVN Reddy; along with local BJP leaders.

BRS TO OPPOSE 'RYTHU DISCOM' PROPOSAL AT ERC PUBLIC HEARING TODAY

>FROM PAGE 1

The BRS has alleged that the Congress government is seeking to implement policies that could harm farmers and the state's electricity sector under the pretense of creating a separate DISCOM for agriculture. The party intends to present its objections to the proposal at the ERC and express its concerns regarding the effects on Telangana's agricultural community and power sector.

“FUTURE CITY PROJECT BEING BUILT TO ...

Future City Development Authority (FCDA) under the prestigious "Future City" project and reviewed the ongoing works.

Speaking on the occasion, Sridhar Babu said that a decision would soon be taken regarding the inauguration of the Future City Development Authority office by Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy on June 2 or 3. He stated that the visit was conducted to inspect the progress of works ahead of the inauguration. The Minister said that strong foundations are currently being laid for modern infrastructure and developments in the coming days, and assured that the government would complete the Future City project rapidly during its tenure and fulfill the promises made to the people.

Sridhar Babu further stated that the government's objective is to make Future City a globally influential urban center. "Plans are already underway to establish a Police Commissionerate and operate government offices with a global presence from this location," he said. The Minister also emphasised the importance being given to youth skill development and mentioned that the Young India Skills University has been established through special legislation. Minister Ponguleti Srinivasa Reddy stated that under the leadership of Chief Minister Revanth Reddy, the government is firmly committed to the construction of Future City as a highly prestigious project.

KTR challenges Congress govt to deliver 20 lakh houses before seeking votes

>FROM PAGE 1

He challenged the ruling party to publicly pledge that it would implement every single promise made in its election manifesto if it truly possesses commitment and credibility.

"Do not make hollow oaths. If you have the capability, fulfil your promises and show results to the people," KTR said.

He reminded that the BRS government had built houses with dignity and self-respect for the poor and transformed the dream of home ownership into reality for lakhs of families. He stated that while Congress speaks about tiny "box houses," the BRS government constructed quality double-bedroom homes that became a model for the country.

KTR highlighted that BRS constructed nearly one lakh double-bedroom houses in Hyderabad alone and said each house built by the previous

BRS government was equivalent in quality and scale to seven so-called Indiramma houses proposed by the Congress.

"Our party built houses of dignity and pride. We did not construct matchbox houses with poor standards. We built spacious and respectable homes for the poor and created a model admired across the country," he stated.

Throwing an open challenge to the Congress government, KTR said if the government truly has sincerity and administrative capability, it should build even better double-bedroom housing projects in Hyderabad instead of merely making allegations against the previous government.

The BRS working president strongly criticised the Congress government for demolishing houses in the name of governance while failing to construct new housing for the poor.

Karnataka CM Steps Down

>FROM PAGE 1

Reflection on a Five-Decade 'Accidental' Journey

Addressing a packed press conference—flanked by Deputy Chief Minister and chief ministerial aspirant D.K. Shivakumar—Siddaramaiah struck a deeply reflective note. Walking down memory lane, the 78-year-old leader described himself as an "accidental politician" emerging from a modest rural background with no prior family lineage in public life.

Tracing a remarkable near 50-year trajectory that began as a taluk board member in 1978 and a legislator in 1983, his career saw him rise to become a Minister, Deputy Chief Minister, Leader of the Opposition, and ultimately a two-term Chief Minister (2013–2018 and 2023–2026). He credited a crucial 2006 meeting with Sonia Gandhi, facilitated by the late Ahmed Patel, for paving his entry into the Congress

fold.

Invoking the iconic Kannada actor Dr. Rajkumar's phrase abhimani devaru (fan gods), Siddaramaiah expressed deep gratitude to the electorate. "I am a politician. Constitution is my religion, and voters are my abhimani devaru," he stated, adding that his entire career was enabled by the constitutional frameworks authored by Dr. B.R. Ambedkar.

Defending the Fiscal Record and 'Bhagya' Guarantees

A significant portion of the outgoing Chief Minister's address was dedicated to robustly defending his administration's economic legacy, specifically hitting back at critics and Prime Minister Narendra Modi for running what he termed a "misinformation campaign" against the state's flagship welfare guarantees.

Siddaramaiah noted that his government spent over ₹1.4

lakh crore on its five signature guarantee schemes, fulfilling 300 out of more than 550 promises made in the 2023 manifesto. He strongly refuted narratives that these welfare layouts had drained the state treasury, presenting hard macroeconomic data to back his claims:

Economic Growth: Karnataka registered an 8.1% GDP growth rate this year, outperforming the national average of 7.1%.

Fiscal Metrics: The state ranks first in per capita income and holds the second-highest spot nationally in GST collections.

Prudent Management: The state's fiscal deficit stands at 2.85%, comfortably below the 3% ceiling mandated by the Karnataka Fiscal Responsibility Act, 2002. Furthermore, total liabilities sit at 24.94% of the GSDP, staying within the legal 25% boundary.

While acknowledging a revenue deficit of ₹19,500 crore, Siddaramaiah squarely laid the blame on the previous BJP state administration's financial mismanagement and a systemic shortfall in central fund devolution. He specifically flagged that the Union Government withheld ₹11,495 crore in earmarked grants alongside ₹5,300 crore designated for the Upper Bhadra project.

The Question of Succession

Despite the visible presence of D.K. Shivakumar by his side, Siddaramaiah carefully desisted from dropping any names regarding his immediate successor. When pressed by reporters on who would take the helm next, the outgoing leader maintained strict party discipline.

"Whoever is chosen by the high command and the Congress legislature party will become the next chief minister," he concluded.

Unified Card for every citizen

>FROM PAGE 1

AI-based profiling system for dynamic tracking of 360-degree beneficiary data.

The Chief Minister, along with Hon'ble Minister D. Sridhar Babu, held a meeting with Chief Secretary K. Ramakrishna Rao and other senior officials on Wednesday. During the meeting, the CM laid out a detailed plan to implement the project to create a Unified Card that serves as a one-stop solution to track welfare delivery profile of every individual.

The Chief Minister emphasized on the need to make full use of artificial intelligence (AI) for eliminating duplication of benefits to individuals, to reduce bureaucratic delay

in extending benefits, and to eliminate human interface. With this, delivery of welfare benefits can be further strengthened and identifying ineligible individuals is eased.

The Chief Minister instructed for issuance of the Unified Cards by the IT department instead of creation of cards by individual departments. He asked officials to utilise services of young government officials well-versed with technology.

The Unified Card shall comprise the overall profile of the individuals with data-points across welfare-centric departments including AarogyaSri, Chief Minister's Relief Fund (CMRF), Fees Reimbursement, Labour

and Education. He asked to explore, if needed, creating a state-level unique identity number on the lines of Aadhar. The data from the Socio-Economic, Education, Employment, Political and Caste (SEEEPC) Survey should also be merged with the Unified Card profile.

In addition to the beneficiary details, profiling of contract and outsourcing employees in the government should also be considered.

The CM shared an example use-case for the AI-based profiling system — ensuring that issuance of Death Certificate is automatically routed to the database pertaining to Cheyutha pensions.

The comprehensive health

profile of individuals should be integrated with the Unified Card profiling system, he added.

He asked officials to study best practices in handling the migration of citizens to the Middle East, from states like Kerala. The profiling system should be able to provide a centralised view of the state's skilling and training initiatives, as well as issuance of Passports and Visas. The objective is to reduce the involvement of unauthorised persons and agents in the migration ecosystem.

Overall, the Unified Card should be designed for ease in assessing the welfare delivery for the poor, the Chief Minister said.



SHORT
TAKES

"Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat" Strengthening Cultural Bonds: Governor Shukla

HYDERABAD: *Telangana Governor Shiv Pratap Shukla said the Centre's "Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat" initiative is playing a key role in strengthening cultural ties between the states and bringing the Northeastern region closer to rest of the country through enhanced connectivity and exchanges. Addressing the students under the "Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat - Yuva Sangam Phase-6" programme organised by the Ministry of Education, the Governor interacted with 50 students from Indian Institute of Management, Shillong at Lok Bhavan here on Thursday. On this occasion, the Governor said the initiative promotes mutual understanding of India's diverse cultures, traditions, languages and lifestyles, while encouraging youth participation in strengthening national unity and integrity. Officials briefed the visiting students about Telangana's history, culture and development. Special Chief Secretary to Governor M. Dana Kishore, NIT Warangal professors Kiran Kumar and Sunil Kumar, Professor Perugu Shyam and Professor Hariprasad Reddy participated in the programme. Besides, Colonel Abhishek Singh, Group Commander of the National Security Guard (NSG), Mumbai 28 Special Composite Group.*

UCC not against religion and caste: BJP

HYDERABAD

BJP State President N Ramchander Rao today emphasised that Uniform Civil Code (UCC) should also be implemented in Telangana state as this law would provide legal property rights and adoption rights to women and children in the country.

Rao was speaking as chief guest at the party's cadre training camp organized under the "Pandit Deendayal Upadhyaya Shikshan Maha Abhiyan" at Moinaba in Ranga Reddy district. He said that these training sessions are being conducted to provide workers with a complete understanding of the party's ideology and policies along-side changing times.

UCC was not against any religion or caste. Because of this law women and children in the country will get legal property rights and adoption rights. While exempting the culture and traditions of Scheduled Tribes (Tribals), a single civil law would apply to everyone else in the country. Women across the nation have welcomed Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who delivered justice to Muslim women by abolishing Triple Taluq," Rao reminded.

BJP state chief clarified that just as they achieved the abolition of Article 370 which was part of the BJP's ideology and manifesto, the Uniform Civil Code (UCC) is equally necessary for the country. He noted that states like Uttarakhand, Goa, and Assam have already brought in this law and lauded the decision taken



by the Assam government as highly commendable.

Rao welcomed the verdict of the Apex court on Special intensive Revision (SIR) and alleged that opposition parties have carried malicious propaganda over Voters' List Purification (SIR). He lashed out at the Congress, BRS, and Majlis parties for spreading false propaganda against the decision taken by the Election Commission of India to remove fake and deceased voters. He mocked that those who remained silent when this purification happened 10 times during the previous Congress regimes were now searching for excuses in EVMs and SIRs out of fear of defeat.

He further alleged that the mentality of both Congress and BRS was the same accusing leaders of both parties of supporting disruptive forces

that instigate youth to burn down railway stations and government properties.

Rao criticized that while the previous BRS government deceived the unemployed and students, the current Congress government is also playing with the future of students and youth by not providing jobs and failing to pay fee reimbursement dues. He slammed the Congress government for failing to properly deliver the promised Rs 15,000 Rythu Bharosa to farmers, adding that the government was in an incompetent state which was unable to disburse salaries on the first of the month, fails to give pensions and benefits to employees and retired staff.

He expressed grief that due to recent unseasonal rains, the paddy, maize, and jowar of farmers at various purchase centers were complete-

ly soaked and farmers are weeping with no one to buy their produce. Rao criticized the Congress government for breaking its promise of "buying until the last grain" and shifting its incompetence onto the Center. BJP state chief warned that although the BJP's 'Rythu Gosa - BJP Bharosa' yatra for farmers' rights concluded in Nirmal (Sarangapur), the BJP's struggle will not stop until justice is done to the farmers. He warned that they would not tolerate attempts to scare BJP leaders and workers with false cases and house arrests.

He praised Prime Minister Narendra Modi for creating a new record by delivering corruption-free and pro-people welfare governance in this country. He expressed optimism that despite the global economic crisis, India was surging ahead economical-

ly and would soon reach the third position and with PM Modi's vision, we will achieve 'Viksit Bharat' and stand first in the world.

He pointed out that the Center has allocated around Rs 13 lakh crore to Telangana over the last 12 years. He noted that 5 kg of free rice every month, National Highways, the Central Tribal University in Mulugu, AIIMS in Bibinagar, Warangal-Adilabad airports, and the revival of the Ramagundam Fertilizer Factory, along with Jan Dhan accounts, were all made possible only because of PM Modi.

Rao said that the BJP, built on the hard work and sacrifices of workers and many senior leaders, is today transforming from a disciplined 'cadre-based' party into a 'mass-based' party by reaching deep into the public. He asserted that youth, women, IT employees, and intellectuals in Telangana, who are fed up with Congress and BRS, are desiring a new political change and that trust is the BJP.

BJP state chief called upon all the workers in Ranga Reddy district to put aside differences, coordinate with each other and move forward unitedly with a grand objective to establish a "Double-Engine Government" here, as BJP is certain to come to power in Telangana in the coming days. Asking the cadre to take the lessons learned in these training classes to the public, he concluded his speech with slogans of "Bharat Mata Ki Jai" and "Jai Shri Ram".

Kazipet Rail Manufacturing Unit Nears Completion, to Manufacture Intercity Trains: Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw



HYDERABAD

The Kazipet Rail Manufacturing Unit of Indian Railways is nearing completion and will soon begin manufacturing intercity trains, Union Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw announced. Union Minister of State for Railways Ravneet Singh Bittu, along with senior officials, reviewed the plans to operationalise the facility. The Kazipet unit is being developed as a versatile railway rolling stock manufacturing facility. Initially, it will manufacture 200 intercity trains over the next five years.

These trains are being designed for short-distance travel with frequent stops, typically covering routes of around 300 kilometres. The services are expected to improve connectivity between towns and nearby cities, benefiting students, daily commuters, patients and workers. Railway officials said the trains would provide an affordable and convenient intercity travel option, functioning like shuttle services connecting ad-

jacent urban centres across the country.

The new trains will feature modern facilities including automatic door-closing systems, superior ventilation and enhanced coach safety design. Each train will consist of 20 coaches, with two toilets provided in every coach, one at each end. The intercity trains will also be equipped with modern jerk-free couplers and advanced bogies, and are being designed to operate at speeds of up to 130 kmph.

In addition, the trains will feature regenerative braking technology, enabling them to generate electricity during braking and feed the regenerated power back into the grid. Railway officials said this would improve energy efficiency and significantly reduce carbon emissions compared to road transport.

The Railways expects the large-scale introduction of these trains to strengthen green and clean public transport capacity across the country while encouraging a shift of local passenger traffic from roads to railways.

Adverse Effect of 'El Nino' on Agricultural Sector

For generations, Indian agriculture has depended on the monsoons. Crops grow well only when the rains fall in a timely manner and the monsoons are spread evenly. Uncertain conditions arise when the ecological balance is disturbed. With experts predicting that the El Nino effect may be the main cause of such uncertainty, the farmers are living in a state of fear. Adverse weather changes are taking place around the world. Climate change is causing many adverse effects, including rising temperatures, droughts, untimely rains, floods, storms, global warming, carbon emissions, extreme heat waves, water scarcity, rising sea levels, food

that the El Niño that forms in May is likely to strengthen by August and form a Super El Niño. It should be noted that the effects of El Niño can cause high temperatures, adverse changes in rainfall, sea storms, and droughts.

El Nino effect on Rainfall

According to the latest report by Skymet Weather, India is likely to experience below-normal monsoon in 2026. The June-September 2026 season is expected to receive 6 percent below-normal rainfall (94 percent of the long-term average). The study by the agency has revealed that the monsoon may weaken in the second season,

ton/groundnut, an increase in pest infestation (sucking aphids, whitefly, powdery mildew), and drying up of ponds/wells/marshlands due to water shortage. Farmers should take appropriate precautions to withstand the effect of El Niño. They should choose crops like sorghum, millets, pulses, and small grains that grow well with adequate water. Mulching should be followed to conserve moisture in the soil. It is advisable to use fertilizers and organic matter according to the soil composition. As part of crop protection, timely spraying of pesticides should be done as per the instructions of agricultural officials to prevent pests. Horticultural farmers can get some relief through micro-irrigation. It should be noted that due to the effect of El Niño, there will be a shortage of fertilizers like urea due to low rainfall and wars. In the coming days, farmers should increase awareness about the effect of El Niño and focus on suitable crops. It should be known that burning crop residues can have serious side effects such as damaging soil fertility, reducing yields, and not getting the desired benefits even after applying fertilizers.

The sun is already shining. Untimely rains are fueling the cries of the farmers. The harvest has fallen on the ground. Fruits are falling in the orchards. The farmer who has worked hard for six months is shedding tears. The farmer is suffering from excessive rain, drought, and untimely rain and hail. If the Super El Nino strengthens in the coming days, like pepper sprinkled on the tree, drought may dance in the dark. Food insecurity may reign. If we do not understand the causes of such adverse weather changes and make efforts to stop them, the world humanity may be bound in the shackles of crisis and breathe its last with sighs. Let us not ignore these situations and start taking measures to face the coming droughts from today itself, and let us pray for a healthy climate for tomorrow from today itself.

— Prof. Burra Madhusudan Reddy
9949700037



insecurity, increased environmental pollution, increased human migration, loss of biodiversity, and fluctuations in rainfall. Meteorologists have warned that if climate change is not stopped, the lives of humanity worldwide will surely be in grave crisis.

Adverse Effects of Super El Nino

The report has revealed the bitter truth that the strongest El Niño may form on the planet this year. The warming of the waters in the Pacific Ocean above normal is called "El Niño". An increase in sea water temperatures by 2.5 degrees Celsius above normal is called a "Super El Niño". The report clarified that El Niño may cause adverse weather changes from June 2026, with temperatures rising sharply and abnormal monsoon movements. It is estimated that the direction of the winds may change due to the effect of El Niño and fuel adverse weather changes. It is known

'We are preparing a development plan'

HYDERABAD

Senior leaders from erstwhile Adilabad district, including former minister Boda Janardhan, join TRS party

Hyderabad: Telangana Rakshana Sena Chief Kalvakuntla Kavitha said that they are preparing a development plan that will transform the lives of all sections of Telangana and that it would bring revolutionary changes in the state.

Senior leader and former minister Boda Janardhan from the erstwhile Adilabad district, along with his followers, joined the TRS party. On Thursday, they were welcomed into the party with party scarves at the Telangana Rakshana Sena office in Banjara Hills.

Speaking on the occasion, Kavitha said that the joining of Boda Janardhan, who has vast political experience, would further strengthen the TRS party. She noted that Janardhan had served as Labour Minister and RTC Chairman at a young age and had worked extensively for Singareni and RTC workers. She assured that he would be given due importance in the party according to his stature.

She strongly criticized Chief Minister Revanth Reddy for allegedly behaving harshly and unjustly toward Singareni and RTC workers.

Development Plan for All Sections

Kavitha said that Telangana Rakshana Sena was formed to create a new political direction



in Telangana politics. She stated that they are seriously working on a comprehensive development plan aimed at changing the destiny of all Telangana communities and that it would be announced soon.

She claimed that the proposed plan would bring revolutionary changes to Telangana. The party, she said, was established to build an egalitarian society and would certainly become the people's own party.

Kavitha stated that the party follows the principle of "Question, Fight, and Resolve." While some only question and others only agitate, their party would continue until issues are completely resolved.

She recalled that 25 issues raised during the "Janam Bata" program had already been resolved. She mentioned that after they questioned the Palamuru-Rangareddy project, the Chief Minister reviewed it and

assured that works would begin without further agitations. Similarly, she said that a bridge pending for 35 years in Nalgonda was taken up after being highlighted during the Janam Bata program.

"Irreparable Injustice to Workers"

Kavitha alleged that the Revanth government has deceived workers across sectors including Singareni and RTC. She criticized the government's claim that fixing minimum wages was unprecedented.

She pointed out that six years ago, when Revanth Reddy was the Malkajigiri MP, he had written to the then Chief Minister demanding a minimum wage of ₹20,000 for workers. However, after becoming Chief Minister, he fixed wages at ₹16,000 for the same category of workers.

She called this a betrayal of

workers, saying that after six years, wages were effectively reduced by ₹4,000 instead of increased. Kavitha also accused the government of exploiting Singareni workers and engaging in corruption by spending excessively on projects. She alleged that Congress was weakening dependent jobs that Telangana had secured after state formation. She criticized INTUC and its affiliated groups for suppressing workers' rights. She expressed confidence that with Boda Janardhan joining, their HMS union would gain strength in Singareni and intensify the fight for workers' rights.

"No Sign of RTC Merger"

Kavitha alleged that the Revanth government was also neglecting RTC workers. She criticized the government for delaying the merger of RTC into the government despite

making promises for over two and a half years.

She stated that the issue was not addressed even after RTC driver Raju Goud allegedly sacrificed his life. She also referred to an incident where an RTC driver was reportedly dismissed for advising Congress leaders protesting fuel prices to first procure paddy.

She said the government backed down only after protests were launched, calling it an intolerant and harsh administration unable to handle criticism. With the support of former RTC Chairman Boda Janardhan, she said the party would continue fighting for RTC workers as well. "Kavitha Thinks Beyond NTR and KCR" — Boda Janardhan

Former minister Boda Janardhan said that it takes great courage for a woman leader to launch a party and fight for public issues.

He noted that NTR came to power with the slogan of "food, shelter, and clothing," while KCR came with "water, funds, and jobs." He claimed that Kavitha, through her "Panchajanyam" vision based on five major principles, had thought beyond both leaders.

He said he joined the TRS party after being impressed by Kavitha's manifesto and added that Telangana would witness significant development under a woman Chief Minister.

He pledged to work hard to strengthen the TRS and intensify the struggle against the Congress government.

Damodar Raja Narasimha inspected the advance arrangements for the inauguration of the TIMS

HYDERABAD

The minister personally reviewed the modern equipment, medical facilities, infrastructure, laboratories, and blood bank established at the internationally developed TIMS hospital. Minister Damodar Raja Narasimha directed engineering officials to complete the ongoing civil works at a rapid pace. He instructed officials to establish separate boys' and girls' hostel blocks for doctors within the hospital premises. Necessary toilet blocks should be arranged for both outpatients and inpatients visiting the hospital.

A multi-level parking system should be developed to avoid traffic problems within the



hospital premises. The minister also instructed officials to establish a dharmashala (rest house) for attendants of patients and set up two canteens in the hospital. He directed that the administrative building and the TB Hospital Board office works be com-

pleted quickly. Officials were instructed to establish a police outpost at the hospital's main entrance. The minister ordered continuous maintenance services such as drainage, sanitation, and water supply in the internationally developed hospital. He also

directed officials to create advanced interiors and lounges within the hospital. Special emphasis should be placed on modern facilities in the blocks designated for foreign patients. A committee consisting of the DME, HoD, and engineering officials of the Telangana Medical Infrastructure Development Corporation was formed to oversee the establishment of an international-standard laboratory in the hospital. The minister instructed officials to prepare estimates for the continuation works necessary to fully operationalize the TIMS hospital. After the field inspection of the TIMS hospital, the minister conducted a review meeting in the proposed administrative

building regarding hospital management, provision of better medical services, and speedy completion of civil works. He provided guidance to state health department officials regarding government objectives, hospital administration, and improvement of healthcare services.

During the visit to TIMS Hospital, State Health Principal Secretary Dr. Christina Z. Chongthu, Director of Medical Education Dr. Narendra Kumar, Telangana Medical Infrastructure Development Corporation MD Hanumanthu, NIMS Director Dr. Beerappa, R&B engineering official Rajeshwar Reddy, and other state health department officials participated.





Kolkata to host PM Modi for International Yoga Day event

Kolkata is set to host the main celebrations for the International Day of Yoga (IDY) 2026, with Prime Minister Narendra Modi likely to participate in the event on June 21. Announcing the theme for this year's Yoga Day, "Yoga for Healthy Ageing", Union Minister Prataprao Jadhav said the focus would be on highlighting yoga's role in promoting physical health, mental well-being and healthy ageing. The announcement was made during Yoga Mahotsav 2026, organised at the UNESCO World Heritage Site of the Western Group of Temples in Khajuraho, marking the beginning of the 25-day countdown to IDY 2026. On the occasion, the Union Minister relaunched the Yoga Sangam Portal to facilitate online registrations and encourage greater public participation in the celebrations. He also launched the Yoga Park Portal, aimed at supporting the creation of dedicated yoga spaces across states and institutions.

Adhikari Performs Gau Puja At ISKCON Visit

MAYAPUR/ KOLKATA: In a visit that carried both spiritual and political significance, West Bengal Chief Minister Suwendu Adhikari on Thursday went to the ISKCON headquarters in Nadia district, where he performed 'gau puja' and interacted with monks. Dressed in a traditional white dhoti-kurta, Adhikari walked barefoot to the ISKCON 'gaushala' (cow shelter) in the sprawling temple complex around 11.30 am, and offered prayers as part of a special 'gau seva' programme. He fed fruits and sweets to the cows, took part in a 'yagna', and later visited the Chandradoya temple for prayers and interactions with monks and members of the ISKCON management.

Berger Team Continues Second Day Inspection at Polavaram Project

POLAVARAM, MAY 28:

Foreign expert Sean Hinchberger continued his visit to the Polavaram Project for the second consecutive day Thursday along with officials of the Central and State Water Resources Departments. Following the field inspection, an extensive review meeting was conducted. While Berger inspected Gap-1 and Gap-2 of the diaphragm wall on the first day, the second day's visit focused on the borrow earth being used in the construction of the Earth-cum-Rock Fill (ECRF) Dam. He spent nearly an hour examining the area where the soil is being stored and enquired about the locations from where it had been collected. He also sought details regarding the tests being conducted before the soil is used in the project works. Officials informed him that the soil is being utilized only after all necessary tests are completed and after certification by the Central Soil and Materials Research Station (CSMRS) under the



Government of India. They further explained that internal quality checks are also carried out before the material is put to use. Later, a review meeting was held under the chairmanship of Central Water Commission Chief Engineer Sarabjit Singh Bakshi. The meeting was attended by CWC Director Manish Rathore, Deputy Directors Ashwani Kumar Verma and Gaurav Tiwari, Water Resources Department Deputy Commissioner Gaurav Singhai, CSMRS scientists Sachin Gupta and Ravi Agarwal, Polavaram Project Authority Chief Executive Officer

Sanjeev Vohra, Member Secretary M. Raghuram, Chief Engineer M. Ramesh Kumar, Andhra Pradesh Water Resources Department Advisor M. Venkateswara Rao, Engineer-in-Chief K. Narasimha Murthy, Superintending Engineer R. Ramachandra Rao, Megha Engineering and Infrastructures Limited (MEIL) Chief General Manager Rafi, Polavaram Project General Manager A. Gangadhar, Deputy General Manager Murali Pammi and several other officials. During the review meeting, officials gave a PowerPoint presentation explaining the use of borrow earth

in the ECRF dam works, the retaining wall being constructed for strengthening the G & G Hill, and the plan proposed for dewatering the stored water. Representatives of the State Water Resources Department and MEIL clarified the queries raised by Berger and Central Water Commission officials during the discussions. Meanwhile, the inspection and testing activities being carried out by the Central Soil and Materials Research Station (CSMRS) team at the Polavaram Project concluded on Thursday. In view of the ongoing ECRF works, CSMRS experts Sid-

dharth P. Hedavu, Sri Hari T. Nair and Gaurav Pandey continued their technical tests at the project site. On Thursday, they conducted tests in the Gap-2 area, primarily to assess whether the rock-filled section could withstand water flow conditions. Similar tests were also carried out in areas where soil and sand had been used. The testing activities were attended by Water Resources Department DEs D. Srinivas, Srikanth and Vijay Kumar, MEIL Polavaram Project GM A. Gangadhar, DGMS Murali Pammi and Guttapati Shankaraya, along with other officials.

Punjab CM launches menstrual health curriculum for 3.4 lakh schoolgirls

Punjab has begun a phased rollout of its menstrual health curriculum for girls in government schools across all 23 districts. Backed by teacher training and pilot feedback, the programme seeks to normalise period conversations in classrooms.



On the occasion of Menstrual Hygiene Day on May 28, the state government announced the phased expansion of the 'Menstrual Hygiene Curriculum' across government high and senior secondary schools in all 23 districts of Punjab. The first session under the curriculum will be conducted on May 29. According to an official statement, the initiative will directly benefit more than 3.4 lakh girl students from classes 6 to 10 studying in over 3,600 government schools across the state.

The government said the programme aims to address an issue that has traditionally remained surrounded by silence, hesitation, myths and social stigma. The statement added that the programme aligns with the spirit of the Supreme Court of India's observation recognising that menstrual health and hygiene are directly linked to dignity, education and equality for adolescent girls. The Punjab government has launched the programme in collaboration with WASH United, an international non-profit organisation working globally on menstrual health education and awareness.

Under the initiative, schools will conduct special classroom sessions through a structured curriculum in Punjabi so that students can connect with the content in a relatable and comfortable manner. The sessions use interactive storytelling centred around the curriculum's main character, Ruby, a 10-year-old girl. The lessons focus on helping students understand menstruation and bodily changes, maintain hygiene, build confidence and self-esteem, and create supportive school

and peer environments. The government has already trained around 7,200 teachers across Punjab to conduct these sessions. According to the statement, the programme follows a structured three-session intervention model that includes story-based learning and age-appropriate menstrual health education. To prepare for the rollout, the government first trained around 100 state resource persons as Master Trainers. Authorities later organised cascade training sessions across districts to prepare teachers from thousands of government schools. The government expanded the initiative after encouraging results emerged from a pilot programme conducted in more than 100 government schools across all 23 districts of Punjab. The pilot involved over 45,000 students.

According to findings shared by the Punjab government, 97 per cent of teachers involved in the pilot said they felt confident delivering period education through the new curriculum, while 94 per cent recommended expanding the programme across the state. The findings also showed that 88 per cent of teachers found the curriculum easier and more effective than previous approaches, while 80 per cent observed active participation by students. Jaspreet Kaur, a teacher from Faridkot, said, "The Menstrual Hygiene Curriculum effectively breaks menstrual taboos by creating safe spaces for girls to ask questions and share experiences. The interactive approach using stories, games, and visuals makes learning relatable and reduces stigma."

Andhra CM Chandrababu Naidu demands Bharat Ratna for NTR

AMARAVATI (ANDHRA PRADESH), MAY 28

Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister and Telugu Desam Party president N. Chandrababu Naidu on Thursday urged the Centre to confer the Bharat Ratna on former chief minister and TDP founder NT Rama Rao, saying the legendary actor-politician remains a permanent symbol of Telugu self-respect. Speaking at the TDP's annual conclave, Mahanadu, held on the occasion of NTR's 103rd birth anniversary, Chandrababu moved a resolution demanding the country's highest civilian honour for the late leader. The resolution was unanimously



adopted by the gathering. "It is the collective demand of all of us that the late NTR, who became a shining light for Telugu people, be awarded the Bharat

Ratna," Chandrababu said. "I request that Bharat Ratna be awarded to the great leader who ushered in major transformations in Indian politics,"

he said. Describing NTR as an unmatched personality in Telugu public life, Chandrababu said his legacy would endure as long as the Telugu community existed. "NTR's birth anniversary is a festival day for all Telugu people," he said. Recalling NTR's journey from a farmer's son and government employee to film icon and chief minister of the undivided Andhra Pradesh, Chandrababu said he created history both in cinema and politics. "Unless NTR is born again, no one can match his discipline and stature. Wherever he was, he always lived for the self-respect of Telugu people," he said. Chandrababu noted that NTR entered politics after

a successful film career and became chief minister within nine months of launching the TDP. He also highlighted the party's role in national politics despite being a regional outfit. "NTR's governance stood as a support system for farmers, assurance for women, protection for workers and guidance for youth," he said, adding that the TDP flag symbolised support for women, confidence for youth and assurance for farmers. The Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister also backed TDP national general secretary Nara Lokesh's proposal for 33 per cent reservation for women and urged the Centre to implement it nationwide.

Assam Govt Draws Up Plan For 2 Lakh Jobs

GUWAHATI, MAY 28

Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma on Thursday said that the state government has already started preparing a roadmap to fulfil its promise of providing two lakh government jobs in the coming years. In a post shared on social media platform X, Sarma asserted that there would be "no time to rest" for the government as it moves ahead with implementing key poll

promises after returning to power. "There's no time to rest in our quest to deliver on our promises," the Chief Minister wrote. He stated that his team has already begun identifying vacancies across departments and preparing a detailed plan to ensure the recruitment process is carried out in a systematic manner. "My team is already at work to identify vacancies, create the roadmap, map out departments and bodies and chalk out the timeframe to deliver on the



commitment of two lakh government jobs," Sarma said in the post. Along with the statement,

the Chief Minister also shared a graphic titled "Mission 2 Lakh Govt Jobs - Plan in Motion", outlining the gov-

ernment's strategy for the recruitment drive. According to the roadmap shared by Sarma, the government will first prepare a comprehensive recruitment plan and identify vacancies likely to arise over the next five years. The plan also includes assessment of sanctioned posts and mapping of opportunities across departments, autonomous institutions, semi-government bodies, missions and societies. The BJP-led government

had made large-scale employment generation one of its major promises during the recently concluded Assembly elections in Assam. Political observers believe the announcement is aimed at reinforcing the government's commitment to employment generation amid growing demand for jobs among the youth in the state. Since assuming office in 2021, the Himanta Biswa Sarma-led government has repeatedly highlighted re-

cruitment drives conducted in various departments including police, education, health and administrative services. The Chief Minister has earlier maintained that the recruitment process in Assam would continue in a transparent manner and merit would remain the key criterion for appointments. The latest announcement comes soon after the BJP returned to power in Assam with a strong mandate in the Assembly elections.

TVK Laps Up More AIADMK Dissidents, Minister's '90% Cadre In A Month' Warning

CHENNAI:

For the AIADMK, the meteoric rise of the Tamilaga Vetttri Kazhagam in Tamil Nadu has added a whole new dimension to the cliché - politics is unpredictable. Since the TVK's poll triumph, which has paused - if not ended - the six-decade-long Dravidian duopoly, the E Palaniswami-steered party is struggling to keep its flock together but has failed to stop the internal bleeding. The latest setback has come in the form of the exit of four senior leaders - former AIADMK minister Vellamandi Natarajan, former MLAs Sadhan Prabhakar and Natarajan, and former transport union leader R Kamalakannan - and other party functionaries. What rubbed salt in the party's al-

ready fresh wounds is TVK politician and state minister Aadhav Arjuna's declaration that 90 per cent of the AIADMK is ready to merge with the Vijay-led party within a month. The fresh tranche of AIADMK erosion took place in the presence of Arjuna, TVK general secretary N Anand, and minister K A Sengottaiyan, who welcomed the defecting politicians into the party's fold. A day before, rebel MLAs, who sided with Chief Minister Vijay in the floor test, had met with Palaniswami to call a truce, providing a much-needed breather to the AIADMK leadership. Thursday's defections and the TVK minister's warning, however, indicate the crisis within is still simmering. Arjuna linked the exits to the period following former chief



minister J Jayalalithaa's demise, stating that the AIADMK boss had made decisions that went against the collective mindset of the AIADMK cadre. "AIADMK won only 47 seats, finishing third. Despite this, EPS was planning to become the Chief Minister. When leaders like CV Shanmugam and C Vijayabaskar questioned this, a conspiracy came out that EPS was

planning to join hands with Udhayanidhi Stalin," he said, pointing out that the Left parties were the first to oppose the alleged move, followed by the Congress and VCK. Offered Nothing To AIADMK Leaders: TVK He, however, claimed the TVK hadn't made any overtures to the turncoats and that they joined without being prompted, highlighting deep

fissures within AIADMK. "TVK didn't offer anything to any MLA and other AIADMK leaders. They all willingly joined TVK by placing their trust in our leader Vijay," he said, adding that "90% of the AIADMK cadre are ready to join TVK in one month." The minister's assessment might be construed as political hyperbole. But the fact that all rebel MLAs haven't joined Wednesday's truce triggers doubts as to the party's unity. Former AIADMK minister and rebel MLA C Vijayabaskar held a consultative meeting with his supporters in Pudukottai to decide his future course of action. He was not present when rebel AIADMK MLAs met Edappadi Palaniswami on Wednesday for a compromise. However, he was there with S P Velum-

ani for the meeting with the Speaker. "For me, my constituency people are so important. Many of my supporters have given many opinions. I will make the decision," he said. AIADMK leader S P Velumani found nothing amiss in the precarious situation. At the Coimbatore airport, he maintained that everything was going well, and the party remained united. AIADMK MP Inbadurai acknowledged that the party is facing a Vijay-induced crisis. "The current politics in Tamil Nadu is a war between the MGR legacy and the Vijay legacy," he said, adding, "Chief Minister Vijay is trying to weaken EPS by pulling AIADMK MLAs and ending the MGR legacy. However, in the end, MGR will win."

Woman IPS officer Princee Rani becomes first BSF Tripura Frontier IG

AGARTALA, MAY 28

IPS officer of the Tripura cadre, Princee Rani, has been appointed as the Inspector General (IG) of the Border Security Force (BSF) Tripura Frontier, replacing the incumbent IG Aloke Kumar Chakraborty, officials said here on Thursday. A senior official said that her appointment follows her husband, Parshant Kumar Goyal, an IAS officer, who recently returned from central deputation and joined the Tripura administration as Secretary. Goyal is currently serving as the Secretary of the Public Works Department and the Finance Department in the Tripura government. The appointment of Princee Rani marks a significant milestone as she becomes the first wom-



an IG of the BSF's Tripura Frontier, which is responsible for guarding the 856-km international border with Bangladesh. A 2005-batch IPS officer of the Tripura cadre, Princee Rani, is known for her extensive experience in administrative and internal security-related assignments. Before her deputation to the BSF, she held several important positions in the Tripura Police, including the post of Deputy Inspector General of Traffic.

EDITORIAL

DIGITAL INDIA BEYOND CITIES:
BRIDGING THE RURAL
CONNECTIVITY GAP

India's digital revolution has emerged as one of the defining transformations of the 21st century. From online banking and digital payments to e-governance and virtual education, technology has become deeply integrated into everyday life. The vision of Digital India has helped modernise governance, improve service delivery and connect millions of citizens. Yet, while major cities and urban centres have rapidly advanced in the digital era, many rural regions continue to face challenges in accessing reliable internet connectivity and digital infrastructure. Bridging this rural connectivity gap is essential for building an inclusive and balanced digital future. India's villages are home to a significant portion of the country's population. For rural communities, digital access is no longer a luxury but a necessity. Internet connectivity today influences education, healthcare, agriculture, employment and access to government services. A strong digital network can empower rural citizens with information, opportunities and financial inclusion, enabling them to participate more effectively in the nation's growth story.

Over the years, initiatives such as BharatNet and the expansion of mobile internet services have made steady progress in connecting rural India. Many villages now have access to digital platforms that allow farmers to receive weather forecasts, crop advisory services and market price updates. Small businesses and self-help groups are increasingly using online platforms and digital payments to expand their reach. These developments demonstrate the enormous potential of rural digital connectivity when supported by proper infrastructure and awareness.

Education is one of the sectors that can benefit most from stronger rural connectivity. The pandemic highlighted the importance of digital learning, but it also exposed the inequalities between urban and rural students. While many city students could continue their education online, countless rural children struggled because of poor internet access and limited availability of digital devices. Expanding broadband connectivity and ensuring affordable access to smartphones, tablets and educational resources can help reduce this divide and create equal learning opportunities for students across the country. Healthcare services in villages can also improve significantly through digital technology. Telemedicine has emerged as an effective solution for people living in remote areas where specialist doctors may not be easily available. Through online consultations, rural patients can receive timely medical advice without travelling long distances. Digital health records, awareness programmes and mobile healthcare applications can further strengthen public health services in rural communities.

However, infrastructure alone cannot bridge the digital divide. Digital literacy is equally important. Many people in villages are first-time users of smartphones and online services. Training programmes in schools, community centres and gram panchayats can help citizens learn how to use digital platforms safely and confidently. Awareness about cyber safety, digital payments and online fraud prevention is also necessary to ensure secure participation in the digital ecosystem.

Public-private cooperation can play a key role in accelerating rural connectivity. Telecom companies, technology firms and local administrations can work together to improve network coverage, create local-language digital content and develop affordable digital services suited to rural needs. Regional language platforms and user-friendly applications can make technology more accessible to a wider population.

India's progress as a digital nation will be truly meaningful only when the benefits of technology reach every village and every citizen. Bridging the rural connectivity gap is not merely about expanding internet networks; it is about empowering communities, improving livelihoods and creating equal opportunities for all. A digitally connected rural India will strengthen the country's social and economic foundation and ensure that the promise of Digital India becomes a reality for everyone.

From village squares to WhatsApp groups: how rural India's conversations are being reshaped

The village square has not vanished—it has merely moved to the smartphone screen. Across rural India, WhatsApp groups and Facebook chats are replacing the banyan tree and the chavdi as the new centres of public conversation. They have widened participation, amplified local voices, and connected villages to a larger world of information. But they have also altered the nature of dialogue itself. In the rush of forwards, memes, and instant reactions, reflection is giving way to assertion, and disagreement is increasingly slipping into division. The challenge before rural India is no longer simply about digital access; it is about preserving the culture of thoughtful conversation and community trust in an age of constant connectivity.

There was a time when the village square—under a banyan tree or at the local chavdi—was more than a meeting place. It was a social institution. People gathered not only to speak, but to listen; not only to disagree, but to do so within an unspoken framework of restraint. Conversation was slow, embodied, and accountable.

what has changed is not only who speaks—it is how speaking itself is understood. Conversation is increasingly oriented towards assertion rather than exchange. The aim is less to understand a situation than to prevail within it. Disagreement, once tempered by physical presence and social familiarity, now escalates more easily into personalised conflict. The absence of

now a common trigger for misunderstanding. What might once have been a passing disagreement can linger indefinitely in digital form. In some villages, tensions that begin online spill into real-world relationships, subtly eroding the fabric of familiarity that once held communities together.

The problem is compounded by the sheer volume of information. Without consistent verification mechanisms, rumours and misinformation can circulate rapidly, often amplified by repetition rather than evidence. The result is not only confusion, but the normalisation of argumentative certainty built on uncertain facts. For many rural young people, this digital space also fills a gap. With limited access to structured career guidance or creative platforms, online groups become a primary arena for expression—though not always a constructive one. Time that might otherwise be spent on learning or work is frequently absorbed into endless cycles of debate.

The other side:
visibility and voice:

face-to-face cues removes a crucial moderating layer from public life.

At the same time, digital platforms privilege speed and brevity over reflection. Forwarded messages, short clips and memes often stand in for sustained discussion. Opinions are formed quickly, shared faster, and rarely examined in depth. Over time, this creates an environment where conviction travels more easily than complexity.

The strain beneath
connectivity:

India's rapid digital expansion has brought rural communities into constant informational circulation. Yet connectivity has also introduced a quieter strain into everyday relationships.

Misread tone in text messages is

reality: the same platforms that amplify division can also enable civic engagement.

Reclaiming the digital
commons:

The challenge lies not in rejecting these platforms, but in rethinking their social function. WhatsApp groups and similar networks are currently shaped by immediacy and emotion. But they could, with intention, become spaces of more meaningful exchange. Digital literacy remains central—not simply the ability to use technology, but the ability to interpret it: to verify information, recognise manipulation, and engage without dehumanising others in the process. Conversations need to shift gradually from personality-driven exchanges to issue-based dialogue. Moderation, too, matters. Group administrators often function as informal gatekeepers of rural digital life. Clear norms around misinformation, abuse, and unverified claims can significantly alter the tone of interaction. Equally, these spaces could be reoriented towards practical content: education, employment, agriculture, and public services.

Just as importantly, rural youth need platforms beyond argument—spaces where creativity, skill, and aspiration can be expressed without being reduced to debate.



D. JAIRAM
Subject Expert – Current Affairs
Founder & Mentor
Sri Jai Ram Competitive Academy

THE NOBLE DUTY TO LIVE”



Death — how gentle, how swift its flight,
A fleeting breath, a kiss of night.
But life — a storm, a roaring tide,
Where time and pain walk side by side.

We find in pain a spark divine,
In struggle, strength, in grief, a sign.
A fire that burns but never dies,
A truth that sorrow purifies.

To live is not a simple feat,
It's battles fought in mute defeat.
Through seas of sorrow, skies of gray,
We sail, though hope feels far away.

We do not walk for praise or name,
Nor chase the ghost of worldly fame.
But for a truth the brave ones see—
That life itself is duty's plea.

Tears fall like rain from broken skies,
While dreams retreat and silence cries.
Yet still we rise, with heads held high,
Like dawn that splits a weeping sky.

A sacred task, a solemn call,
To rise each time we trip or fall.
To breathe, to bear, to break and mend—
To live with grace until the end.

Though burdens weigh the heart and soul,
We press ahead, we seek the goal.
For death may come in but a breath—
But life demands we challenge death.

So let the winds of hardship blow,
Let night descend and rivers flow
Still we endure, we stand, we strive,
For we are bound by duty to live.

..: Dr. Peruka Raju ..:
National Poet
7810032847

From Mughal Walls to Medical Colleges:
The Unsung Hero of Delhi-6

In the narrow, winding lanes of Old Delhi, where the echoes of history resonate through the weathered Mughal-era buildings, stands a remarkable educator whose quiet determination is quietly transforming countless lives. Maqsood Ahmed, a dedicated Biology teacher at the historic Anglo Arabic Senior Secondary School at Ajmeri Gate, is far more than just an instructor. He is a guiding light, a mentor, and a silent

tional clarity, infectious enthusiasm, and the unique ability to ignite a genuine spark of curiosity and wonder in young minds.

Beyond the formal confines of the school, Ahmed's impact deepens in the congested bylanes of Suiwalan in Delhi-6. Here, under the banner of the Allama Rafiq Trust, which he himself founded. He runs a coaching institute that offers completely free coaching in Biology and Mathematics. These classes are tailored for



architect of dreams for the underprivileged youth of the city.

Media-shy and unassuming, Maqsood Ahmed has emerged as a beacon of hope for students from economically weaker sections in Delhi-6. Through relentless hard work, unwavering commitment, and a profound sense of social responsibility, he has become a powerful catalyst for educational mobility among the poor.

Born and raised in Western Uttar Pradesh, Maqsood Ahmed joined Anglo Arabic School in 1992. The institution itself is steeped in rich legacy, founded way back in 1692 as Madrasa Ghaziuddin by a Mughal general. Yet, even today, the school continues to primarily serve working-class and low-income families from the historic lanes of Old Delhi.

As a Biology teacher, Ahmed does not merely deliver textbook lessons. He brings a rare passion to his craft, making even the most complex scientific concepts accessible, engaging, and alive. His students often speak with genuine admiration about Maqsood Sir's classes, describing them as vibrant sessions filled with excep-

aspirants preparing for high-stakes competitive examinations such as NEET for medical entrance, IIT-JEE for engineering, Bank PO, and various other government and professional tests.

In a city where private coaching institutes charge tens of thousands of rupees every year Ahmed's decision to charge nothing from deserving poor students stands as truly revolutionary.

"Most of the students I teach either study at Anglo Arabic or come from various other schools across Old Delhi," Maqsood Ahmed explains. "These children belong to families that struggle even to send their kids to school regularly." Many are first-generation learners from Muslim, Dalit, or labourer backgrounds. Their parents work as rickshaw pullers, small shopkeepers, tailors, or construction labourers, for whom quality education often feels like an unattainable luxury. Ahmed bridges this vast gap with remarkable dedication.

He identifies talented but resource-poor students, mentors them personally, and provides not just

academic guidance but also emotional support, study materials, and constant motivation. His approach is truly holistic. He conducts extra sessions, tracks each student's progress meticulously, and stands by them through every challenge.

The results of his tireless efforts speak louder than words. Thanks to his dedication, more than 25 students from economically disadvantaged backgrounds have successfully cracked prestigious medical, engineering, and other competitive entrance examinations over the years.

Ahmed attributes a significant part of his sustained motivation and success to Prof. Kehkashan Daniyal, Secretary of the Delhi Education Society, which manages Anglo Arabic School. "Her moral support, progressive vision for inclusive education, and constant encouragement have been instrumental," he says. The Delhi Education Society's framework grants him the freedom to extend the school's historic ethos of service far beyond its ancient campus walls.

Imagine a boy whose father repairs cycles in a gali near Jama Masjid now pursuing an MBBS degree, or a girl from a cramped tenement in Sita Ram Bazar securing a seat in a reputed engineering college. These transformative journeys are the direct outcome of Ahmed's relentless hard work. His days are gruelling. He teaches full-time at school during the day, followed by evening and weekend coaching sessions.

"If I am able to do something meaningful for children from economically weaker sections of society, I must give full credit to my wife and my friends who have always supported my cause," admits Maqsood Ahmed with humility.

What drives a man to willingly forgo personal financial gains in one of India's most expensive cities? For Ahmed, the answer lies in deep empathy forged through his own experiences. His free coaching is not charity offered in a condescending manner but a sincere investment in

human potential. The broader ecosystem supporting Ahmed's work includes the Allama Rafiq Trust, which runs a vocational centre in Suiwalan. It provides free library facilities, dedicated self-study spaces, skill development courses, and even charitable medical camps.

Dr. Zaid Ahmed of Tibbia Ayurvedic and Unani College recalls, "While studying at Anglo Arabic School, he taught me Biology. When I was preparing for my medical entrance examinations, he personally asked me to join his classes. That support proved invaluable. Maqsood Ahmed Sir represents an older, nobler tradition of teaching."

Parents across Old Delhi speak of him with deep reverence, often calling him a "messiah" for their children. Yet Maqsood Ahmed remains remarkably humble, attributing every success to collective effort, the support of well-wishers, and divine will rather than seeking personal glory.

Challenges continue to test his resolve. The congested environment of Old Delhi, limited infrastructure, societal pressures—especially regarding girls' education—and the constant need for funds to sustain free programs and provide quality materials require ongoing innovation and support.

In Maqsood Ahmed, Delhi has found a quiet, uncelebrated hero whose legacy will echo through generations of empowered youth emerging from its timeless lanes.



VIVEK SHUKLA

Only citizens should decide India’s future

AHMEDABAD, MAY 28

Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Thursday accused Congress leader Rahul Gandhi and opposition parties of running a nation-wide campaign against the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) process undertaken by the Election Commission, while asserting that the exercise had been upheld as constitutionally valid.

Addressing a gathering during the inauguration of new hostel facilities at Mata Umiya Dham in Ahmedabad, Shah said opposition parties had approached the Supreme Court and alleged “vote theft” after the Election Commission initiated the SIR process. “When the SIR was started by the Election Commission,

HM Amit Shah attacks on Rahul Gandhi over SIR

Rahul Gandhi and his allied parties launched a campaign across the country alleging vote theft. They went to the Supreme Court and filed several cases,” Shah said.

He claimed that the electorate in West Bengal had supported the exercise and opposed infiltration into the country. “In the Bengal elections, the people of Bengal showed that they stand with the SIR and that infiltration should not happen in the country,” he said.

Shah further stated that a recent court verdict had upheld the process. “Just the other day, the complete verdict came, and it declared that



the SIR is entirely constitutionally valid,” he said.

The Union Home Minister linked the issue to citizenship and voting rights, saying the Prime Minister Narendra Modi-led government had

established that only Indian citizens should have the right to determine the country’s future. “The Narendra Modi government of the Bharatiya Janata Party has established that the right to decide the

future of this country should belong only to the citizens of this country and not to infiltrators who have entered the country,” Shah said.

During his speech, Shah also referred to infiltration in West Bengal and said that changes had occurred following political developments in the state. “Earlier, five to 10 thousand infiltrators used to enter every day, whereas now five to 10 thousand have started going back every day,” he said. He added that the Union Home Ministry had formed a Demographic Change Commission, which, according to him, would study “unnatural demographic changes”,

investigate their causes, and explore legal measures to address them.

The event was organised to inaugurate the J.S. Patel Hostel and the Tapasvi Kumar Arvind Patel Girls’ Hostel at Mata Umiya Dham.

Shah attended the programme along with Gujarat Chief Minister Bhupendra Patel, several BJP leaders, ministers, and representatives of the Umiya Mata Sansthan.

The new hostel facilities, built at a reported combined cost exceeding Rs 170 crore, are expected to accommodate around 1,600 students in Ahmedabad.



NFR is Observing World Environment Day

MALIGAON, 28 MAY, 2026:

Northeast Frontier Railway has been actively observing World Environment Day 2026 through a series of awareness programmes and environmental protection activities across all its divisions and units from 15th May, 2026. The observance, which will continue till 5th June, 2026, is being conducted under the theme “Climate Change”, emphasizing the importance of environmental conservation, sustainable practices and collective responsibility towards safeguarding the planet for future generations. As part of the ongoing campaign, programmes including plantation drives, cleanliness campaigns, awareness rallies, seminars and eco-friendly initiatives are being organized throughout the NFR network to promote environmental sustainability and conservation awareness among railway employees, passengers and the general public. Special emphasis is being laid on reducing plastic usage, maintaining cleanliness at railway stations and railway colonies, water conservation and adoption of green practices in railway operations. Railway officials, staff members, students, scouts and guides, along with members

of social organizations, are actively participating in the awareness drive.

In a significant outreach initiative, Nukkad Natak highlighting environmental protection, cleanliness and the harmful effects of plastic pollution were performed by the NFR Scouts and Guides at the NFR Headquarter, Maligaon. The performances drew attention from passengers and the public, spreading awareness on the need for collective environmental responsibility. To encourage eco-friendly practices, jute bags, cloth bags and biodegradable items are also being distributed among passengers, railway staff and local residents across different locations under the NFR jurisdiction. These initiatives aim to discourage the use of single-use plastics and promote sustainable alternatives in daily life. Northeast Frontier Railway has consistently undertaken various eco-friendly measures and remains committed towards sustainable and environment-friendly railway operations in the Northeast region. The observance will culminate on World Environment Day on 5th June, 2026 with special programmes, awareness activities and administration of an environmental pledge across all divisions and units of NFR.

80% Polling In Himachal Panchayat Polls, Women Outvote Men

SHIMLA: (MAY 28)

Nearly 80 per cent polling was recorded during the second phase of the Himachal Pradesh rural body elections for 1,276 panchayats on Thursday, with women voters surpassing men in turnout in nine out of 12 districts. The percentages of female and male voters stood at 82.97 per cent and 76.66 per cent, respectively. The poll percentage, which was 76 per cent in the second phase of Panchayat polls in 2021, increased to 79.79 percent in the second phase in 2026, officials said.



Twisha death case: CBI arrests her mother-in-law and ex-judge Giribala Singh

BHOPAL: (MAY 28)

The CBI on Thursday tarrested former district judge Giribala Singh in connection with the death of her daughter-in-law Twisha Sharma, a day after the Madhya Pradesh High Court quashed her anticipatory bail. A CBI team questioned Singh at her residence in Bhopal's Bag Mughaliya extension area before taking her into custody, officials said. The agency is likely to produce the former judge before a competent court on Friday to seek her formal custody, they said.

Executive Engineer Accused of Securing Solar Plant Approval in Wife’s Name

BARKOT:

A controversy has surfaced in the Electricity Distribution Division Barkot, where an Executive Engineer has been accused of violating departmental norms by allegedly securing approval for a solar power plant in the name of his wife under the Chief Minister Solar Self-Employment Scheme. The matter has triggered widespread discussion across the district, with locals questioning whether the benefits meant for unemployed residents are being misused by government officials. According to allegations, Executive Engineer Dharmveer Singh, posted in the Barkot Electricity Distribution Division, got a solar plant approved in Mori area under the Mukhyamantri Solar Swarojgar Yojana in the name of his wife, Mrs. Shraddha, and also entered into a departmental agreement for the project. The scheme,



launched by Uttarakhand Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami, aims to provide self-employment opportunities to unemployed youth in the state and encourage economic self-reliance. Under the scheme, beneficiaries receive substantial government subsidies for establishing solar power plants. However, local residents and social



groups allege that the scheme is intended for unemployed individuals, and an officer holding a senior government position using his influence to secure benefits for his family defeats the purpose of the initiative. The “Barkot Jai Ho Group” has strongly objected to the alleged act and submitted a memorandum to the Chief Minister and the

Energy Secretary demanding a fair investigation and strict action against those found guilty. The group stated that portraying the image of a senior officer as unemployed to avail government subsidy tarnishes the image and intent of the state government.

Members of the group said that while thousands of unemployed youths in Ut-

tarakhand are waiting for opportunities under self-employment schemes, officials themselves taking advantage of such benefits amounts to depriving deserving candidates of their rights. They termed the matter a serious misuse of a public welfare scheme. Meanwhile, Superintending Engineer Yudhveer Tomar said that the Chief Minister Solar Self-Employment Scheme is primarily meant for unemployed persons, as is evident from the name of the scheme itself. He added that if the allegations regarding the Executive Engineer availing benefits in his wife's name are found to be true, the matter will be investigated thoroughly. The memorandum submitted in the case bears signatures of Mohit, Madan, Soban Singh, Pradeep, Ajay Rawat, Sunil Thiapliyal, Ravindra, Mahitab, Manmohan Singh, Sanjay Singh, Jai Singh and dozens of other local residents.

Invest in World Peace

(On the occasion of “International Day of UN Peacekeepers” on 29 May)

United Nations Peacekeepers play a vital role in conflict zones - maintaining ceasefires, protecting vulnerable populations, and supporting the rebuilding of societies ravaged by war. Their work often comes at great personal risk, with thousands having given their lives in service to peace since 1948. To honour the services, dedication, and sacrifice of peacekeepers who have served in UN operations around the globe, the “International Day of UN Peacekeepers” is observed annually on 29 May. It also commemorates those

who have lost their lives in the pursuit of peace and stability in some of the world’s most fragile environments.

The Future of Peacekeepers: “International Day of UN Peacekeepers” was established by the UN in 2002 and first observed in 2003. This date was chosen to mark the anniversary of the UN’s first peacekeeping mission on 29 May 1948. This day is dedicated to highlight the contributions of military, police, and civilian personnel who served under the UN flag, often in challenging and dangerous situations. It also promotes

an opportunity to reaffirm the International community’s commitment to peace, security, and international cooperation. The theme of 2026 International Day of UN Peacekeepers is “Invest in Peace”, to acknowledge the vital contributions made by peacekeepers against all challenging and life risk related services.

Peacekeepers Deliver Tangible Change in Communities:

The best ways to observe the day are organising official programs at UN, campaigning the role of peacekeepers in

educational institutions, organising suitable local events, sharing through social media, and honouring local veterans. Now more than ever, the world needs UN, and the UN needs fully equipped peacekeepers for today’s realities and tomorrow’s challenges. For nearly 77, UN peacekeepers have delivered tangible change to communities worldwide, from Liberia and Namibia to Cambodia, Sierra Leone and Timor-Leste, their presence has been life-saving and transformative in some of the most volatile political and security contexts, guid-

ing countries from conflict towards lasting peace. Today, more than 68,000 civilians, military p, police personnel serve in 11 UN peacekeeping missions despite the challenges in their pursuit of peace. It is also solemnly honour the more than 4,400 peacekeepers who lost their lives in the cause of peace, including 57 in 2024 alone. Let’s join the global movement for peace. Show your support for peacekeepers, community leaders, activists and many others committed to making the world more secure, inspiring us all to take action for peace.

Historic Win In Municipal Polls

CHANDIGARH, MAY 28

Haryana Chief Minister Sh. Nayab Singh Saini said the Bharatiya Janata Party’s historic victory in the Municipal Corporation elections is the result of the tireless hard work, dedication and unwavering trust of the people in party workers. He said that despite the intense heat, party workers carried out extensive public outreach day and night, which resulted in the victory of BJP-supported Mayor and councillors by a huge margin.

The Chief Minister was addressing the grand oath-taking ceremony of newly elected Sonipat Mayor Rajiv Jain and councillors held at Deenbandhu Chhotu Ram University of Science and Technology (DCRUST), Murthal.

While attending the programme as Chief Guest, Chief Minister Sh. Nayab Singh Saini

Achieved Through Hard Work of Party Workers and Trust of People: CM Nayab Singh Saini
Grand oath-taking ceremony of newly elected Sonipat Mayor Rajiv Jain and councillors held at Deenbandhu Chhotu Ram University of Science and Technology, Murthal



congratulated newly elected Mayor Sh. Rajiv Jain and all the councillors. The Chief Minister said that the Bharatiya Janata Party is a worker-based organisation where every worker gets opportunities from time to time. He said that this democratic tradition distinguishes BJP from other political parties. Emphasising

women empowerment, he said that in line with the vision of Prime Minister Sh. Narendra Modi, the party is providing leadership opportunities to women. Referring to the appointment of Dr. Archana Gupta as State President, he said that promoting women to leadership positions is a priority for the BJP. Sh. Nayab Singh

Saini assured that the state government and the new Municipal Corporation team will together accelerate the development of Sonipat threefold. He said that rapid work will be undertaken to improve roads, sanitation, drinking water, sewerage, electricity and expansion of modern urban facilities in the city. He called

upon Mayor Rajiv Jain and his team to work with transparency, sensitivity and dedication while maintaining the trust of the people. He said that at prompt and effective resolution of public grievances should remain their top priority. Divisional Commissioner Sh. Rajiv Rattan administered the oath of office and secrecy to all elected representatives. Development and Panchayats Minister Sh. Krishna Lal Panwar, Cooperation Minister Arvind Sharma, Rai MLA Smt. Krishna Gehlawat, Sonipat MLA Sh. Nikhil Madan, Kharkhoda MLA Sh. Pawan Kumar Kharkhoda, BJP State President Dr. Archana Gupta and several other dignitaries were also present on the occasion.

Delhi-NCR Rains Bring Relief From Scorching Heat

NEW DELHI, MAY 28

Delhi-NCR finally received the much-awaited rainfall on Thursday, as thunderstorms accompanied by light to moderate showers lashed several parts of the national capital and its surrounding areas in the evening. The India Meteorological Department (IMD) predicted generally cloudy skies over Delhi-NCR with one or two spells of very light to light rain accompanied by thunderstorms, lightning, and strong winds reaching 60-70 kmph, gusting up to 80 kmph, during the evening and night at many places. A hailstorm is also likely at isolated places. The rains brought significant relief to residents after days of severe heatwave conditions, with temperatures hovering

above 44 degrees Celsius. According to the India Meteorological Department (IMD), rainfall occurred under the influence of a Western Disturbance and an upper-air cyclonic circulation. Parts of Delhi witnessed intense thunderstorm activity, with strong winds gusting up to 60-70 kmph. Many areas reported light to moderate rainfall, leading to a sharp drop in temperatures and improved air quality. The Regional Meteorological Centre had forecast partly cloudy skies turning generally cloudy by the evening of May 28, with a spell of very light to light rain accompanied by thunderstorms, lightning, and strong winds. The prediction came true, with scattered showers reported across North, South, East, West, and Central Delhi,

as well as Gurugram, Noida, Ghaziabad, and Faridabad. Maximum temperatures on Thursday initially remained high at 40-42 degrees Celsius but dropped noticeably after the rain. The IMD has predicted further cooling in the coming days, with maximum temperatures likely to settle between 34 and 37 degrees Celsius on Friday and 34 and 36 degrees Celsius on Saturday. Minimum temperatures are also expected to drop to 22-25 degrees Celsius, providing pleasant weather. The rainfall has brought respite from the prolonged heatwave that gripped the region. However, the accompanying strong winds and lightning prompted the IMD to issue warnings about possible damage to trees, power lines, and vulnerable structures.



Rubio's Delhi visit reflects mature India-US ties and evolving Quad dynamics: Report

WASHINGTON/NEW DELHI

The recent visit of US Secretary of State Marco Rubio to India reflected a more mature phase in relations between New Delhi and Washington, where strategic convergence continues alongside open discussions on trade frictions, differing geopolitical priorities, and ambiguity regarding American consistency, a report has stated.

In parallel, it also underscored the Quad's evolution from a primarily diplomatic signalling platform into an operational framework aimed at strengthening resilience in an era of fractured globalisation. The key challenge for the Quad lies in strengthening sustainability while ensuring strategic coherence among member nations, former Foreign Secretary Nirupama Rao wrote in India Narrative.

According to the expert, Rubio's visit to India from May 23-26 was a "restrained affair", but one that carried its own significance. The visit, she said, could be viewed as an exercise in strategic reassurance amid growing geopolitical uncertainty.

"In diplomacy, timing matters. Rubio arrived in India just days after President Donald Trump's summit with Xi Jinping



in Beijing, a meeting that produced language about a 'constructive relationship of strategic stability' between the US and China. Simultaneously, the continuing conflict involving Iran and the resulting instability in the Gulf and around the Strait of Hormuz have brought energy security and maritime vulnerability to the forefront of global politics," Rao de-

tailed. All these developments, the former Indian diplomat said, served as a multi-layered backdrop to Rubio's Delhi visit and to the Quad Foreign Ministers' Meeting held on May 26.

"The bilateral leg of the visit was plainly designed to reassure New Delhi. Rubio repeatedly described India as central to America's Indo-Pacific strate-

gy and called the Quad a cornerstone of regional stability. Prime Minister Narendra Modi received an invitation to visit Washington. Rubio and External Affairs Minister Jaishankar reviewed the now-familiar agenda of trade, defence, critical technologies, semiconductors, AI, energy, nuclear cooperation and mobility. The atmospherics were good,

although reassurance is not reset," she highlighted.

Rubio's Delhi visit, therefore, the seasoned diplomat said, was aimed at two objectives: reaffirming the importance of the India-US partnership and, at the same time, assuring the broader Indo-Pacific that ties with China would not come at the cost of regional engagements.

Emphasising the Quad's significance, Rao said that the official statement released after the Delhi meeting of the four foreign ministers pointed to a grouping that is increasingly operational, geo-economic, and systemic in its approach.

She further highlighted that Quad's agenda is currently explicitly based on four pillars: "maritime and transnational security, economic prosperity and security, critical and emerging technologies, and humanitarian assistance and emergency response."

Highlighting India's longstanding preference for flexible strategic coalitions over rigid alliances, Rao said, "A Quad focused on energy security, maritime awareness, critical minerals, infrastructure and technological resilience aligns far more naturally with Indian strategic culture than an overtly militarised bloc would."



US-Japan exercises with Typhon missile system deployment threaten our interest: Russian Foreign Ministry

MOSCOW

Moscow on Thursday stated that the US-Japan joint exercises, which include the deployment of Typhon missile system, are viewed as a step that threatens Russia's interests. "We have repeatedly drawn the attention of Tokyo to the fact that we view the provision of Japanese territory for the deployment of American medium - and shorter-range missile systems, regardless of whether this is done on an episodic, rotational, or permanent basis, as a step that has a serious negative impact on the stability and security of the Asia-Pacific region and creates a direct threat to our Far Eastern borders," said Russian Foreign Ministry spokesperson Maria Zakharova, local media reported.

According to the state-owned Tass news agency, Zakharova also recalled Russia's diplomatic statement from August 2025, that it no longer considers itself bound by the moratorium on the deployment of ground-based medium and short-range missiles.

"The strategic risks arising from such provocative actions will be thoroughly analysed to develop the necessary com-

pensatory military-technical measures of the strictest and longest possible nature," she stated. On May 20, Tass cited a report from leading Japanese news agency Kyodo, which stated that the US military plans to deploy the Typhon medium-range missile systems to the Japanese Self-Defence Force (JSDF) Kanoya Air Base in Kagoshima Prefecture during exercises from June to September.

High Mobility Artillery Rocket System (HIMARS) multiple launch rocket systems will also be deployed during the exercises. Earlier, Zakharova asked Japan to improve relations with Russia and take steps to reaffirm its rejection of anti-Russian stance.

"On May 12, Japanese Foreign Minister Toshimitsu Motegi stated that Tokyo, while recognising the importance of building relations with Russia, as a neighbouring state, based on national interests, nevertheless does not intend to change its current anti-Russian foreign policy course. As we have repeatedly noted, the dismantling of the positive legacy of bilateral relations accumulated over a long period of time was initiated precisely at Japan's initiative.



Bangladesh government reviewing US trade deal, says ruling BNP leader

NEW DELHI

A United States-Bangladesh trade deal, signed by Dhaka's then Muhammad Yunus-led interim government, has come under severe criticism since an elected government under Prime Minister Tarique Rahman assumed office this February.

The government will take steps regarding the trade agreement signed with Washington while preserving Bangladesh's sovereignty and rights, ruling Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) lawmaker and Economic Affairs Secretary of the party's central committee, Khaled Hossain Mahbub Shyamal, told Bangladesh's The Business Standard newspaper on Thursday. "Perhaps this kitchen cabinet of the interim government also had its own strategy. However, the agreements they signed were not known to the people of the country, nor were they known

to us. They can explain better under what circumstances and in what context those agreements were made," Shyamal said. "We have obtained a copy of an agreement and are currently working on it. We will try, as far as possible, to review the agreements and take future steps while ensuring that the country's sovereignty and rights remain intact," he added, as per the media report.

Since it assumed office, the new government has been facing pressure to cancel the deal, with reports stressing that the agreement is against the national interest and violates the country's independence and sovereignty.

Concerns were being raised over the agreement signed by the interim government on February 9, only three days before the national election, while maintaining strict secrecy. Some reports pointed to the inclusion of strategic conditions related.

Nepal: In a first, open competition introduced for ambassadorial posts

KATHMANDU

The Nepali government on Thursday invited applications from qualified Nepali citizens for appointment as Nepal's ambassadors and permanent representatives to various countries and international organisations.

It is for the first time that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has sought to appoint the country's ambassadors through open competition among aspiring candidates. However, the ministry has not specified the countries for which applications have been sought.

Earlier, the positions reportedly open to competition included postings in India, China, the United States, the United Kingdom, Australia, Israel, South Korea, Austria, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Malaysia, Oman, and Saudi Arabia, among others, as well as positions in international organisations. However, the ministry has since removed the page that previously specified country-wise allocations for applicants.

Amid widespread criticism of the long-standing practice of appointing ambassadors based on political loyalty and power-sharing arrangements among political parties, the new government led by Prime Minister Balendra Shah introduced a competitive selection process for appointing envoys



to Nepal's foreign missions.

Traditionally, ambassadorial appointments in Nepal have been evenly divided between political nominees and career diplomats from the Foreign Service. The 'Terms of Reference (TOR) for Ambassador of Nepal' published on Thursday, outlines the qualifications, responsibilities, appointment procedures, tenure, and code of conduct for ambassadors representing Nepal abroad.

Under the eligibility criteria, applicants must be at least 35 years old, hold at least a bachelor's degree, and possess knowledge or experience in Nepal's foreign policy, international relations, or diplomacy.

A postgraduate degree (Master's or higher) in international relations, political science, law, economics, public administration, or a related field will be given preference. Specialised training or certification in diplomacy, international trade, or multilateral negotiations; academic pub-

lications, research, or significant scholarly contributions related to Nepal's foreign policy; and substantial leadership experience in senior government, diplomatic, corporate, non-governmental, or public service roles at the national or international level will also be considered advantages.

Candidates must not hold permanent or temporary residency status or immigration benefits in foreign countries and must not have been convicted in corruption or moral turpitude cases.

According to the TOR, candidates must not have any conflict of interest or vested interest in the country of their proposed posting. They also must not currently be employed by any non-governmental organisation funded through international or foreign assistance.

The ministry has also emphasised proficiency in English, knowledge of diplomatic practices, and understanding of the Vienna Convention on

Diplomatic Relations. Experience in trade promotion, investment facilitation, multilateral negotiations, or work with international organizations is an added advantage.

According to the TOR, ambassadors will serve as Nepal's highest-ranking diplomatic representatives in host countries and international organisations. Their responsibilities will include promoting Nepal's political, economic, and strategic interests, facilitating foreign investment and trade, protecting Nepali citizens abroad, and strengthening ties with the Nepali diaspora.

The TOR also places significant emphasis on economic diplomacy, tourism promotion, climate diplomacy, and public engagement. Ambassadors are expected to promote Nepal as an investment destination, mobilize development assistance, and enhance Nepal's international image through cultural and public diplomacy initiatives.

The tenure of ambassadors has been fixed at four years, although the government retains the authority to recall ambassadors before completion of their term if deemed necessary. Interested applicants have been asked to submit their applications by June 5. The ministry said the appointments will be made in accordance with the Ambassador Appointment Guidelines, 2018.

Pakistan: Family awaits justice, compensation two years after mob lynched Christian man over blasphemy allegations

ISLAMABAD

Nearly two years after a violent mob killed 73-year-old Pakistani Christian Nazir (Lazar) Masih over blasphemy allegations in Pakistan's Sargodha, his family has said that they are still waiting for justice, along with compensation for the destruction of their property which remains abandoned after they left the city in Punjab province.

While people in Pakistan celebrated Eid al-Adha, Sultan Gill was preparing for the death anniversary of his father, Nazir (Lazar) Masih, who had died after nearly 2,000 people attacked his family in Sargodha in 2024 following allegations that Masih had desecrated pages of the Quran, a report in EWTN News detailed.

The mob attacked Masih's home and shoe factory and set the business on fire after an announcement in mosque reportedly amplified the allegations. Police evacuated nine members of the family, however, Masih, who was caught by the mob and beaten with stones,



bricks and sticks, succumbed to his injuries. His death had sparked major protests by Christian groups in Pakistan.

"Our wounds became fresh during Eid. The cruelty cannot be described in words," EWTN News quoted Gill as saying. He said, "The confidence is gone. We cannot move around or talk freely. Two of my children had to discontinue their education and start working to support the family in a new city and help pay house rent."

Sultan Gill said that police had assured them that they will receive Pakistani Rupees (PKR) 1.2 million as compensation for damage to the factory, which was actually worth millions. However, he said that they have received nothing despite repeated visits to the district administration and Punjab province's minority affairs minister, according to EWTN News report.

Sargodha police lodged cases against about 450 uniden-

tified suspects under anti-terrorism laws and 25 people were arrested over the attack on Masih. However, Sunil Kaleem, Director of the Organisation for Legal Aid, has said that all of the accused were released within weeks.

Meanwhile, a church leader has accused Pakistani police of not following the Supreme Court's order to arrest all suspects involved in the attacks that took place on multiple churches and Christian homes

in Jaranwala area of Pakistan's Punjab province in 2023, a report has stated.

Khalid Mukhtar, whose parish house was among the properties destroyed in the violence, said authorities made little progress despite the Supreme Court's orders on March 31, where it directed police to arrest absconding suspects and ordered the Faisalabad anti-terrorism court to conclude the trials within six months, the Christian Daily International reported. Mukhtar, who is now serving as priest of St Joseph's Church in Faisalabad, said: "The Supreme Court directed the police to immediately arrest all absconding suspects and ordered the anti-terrorism court to conclude the trials within six months."

"Despite providing police with video and photographic evidence identifying many of those involved, there has been no meaningful progress in arrests. We have met senior police officials several times since the ruling, but their assurances have not translated into concrete action," he said.

From admirers to lawmakers, all wait for interaction with Nepal Prime Minister Balen

NEW DELHI

In the run-up to Nepal's March 5 election, the Rastriya Swatantra Party's (RSP) then projected Prime Ministerial face Balendra Shah remained largely elusive for most of his followers even in his own constituency of Jhapa-5. Even after he took over the post, the situation hasn't changed.

A large number of his admirers had then congregated in Jhapa, voluntarily working for the victory of this engineer-turned-rapper and social media sensation.

Shah's itinerary mostly remained unknown, at times till he actually hit the road, driving an SUV himself. His public interaction remained largely confined to zipping through roads, posing for "selfies", or making the love sign, and the occasional taking off his dark glasses or a smattering of words.

Such is his appeal that he was elected Mayor of Kathmandu as the first independent candidate. He chose to resign and contest on the RSP's invitation against former Prime Minister K.P. Sharma Oli in the



latter's bastion of Jhapa-5 seat and won convincingly. Many claim him to be a private person, often reclusive.

On one occasion, during his campaign, a car with media persons overtook his vehicle for a clear shot of his driving. Shah abruptly stopped his vehicle and sent a representative to the journalists to ask them to refrain from such activities.

This week, Nepal's lawmakers were reportedly raising concerns that the Prime Minister - better known as Balen - has not publicly addressed the Parliament since assuming office in late March 2026 during the Ram Navami festival.

According to media reports,

his continued absence has sparked political debates, Opposition protests, and growing accusations that the country's newest leader is evading democratic accountability.

However, he is said to have been visiting the Office of the Prime Minister and Council of Ministers in Singha Durbar, Kathmandu. He has made it clear he will not appear "immediately", said media reports.

When House Speaker Dol Prasad Aryal met him last week to request his presence in the Parliament, Shah reportedly responded that he would come at an "appropriate time".

Reports also claimed that he earlier declined to meet India's Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri and United States special envoy Sergio Gorrer on separate occasions, intensifying debates.

Since assuming office nearly two months ago, Shah has yet to address the House publicly. He had apparently walked out midway through President Ram Chandra Poudel's presentation of the government's policy and programme earlier this week, triggering immediate backlash.

Ambani draws no salary for sixth year in row



MUMBAI: MAY 28

New Delhi, May 28: Mukesh Ambani drew nil salary from Reliance Industries for the sixth consecutive year in FY26, continuing a voluntary pay freeze begun in June 2020 amid the COVID-19 crisis. Ambani, 69, previously capped his annual pay at Rs 15 crore from FY09–FY20. Reliance reported a record consolidated net profit of Rs 95,754 crore and a market valuation of Rs 18,19,103 crore in FY26. While Ambani received no salary or perks, he earned dividend income—Rs 9.66 crore from 1.61 crore direct shares and Rs 3,987 crore via promoter-group holdings. Other directors and family members received salaries, commissions and sitting fees.

Crop Diversification, Horticulture Key To Farmers' Prosperity: Haryana CM

KARNAL: (MAY 28)

Crop diversification and horticulture-based farming are key to farmers' prosperity, Haryana Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini said on Thursday as he suggested several measures to increase the horticulture sector's output in the state. The chief minister dedicated 14 new horticulture science centres to the Maharana Pratap Horticulture University and said that now Master's and PhD programmes will be started in subjects such as post-harvest management, plant pest control and diseases. These centres will play a significant role in delivering the latest technologies, quality planting material and scientific guidance to farmers, the chief minister said while addressing a national conference - 'Strategic Paradigm of Quality Seeds and Planting Material for Horticultural Crops'.

The hidden salary leak Gen Z didn't notice until bank balances started shrinking

Young salaried Indians are discovering that small app subscriptions are quietly eating into their monthly income. The online debate has sharpened focus on how auto-debits and convenient spending can distort budgeting.

Penny and penny laid up will be many. Or in Gen Z's case, dozens of Rs 99 and Rs 149 subscriptions quietly turning into a surprisingly large monthly bill. A growing number of young Indians are now realising that the biggest dent in their salaries may not be coming from luxury shopping or expensive gadgets, but from small recurring app payments that often go unnoticed for months. A recent online discussion around "invisible spending" has struck a chord with many young professionals who say monthly subscriptions for food delivery apps, OTT platforms, music streaming services and shopping memberships are silently draining their disposable income. The conversation picked up after a Reddit user described how he was shocked to discover where



his salary was disappearing every month. "There were no expensive gadgets. No luxury shopping sprees. No major purchases," the user wrote. But after checking his bank statement closely, he realised the problem was not one big expense. It was dozens of small auto-debits. Subscriptions like Swiggy One, Zomato Gold, Netflix, Amazon Prime, Spotify and Jio Hotstar looked harmless individually. Most cost less than Rs 200 a month. But together, they had quietly become a large recurring expense. The post has now triggered a wider debate online around what many are calling the "app trap economy", where convenience-based subscriptions slowly pile up in the background.

THE 'ONLY RS 99' TRAP
For many young consumers, the psychology behind these purchases is simple. A single subscription rarely feels expensive. Most platforms market services through: student offers, trial plans, introductory discounts and low monthly pricing. That makes spending feel small and manageable. But the problem starts when multiple subscriptions stack together across entertainment, food delivery, shopping, cloud storage, fitness and productivity apps. Many users say they often forget about subscriptions entirely because payments happen automatically through UPI, debit cards or credit cards. And cancelling them usually becomes "something to do

later." A young Delhi-based professional told NDTV that she eventually realised she was paying for nearly every major OTT platform despite barely using most of them. "I always felt what if a new movie or series releases on a platform I don't subscribe to?" she said. Over time, however, she noticed she was too tired after work to actually watch most of the content she was paying for. "Meanwhile, the subscription money kept getting auto-debited every month," she said. She has now shifted to a "rotation system", where she subscribes to only one OTT platform at a time instead of paying for multiple services together.

THE BIGGER SHIFT IN GEN Z SPENDING
The debate also reflects a larger change in how younger consumers spend money today. Unlike previous generations that spent more heavily on physical goods, Gen Z spending is increasingly moving towards: subscriptions, convenience services and digital experiences. Food delivery memberships, OTT apps, gaming subscriptions, AI tools, shopping memberships and music streaming plans

are now becoming regular monthly expenses for many salaried professionals. The problem is that unlike rent or EMIs, these expenses often stay hidden in the background because they are split across multiple platforms. That is why many users only realise the total cost after checking bank statements carefully.

WHY MORE YOUNG EARNERS ARE NOW CUTTING SUBSCRIPTIONS
As inflation and living costs continue rising in cities, many young professionals are becoming more conscious about where their salaries are going. Several users online now say they have started: reviewing subscriptions monthly, cancelling unused apps and limiting the number of active memberships.

For some, the solution is becoming more intentional about digital spending instead of allowing dozens of auto-renewals to continue silently. Because while one Rs 99 payment may not feel important, many young earners are now discovering that small recurring expenses can quietly become one of the biggest leaks in their monthly finances.



REC Limited Signs MoU with ERDA

Strengthen Quality Assurance under RDSS

NEW DELHI:
REC Limited, a Maharatna CPSE under the Ministry of Power, Government of India, signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Electrical Research and Development Association (ERDA) on Wednesday at SCOPE Complex, New Delhi, to strengthen quality testing and assurance mechanisms for materials deployed under the Revamped Distribution Sector Scheme (RDSS).
The MoU was signed by Shri Prabhat Kumar Singh, Executive Director (RDSS), REC Limited and Shri Brijesh Sachdeva, Head, ERDA North, in the presence of Shri Prince Dhawan, IAS, Executive Director (PMD), REC Limited and senior officials from both organisations. Under the agreement, REC Limited and ERDA will collaborate on third-party quality testing of materials used in RDSS projects, technical support, capacity-building initiatives, and development of robust quality assurance frameworks. The collaboration aims to ensure that materials deployed in RDSS works conform to prescribed standards and contribute towards enhanced operational reliability and efficiency of the power distribution network across the country. The partnership reinforces REC Limited's commitment towards supporting quality infrastructure development and strengthening the implementation of power sector reforms under RDSS.

Remote Work Reshapes India's Home Choices

Flexible work is again influencing how Indian homebuyers assess where to live. The shift could move demand beyond office hubs towards space, practicality and quality of life.

The next big shift in India's housing market may not come from prices, policy, or supply. It may come from something far more routine: the daily commute.
As flexible work and remote-first thinking return to the conversation, alongside a broader push toward reducing unnecessary travel, the role of the office in everyday life is quietly being redefined. And when the role of the office changes, the logic of where we live begins to change with it.
This is not unfamiliar territory. Just a few years ago,

remote work transformed homes into multi-functional spaces—offices, classrooms, and lifestyle hubs. What followed was not just a temporary adjustment but a structural shift in how buyers evaluated homes.
What is different now is that this transition may be more measured and more permanent.
DEMAND REMAINS STRONG, BUT THE DECISION FRAMEWORK IS CHANGING
Early signals suggest that demand itself is not weakening. As per ANAROCK data, housing sales across India's top seven cities—MMR, NCR, Bengaluru, Hyderabad, Pune, Chennai, and Kolkata—rose by around 7–9% year-on-year in Q1 2026 to over 1.01 lakh units, reflecting steady underlying demand even as work patterns and commute



realities continue to shift.
But beneath that stability, the way people make decisions is beginning to evolve. Earlier, the homebuying question was straightforward: "How close is the office?" Today, it is becoming, "How often do I need to go there at all?" That single shift is beginning to rewrite the housing decision.
FROM COM-MUTE-DRIVEN TO
LIFESTYLE-DRIVEN CHOICES
If office attendance is no longer a daily requirement, proximity starts to lose its absolute hold. It doesn't disappear, but it competes with other priorities. Space, flexibility, layout, and quality of life are gaining importance.
At the same time, the cost of commuting is becoming more visible. Long travel

times, rising fuel expenses, and unpredictable congestion are no longer just inconveniences; they are influencing financial and lifestyle trade-offs. What this creates is a gradual move from commute-optimised buying to lifestyle-optimised buying.
HOW HOMEBUYER PREFERENCES COULD EVOLVE
This shift is likely to show up in how buyers evaluate homes. Space could again become a priority, but this time for a purpose that matters. Buyers may be looking for homes that are more practical than just bigger, with layouts that allow for a focused work, adaptability and longevity. At the same time, the acceptable radius for homebuying may expand. When commuting is only necessary a few days a week, a greater distance

from the workplace is more acceptable in exchange for bigger homes, better communities, or better living environments. The decision, in essence, is not just about getting to the office faster; it's about living better.
A POTENTIAL SHIFT IN WHERE DEMAND FLOWS
As this mindset evolves, demand may start to grow beyond the traditional office-centric areas. Peripheral suburbs, integrated townships and plotted developments could see better traction. More importantly, Tier-2 cities could be back in the spotlight – not as a stop-gap alternative but as a viable long-term option. With better infrastructure and more economic activity, these cities are better able to meet the needs of people who live and work there.

Flexible work only strengthens their argument. From the developer perspective, it's a step towards practicality. Projects may increasingly focus on usability over excess—homes designed for everyday living, not just for looks.
This includes flexible layouts, work-friendly spaces and community infrastructure to support more time at home. The emphasis may also shift toward affordability alignment and execution discipline, rather than purely premium positioning or speculative expansion.
As flexible work reshapes how people structure their week, it is also reshaping how they define a "good home." And in that shift, the next phase of India's housing market will be driven less by proximity alone and more by how people balance work, life, and time.

Is E20 petrol quietly increasing your monthly fuel bill? 5 in 10 owners say yes

A LocalCircles survey says many owners of older petrol vehicles have seen lower mileage after the E20 rollout. The findings sharpen consumer concerns over fuel costs, repairs and the shift towards higher ethanol blends.

India's aggressive push towards ethanol-blended petrol may now be creating fresh concerns for many vehicle owners, especially those driving older petrol cars and two-wheelers. A new LocalCircles survey has found that nearly 5 in 10 owners of petrol vehicles purchased in 2022 or earlier say they have experienced lower mileage after the rollout of E20 petrol in 2025. The findings have added a new consumer angle to India's large ethanol-blending mission, which the government has strongly pushed as part of its effort to reduce crude oil imports and cut dependence on foreign fuel. India achieved its E20 rollout target years ahead of schedule and has increasingly put its foot down on expanding ethanol-based fuel adoption across the country. The government sees ethanol blending as an important long-term

strategy to reduce oil imports, save foreign exchange and support domestic farmers linked to sugarcane and maize production.
But the latest survey suggests that some consumers believe the shift may be coming with hidden costs.
MANY OWNERS SAY MILEAGE HAS FALLEN
According to the survey, which gathered responses from over 24,000 vehicle owners, a large number of respondents said their vehicles were now giving lower average after the introduction of E20 fuel. Among those reporting a decline, around 25% said mileage had dropped by over 20%. Another 7% said the fall was between 15% and 20%, while 13% reported a decline between 10% and 15%. The findings are significant because official estimates earlier suggested E20 fuel could reduce fuel efficiency only marginally, generally in the range of 1% to 6%. That gap between official projections and consumer experiences is now emerging as one of the biggest talking points around E20 petrol. For everyday consumers, lower mileage directly means spending more money on fuel every month. At a time when petrol prices remain el-



evated in several cities, even a small drop in fuel efficiency can significantly increase monthly commuting costs for middle-class households.
WHY OLDER VEHICLES MAY BE MORE AFFECTED
One important detail highlighted in the survey is that most complaints are coming from owners of vehicles purchased before 2023.
That is important because many older petrol vehicles were originally designed for lower ethanol blends such as E5 or E10, not E20. Ethanol behaves differently from conventional petrol. It has lower energy density, which means vehicles may need to burn slightly more fuel to travel the same distance. Industry experts have also earlier pointed

out that ethanol can absorb moisture more easily and may affect certain rubber and plastic components in older fuel systems over long periods.
The survey suggests this may be one reason why some owners feel their vehicles are not performing the same way after the E20 rollout.
VEHICLE OWNERS ALSO REPORT REPAIR CONCERNS
The survey also found that concerns are not limited only to mileage. Nearly 29% of respondents said they had experienced unusual wear and tear, repairs or vehicle-related issues after using E20 fuel. Some respondents reported problems linked to fuel lines, carburetors and engine performance. While these claims

are based on consumer responses and not a scientific mechanical study, the findings are likely to add to the growing debate around how older vehicles are coping with higher ethanol blends.
INDIA'S BIG ETHANOL PUSH
India's ethanol-blending programme has been one of the government's biggest energy-transition projects in recent years. The country imports nearly 87% of its crude oil requirements, making it highly vulnerable to global oil price shocks and geopolitical disruptions. By increasing ethanol blending in petrol, the government aims to: reduce crude oil imports, lower foreign exchange outflow and support domestic agriculture. The E20 target was originally planned for later years but was achieved ahead of schedule. The government has also been encouraging automobile manufacturers to prepare vehicles compatible with higher ethanol blends in the future. The report points out that India is already preparing for even higher blending levels beyond E20, including E22, E25, E30 and eventually E85 in some segments. That makes the current concerns around E20 even more important because



PMS Industry Sees Rs 25,088 Cr Inflow, AUM Hits Rs 42.2 Lakh Cr

NEW DELHI, MAY 28
India's portfolio management services (PMS) industry expanded to Rs 42.2 lakh crore in April 2026, up 2.1 per cent month-on-month, indicating healthy investor participation entering FY27, a report said on Thursday. The report from Association of Portfolio Managers in India (APMI) said the client base stood at approximately 2.12 lakh accounts, with a 1.7 per cent adjustment during the month. A net inflow of Rs 25,088 crore was recorded in April, compared to a net outflow of Rs 648 crore in March, driven by a 27 per cent month-on-month expansion in inflows. Equity grew 13.8 per cent, plain debt expanded 0.8 per cent, and mutual funds increased 5.4 per cent in the portfolio, while derivatives experienced notable repositioning, the report said. Domestic investors accounted for 91 per cent of the client base and 95 per cent of total AUM. Foreign AUM expand-

ed 7.8 per cent month-on-month, while domestic AUM also recorded a healthy 1.8 per cent expansion, reflecting steady underlying allocations at the start of the fiscal year. Provident funds continued to anchor domestic assets at approximately 80 per cent of domestic AUM, while distributor additions continued into FY27, supporting broader PMS penetration. Listed equity assets grew 13.6 per cent month-on-month, reflecting sustained investor preference towards equity-oriented opportunities. In the unlisted space, equity assets surged 38.8 per cent, while unlisted debt grew sharply by 150.5 per cent, indicating rising interest in private market investments. Foreign AUM rose 7.8 per cent in April, while domestic AUM remained broadly stable. "Capital is no longer moving only towards traditional equity exposure, but increasingly towards specialised and diversified strategies across listed and unlisted markets."



Researchers examined how eating an unhealthy, high-fat, high-sugar diet during early life affects appetite and eating behaviours later in adulthood, and whether targeting the gut microbiome can fix those changes. Eating too much junk food can negatively affect health in more ways than one. Junk food typically contains high levels of unhealthy fats, sugar, salt, and low nutritional value. Regular consumption of junk food can lead to various health problems, such as obesity, diabetes, heart disease, and digestive issues. It can be particularly harm-

ful for children. A study published in the journal Nature Communications has revealed that eating too much junk food in early life can rewire the brain in ways that last into adulthood, even after switching to a healthier diet. Researchers examined how eating an unhealthy, high-fat, high-sugar diet during early life affects appetite and eating behaviours later in adulthood, and whether targeting the gut microbiome can fix those changes. The researchers found that early-life junk food leaves a lasting mark on the brain. A high-fat, high-sugar diet

can permanently alter adult eating habits, even after maintaining a healthy body weight later in life. The study also revealed that the unhealthy diet messes with male and female biology via completely different pathways. Females were found to be more vulnerable. The diet specifically wiped out their brain's leptin receptors (the hormone that tells you to stop eating) and disrupted how they process essential amino acids like tryptophan and arginine. While the males showed damage to their immune-sensing pathways and their steroid metabolism.

Junk Food in Childhood May Rewire Brain for Life

Gut-targeted therapies may reverse the damage
The most exciting finding is that the researchers successfully used two different types of gut-microbiome treatments to reverse these behavioural and brain alterations. Probiotics can help fix the overeating behaviours directly with minimal disruption to the rest of the existing gut ecosystem. Additionally, the prebiotics helped improve the health of their overall gut environment and fixed the gut-to-brain chemical pathways.

This study highlights how childhood diet matters immensely for long-term brain health. Eating too much junk food early in life doesn't just impact childhood weight; it physically rewires the brain's hunger and reward circuitry, making overeating a hardwired habit in adulthood. However, because the gut microbiome acts as a bridge to the brain, using targeted prebiotics or specific probiotics like Bifidobacterium longum can act like a reset button for the brain.

why children should steer clear of junk food:
1. Nutritional deficiency
Children need a balanced diet rich in vitamins and minerals for proper growth and development. Junk food is often devoid of these important nutrients, leading to deficiencies that can impact their physical and cognitive growth.
2. Weight gain and obesity
Junk food is typically high in calories and low in nutrients, which can contribute to weight gain. Childhood obesity is

a growing concern, and it can lead to serious health issues like type 2 diabetes and heart problems later in life.
3. Impact on behaviour and learning
Diets high in sugar and unhealthy fats can affect children's behaviour and cognitive function. Poor nutrition can lead to difficulties in concentration and learning, which are essential for academic success.
4. Dental problems
High sugar content in junk food can

lead to cavities and other dental issues. Children's teeth are still developing, and giving them sugary snacks can harm their oral health.
5. Poor eating habits
When children develop a taste for junk food, they might be less inclined to try healthy foods like fruits and vegetables. This can create lifelong eating habits that are difficult to change, setting the stage for chronic health issues. Encouraging children to eat whole, nutritious foods instead of junk food can lay a strong

foundation for their health and well-being, ensuring they grow up with the energy and nutrients they need for an active lifestyle and healthy development.
Disclaimer: This content including advice provides generic information only. It is in no way a substitute for a qualified medical opinion. Always consult a specialist or your own doctor for more information. NDTV does not claim responsibility for this information.



4 Nutrition Ideas That Changed Global Diets World Nutrition Day 2026

On World Nutrition Day 2026, here are the 4 nutrition concepts that changed global dietary trends.

The basic checklist for healthy eating has changed completely. A reliable healthy diet tips list no longer tells individuals to simply count calories or avoid dietary fats. As the medical community marks World Nutrition Day 2026 on May 28, the conversation has officially shifted toward cell-level metabolism and biochemical individuality. Proper nutrition is not about starving the body but about helping daily metabolism work efficiently. For Indians who are looking to optimise their nutrition, these new scientific ideas are important. The country faces a rapid rise in diabetes, heart issues, and metabolic disorders. Because of this, traditional Indian dietary habits are being studied by global researchers and are proving to be highly effective for long-term health management.

4 Nutrition Science Concepts That Changed Global Dietary Trends

1. The Gut Bacteria Ecosystem
For a long time, standard medicine viewed the digestive tract only as a basic tube for processing food and clearing waste. Today, global research focuses heavily on gut microbiome health. This term refers to the massive community of trillions of tiny live bacteria inside the large intestine. These bacteria control energy utilisation, immune health, and even mood signals via the gut-brain pathway. This discovery has shifted global diet trends back toward high-fibre, unrefined ingredients. For anyone looking at how to improve gut health naturally, the most effective options are already present in the traditional Indian kitchen. Fermented items like homemade curd (dahi), fresh idli batter, and seasonal kanji work as potent natural probiotics. Local foods like arbi (taro root), onions, and garlic act as prebiotics that feed good bacteria. This simple process effectively lowers chronic swelling and irritation inside the body.

2. Eating Food In The Right

Sequence

One of the most practical new health tools involves macronutrient sequencing. This principle states that the exact order in which food is eaten matters just as much as what is on the plate. Medical studies such as the study published in the J Am Nutritional Association Journal confirm that eating a meal in a specific order helps significantly in managing blood sugar spikes with food sequence adjustments. Structuring the regular Indian meal by eating components in a specific order alters the glycaemic response. There are two distinctions that determine the impact of food on your blood sugar levels:

- **Eating Order**
- **Food Component**
- **How It Helps The Body**

First: Fibre (salads, green vegetables) which creates a mesh filter in the intestine to slow down sugar absorption.

Second: Proteins and Fats (dal, paneer, chicken) which promotes satiety hormones and slows down stomach emptying.

Third: Carbohydrates (roti, rice, sweets) as they enter the blood-

stream much more slowly, preventing a sudden glucose surge. Eating a standard meal in this precise order provides a powerful way to handle sugar issues without requiring a total change to the family menu.

3. Understanding Carbohydrates And Insulin Resistance
Weight gain is often a visible symptom of a deeper metabolic issue called insulin resistance. When cells cannot use insulin properly, the condition can lead to type-2 diabetes, cardiovascular issues, and hormonal issues. This issue is highly critical because genetic susceptibility to insulin resistance in India remains exceptionally high. In previous decades, public health rules favoured low-fat foods, which inadvertently caused people to eat too many refined carbs like white rice and white flour (maida). Today, top health experts suggest focusing on high-quality carbohydrates paired with adequate protein and good fats. This biochemical reality explains why reliance on packaged "sugar-free" commercial diet foods often fails. These highly processed products can cause fat buildup in the liver and disrupt baseline metabolic health over time.

4. The Power Of Ancient Grains And Meal Timing

On World Nutrition Day 2026, ancient grains like sorghum (jowar), pearl millet (bajra), and finger millet (ragi) are highly valued globally. Modern global diet trends favour these grains because they do not cause fast sugar spikes, they carry vital micronutrients, and they maintain steady energy levels.

Nutritional Fact

The health benefits of traditional Indian foods like millets are immense. These grains possess special plant polyphenols and resistant starch that are digested very slowly, giving the body a steady release of fuel.

At the same time, the study of chrono-nutrition shows that the timing of food intake is crucial. The human metabolic system processes sugar best in the morning and afternoon. Eating heavy meals late at night goes directly against the internal biological clock, leading to visceral fat storage and poor sleep quality. Shifting the largest meal to lunch and keeping dinner light and early remains one of the best healthy diet tips for long-term health. Modern nutrition science reveals that good health does not require expensive, imported superfoods or restrictive eating patterns. True health management comes from applying modern scientific research to local, native food systems. By prioritising gut microbiome health, using smart food sequencing, and choosing ancient grains over refined flour, individuals can protect their health effectively. For World Nutrition Day 2026, making these small, deliberate updates to existing Indian dietary habits remains the most practical strategy for lifelong health and well-being.

Tired Of Energy Crashes? These 5 Superfoods May Help More Than Coffee

If your energy levels crash by midday and you constantly rely on coffee to stay productive, it may be time to look at what's on your plate.

Long work hours, poor sleep schedules and hectic routines often leave people reaching for another cup of coffee just to get through the day. While caffeine may offer a temporary boost in alertness, the effect does not always last long. For many, the sudden spike is often followed by an energy crash, irritability or fatigue later in the day. This is why more people are now looking for ways to support stable energy levels naturally through food choices instead of depending entirely on stimulants. According to Ayurvedic health expert Dimple Jangda, certain nutrient-rich foods may help provide more sustained energy throughout the day when included as part of a balanced diet. So, if you are someone who is looking for alternatives, here are some foods you should include in your diet.

5 Superfoods That Can Give You Sustained Energy Instead Of Caffeine

1. Almonds
Almonds are packed with healthy fats and protein, both of which help release energy slowly and steadily. According to Jangda, soaking almonds overnight and eating them in the morning may also make them easier to digest. Since they are rich in nutrients and provide satiety, they may help prevent sudden hunger and energy dips between meals.

2. Dates
Dates are often considered nature's energy bites for a reason. They contain natural sugars like glucose along with minerals such as iron and

magnesium. Jangda explains that dates can provide a quick yet relatively balanced energy boost compared to refined sugar. Pairing them with nuts may further help slow down sugar absorption and provide longer-lasting fuel.

3. Ghee
Adding a small amount of healthy fat to meals may also support sustained energy, says Jangda. One such option is ghee. Healthy fats digest more slowly and provide longer-lasting fuel to the body. According to her, fats may also support overall brain function and help improve satiety. For those who do not consume ghee, alternatives such as nut butters may offer similar benefits.

4. Ashwagandha
Ashwagandha is a popular adaptogenic herb in Ayurveda that is often associated with stress management and energy support. Jangda says it may help the body better cope with stress over time, which can indirectly support energy levels as well. It is commonly consumed with milk or plant-based alternatives. However, she advises that it should ideally be used under proper guidance.

5. Green Mung Beans
Green mung beans are light, protein-rich and generally considered easy to digest. They can be included in soups, dals or salads to help maintain stable energy levels throughout the day. Since they provide a combination of protein and complex carbohydrates, they may help avoid sudden spikes and crashes in energy.





U20 Asian Athletics

Sprinter Nipam makes memorable debut, wins 100m bronze in HK



HONG KONG: Young Indian female sprinter Nipam made a memorable debut as she won the 100m bronze on the opening day of the U20 Asian Athletics Championships, which got underway in Hong Kong, China, on Thursday. The 18-year-old national record holder in the U20 women's 100m was slow off the blocks but regained lost ground as she shifted gears to post a time of 11.62 seconds to win the bronze medal. The sprinter from Uttar Pradesh has a personal best (also national U20 record) of 11.53 seconds, clocked during a domestic meet in April.

Shooting World Cup Munich

Sakshi Padekar finishes seventh on debut



NEW DELHI: Sakshi Sunil Padekar finished seventh in the 10m Air Rifle women's final on Day Three of the International Shooting Sport Federation (ISSF) World Cup Rifle/Pistol at the iconic Olympiaschießanlage in Munich, Germany. The 22-year-old from Maharashtra qualified for the final in third place after shooting a very high 635.1, only behind World No. 1 Wang Zifei of China and Paris Olympics champion Hyojin Ban of South Korea. The 18-year-old Anelija Stevanovic of Serbia, also in her debut senior World Cup, clinched the gold with a total score of 252.3 in a final that was decided in the final shot.

Gujarat Titans seek final berth against red-hot Rajasthan Royals in do-or-die clash

NEW CHANDIGARH



Gujarat Titans know they must be at their absolute best to stop a Rajasthan Royals side playing some of the most explosive cricket of the season, when the two sides meet in a do-or-die Qualifier 2 of the Indian Premier League (IPL) 2026 at the Mahara-ja Yadavindra Singh International Cricket Stadium in New Chandigarh on Friday.

The stakes could not be higher. A win will help the Gujarat Titans book their place in the final at the Narendra Modi Stadium in Ahmed-abad, where they will again take on the Royal Challengers Bengaluru on Sunday. But a loss would mean that a campaign that promised much would come to an abrupt end. GT ar-rive in New Chandigarh with some-thing to prove -- their Qualifier 1 game against RCB in Dharamshala ended in a heavy 92-run defeat, their worst performance of the season at the worst possible time. Rahul Tewa-tia's gutsy fifty offered a rare positive in an otherwise lopsided contest, where their menacing new-ball pair of Kagiso Rabada and Mohammed Siraj could not contain a rampant RCB batting lineup.

GT will need their opening pair of captain Shubman Gill and B. Sai Sudharsan, and number three Jos Buttler to fire on Friday, and hope for their bowling line-up to stop a rampaging Vaibhav Sooryavanshi from making big runs. RR, mean-while, have won three on the trot and arrive in Qualifier 2 brimming with confidence after saying goodbye to Sunrisers Hyderabad. The catalyst has been 15-year-old Sooryavanshi,

who is fast becoming the tourna-ment's defining story. His 97 off just 29 balls against SRH in the Elimina-tor was breathtaking and astonish-ing in equal measure. He now wears the Orange Cap with 680 runs at a staggering strike rate of 243 and also broke Chris Gayle's record for the most sixes in a single IPL season by taking his tally to 65 maximums.

The pairing of Sooryavanshi and Yashasvi Jaiswal has combined for 747 runs at a strike rate of 206 -- making them the most productive partnership of IPL 2026, ahead of Gill-Sudharsan. Dhruv Jurel has enjoyed a career-best season with 508 runs at a strike rate of 155, while skipper Riyan Parag has provided calm leadership throughout.

With the ball, Jofra Archer has been RR's most potent weapon - 24 wickets at a strike rate of 14, includ-ing 14 in the powerplay. The England pacer's battle against the GT top or-

der will also be one of the most antici-pated duels of the evening. Ravindra Jadeja adds match-winning balance with both bat and ball and brings invaluable playoffs experience to the RR dressing room.

GT hold a commanding 7-3 head-to-head record over RR and famous-ly beat them in both the 2022 Qual-ifier 1 and the final. But this season, the scores are level - GT won by 77 runs in Jaipur, while RR had a six-run victory in Ahmedabad.

The venue, however, leans firmly in RR's favour -- they have won all four matches in New Chandigarh this season, while GT have managed just one win from three outings here. Come Friday, and both sides will be chasing their third IPL final appear-ance. For GT, it is about rediscover-ing their best in the biggest moment, while for RR, it is about sustaining a momentum that feels, right now, unstoppable.

Squads

Gujarat Titans: Shubman Gill (cap-tain), Sai Sudharsan, Jos Buttler, Jason Holder, Nishant Sindhu, Rahul Tewatia, Washington Sund-ar, Rashid Khan, Shahrulkh Khan, Kagiso Rabada, Mohammed Siraj, Prasidh Krishna, Glenn Phillips, Anuj Rawat, Kumar Kushagra, Ma-nav Suthar, Gurnoor Brar, Connor Esterhuizen, R Sai Kishore, Arshad Khan, Ashok Sharma, Ishant Shar-ma, Jayant Yadav, Kulwant Khejroli-ya, and Luke Wood

Rajasthan Royals: Riyan Parag (captain), Dhruv Jurel (wk), Don-ovan Ferreira, Emanjot Chahal, Vaibhav Sooryavanshi, Yashasvi Jaiswal, Shubham Dubey, Lhuan-dre Pretorius, Shimron Hetmyer, Aman Rao, Ravindra Jadeja, Dasun Shanaka, Yuvdev Singh, Jofra Ar-cher, Tushar Deshpande, Kvena Maphaka, Nandre Burger, Sushant Mishra, Kuldeep Sen, Adam Milne.

Neymar set to miss friendlies, doubtful for Brazil's first match in FIFA World Cup

SÃO PAULO (BRAZIL)

Brazilian star Neymar Jr suf-fered a big setback to his hopes of playing in the side's first match in the FIFA World Cup 2026, to be played in the USA, Mexico, and Canada from June 11, as he has been ruled out of the upcoming international friendly matches.

Brazil are set to play Panama in Brasília on Sunday and will take the field for their sec-ond warmup match against Egypt on June 5, and the country's all-time leading scorer is likely to miss both the friendlies. Neymar, who joined the national camp on Wednesday, missed the first World Cup training session and had to undergo

"further medical evaluations" on his bruised right calf, the Brazilian Football Confedera-tion (CBF) announced.

Scans carried out on Ney-mar have confirmed a Grade 2 calf injury, and according to the CBF medical department, this is the same injury that had sidelined the forward since May 17, when he last fea-tured in Santos' defeat to Coritiba in Brazil's national league.

CBF doctor Rodrigo Lasmar confirmed to the local media that the veteran forward will need around two to three weeks to recover, leaving his hopes hanging by a thread. Neymar had reported to

camp earlier Wednesday, join-ing the rest of the squad at the five-time world champions' training center in Teresópo-lis, outside Rio de Janeiro. Pending the results of the final medical tests, it appears high-ly unlikely that Neymar will feature in Brazil's first warm-



up friendly ahead of the World Cup this coming Sunday against Panama in Brasília.

On Tuesday, Neymar played down concerns about his availability for the World Cup after watching Santos beat Deportivo Cuenca 3-0 in a Copa Sudamericana game at Vila Belmiro, ESPN Bra-sil reported on Wednesday. When asked about his injury problem, Neymar shot back: "What problem?" Right-back Danilo was the only other absentee in the first practice from the group of 23 players that reported to manager Car-lo Ancelotti. Danilo played the full 90 minutes.

CM Congratulated to Esha Singh

HYDERABAD

ISSF World Cup 2026 shooting cham-pion Esha Singh has been congrat-ulated by Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy for achieving a historic victory with an extraordinary performance. The Chief Minister stated that Esha's achievement of scoring 43 hits in the women's 25-meter pistol final at the ISSF World Cup being held in Munich, breaking the world record with a re-markable score, will remain a memo-rable milestone in the history of Indi-an shooting sports. He praised Hyder-abad-based Esha Singh for becoming an inspiration to millions through her dedication, discipline, and determina-tion. He said her outstanding per-formance is inspiring for Indian athletes and a symbol of the bright future of Indian sports. The Chief Minister expressed hope that Esha Singh will achieve many more successes in the future and reach even greater heights. He wished that she would continue to bring more glory to the country.



Harmanpreet Kaur sits out of the first T20I against England

CHELMSFORD

In the series before the upcoming ICC Women's T20 World Cup, India women decided to go into the opening match of the white-ball series against England without regular skipper Har-manpreet Kaur.

The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI informed via social me-dia post that Harmanpreet Kaur has been rested for the first T20I against England and that Smriti Mandhana will be leading the side.

"Captain Harmanpreet Kaur has been rested for the first T20I against England Women in Chelmsford. Sm-riti Mandhana is leading the side in her absence," said the post on X, for-merly Twitter. "I think she'll be ready for the second match," said Mandhana at the toss as India handed a debut to Nandani Sharma, who finished as the joint-leading wicket-taker at the re-cent Women's Premier League (WPL). England also went into the match without regular skipper Nat Sciv-



er-Brunt, nursing her troublesome calf. Charlie Dean was leading the side. England Women won the toss and elected to bowl first as they hand-ed a debut to Tilly Corteen-Coleman. Having claimed their maiden T20 World Cup title at home last year, India are making their final prepa-rations for the mega event by locking horns with England in a three-match T20I series to familiarise themselves with the conditions on offer. The In-dian players will be taking the field in England on a high following their

success over the hosts in the previous white-ball series.

With India riding on a wave of confidence, Harman conceded that a fairytale ending to the upcoming tournament will be a dream come true for her. "It will be a dream come true for any cricketer who made their debut in England and then winning the World Cup in England, I think I can't ask anything else for myself and from God," she said in the pre-match press conference in Chelmsford on Wednesday.

PM Modi congratulates Indian wrestlers for outstanding performance in 2026 U23 Asian Championships



NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thurs-day congratulated Indian wrestlers for their outstanding performance in the 2026 U23 Asian Championships in Da Nang, Vietnam, with the Men's Freestyle and Women's teams winning the overall championships.

It was a historic campaign in a sen-sational continental campaign with the entire Indian contingent amassing a staggering total of 27 medals, comprising eleven gold, seven silver, and nine bronze, across the Freestyle, Women's Wrestling, and Greco-Roman categories.

"An outstanding performance by our wrestlers! Our Men's Freestyle and Women's Wrestling teams won the Team Titles at the 2026 U23 Asian Championships in Da Nang, Vietnam," PM Modi wrote in a post on X, formerly Twitter.

"The Men's Freestyle Wrestling team secured 9 medals, including 4 Golds, thus registering India's highest-ever overall medal haul at the U23 Asian Champi-onships in history. The women's wrestling contingent won 10 medals, including 6

Golds. The Greco-Roman team also re-corded its highest-ever overall medal count with 8 medals. Congratulations to our wrestlers. My best wishes for the en-deavours ahead," PM Modi wrote in his post. The Indian men's freestyle wrestling team was crowned the undisputed cham-pions at the U23 Asian Wrestling Champi-onships in Da Nang, Vietnam, lifting the Team Championship Trophy with a spec-tacular first-place finish. India dominated the freestyle standings to claim the top spot ahead of powerhouse nations Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan, who finished second and third, respectively.

The championship-winning freestyle squad wrapped up their campaign with nine medals, including four gold, three silver, and two bronze. Akshay T Dhre (57kg) and Vicky (97kg) set the tone with brilliant gold medals, and the momentum was carried forward by Kumar Mohit (65kg) and Chandermohan (79kg), who also stood atop the podium.

Deepak Rathi (61kg), Punit Kumar (92kg), and Lacky (125kg) contributed to the historic team title with hard-fought silver medals, while Deepak Berwal

(74kg) and Mor Sachin (82kg) rounded out the freestyle tally with crucial bronze medal finishes.

India's women wrestlers were equally dominant throughout the tournament, delivering an exceptional performance to capture ten medals. The women's contin-gent brought home a remarkable six gold medals, with Muskan (53kg), Tapasya (57kg), Bhagyashree (62kg), Pulkrit (67kg), Mansi (68kg), and Kajal (76kg) all showcasing their technical superiority in their respective title clashes.

Neha (59kg) and Sweety (50kg) fought valiantly to secure silver medals, while Amruta (72kg) and Ahilya (55kg) finished their campaigns on the podium with bronze. In the Greco-Roman category, the Indian grapplers laid a strong foundation early in the tournament by securing eight medals. Sumit led the charge with a spec-tacular gold in the 63kg division, supported by silver medals from Suraj (60kg) and Sagar Singh (67kg).

Neeraj Patel (55kg), Sachin (77kg), Ro-hit Bura (87kg), Rohit (97kg), and Hard-eep (130kg) added to the impressive haul with well-deserved bronze medals.

French Open: Moise Kouame continues to rise, reaches third round

PARIS

France's Moise Kouame continued to thrive at the home Grand Slam as the newest tennis sensation in his country at the French Open, surging into the third round with a five-set victory, joining Rafael Nadal in a milestone achieved in 2003.

The 17-year-old Frenchman, playing in his first major tournament, defeated Adolfo Daniel Vallejo 6-3, 7-5, 3-6, 2-6, 7-6(8) with a vociferous crowd at Court Suzanne-Lenglen. Kouame became the youngest man to reach the third round of a major since Nadal at Wimbledon in 2003 with his four-hour, 56-minute victo-ry. "Winning Roland Garros is, of course, a dream," Kouame said with a smile. "Be-ing World No. 1 is also a dream... I think thinking about winning the tournament is



a bit early, but I'm really happy to be in the third round, and I'm going to try my best to win another match."

Kouame's breakthrough run has added another layer to the teenage story-line unfolding at this year's clay-court major. Alongside Rafael Jodar and Joao Fonse-ca, both 19, Kouame completed the first trio of teenagers to reach the third round at a major since 2006, when 19-year-olds

Nadal, Novak Djokovic, and Gael Monfils achieved the feat. Kouame had announced his arrival with an opening-round victory over 2014 US Open champion Marin Cilic, while his second-round display under-lined his growing stature. Vallejo, the World No. 71, arrived in Paris having won nine of his previous 12 matches across all levels, including a run to the third round at the ATP Masters 1000 event in Madrid last month. Yet Kouame stole the spotlight with his athleticism and shotmaking. The Frenchman claimed his third tour-level victory -- all against Top-100 opponents -- while producing flashes of brilliance throughout the match. In the opening set, he pulled off a disguised forehand flick be-fore showcasing exceptional defence and court coverage during several lung-bust-ing rallies.

FC Barcelona closing in on Newcastle's Gordon

MADRID

FC Barcelona are closing in on their first signing for the 2026-27 La Liga season after reportedly reaching an agreement to sign England interna-tional winger Anthony Gordon from Newcastle United.

Barcelo-na-based newspaper Mundo De-portivo reported on Wednesday that the deal is worth around 70 million euros (81.3 million U.S. dollars), plus an initial 10 million euros in performance-related variables.

The newly crowned La Liga champion



and has earned 17 caps for England.

The 25-year-old is expected to arrive in Barcelona on Thursday to undergo med-ical tests and sign his contract, with both the player and the club keen to finalise the move before he joins England's World

Cup preparations on Monday, June 1. The 2025-26 La Liga season ended with Barce-lona as the champion, Real Madrid second, and Oviedo, Mallorca, and Girona relegat-ed to the second tier. Some clubs can look back with satisfaction, while others face an uncomfortable summer. Here are the end-of-term marks in Spain's top flight.

FC Barcelona finished top of the class, with Hansi Flick's side recovering from a slow start, perhaps affected by the loss of defender Inigo Martinez to Saudi Arabia, to dominate the competition. Lamine Yamal, Pedri, Raphinha, Pau Cubarsi, Eric Garcia, and Joan Garcia were all outstand-ing, but Flick also deserves special praise for showing flair in young players and ro-tating a thin squad so effectively that inju-ries to key players were hardly noticed.

Spirit to Spotlight Tripti Dimri

Tripti Dimri is currently one of the busiest actresses in Bollywood. She shot to nationwide fame after starring opposite Ranbir Kapoor in the blockbuster Animal, directed by Sandeep Reddy Vanga. After Deepika Padukone exited Spirit, Vanga reportedly brought Tripti on board as the female lead opposite Prabhas in the much-awaited Telugu-Hindi bilingual. The project marks Tripti's official debut in Telugu cinema. According to writer-director Hemant Madhukar, who shares a long association with Sandeep Reddy Vanga, Tripti's character in the film will be much more than just a glamorous role. "Tripti Dimri will surprise everyone with her performance in the film. Sandeep Reddy Vanga is known for writing strong and mem-

orable female characters, and audiences can expect a powerful role for her in 'Spirit'," Hemant Madhukar said. The shooting of Spirit is currently underway in Hyderabad. The crime drama is especially significant as it marks Prabhas's 25th film and the first time he will portray a police officer on screen. With Prabhas and Sandeep Reddy Vanga collaborating for the first time, expectations are sky-high. The film is currently being planned for a theatrical release in early 2027.

Jailer 2: Big Twist In Shah Rukh Khan's Cameo



Kollywood director Nelson Dilipkumar seems to be following one clear strategy with Jailer 2, make the film bigger than the first part in every possible way. And now, the latest speculation around the film is once again creating huge discussion across industries. After the massive success of Superstar Rajinikanth's Jailer, expectations on the sequel are naturally sky high. Rajinikanth's presence itself is enough to create hype, but the makers appear to be adding multiple surprise elements like special cameos, which they also did in the first part, to turn the sequel into a big pan-India film. For the past few months, rumours about star cameos in Jailer 2 have been circulating heavily. Veteran Bollywood star Mithun Chakraborty himself revealed that both he and Shah Rukh Khan would be appearing in the film. That instantly pushed expectations to another level altogether. A Rajinikanth and Shah Rukh Khan combination in a Nelson film sound-

Peddi celebrates Indian Spirit on Global Canvas - Ram Charan

Mega Power Star Ram Charan's upcoming rural sports drama Peddi is rapidly building nationwide anticipation. At a national media press conference held in Delhi, the actor described the film as a representation of the "true Indian spirit on a global canvas." Speaking about the film, Ram Charan said Indian cinema has always been celebrated for telling rooted stories connected to the soil and culture of the country, and noted that Peddi carries an inspiring narrative with strong emotional depth. The actor revealed that he underwent intense physical preparation for the role and found achieving the wrestler's physique to be the most challenging transformation of his career. He added that the hard work was part of his responsibility toward bringing an authentic and impactful story to the screen. Charan also praised director Buchi Babu for his screenplay and vision, while appreciating producer Venkata Satish Kilari for backing such an ambitious project as a debut production venture.

ed explosive on paper. Especially after Jawan, Shah Rukh's mass image in the South market has grown massively. Fans expected that cameo to create a theatrical blast moment. But now, things seem to have changed. According to the latest buzz, Shah Rukh Khan could not continue with the project because of his commitments towards, his own-production movie, King. Reports suggest the portions planned with him are still incomplete. And now, the makers are allegedly considering Hrithik Roshan for the same role.

Hrithik Roshan is undoubtedly one of the biggest stars in Bollywood with terrific screen presence. But then, fans feel that replacing Shah Rukh with Hrithik completely changes the emotional dynamic and mass impact of the cameo in Tamil-Telugu film. Anyway, lets wait for the official confirmation over the same.



Beauty Cracks The Summer Heat In Bikini!

Malaika Arora is serving major vacation goals! The ageless diva is currently enjoying a dreamy wellness getaway in a tropical paradise, and her latest pictures and videos are pure summer inspiration. From cycling on a scenic wooden pier during a golden sunset to floating peacefully in crystal-clear turquoise waters, fully in crystal-clear radiant and relaxed. In one stunning shot, she is seen in a sleek black bikini and cap, soaking up the sun on the beach. Her fit and toned figure is proof of her disciplined fitness routine.

Samantha's comeback faces box office competition

Samantha Ruth Prabhu is gearing up for a crucial comeback with Maa Inti Bangaram, directed by Nandini Reddy and backed by Raj Nidimoru as the showrunner. The recently released trailer showcased Samantha in a refreshing avatar. The trailer has already generated positive buzz and heightened expecta-

tions among fans. The film is currently eyeing a June 19 theatrical release. However, Samantha's comeback will face competition at the box office. Interestingly, veteran actor Vadde Naveen is also returning to the big screen with Transfer Trimurthulu, which is scheduled to release on the same day. Adding to the crowded lineup is Deewana starring Harshith Reddy, who was previously seen in Sa-

mantha-backed Shubham. A dubbed film titled Balan is also expected to join the June 19 race. While these releases may not pose a major threat to Maa Inti Bangaram, their presence could divide audience attention and screen space. Nevertheless, Samantha remains the biggest attraction of the weekend, with fans eagerly waiting to see her return to Telugu cinema in a lead role after a long gap.

Sreeleela Says Speaking Local Languages Is a Sign of Respect

Sreeleela has spoken about the importance of regional languages and why she consciously tries to speak the local language wherever she travels for work. Sreeleela began her acting journey in the Kannada film industry before achieving major success in Telugu cinema. She later expanded into Tamil films and is now preparing for the release of her maiden Hindi film this

year. Although she comes from a Telugu-speaking family, Sreeleela is fluent in English, Hindi and Kannada apart from her native Telugu. She can also converse in Tamil, making her one of the few young actresses comfortable working across multiple Indian film industries. The actress, currently among the

busiest stars in Indian cinema, said speaking the local language is her way of showing respect to the people and culture of a region. "Since I work in different film industries, I travel to many places. Whenever I visit a region, I try to speak in the local language. It is a way of showing respect to the people, their culture and their language," she said. According to Sreeleela, language acts as an emotional bridge between actors and audiences. She believes speaking the local language during promotional events helps celebrities connect more closely with fans and makes interactions more meaningful. On the professional front, Sreeleela is currently working on a Hindi romantic drama opposite Kartik Aaryan. She is also set to share screen space with Dhanush in an upcoming project.

