



Telangana govt to hand over power purchase

Agreements scam to CBI



Hyderabad: Revenue Minister Ponguleti Srinivas Reddy has announced that the Telangana cabinet has decided to hand over the Justice Madan B Lokur Commission's report on the alleged irregularities in power

purchases and the construction of Yadadri and Bhadradi Thermal Power Plants during the Bharat Rashtra Samithi (BRS) government to the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI). A meeting of the Telangana cabinet was held

at Dr BR Ambedkar Telangana State Secretariat on Monday, May 4, which was chaired by Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy, where the decision was taken. He said the state cabinet has also decided to increase the value of lands across the state by May 26, and that the revised land values will apply to the lands being acquired for various irrigation, road and other infrastructure projects. He said those who are the applicants under the Hyderabad Industrial Lands Transformation (HILT) policy, who apply for registering the lands before the increase of land values, will have to pay 10 per cent of the registration charges at the time of registration, and will have to pay the rest within 90 days of registration.



What A Shock: 2 Veteran CMs Lost As MLAs

Something remarkable has happened in an Indian politics today as two sitting chief ministers are not just eradicated from their office, but also ended up losing their own legislative seats. The two Chief ministers in discussion here are the outgoing CM of Tamil Nadu, MK Stalin and West Bengal CM Mamata Banerjee. The interesting common factor between these two outgoing chief ministers is that they did not just end up losing the election in Tamil Nadu and Bengal, respectively but also lost as MLAs. Stalin lost the election from Kothalur in Chennai city region and this happens to be the first time in last 40 years that he has lost the MLA position. He was defeated by a significant margin of 8000+ votes. On the other hand, we have the case of Mamata Banerjee, who herself had a pathetic campaign in the Bhabanipur constituency in West Bengal. The level of anti-incumbency that had built up against Stalin and Mamata Banerjee is so very strong that they have been eradicated from their respective offices and are also out of MLA positions now. On the other hand, Kerala chief minister, Pinarayi Vijayan also ended up narrowly surviving as an MLA as he to faced a significant setback in the assembly election.

BRS calls for statewide protests over failed crop procurement



Vijay Formula For Political Success, Others Should Note

Everyone thought the era of actors commanding politics is done and dusted with NTR itself after Chiranjeevi (in 2009) and Pawan Kalyan failed (in 2019). That's the reason why everyone is skeptical when Vijay contested the elections independently in Tamil Nadu. But then, everything changed with Vijay's Sensational Victory in Tamil Nadu. All of sudden, fans of some stars are fancying their chances and are claiming that their favorite actors will be the next Chief Ministers. Keeping aside the special conditions that will prevail at a particular time, every actor should have one thing for sure. The actors aspiring to make it big in politics should have absolute dominance in film for at least five years preceding their political debut. It should be like they are indisputable number one and the Number Two should be at least a mile away from his popularity/success.

Declaring that "the BRS will not relent until every grain is procured," BRS working president KT Rama Rao called for statewide protests, directing party cadres to mobilise at procurement centres and government offices in support of distressed farmers. He mounted a sharp attack on the Revanth Reddy government over its failure to establish adequate procurement centres even as farmers awaited procurement of their harvested crops. During a visit to a Bengal gram procurement centre in Sadasi vapet of Sangareddy district on Monday, Rama Rao interacted with farmers, who alleged that the government was not purchasing their produce, leaving them in



acute distress. He said the procurement mechanism had completely broken down, with the government resorting to theatrics instead of ensuring timely crop purchases.

Telangana Cabinet clears caste name changes, nodal steps for nomadic communities

HYDERABAD: The state Cabinet on Monday approved changing the name of the "Dommaru" caste to "Gadavanshiya", and removing the word "Pichchi guntla" from the BC list, retaining only "Vamsharaj". State BC Commission chairman G Niranjana, along with members Rapolu Jayaprakash, Tirumalagiri Surender and Balalakshmi Rangu, disclosed this while welcoming the government's acceptance of the panel's recommendations aimed at the welfare of nomadic and marginalised communities. The Cabinet cleared proposals to revise caste names considered derogatory and approved the list of eligible nomadic communities for schemes such as SEED being implemented by the Centre.

BASF to Set Up Global Service Hub in Hyderabad

German-based multinational BASF is poised to establish a Global Service Hub in Hyderabad, following an agreement with the Telangana Government. The project is expected to create around 3,000 new jobs for local residents. Representatives from BASF presented a Letter of Intent (LoI) to IT Minister Sridhar Babu, announcing the formation of BASF Global Business Services Private Limited. The new hub will focus on providing strategic Finance and Human Resources (HR) services.



Saudi Arabia Calls to 'De-Escalate' as US-Iran Ceasefire on Brink

RIYADH: Saudi Arabia called on Tuesday to de-escalate the conflict in the Middle East after Iran and the United States traded fire, rattling a fragile ceasefire. "The Ministry of Foreign Affairs expresses the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia's concern regarding the current military escalation in the region, and calls for the need to de-escalate," the foreign ministry said in a statement posted on X. The ministry said it supported "diplomatic efforts to reach a political solution" in the war.

After Bengal win, BJP has 17 CMs; Bang, Ang, Kaling under its wing

NEW DELHI: With its landslide win in West Bengal, the BJP has added one more to its kitty of 16 states and Union territories (UTs) where the party has its chief ministers. The BJP is also in power in four more states, including Andhra Pradesh, as part of NDA. The states and the UTs in which the party has own CMs include Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Delhi, Goa, Gujarat, Haryana, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Manipur, Odisha, Rajasthan, Tripura, Uttar Pradesh and Uttarakhand. Now with the



addition of Bengal, a BJP leader said, "Our party is now ruling the entire stretch where the Ganges is flowing.

Uttam Instructs Officials to Ramp-Up Paddy Procurement

Hyderabad: Civil supplies minister N. Uttam Kumar Reddy on Monday directed officials to ramp-up paddy procurement, as unseasonal rains would start lashing Telangana. He also sought urgent safeguards to protect farmers from untimely rains and losses. Putting the official machinery that is involved in minimum support price (MSP) operations on high alert, Uttam Kumar Reddy emphasised the need for monitoring of weather conditions and ensuring that farmers were promptly informed about rainfall forecasts. He was speaking at a reviewed of paddy procurement an directed officials to scale up the operations. The government has procured around 14.8 lakh metric tonnes (LMT), with all 8,575 paddy procurement centres (PPCs) fully operational. This includes over 8 LMT of coarse varieties. An amount of ₹2001.96 crore has been remitted to the accounts of farmers.



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Midwife : Critical at Every Crisis

(On the occasion of “International Day of the Midwife” on May 05)

Midwives perform a vital service in providing care and support to women and their families while pregnant, throughout labour and during the period after a baby's birth. Midwifery is skilled, knowledgeable and compassionate care for childbearing women, newborn infants and families across the continuum throughout pre-pregnancy, pregnancy, birth, postpartum and early weeks of life. A Midwife is a person who, having been regularly admitted to a midwifery educational program, duly recognised in the country, has successfully completed the prescribed course of study in midwifery and has acquired the requisite qualifications to be registered and/or legally licensed to practice to practice midwifery. “International Day of the Midwife-2026 Theme: “The world is facing an unprecedented number of crises - natural disasters, conflicts, and ongoing impacts of climate change. These crises disproportionately affect women, girls, and gender diverse people, exposing them to heightened risks such as pregnancy complications and gender-based violence, while also limiting their access to essential health services. In these changing times, midwives are critical. To appreciate and acknowledge the invaluable services to the well-being of both newborn and mother “International Day of the Midwife” on 05 May annually around the globe. The theme of 2026 International Day of the Midwife is “One Million More Midwife” indicating the importance of many more midwives in building healthy child and mother. They can provide up to 90% of sexual, reproductive, maternal, newborn, and adolescent health services, even in the most complex humanitarian settings. “With minimum resources, midwives can provide safe births, antenatal, and postnatal care, contraception, comprehensive abortion care, and care for survivors of gender-based violence. They also support breastfeeding, ensure newborns receive safe, clean, and reliable nutrition. Midwives educate and prepare communities with the knowledge and tools they need to stay safe and healthy during emergencies. Let's celebrate International Day of the Midwife by visiting to a nearby mother and child health centre to appreciate the on duty midwives and sincerely thank them on behalf of the civil society.”

Dr Burra Madhusudhan Reddy

MLA Palla Rajeshwar Reddy hails chukka Sattaiah's timeless legacy

Hanumakonda: Ogguartist Chukka Sattaiah was remembered as a great personality like a gem in the soil during a statue unveiling ceremony held on Sunday at Kallem Common in Jangaon district headquarters. Jangaon MLA Dr Palla Rajeshwar Reddy attended the event as chief guest and paid floral tributes to the statue. Addressing the gathering, the MLA said Sattaiah dedicated his art beyond caste, family and region, serving society as a whole. Despite lacking formal education, he mastered the Oggu art form and earned national and international recognition. He noted that Sattaiah received several honours, including the Central Sahitya Akademi Award, for presenting stories of deities in a manner easily understood by the masses. He further said that Sattaiah's performances served as guiding principles for workers and the labour community. Through extensive research and dedication, he performed over 12,000 Oggu shows and trained around 1,700 disciples, ensuring the continuation of the tradition. The MLA added that Sattaiah also spread social awareness by addressing issues like dowry and alcoholism through his art.

Five suspects involved in jewellery showroom attack, says Bandi Sanjay

Karimnagar: A suspected gang of armed robbers entered a jewellery showroom in Karimnagar pretending as customers before opening fire when employees resisted an attempted theft. Union Minister of State for Home Affairs Bandi Sanjay Kumar said five persons were believed to be involved and expressed confidence that police would soon nab them. The incident occurred at PMJ Jewellers in Jyothinagar, creating panic in the locality, On Sunday. Soon after receiving information, Bandi Sanjay reached the showroom along with Mayor Kolagani Srinivas and corporator Boyinipalli Praveen Kumar. He reviewed CCTV footage and spoke to employees to understand how the attack unfolded. Speaking on this occasion, the Minister said preliminary inputs based on surveillance footage and eyewitness accounts



suggested the crime was carefully planned. One suspect reportedly entered first and asked to see a 20-gram gold chain. Minutes later, two others arrived seeking to view ornaments. While staff were attending to them, two more men walked in, taking the group's strength to five. Police suspect the men then pulled out firearms and tried to loot jewellery. When the sales manager and other workers intervened, shots were fired inside the showroom. The sudden attack caused chaos as staff attempted to stop the gang. Bandi Sanjay commended the courage shown by the employees, saying their resistance may have foiled a larger theft attempt.

2nd phase of Indiramma housing to be sanctioned by May end: Telangana Minister

Khammam: Telangana Revenue and Housing Minister Ponguleti Srinivas Reddy on Sunday, May 3, announced that the second phase of the Indiramma housing scheme would be sanctioned by the end of this month, assuring that eligibility, and not political affiliation, would be the sole criterion for beneficiaries. The minister was speaking at a Praja Darbar held at the Zilla Parishad High School in Kusumanchi in the Paleru constituency, where he received grievances directly from the public. Ponguleti said the bulk of petitions received at such outreach camps pertained to Indiramma housing and blamed the previous government for the backlog. He said funds for house construction were being credited directly to beneficiaries' accounts every Monday. Asserting that the Congress-led government's goal was to spare citizens the ordeal of running from office to office, Reddy said officials were being sent to the doorstep of the public to receive and doorestep petitions on the spot. He said the 99-day Praja



Palana progress plan had helped streamline the delivery of welfare schemes and that every legitimate application would be examined and acted upon without delay or political bias. He added that the government was making special efforts to resolve long-pending disputes related to Sada Bainama transactions, prohibited land lists and land records. On ag-

riculture, Ponguleti Reddy said paddy and maize were being procured at minimum support price (MSP), with payments credited to farmers within a week. He recalled that loan waivers had been extended to 25 lakh farmers, Rythu Bharosa had been raised to Rs 12,000 per acre and a bonus of Rs 500 per quintal was being paid for fine paddy.

Farmers seek Rs 40L per acre as compensation for land acquired

Hyderabad: Farmers and representatives of the Telangana State Farmers' Union have urged Irrigation Minister Uttam Kumar Reddy to enhance compensation for land being acquired for a proposed Food Park in Huzurnagar mandal. In an open letter addressed to the Minister on Sunday, the union stated that the compensation announced for 138 acres of land in Survey No. 1041 is significantly below the prevailing market value. They demanded a minimum compensation of Rs 40 lakh per acre, citing loss of livelihood and long-term economic insecurity. The letter noted that farmers dependent on these lands are losing their primary income source, making adequate compensation essential. The signatories requested that the Food Park be developed in association with Professor Jayashankar Telangana Agricultural University and be used exclusively for food processing industries. They further demanded that polluting industries should not be permitted in the project area. The farmers also urged the government to give priority to displaced cultivators wishing to establish processing units using the compensation received. The letter was signed by Pashya Padma, General Secretary, and Bhagam Hemantha Rao, President of the organisation. They appealed to the Minister to consider their demands sympathetically to ensure fair justice for all affected families within the district.

Unseasonal Rains in Mahbubabad, Warangal Districts Damage Crops

Warangal: Heavy unseasonal rains accompanied by high-velocity winds destroyed crops and caused heavy losses to farmers across Mahbubabad district and some parts of Warangal district on Sunday. Paddy and maize stocks piled up at various IKP procurement centres and markets got soaked in the sudden downpour that caught farmers off guard, leaving them in deep distress. The situation turned particularly grim in Nellikuduru in Mahbubabad district and Nekkonda mandal in Warangal district. Farmers at the Nekkonda Agricultural Market lamented that their produce, which had been drying for nearly a month, either got



washed away or turned into sodden heaps. We work hard during the entire season only to see our harvest go to waste just before it is sold," a farmer lamented. Farmers have requested the government to intervene immediately and procure their damaged grain to save them from financial ruin. The storm caused significant disruption in Mahabubabad town. Strong winds blew away tin roofs and wooden beams from shops near Kesamudram Road and the local bus depot. The debris fell onto the main road, completely halting traffic and posing a threat to commuters.

Farmers protest delays in maize procurement

KHAMMAM: Protests erupted at maize procurement centres in Khammam after a server outage stalled data processing, forcing staff to halt issuance of truck sheets and leaving loaded lorries stranded. The situation worsened over the weekend, with several lorries remaining parked at procurement centres on Saturday and Sunday. Farmers' union teams

visited centres in Wyra mandal and interacted with farmers to assess the ground situation. Expressing frustration over the delays, farmers demanded immediate resolution. Telangana Rythu Sangham district secretary Bonthu Rambabu and mandal secretary Kilaru Srinivasa Rao criticised the government's inaction amid mounting challenges.



100 acres of maize and jowar crops reduced to ashes in fire

Adilabad: Farmers, who had worked for months, were just days away from bringing their harvest home. Unfortunately, an accidental fire turned their hopes into ashes, destroying nearly 100 acres of maize crops. The incident in Kangutta village, Adilabad district, left farmers in deep sorrow. The fire broke out accidentally in the maize fields of Kangutta. With the scorching heat and strong winds, the flames spread quickly, engulfing hundreds of acres within minutes. Starting in Kangutta, the fire soon spread to neighbouring Sakera village fields. Since the crops were fully dried and ready for harvest, the flames rose even higher. The absence of a fire engine in the constituency center and the shortage of harvesters worsened the tragedy. Farmers, waiting for their turn to harvest due to machine scarcity, were caught off guard by the sudden blaze. As a result, more than 40 farmers in Kangutta lost their entire yield. Locals and farmers immediately informed the fire department and police. Firefighters rushed to the spot but arrived late. With the help of fire engines, officials, farmers, and villagers worked together to control the flames and prevent them from spreading to nearby fields.



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Golconda Fort Gets Lightning Shield, 24x7 Watch

Hyderabad: Golconda Fort is now better protected from lightning with the installation of two advanced technology conductors by the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI). The hilltop fort, prone to lightning strikes, can now withstand strikes up to 120 metres. The 23-metre-high conductors will safeguard the upper areas, including the durbar hall. The works cost Rs 10 lakh. Acting on instructions from ASI superintending archaeologist Dr Nihildas, similar conductors have been installed at Ramappa.

BJP Flays Police Action on DD Journalist

Hyderabad: BJP Telangana president N. Ramchander Rao has slammed the Congress-led state government, accusing it of displaying an "emergency mindset" after Telangana police were reportedly sent to the Ghaziabad residence of DD News journalist Ashok Shrivastava late Saturday, Press Freedom Day. Rao termed the move an "attack on press freedom and democratic dissent." "From the first amendment to the dark days of the Emergency, and now this intimidation of a senior journalist, the Congress has repeatedly shown its instinct to curb free voices, especially journalists' voices and silence the press whenever questioned," Rao alleged, charging that the party has a history of discouraging dissent. He said the incident was not just an attack on one journalist, but a "chilling message" to the entire media fraternity. The BJP leader also questioned the Congress's right to lecture the country on the Constitution, democracy and freedom of expression. He called the late-night police action at the journalist's residence a "symbol of Congress intolerance."

Hyderabad Metro Rail Takeover Clears Path for Expansion



Hyderabad: The state government will submit the Hyderabad Metro Rail (HMR) takeover agreement, signed with Larsen&Toubro (L&T) recently, to the Centre next week and seek faster approvals for the expansion of the network under Phase-II (Part-A and Part-B), sources said.

The detailed project reports (DPRs) for the expansion have been pending with the Centre for nearly a year, as it had imposed the condition that the government either take over Phase-I operations from L&T or ensure L&T's participation in the expansion project. With L&T refusing to be part of the expansion or integration plans and instead offering to exit, the state government completed the takeover of Phase-I on April 30. Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy has directed HMR officials to visit Delhi next week to meet officials of the Union urban affairs ministry and submit the takeover agreement documents. The CM is also expected to visit Delhi to meet Union urban affairs minister Manohar Lal Khattar to press for early approvals, especially after the state government cleared all hurdles flagged by the Centre.

Govt Whip hits out at BRS, bats for farmer-friendly policies

Hyderabad: Government Whip Beerla Ailaiah has said that the "people's government" led by Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy is giving top priority to farmers' welfare in the state. Speaking in Hyderabad on Sunday, he said the government has established around 8,000 grain procurement centres across Telangana to ensure smooth procurement of paddy from farmers without inconvenience. He added that the administration is committed to purchasing every grain produced by farmers. Beerla Ailaiah launched a sharp attack on BRS leader T Harish Rao, alleging that he was engaging in politics by provoking farmers through protests. He accused Harish Rao of attempting to create unrest under the guise of supporting farmers, driven by frustration over losing power. He criticised the previous BRS government, claiming that during its 10-year rule farmers suffered due to delays in procurement and



instances where harvested grain sprouted in procurement centres. "Farmers will not be misled by such deceptive protests," he said. He further alleged that the BRS leadership, including K. Chandrashekar Rao, was attempting to mislead farmers while remaining inactive. Highlighting welfare measures, Ailaiah said the government has waived crop loans up to Rs.2 lakh, implemented the Rythu Bharosa scheme, and provided bonuses for fine variety paddy. He stated that Rs.3,000 crore has already been disbursed as bonuses to farmers.



NEET-UG 2026 Held Smoothly; Students Find Paper Easier, Physics Tough

Hyderabad: The National Testing Agency (NTA) conducted the NEET-UG in paper and pen mode for 199 centres for 71,304 candidates in the state on Sunday. The attendance was placed at 97.64 per cent, with 73,024 candidates having registered. Officials reported that the examination was largely smooth, with no major incidents in most districts in the state. A candidate in Nalgonda had a nasal bleed reportedly due to the summer heat. An answer sheet error was reported in Nalgonda and a biometric issue in Suryapet. Officials said these did not disrupt the overall conduct of the examination. Nationwide, 22.79 lakh candidates took the test 551 cities on Sunday, in a single shift from 2 pm to 5 pm. Candidates were allowed to leave centres around 5.20 pm after invigilators completed verification procedures. Students in Hyderabad found the paper easier compared to last year, though opinions varied across sections. Physics was widely described as tough and time-consuming, while Biology was considered more scoring. Most of the Physics section remained unanswered as it was difficult," said Tejasvi from Kothapet, who appeared for the exam at Osmania University. "The paper was solvable. Biology is my favourite, so I focused on that. Physics and Chemistry required more time," said Joyel K from Mallampet, Bachupally. Some candidates flagged issues with seating arrangements. "The seating was uncomfortable, though facilities like air conditioning and drinking water were available," said Sanjay S. Reddy. Parents were seen waiting outside examination centres for hours. At Osmania University, many took shelter under trees and in park areas, resting, eating, and even sleeping while waiting for their children.

Govt announces Rs 5 lakh support for deceased gig workers' kin

Hyderabad: Ina historic and first-of-its-kind initiative in the country, the Government of Telangana has extended financial assistance of Rs 5 lakh each to the families of deceased gig and platform workers. This move recognises their contribution and the hardships faced by workers in the platform economy. Cheques are being distributed to the families of five workers who tragically lost their lives in road accidents while working. The deceased were identified as Ahmed Bin Abdul Khader, G Shyam Sundar, Lokurthi Naresh, Garla pati Shashidhar Reddy, and Daravath Mahesh. Shaik Salaudhin, Founder President of the Telangana Gig and Platform Workers Union, persistently raised the issue with Chief Minister Revanth Reddy and Labour Minister Vivek Venkataswamy. Following these efforts, each affected family is receiving total financial assistance of Rs 15 lakh. This includes Rs 10 lakh compensation from respective platform companies and Rs 5 lakh from the state government. Vivek appreciated the union, noting that their continuous follow-up with the Chief Minister's Office and Lab our Department made this historic initiative possible. Salaudhin stated that this support marks a victory for gig workers in India and reflects the government's commitment towards the welfare and dignity of workers in the digital economy. He reiterated that the union will continue its fight for comprehensive social security, accident insurance, and legal protections for all gig and platform workers.

Woman, son kill live-in partner in Chintal

Hyderabad: A woman, along with her son, allegedly killed her live-in partner in Chintal in Ambedkar Nagar under Jeedimetla police limits on Sunday night. The victim, identified as Shivareddy, was reportedly in a live-in relationship with the woman. According to preliminary information, the suspects resorted to the extreme act due to alleged harassment by the victim. Police suspect the duo had attacked Shivareddy with a butcher's knife, killing him on the spot. In an attempt to dispose of the body, they wrapped it in a sack and tried to transport it. However, their plan failed when the police intercepted them while they were moving the body, leading to their immediate arrest. The body has been retrieved and shifted to the hospital for autopsy.



Hospital, doctor told to pay Rs 50 lakh for botched surgery

HYDERABAD: The District Consumer Disputes Redressal Commission-2 in Hyderabad has directed a private hospital and a spine surgeon to jointly pay Rs 50 lakh compensation to a 44-year-old woman from Tripura who was left permanently disabled following spinal surgery. The case dates back to 2019, when the woman, diagnosed with Grade-1 spondylolisthesis, consulted the surgeon during his visit to Tripura. She was allegedly told surgery was the only option and assured full recovery. She later underwent surgery at a private hospital in Hyderabad in May 2019. Her condition worsened after the procedure, leading to chronic pain, numbness and loss of mobility. Previously earning around Rs 70,000 per month, she is now unable to perform daily activities and is dependent on her family. The commission found the surgery unnecessary and noted that standard protocols were not followed. It said conservative treatment options were not explored and no fresh MRI was conducted before surgery, highlighting inconsistencies in diagnosis. The hospital and surgeon argued the patient had consented and that the procedure was successful, but the commission rejected the claims, stating the decision to proceed without adequate diagnosis and without attempting conservative treatment violated standard medical care.

GHMC food safety wing conducts special inspection drive across Hyderabad

Hyderabad: The GHMC food safety wing on Sunday conducted a special drive for food safety in child-frequented food establishments, including school premises, play zones, GHMC parks, and bakeries. According to a press release, the officials carried out 81 inspections across parks, school premises, food courts, and bakeries as part of the drive. During the inspections, Food Business Operators (FBOs) were educated on key food safety and hygiene parameters, including proper labelling of packaged raw materials, proper storage and preservation of food articles, and pest control measures, along with the related records to be maintained.

GHMC food safety wing conducts special inspection drive across Hyderabad



Telangana taking up development works with central funds: Vishweshwar Reddy



SANGAREDDY: Claiming that Telangana ministers are receiving funds from the Centre for various development works, BJP MP Konda Vishweshwar Reddy on Sunday accused them of making false allegations that the Union government is not releasing funds to the state. Vishweshwar Reddy was speaking to the media after a party workers' preparatory meeting held in Sangareddy for the upcoming visit of Prime Minister Narendra Modi. The prime minister is scheduled to visit Hyderabad on May 10. "Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy has publicly admitted that the state is in financial doldrums. Development works in the state are being taken up with funds provided by the Centre. Not just development activities, but benefits reaching farmers too are solely due to the funds provided by the Union government," he said. Referring to the Assembly elections in West Bengal, the parliamentarian from Chevella said: "Around 4.5 crore Rohingya arrived in the country through Bangladesh and are living here illegally. Of those, 1.5 crore obtained voter cards by illegal means and are helping certain political parties win elections again and again."



TELANGANA Voice

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Nizam's Kin Backs Kohinoor Return From UK

Hyderabad: In the wake of New York Mayor Zohran Mamdani raising the issue of the Kohinoor diamond and formally placing a request with King Charles to return it to India, the Nizam's kin echoed the sentiment. It is argued that restoring the Kohinoor — now valued between US \$140 million (Rs 1,328 crore) and US \$400 million (Rs 3,796 crore) — to its land of origin would not erase history but be remembered as one of the greatest deeds.

Only 25 lakh of 45 lakh farmers got loan waiver: Bandi Sanjay jabs Telangana CM



Hyderabad: Union Minister of State for Home Affairs Bandi Sanjay Kumar on Sunday, May 3, wrote to Telangana Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy, accusing state Agriculture

Minister Tummula Nageshwara Rao of misleading farmers and deflecting attention from the Congress government's unfulfilled election promises. In the letter, Bandi Sanjay said that while Congress had promised a complete loan waiver for farmers who had borrowed up to Rs 2 lakh, the state government's own figures showed only 25 lakh of an estimated 45 lakh eligible farmers had received relief, leaving nearly 20 lakh farmers without the promised benefit. Taking aim at Tummula Rao's claim that minimum support price (MSP) legislation was within the state's purview, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) leader said fixing MSP was a central subject and that the state government could not shed its own responsibility by pointing fingers at the Centre. He noted

that the Modi government had been procuring 23 varieties of crops at MSP and questioned why the Agriculture Minister was unaware of this. On the Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana, Bandi Sanjay rejected allegations that the scheme benefited private insurers at farmers' expense, pointing out that both BJP-ruled and non-BJP states had implemented it successfully, with crop-loss farmers receiving compensation. He also countered the claim that the Centre had given a bonus of Rs 500 per quintal only for fine paddy, noting that coarse paddy farmers had been left out, and demanded the state implement its own manifesto commitments before attacking central schemes.



Five armed men loot 1 kg gold in Karimnagar heist

Karimnagar: In a daring daylight dacoity, five armed persons opened fire and looted jewellery from PMJ jewellery shop in Jyothinagar here on Sunday morning. The dacoits fled with costly jewellery and four of the jewelry shop staff were injured in the incident. They were rushed to different hospitals. According to police, while the staff of the shop took out jewellery from lockers for display, five motorcycle-borne burglars rushed to the shop on two bikes along with firearms and barged into it. The incident occurred between 11 am and 11.11 am. Initially, one accused posing as a customer entered the shop and enquired about 20 grams of gold chain. Later, two others came to the shop and asked the staff to show gold jewellery. Finally, the remaining two also entered the shop. One among the last two pulled out a pistol and threatened the security guard at point blank range. Simultaneously, others also pulled out their weapons and threatened to shoot other staff. All the workers were forced to sit on their knees in one spot. The accused opened fire

when the staff tried to overpower the dacoits. As a result, four workers sustained injuries. Later, dacoits filled the jewellery in a bag they had brought and fled from the spot. They used both Hindi and Telugu while conversing with each other. According to preliminary estimations, about 1 kg of gold was stolen in the heist. While sales manager Mustaq sustained a bullet injury to his head, Madhukar got an injury to his stomach. Kamalakar and security guard Rakesh were also injured. They are undergoing treatment in different hospitals. Knowing about the incident, police along with the CLUES team rushed to the shop and began an investigation by examining the footage acquired from CCTV cameras fixed in the shop. Police recovered four cartridges and one magazine from the spot. Besides pictures of the accused, the CCTV footage of the robbery was also released by the police. Commissioner of Police, Gautham Alam visited the shop and enquired about the incident.

Love Couple End Life After Engagement

A couple in love got engaged with the consent of their families. Even after the engagement, the duo died by suicide separately. After the engagement, the boy told the girl that they would get married after he earns well and left for Gulf. Within six months of reaching Gulf, the boy, Makkala Saikumar, 22, ended life by suicide unable to overcome the financial problems. Learning about his death, his love, Olle Sruthi, 20, also ended her life in Siripur village, Mallapur mandal, Jagtial district. Saikumar was a native of Paatadaamrajupalli.

Their families performed the engagement seven months ago. However, Saikumar was not happy with the tin-sheet roofed shed he was living in and told Sruthi he would marry her only after constructing a pucca house. Accordingly, he left for Bahrain and worked as a daily wage labourer.

Fee reimbursement: KTR accuses Telangana CM of betraying 14 lakh students

Hyderabad: Bharat Rashtira Samithi (BRS) working president KT Rama Rao (KTR) on Sunday, April 3, attacked Telangana Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy for what he called betraying nearly 14 lakh students from Backward Classes (BC), Scheduled Castes (SC), Scheduled Tribes (ST) and minority communities over fee reimbursement. In a detailed letter addressed to the Chief Minister, he alleged that grave injustice was being meted out to the students. KTR stated that government order (GO) no 7 is a "dark and deliberate attempt" to dismantle the fee reimbursement scheme, which has been a crucial support system enabling access to higher education for economically weaker sections. The GO reportedly allows educational institutions to collect fees from students pending reimbursement approval. He stated that the move would effectively deprive lakhs of poor students of higher education opportunities and push their future into uncertainty.



Telangana witnesses 15 per cent drop in road fatalities

HYDERABAD: Telangana witnessed a 15 per cent drop in road accident deaths in January–April 2026 when compared to the corresponding period last year. According to official statistics, during the first four months of this year, the state recorded 2,363 deaths in 9,313 road accidents, which is the lowest in the last decade. This drop in road mishap deaths is being attributed to the successful Arrive Alive campaign launched by Telangana police in December 2025. Back in 2021, a total of 7,316 accidents occurred between

January and April, which resulted in 2,665 deaths while 7,009 people were injured in those mishaps. In 2025, when compared to 2024, accidents increased by 0.45%, deaths by 0.04%. During 2026, when compared to 2025, the percentage of accidents increased by 3% and deaths decreased by 15%. Between 2021 and 2023, the number of accidents remained relatively stable, between 7,100 and 7,300. But, there was a sharp 23.4% spike in accidents in 2024 compared to 2023.

Harish Rao accuses Cong govt of causing huge distress to farmers

Hyderabad: BRS LP deputy leader Harish Rao on Sunday alleged that the Congress government was causing immense distress to farmers under the guise of new regulations. The BRS leader participated in a farmers' road blockade on the Rajiv Rahadari on Sunday while travelling towards Eravelli. During the protest, Rao referred to Chief Minister Revanth Reddy as a duplicate son of a farmer and alleged that he was incurring the wrath of the farming community by refusing to procure paddy. He demanded that the government procure paddy, sunflower seeds, Bengal gram, and sorghum using traditional methods without imposing any restrictive conditions. Rao stopped his vehicle to inquire about grievances and sat on the road in solidarity with the protesters. He alleged that the administration has completely failed in the statewide procurement of paddy. According to Rao, the government is engaged in a deliberate conspiracy to avoid purchasing grain, subjecting farmers to severe



hardship under the pretext of enforcing various new regulations. He noted that for the past four days, gunny bags have been unavailable at maize procurement centres. Officials were reportedly instructing farmers to purchase their own bags, leaving cultivators in Khammam, Nizamabad, Adilabad, and Sangareddy in tears. In Chinnakodur, Siddipet district, farmers have waited twenty-two days for sunflower procurement to begin. Rao stated that farmers are forced to sleep beside their produce to guard it. Despite promising to procure 90 lakh tonnes of paddy this Rabi season, the government has failed to purchase even 9 lakh tonnes.

Temperature likely to dip in next few days, says IMD



Hyderabad: In a respite to the people suffering from scorching summer, the India Meteorological Department, Hyderabad Centre, has predicted that light to moderate rains, accompanied by thunder, lightning and gusty winds are likely to occur at isolated places across several districts of

Telangana in the next few days. The IMD has further noted that winds are expected to blow at speeds ranging from 30 to 40 km per hour during this period. The department said that on Tuesday, heavy rains accompanied by thunder and lightning, along with winds blowing at a speed of 40 to 50 km per hour, are likely in the districts of Jayashankar Bhupalpally, Mulugu, Warangal and Hanamkonda. The Meteorological Department said that there are chances of other districts also experience scattered rains accompanied by thunder, lightning and gusty winds. The department stated that maximum temperatures are expected to remain at approximately current levels over the next two days, before gradually dropping by two to three degrees over the subsequent three days. The temperatures are likely to fall from Tuesday in the districts of Bhadradi Kothagudem, Hyderabad, Hanamkonda, Jangaon and Jayashankar Bhupalpally. Presently, in these districts, the temperatures are ranging between 41 degrees Celsius and 44 degrees Celsius, and from Tuesday, the temperatures are likely to be between 36 degrees Celsius and 40 degrees Celsius. High temperatures are likely to continue till May 5 in districts such as Adilabad, Jagtial, Gadwal, Asifabad, Mahabubnagar, Mancherla and others.

Singareni Collieries Company Limited Gets Central Nod for 21-MT Mine

Hyderabad: The Singareni Collieries Company Limited (SCCL) received a major boost after the Union Ministry of Environment, Forest, and Climate Change (MoEF&CC) granted preliminary clearance for the Ramagundam coal mine project. Formal approval is expected within days.

Welcoming the clearance, SCCL chairman and managing director Dr Buddhaprakash Jyoti called the project a milestone. With an annual capacity of 21 million tonnes, it is the company's highest-capacity venture to date. The project is designed to offset declining output from ageing mines and tap 314.98 million tonnes of recoverable reserves across two opencast and three underground mines. Coal will be supplied mainly to NTPC Ramagundam and other industries under fuel supply agreements.



Vijay's Super Victory, But Not Right To Insult Pawan Kalyan!

Thalapathy Vijay is becoming the Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu against all odds. Vijay did not run a spirited campaign before the elections. He did not come out until 7-8 months of the elections. Everyone mocked him calling Work from Home Politician. We have seen him struggle with his divorce case, Trisha matter, Jana Nayagan Censor issues, the movie's subsequent leak, and Karur Stampede Case in which he was summoned to the Delhi for the CBI investigation multiple times. However, at the end, Vijay was able to convert his film popularity into votes and also the remaining sections towards him using the anti-incumbency. As Vijay won, social media is abuzz about Pawan Kalyan's Political Career. There were people who were trying to insult Pawan Kalyan saying he could not come to power alone and had to be a part of the government via the alliances route. While Vijay's victory is special, it is not right to insult Pawan Kalyan because the political conditions in both the cases were not comparable. In Tamil Nadu, there is vacuum for Vijay's Party because there is severe anti-incumbency on the DMK and AIADMK is completely battered after Jayalalithaa's demise. BJP aligned with AIADMK but the Saffron Party and its Hindutva motto is more of a burden than strength. Pawan Kalyan's scenario is entirely different. TDP and YSR Congress are super strong in Andhra Pradesh Politics and there is no vacuum whatsoever for Janasena. Vijay had projected himself as Caste-Neutral but Christians rallied with him big time. The Kapu Community that was supposed to support Pawan Kalyan was in a dilemma after the failure of Praja Rajyam Party. They thought Pawan Kalyan can not sustain politics for so long like Chiranjeevi. This was a major factor that curtailed Pawan Kalyan's Political Chances especially in 2019. When in alliance with the TDP, he appeared formidable and so, the sections that deserted him voted him considering he will win. In Indian politics, voters do not waste their vote by betting on a losing horse. In 2019, Janasena was the losing horse and it appeared as a winning horse in 2024. That is the reason for Janasena winning 21 out of 21 and 3 out of 3 in 2024 elections, a feat never before and maybe never after in Indian Future. So, it is not justified to compare the political journeys and challenges of Vijay and Pawan Kalyan and call Pawan Kalyan a failure.

Big Political Lessons From Stalin & Mamata

The Ruling Parties of Tamil Nadu and West Bengal have bitten dust very badly. Both MK Stalin and Mamata Banarjee on their way back home. In Tamil Nadu, MK Stalin and his son, Udhayanidhi Stalin were trailing. The scenario with respect to both the parties is same. Those ruling the states were completely blind with Power and lost touch with the Ground. People have started hating their arrogance and taught a lesson when it mattered. Udhayanidhi Stalin was completely arrogant and was making statements like "Sanathana Dharma is like malaria, dengue, and corona. It should not just be opposed; it must be eradicated". Mamatha Banarjee fought for the common man against 40 years of Communists' Rule. But her last five years, Mamatha's regime is frequently criticized for her perceived arrogance, authoritarian style, and confrontational demeanor. She turned a blind eye to Rohingya crisis which added to the poverty in the state. She took certain vote banks for granted, alienating others through confrontational politics, and over-reliance on personal appeal amid governance issues. Both Stalin and Mamatha are lessons for anyone in Power. Only those who, day in and day out constantly thinking about the elections and those who establish a connection with the



people through their words and deeds, will not feel distressed or go into shock on the day of the election results. We will have to see how many other Chief Ministers in the country will learn the lesson.



Vijay's Victory – Trisha, Roja Trending

Thalapathy Vijay's TVK Party is leading in over 100 seats. It has to be seen if can reach the Magic figure of 117 on his own or will have to take the help of others to get there. While the entire media space is buzzing with Vijay's exemplary victory, Trisha and Roja are also trending on the social media. It is known to our readers that just before the elections, unconfirmed rumours surfaced claiming Vijay and Trisha were in a relationship, and that his estranged wife had dragged him to court for divorce. At that time, Vijay made a public appearance along with Trisha. Many thought it was a political blunder and would play a decisive role in the election but it had no impact. And then, Trisha's Birthday is

on May 4th, the results day in Tamil Nadu and that kept her in news even after the elections. Finally, Vijay registered a remarkable victory on Trisha's Birthday and her name is buzzing on social media. Roja trending on Social Media is more about the work of TDP cadres. We know how they constantly try to pull her down calling her 'Iron Leg'. Roja, on March 1st, was seen celebrating MK Stalin's Birthday. A video of Roja cutting a cake and celebrating the Birthday went viral back then. and later, she also campaigned for the DMK. DMK is losing and both MK Stalin and his son, Udhayanidhi Stalin are trailing in their respective seats. TDP Social Media is attributing this to Roja's Iron Leg keeping her in the trends.

9 TMC Workers Skip NIA Summons in Malda

Kolkata: Nine workers of the Trinamool Congress (TMC), including an election agent, skipped summons issued by the National Investigation Agency (NIA) in connection with the alleged hostage-taking of seven judicial officers in Malda district. The central agency had asked the individuals to appear at Kaliachak police station around noon on Sunday for questioning. The summons were served late Saturday night. Among those called were Abdul Rahman, election agent of Sujapur TMC candidate Sabina Yasmin, Mohammad Sariul Islam, Kaliachak block no. 1 president of the party, Kamal Hossain, a member of Kaliachak Panchayat Samiti no. 1, and local leader Haji Qutubuddin. Rahman also serves as Karmadhakshya (Forest & Land) in the TMC-run Malda Zilla Parishad. However, none of the nine appeared before the agency on the scheduled date. Reacting to the development, Yasmin questioned the timing of the summons, alleging political motives.

YCP Cadre Database – Jagan's Big Plan For 2029

YSR Congress is preparing a Digital Database to capture the details of all its cadres. Jagan Mohan Reddy plans to have a direct connection between the cadre and the party headquarters in Tadepalli with minimal interference of the leaders. The party started the verification of the Cadre ID cards and everyone will be given a Unique number. The Verification is already complete 99% in Gurajala constituency. Punganuru and Prodatnur have also registered good progress. Once the database is ready, the party will directly know who is active and who is working on the ground. They will use them to know the working of the leaders, Group Politics if any, party's condition in that constituency, etc. If the cadre is not actively working in any constituency, the party will talk to the leaders and make necessary changes. The party will give direct instructions to the cadre about the Programs in the constituency and will make IVRS calls to know the feedback about the party and the performance of the Incharges.

After Vijay's History, YCP's Invalid Demand To Jagan?

Something truly remarkable is happening in South Indian politics with the historic surge of Thalapathy Vijay in the ongoing Tamil Nadu assembly election. His TVK party is leading in 110 seats and no projected to form the government in the state. On that note, there is this one particular video of political strategist Prashanth Kishor that's

going viral. In this video, Prashanth is seen speaking about the Director outcome of Tamil Nadu and saying how he would become more famous than Dhoni here after leading Thalapathy Vijay to victory. But this did not actually turn out to be the case, considering that Prashanth had to focus on his own political career.

Congress Leaders Celebrate As UDF Heads Towards Return To Power After 10-year Drought



Thiruvananthapuram (Keralam): Senior Congress leaders, including KC Venugopal, Ramesh Chennithala, Sunny Joseph and Shashi Tharoor, gathered at the party's Kerala headquarters in Thiruvananthapuram to celebrate after the United Democratic Front crossed the halfway mark in trends released by the Election Commission of India (ECI). The leaders marked the moment by cutting a cake and jointly raising their hands in a gesture of victory, celebrating the UDF's strong performance in the early trends. Speaking on early trends in Keralam, the CPI (M) General Secretary, MA Baby, expressed optimism about the reversal of

trends as the counting will progress further later in the day. He stated that under the LDF regime, poverty has been eradicated from the state, meanwhile, it holds a top status in terms of education, healthcare, and social security measures. These are just early trends. Even though UDF has an edge right now, we hope this will be reversed in the ensuing rounds. Because, under LDF, Keralam became the only Indian state from where extreme poverty has been eradicated. It is at the top in terms of quality of education, healthcare, and social security measures. We hope, politically literate people of Keralam would consider all these aspects and support LDF, which will be reflected in the upcoming rounds... we are hopeful for a third term," said MA Baby. The United Democratic Front has attained a lead in 91 constituencies in Keralam, as the Election Commission of India declared trends of all 140 seats in the state. The Congress is currently leading in 58 constituencies, followed by Indian Union Muslim League (IUML) in 22. The achievement led to the return of the UDF government in Keralam after 10 years, bringing an end to Pinarayi Vijayan-led Left Democratic Front (LDF) regime, which is currently leading in 40 constituencies. As the United Democratic Front (UDF) crossed the halfway majority mark in Keralam, senior Congress leaders including Ramesh Chennithala, KC Venugopal, Shashi Tharoor and others, arrived at the party's state office in Thiruvananthapuram.

Estd : 1996

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Education

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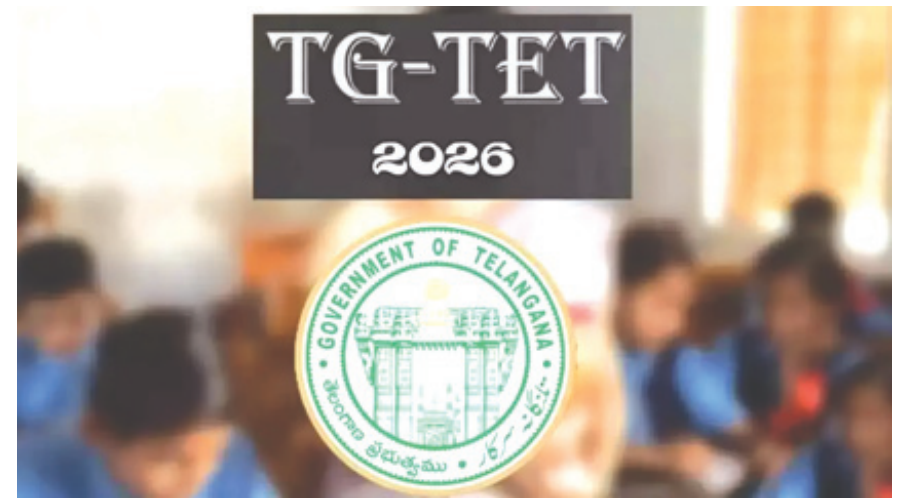
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Activists warn of crisis as Telangana scholarship row hits students

Hyderabad: Civil society organisations, NGOs, social activists, community leaders and academicians have written to Congress leaders, including Rahul Gandhi, Mallikarjun Kharge, Telangana chief minister Revanth Reddy, All India Majlis e Ittehad ul Muslimeen (AIMIM) chief and Hyderabad MP Asaduddin Owaisi and Meenakshi Natarajan, urging immediate intervention over a developing crisis linked to post-matric scholarships in Telangana. In the letter, the signatories flagged "grave concern" over the situation affecting lakhs of poor and marginalised students who depend on the Post-Matric Scholarship under the Fee Reimbursement Scheme to pursue higher education. They pointed to recent proceedings before the Telangana High Court, stating that administrative and policy lapses by the state government have worsened uncertainty for students belonging to SC, ST, BC, Minority and EBC communities. According to the letter, on April 2, the High Court passed an interim order allowing private educational institutions to collect tuition fees directly from students. The signatories alleged that the government failed to effectively defend its policy, did not present the potential impact on economically vulnerable students, and did not file a counter-affidavit in time. They further criticised the issuance of the government order dated April 29 by the Scheduled Castes Development Department, which proposed direct benefit transfer of fee reimbursement amounts into students' bank accounts. The move, they said, altered the existing reimbursement structure and created fresh anxiety among students, parents and institutions. The letter also noted that on April 30, the High Court suspended Clause XII of Paragraph 5 of the government order, observing prima facie that it was contrary to its earlier interim order, highlighting what the signatories described as a lack of policy clarity and legal preparedness. Listing the impact, the signatories said: Students from poor families are being forced to arrange large sums for admissions. Many face the risk of discontinuing education. Colleges are under financial strain due to pending dues. Admissions for the current academic year are affected. Marginalised communities are losing faith in the system. Calling it a "defining moment", the letter urged the Congress leadership to act swiftly and placed key demands, including: Challenging the April 2 interim order before a division bench. Immediate release of pending fee reimbursement and scholarship dues. Restoration of the earlier system of direct payments to institutions. Formation of a high-level committee to resolve the issue. Appointment of senior legal counsel for effective representation. The signatories warned that any delay would deepen the crisis.

1.36 lakh applications received for Telangana TGTET-June 2026



The State Council of Educational Research and Training (SCERT), Telangana, has announced that a total of 1,36,418 applications have been received for the upcoming Telangana Teacher Eligibility Test (TGTET) scheduled for June 2026. The application process concluded on April 30, 2026. According to official figures, 32,779 candidates applied for Paper I, 86,305 for Paper II, and 17,334 for both papers, bringing the total to 1,36,418 applications. The large number of applicants reflects the high demand for teaching positions across Telangana's schools. The SCERT Director and Convener of TGTET-June-2026, G Ramesh, said on Friday that candidates were informed that the 'Edit Application Service' has been enabled from April 29 and will remain open until May 3. This facility allows applicants to make corrections or updates to their submitted forms through the official portal at school.edu.telangana.gov.in in Bing. The TGTET is a crucial qualifying examination for aspiring teachers in Telangana, ensuring that candidates meet the required standards for teaching positions in government and aided schools. With the test scheduled for June, the next phase will involve issuing hall tickets and conducting the examination across designated centres in the state. Officials emphasised that the edit window is the final opportunity for candidates to rectify errors in their applications. They also urged applicants to carefully verify their details to avoid discrepancies during the examination process.



AP RGUKT Announces Admissions notification for 2026-27

The Rajiv Gandhi University of Knowledge Technologies (RGUKT) has issued its official notification for admissions into the 2026-27 academic year. Prospective students can now apply for the university's esteemed six-year integrated programme across its four campuses: Nuzvid, RK Valley, Srikakulam, and Ongole. The university offers a unique six-year course divided into two stages. The first is a two-year Pre-University Course (PUC) in streams such as M.P.C. and M.Bi.P.C., covering subjects including Mathematics, Physics, Chemistry, English, Telugu, Computer Programming, and Biology. Following this, students can enrol in a four-year B.Tech programme with specialisations in Civil, Computer Science, Electrical and Electronics Engineering, Electronics and Communication, Mechanical Engineering, Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning, as well as Chemical or Metallurgical and Materials Engineering (available only at Nuzvid and RK Valley). Admission is primarily merit-based, with selection determined by marks obtained in the 2026 SSC or equivalent examinations. An additional 4% deprivation score is added for students from government schools to ensure fair competition. Applications must be submitted online via the official website (www.rgukt.in). The application fee is Rs.400 for general candidates and Rs.250 for SC/ST applicants. Selected candidates are required to attend in-person certificate verification at designated campuses. Key dates include the opening of online applications on 1st May 2026 at 10:00am, with the deadline set for 30th May at 5:00pm. The provisional selection list will be announced on 12th June, with certificate verification starting from 19th June. Reporting to campus is scheduled for 1st July 2026. Applicants are reminded that RGUKT is a fully residential institution, and transfers between campuses are strictly prohibited once admitted.

IBCA Opens Admissions for Culinary and Pastry Programs for 2026



New Delhi: The Institute of Bakery & Culinary Arts has announced the opening of admissions for its Culinary Arts and Bakery & Pastry programs for the academic year 2026. The institute is inviting applications from students and aspiring professionals interested in pursuing careers in the culinary and hospitality sectors. IBCA offers a range of programmes designed for different levels of learning. These include 18-month Advanced Diplomas in Culinary Arts and Pastry (Level 3), 12-month Diplomas in Culinary and Pastry Arts (Level 2), and a 4-month Certificate Course in Pastry (Level 1). In addition, the institute provides short-term hobby and specialised courses aimed at beginners and enthusiasts. According to the institute, the programmes focus on practical training alongside theoretical learning. Students are introduced to industry practices through hands-on sessions, with opportunities to participate in selection trials and interviews as part of the placement process. IBCA has collaborations with organisations such as City & Guilds, the Confederation of Tourism & Hospitality, the Tourism and Hospitality Skill Council, and the National Skills Development Corporation. These affiliations support structured training and certification aligned with industry requirements. Eligibility for the 2026 intake includes candidates who have completed or are appearing for their higher secondary (10+2) examinations from recognised boards such as CBSE, ICSE, IB, or equivalent. Applications can be submitted online through the institute's official website. The last date to apply is May 31, 2026.

NEET UG 2026: Nearly 23 Lakh Aspirants Appear As Union Minister Dharmendra Pradhan Visits NTA Headquarters To Review Arrangements



New Delhi: As nearly 23 lakh medical aspirants appeared for the National Eligibility-cum-Entrance Test (Undergraduate) on Sunday, Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan visited the headquarters of the National Testing Agency to review the arrangements made for NEET UG 2026. The visit came on the day of the examination, with the minister assessing how the agency was managing one of the country's largest undergraduate entrance tests. At the NTA headquarters in New Delhi, Pradhan was briefed by officials on the operational readiness for the examination. He reviewed key aspects such as logistics, coordination with examination centres, and the monitoring systems put in place to ensure that the test was conducted smoothly across the country. Officials also apprised him of the measures taken to manage the large vol-

ume of candidates and maintain order at examination venues. Earlier in the day, before visiting the NTA headquarters, Pradhan shared a message for candidates appearing for the exam. In a post on X, he wrote: "Best wishes to all students taking the NEET UG examination today. Stay calm, focused and give your best. The medical profession stands for compassion, service and a lifelong commitment to learning. Wishing every aspirant the clarity and confidence to take a meaningful step towards this path." The message was widely shared as students headed to examination centres on Sunday afternoon. NEET UG 2026 is being conducted by the National Testing Agency for close to 23 lakh registered candidates, making it one of the largest entrance examinations held in the country. The examination serves as the gateway for admis-

sion to undergraduate medical programmes such as MBBS, BDS and other allied health science courses offered by institutions across India. With such a large number of candidates appearing this year, the government and the NTA have emphasised smooth coordination, strict monitoring and fair conduct of the examination process. Officials said the entire administrative machinery remained on alert through the day to ensure the exam proceeded without disruption.

Indian Scientist Akhilesh Vats Named Qualified Scientist for Regeneron ISEF 2026; Mentee Reaches Phoenix Finals



NEW DELHI: An Indian researcher and his philanthropist wife from Baghpat in Uttar Pradesh have been associated with a Philippine entry that has qualified for the Regeneron International Science and Engineering Fair (ISEF) 2026, billed as the world's biggest pre-college science contest. The fair will be held in Phoenix, Arizona, in May this year. Dr. Akhilesh Vats, Founder and Director of ACME Research Solutions, alongside Anupriya Vats, who leads the philanthropic arm of the organisation's cross-border research mentorship work. Dr. Akhilesh Vats, who is the founder and director of ACME Research Solutions, has been recognised as a Qualified Scientist with the Society for Science on its official ISEF 2026 project database. His wife, Mrs. Anupriya Vats, looks after the philanthropic side of the organisation. Cross-border research mentorship work falls under her wing. The entry that has qualified is a Philippine national project. It comes under the Biomedical and Health Sciences category.

VOICE OF WORDS

HEALTH

Blue baby syndrome: Signs every parent



Blue baby syndrome is a condition where newborns develop a bluish tint due to low oxygen levels, often linked to congenital heart disease. This expert-backed story explains warning signs, causes, diagnosis and treatment, highlighting why early recognition is critical for a child's health. Those initial few seconds after birth are full of happiness and excitement, especially when the baby cries for the first cry. However, imagine that the baby has blue-looking skin rather than pink.

It can be quite scary, but it may mean that the baby has blue baby syndrome. Knowing what that entails and understanding some early indicators can make all the difference. According to Dr Vikram Kudumula, a pediatric cardiologist, the early identification of this disease can be important.

What is blue baby syndrome?

Blue Baby Syndrome is an illness in which the skin, lips, or nails of a baby are blue because there isn't enough oxygen in their blood. Congenital heart disease, which is a defect in the heart of a child that develops while they are still inside their mother, is the most frequent cause of this condition.

How common is it

Congenital heart disease is among the most frequent congenital malformations. In India, it occurs in about 8 to 10 infants per 1,000 live births. From these, a considerable proportion consists of cyanotic congenital heart diseases leading to cyanosis.

Warning signs parents should not ignore

Early detection can save lives. Symptoms to look out for include: Blueness in the lips, tongue, or fingers

- Fast or difficult breathing
- Feeding problems or profuse sweating while eating
- Weight loss
- Excessive sleeping or lethargy

Sometimes, infants have periods when they suddenly turn very blue, breathe rapidly, or go limp. This is an emergency situation that demands urgent medical care.

Symptoms may not appear immediately

Not all babies show signs right after birth. In some cases, symptoms may develop days or even weeks later. This makes it important for parents to stay observant even after leaving the hospital.

Treatment and outlook

The good news is that treatment outcomes today are highly encouraging. Depending on the type, treatment will involve drugs, catheterisation, or surgical intervention. In light of advancements in children's cardiac care, the majority of affected children lead normal lives.

Early detection and treatment can be the difference between life and death, and avoid complications altogether. The first thing you need to do is learn. It is understandable that blue baby syndrome sounds scary, but once you have learned the facts, it is manageable. Knowledge is power. Stay alert and aware.

Adults above 40 may need more protein than recommended



A longevity expert has warned that many adults over 40 are not consuming enough protein, which can affect muscle health, metabolism and overall ageing. The doctor suggests a higher intake than standard guidelines to help maintain strength and support long-term health.

Protein requirements increase with age, particularly after 40. While general recommendations suggest around 0.8 grams per kilogram of body weight, this may not be sufficient for older adults, according to Dr Vassily Eliopoulos, a longevity expert trained at Cornell University and co-founder and chief medical

officer of Longevity Health. He advises aiming for approximately 1.2 to 1.6 grams per kilogram to better support the body's needs.

Risk of muscle loss

One of the main concerns is age-related muscle loss, also known as Sarcopenia. As the person ages, the ability of the body to maintain muscle mass decreases. Inability to take enough proteins will result in low energy levels, poor muscle tone, and poor metabolic rate.

More than just muscle maintenance

In addition to muscle maintenance, proteins are important for immune

system functioning, proper hormone synthesis and satiety.

According to the doctor, most people eat more carbohydrates and fats rather than proteins.

Importance of meal distribution

The expert also emphasised spreading protein intake evenly across meals rather than consuming it all at once. Including protein sources such as eggs, dairy, legumes, lean meats, nuts and seeds throughout the day can help improve absorption and effectiveness.

A balanced approach

The doctor stressed that dietary changes should be personalised based on factors such as activity levels and health conditions. Consulting a healthcare professional can help determine the right protein intake for each individual.

Hence, protein consumption is important for muscle maintenance and metabolism and well-being after the age of 40.

With changing requirements for the body at different stages of life, it might not be enough to depend on obsolete nutritional recommendations. It would help if you had a combination of proteins in your diet throughout the day to help with healthy aging. According to experts, people need to take note of how much protein they consume.

Not just skin deep: The silent danger of invasive fungal infections

Invasive fungal infections are a lesser-known but serious health risk, especially for people with weakened immunity. Often beginning with mild symptoms like persistent fever or cough, these infections are frequently misdiagnosed. When we think of infections, most of us picture bacteria or viruses. But there is another, quieter threat that often goes unnoticed. Invasive fungal infections or IFI. These infections do not always start dramatically. In fact, they often begin with symptoms so mild that they are easily dismissed until they become serious.

What exactly are invasive fungal infections?

According to Dr Nitin Shinde, Infectious Disease Specialist at KIMS Hospital, Nagpur, these infections occur when fungi move beyond their usual harmless presence. "Invasive fungal infections occur when these organisms cross the body's protective barriers and establish themselves inside tissues and organs."

While fungi are commonly found in our environment, they usually do not cause harm unless the body's defences are compromised.

Who is most at risk

IFI does not affect everyone equally. It primarily targets people with weakened immunity. "Those most at risk include people on long-term steroids or immunosuppressing medicines, patients undergoing chemotherapy, organ transplant recipients, and those with poorly controlled diabetes."

Patients who have spent long periods in intensive care are also more vulnerable, as their immune systems are often already under stress.

Early signs that are easy to ignore

One of the biggest challenges with IFI is that it rarely presents itself clearly in the beginning. "The earliest and most common sign is a fever that does not settle with usual treatment." Other warning signs can include persistent cough, unexplained breathlessness, sinus or facial pain, and subtle changes in energy or alertness. "These symptoms are easily dismissed when mild, yet in someone with risk factors, they should prompt



urgent reassessment."

Why diagnosis is often delayed

Diagnosing IFI is not straightforward, and that is where the real danger lies. "Routine tests and scans can be misleading. Appearances may mimic common bacterial infections." Even specialised fungal tests may not give immediate clarity, which means valuable time can be lost. "Delay allows the infection to advance into lungs, blood vessels or the brain, where it becomes harder to control."

When should you take it seriously?

If symptoms persist, especially in someone already vulnerable, it is important not to wait.

"Early reassessment can prevent a small problem from turning into a crisis." A lingering fever or new respiratory symptoms should always be evaluated carefully rather than dismissed.

Can invasive fungal infections be prevented?

Prevention is largely about awareness and timely action. "Managing chronic conditions carefully and alerting clinicians when symptoms persist can significantly reduce risk." The key is not to panic, but to stay alert.

Why awareness matters more than ever

Fungi are all around us, and for most people, they are harmless. But when immunity drops, they can turn into a serious threat.

"Early recognition and timely action remain the most effective safeguards." Because with infections like these, what you miss early can cost you later.

VOICE OF WORDS

WOMEN

Almond oil or coconut oil?

Here's what truly works for Indian hair



All over the world, people often fuss over gorgeous Indian hair. For generations, our households have believed that natural oils are the ultimate hair care solution. From soothing scalp massages to deep nourishment, for Indians, hair oiling is more than just a beauty ritual; it's cultural wisdom preserved for ages.

Among the most sought-after are coconut oil and almond oil, both renowned for their amazing benefits. However, when it comes to Indian hair, selecting the correct hair oil is not a straightforward decision.

Coconut oil: The centuries-old favourite

Why Coconut oil works

High in lauric acid, coconut oil gets deep into the hair shaft, minimising protein loss and fortifying strands from the inside out.

Natural antibacterial and antifungal properties promote a healthy scalp and inhibit dandruff.

Daily use safeguards hair from pollution, sun, and harsh shampoo damage.

Choose Coconut oil for:

Thick, coarse, or curly locks that require intense moisture. Strengthening hair roots and arresting split ends. Hot oil treatments and overnight deep conditioning.

Almond oil: the vitamin-packed booster

Almond oil: An Undisputed kind of hair nourishment

Why Almond oil works

- With its wealth of vitamin E, omega-3 fatty acids, and magnesium, almond oil feeds the scalp and helps hair elasticity.

- It has a lighter consistency and is therefore easier to wash out than coconut oil, leaving hair silky with no greasiness.

- Daily use encourages shine, tames frizz, and can even assist in slowing down premature greying.

Choose Almond oil for:

- Fine or straight hair that requires lightweight moisture.

- Taming frizz in damp environments.

- Scalp massages to enhance blood flow.

Coconut oil versus almond oil: which one to use?

- The fact is, there is no single answer. If you have dry, thick, or damaged hair, coconut oil's ability to penetrate deeply could be more effective.

- If you want a light, non-greasy product that provides shine and smoothness, almond oil is the way to go.

Most prefer using the two oils in combination: coconut oil for a once-a-week deep conditioning, and almond oil for a daily scalp massage. For Indian hair, coconut and almond oil each have special strengths.

- Coconut oil repairs and guards, while almond oil smoothes and moisturises. The decision is based on your hair type, climate, and preference.

What is certain is that if you choose one or combine both, these natural oils are ageless partners in maintaining Indian hair strong, glossy, and healthy.

Bleaching and peroxide: What they really do to your hair



Hair colouring often involves bleaching agents like hydrogen peroxide and ammonia that can weaken hair structure, cause dryness and affect scalp health over time. This expert-backed story explains how these chemicals work, the risks involved. Hair colouring has evolved into an essential aspect of our day-to-day grooming routine, from simple highlights to radical changes. However, what we rarely consider is what goes on underneath our hair when we colour it. There is typically a chemical process behind most hair-colouring methods that alters the hair's natural properties. Even though the effects may be dramatic, their long-term consequences on the hair's health should be considered before going through with your next session.

What occurs when your hair is bleached

Permanent hair colouring requires hair to be bleached before achieving the desired colour. This method involves the use of chemicals such

as hydrogen peroxide and ammonia to remove the hair's natural pigmentation. The effect is achieved by first opening up the hair's cuticles before depositing artificial pigmentation. As Dr Harinder K. Arya explains, this process weakens protein bonds and removes moisture, making hair more prone to dryness and breakage.

Why peroxide and ammonia can damage hair

Hydrogen peroxide plays a key role in lightening hair, but it also breaks down the natural melanin that gives your hair its colour. At the same time, ammonia swells the hair shaft, making it easier for colour to penetrate.

But the bad news is that this mixture will:

- Make your hair brittle inside out
- Remove moisture from your hair
- Cause frizzy hair
- Cause rough hair
- It is not just hair; your scalp is affected too

Hair dyeing is not only confined to the hair, but the scalp too bears the

brunt of the chemicals.

Strong chemicals might give rise to irritation, drying, and sensitivity to the scalp. It could adversely affect the scalp's natural barrier function, leading to poor hair growth and conditions.

Why ingredient knowledge is essential

A common mistake among many people is that they only pay attention to the end colour, not the ingredients required for their achievement. However, the benefits of label knowledge are substantial. Avoiding certain ingredients, such as hydrogen peroxide, ammonia, and PPD, may come in handy. Selecting formulas that are easier for the hair and scalp becomes more relevant due to increased awareness

Trend toward safer hair colouring

One could notice that there is a tendency in the industry towards hair colouring products that care about the health of the hair and not just its colour. Hair colours that do not contain harsh bleach and use organic or herbal ingredients are becoming popular. An example of such a product would be hair colours offered by Indus Valley, which are gel-based and free of hydrogen peroxide, ammonia, and PPD. Long-term care should take precedence over immediate benefits. If the correct decisions are made, it is quite possible to have colour on your hair without affecting its health.

Hair colouring is as much a matter of care as it is of fashion. What you choose today can affect the health of your hair in the long run.

One SPF mistake that could be damaging your skin

Experts explain why one application isn't enough, common SPF mistakes, and how to maintain protection throughout the day, even with makeup. Sunscreen has finally become a daily habit for many. But there's one part people still get wrong. Reapplication. Applying SPF in the morning feels like enough, but it rarely is. And in Indian weather, that gap can quietly undo all your effort.

Why one application isn't enough

Sunscreen doesn't last all day. Heat, sweat, humidity, and even simple movement break down its protective layer faster than most people expect. As Vidur Kapur, skin care expert and the Director of O3+ Professional Skincare, explains,

"Sunscreen begins to lose its effectiveness within a few hours, making reapplication essential." That means your morning routine is just the starting point, not the full solution.

It's not just about being in the sun

A common myth is that sunscreen is only needed outdoors. But UV exposure happens during everyday activities too. Sitting near a window, commuting, or stepping out briefly all add up over time.

"UV rays affect the skin even during routine daily activities," Kapur notes. This is why consistent reapplication matters, even if you're not directly under the sun.

How often should you reapply

The general rule is simple. Every two to three hours. This helps maintain a steady layer of protection, especially in cities with high heat and pollution.

Skipping this step leaves your skin exposed without



you realising it.

The mistakes most people don't notice

Reapplication is often done incorrectly, even when people try. Using too little product reduces effectiveness. Missing areas like the neck, ears, and hands leave parts of your skin unprotected. And then there's the biggest reason people skip it altogether.

How to reapply without ruining your makeup

This is where most people give up. But sunscreen today comes in more flexible formats. Lightweight gels, facial mists, and powder SPF's make it easier to top up without disturbing makeup.

"You don't have to skip reapplication just because you're wearing makeup," Kapur says. It's about finding what works for your routine. Sunscreen isn't a one-time step. It's a habit that works only when it's consistent. Because it's not just about applying SPF. It's about making sure it's still doing its job hours later.



International News

VOICE OF WORDS

Wednesday, May 06, 2026

US Approves Nearly \$9 Billion in Weapons Sales to West Asian Allies



Washington: U.S. President Donald Trump's administration has bypassed congressional review to approve military sales totaling over \$8.6 billion to Middle Eastern allies Israel, Qatar, Kuwait and the United Arab Emirates. The State Department announcements on Friday came as the U.S. and Israel's war against Iran marked nine weeks since its start and more than three weeks since a fragile ceasefire came into effect. The State Department said U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio determined that an emergency existed that required immediate sales to those countries and waived the congressional review requirements for the sales. The announcements included approving military sales to Qatar of Patriot air and missile defense replenishment services costing \$4.01 billion and of Advanced Precision Kill Weapon Systems (APKWS) costing \$992.4 million. They also

included approval of the sale to Kuwait of an integrated battle command system costing \$2.5 billion and to Israel of Advanced Precision Kill Weapon Systems costing \$992.4 million. The State Department approved a sale to the UAE of APKWS for \$147.6 million. The U.S. and Israel attacked Iran on February 28. Iran responded with its own strikes on Israel and Gulf states that host U.S. bases. U.S.-Israeli strikes on Iran and Israeli attacks in Lebanon have killed thousands and displaced millions. The principal contractor in the APKWS sales to Qatar, Israel and the UAE was BAE Systems, the State Department said. RTX and Lockheed Martin were the principal contractors in the integrated battle command system sale to Kuwait and in the Patriot air and missile defense replenishment sale to Qatar, the State Department added. Northrop Grumman was also a

principal contractor in the Kuwaiti sale. Over the years, Washington has faced scrutiny for military ties with Kuwait, the UAE and Qatar over those countries' human rights track records that rights advocates say involve restrictions on and reported abuses of minorities, journalists, voices of dissent, the LGBT community and laborers. Those nations have denied supporting or engaging in domestic rights abuses. U.S. support for Israel has also come under scrutiny from rights experts, particularly over Israel's assault on Gaza that has killed tens of thousands, caused a hunger crisis and led to assessments of genocide from scholars and a U.N. inquiry. Israel calls its actions self-defense after Hamas-led militants killed 1,200 people in an October 2023 attack. Washington has maintained support for its allies.

'Tell initiators of war to stop, we are suffering,' says Iran Supreme Leader's representative in India

Abdul Majid Hakeem Ilahi, Representative of Iran's Supreme Leader in India, has called for an immediate end to the ongoing West Asia conflict, saying the entire region is suffering due to continued hostilities. Speaking at a press conference, Ilahi urged countries around the world to pressure the United States and Israel to halt military action, arguing that stability would return if the fighting stopped. "We need fairness and justice. Instead of asking Iran 'why,' we should ask those who initiated this war to stop it, because everyone is suffering," he said. "If the United States and the Zionist regime stop, everything will return to normal." He also questioned restrictions on international trade and relations with Iran, describing them as unjustified and collective punishment. Ilahi maintained that Iran had not sought conflict and had attempted to avoid escalation through diplomatic channels, including negotiations in Oman and later in Geneva. According to him, those talks had shown progress before being disrupted by sudden attacks, which he attributed to the opposing side. He further claimed that the conflict had been planned over several years and was intended to bring about a swift collapse of Iran's government, an outcome he said did not materialize. He asserted that Iran faced large-scale military strikes in the opening phase of the conflict and suffered significant civilian and infrastructure losses, including damage to residential areas, hospitals, and educational institutions. Rejecting calls for unconditional surrender, Ilahi said Iran continued to resist pressure and instead pushed for negotiations. He added that while ceasefire discussions had taken place, subsequent proposals and counter-proposals between the parties failed to produce a lasting agreement. He also described the current situation as a fragile "no war, no peace" environment, alleging continued pressure through naval deployments and restrictions affecting maritime activity near Iran. Referring to the Strait of Hormuz, Ilahi said the



waterway had historically remained open to international shipping and that disruption only began with the onset of conflict. He argued that normalcy could only return if hostilities were brought to an end. Concluding his remarks, he criticised what he described as the belief that powerful states can act without consequence, saying such an approach undermines international justice and worsens humanitarian conditions across affected countries. In a related development, Sardar Asadi, Deputy Inspector of the Khatam al-Anbiya Central Headquarters, warned that tensions with the United States could escalate again. Speaking to Fars News Agency, he accused Washington of failing to honour agreements and described recent statements from US officials as politically motivated. He added that Iran's armed forces remain prepared for any further escalation, while characterising current diplomatic conditions as unstable.

Iran Proposes 14-Point Deal to End War, Lift Naval Blockade

Tehran: Iran has submitted a 14-point plan to the United States, outlining a sweeping framework aimed at "ending the war" on all fronts, including Lebanon, according to Tasnim News Agency. The proposal comes in response to an earlier nine-point plan sent by Washington, which allegedly included a two-month timeline for a ceasefire. Tehran, however, is said to have rejected any extended interim arrangement, insisting instead that a comprehensive resolution be achieved within 30 days and framed around a permanent "end to the war" rather than a temporary truce. According to the report, Iran's proposal includes firm security guarantees that would prohibit any future military aggression against Iran and require the withdrawal of United States forces from its "surrounding environment." It also calls for the lifting of existing naval restrictions and blockades, alongside the release of frozen Iranian assets held abroad and compensation for damages Iran attributes to sanctions and military pressure. Economically, the plan demands the full removal of all US and international sanctions imposed on Iran. Regionally, the proposal extends beyond Iran-US tensions and calls for an end to what it describes as "war on all fronts", explicitly including conflict dynamics involving Lebanon. It also suggests the establishment of a new governing mechanism for the Strait of Hormuz, a critical global oil transit chokepoint, aimed at ensuring stability and uninterrupted maritime flow.



China rejects US sanctions on refineries over Iran oil links

BEIJING: China will not comply with US sanctions against five firms targeted for purchasing Iranian oil, Beijing's commerce ministry said on Saturday. China is a key customer for Iranian oil, mainly through independent "teapot" refineries that rely on discounted crude from the Islamic republic. The United States, seeking to choke off revenue to Tehran, has ramped up sanctions on such refineries. The commerce ministry's injunction, relating to sanctions announced separately since last year, states that the US measures "shall not be recognised, implemented, or complied with". The sanctions "improperly prohibit or restrict Chinese enterprises from conducting normal economic, trade and related activities with third countries... and violate international law and the basic norms governing international relations," the ministry said in a statement. "The Chinese government has consistently opposed unilateral sanctions lacking

UN authorisation and a basis in international law." The injunction applies to three companies in Shandong province -- Shandong Jincheng Petrochemical Group, Shandong Shouguang Luqing Petrochemical and Shandong Shengxing Chemical -- and two others based elsewhere in China, Hengli Petrochemical (Dalian) Refinery and Hebei Xinhai Chemical Group. Washington imposed on Friday sanctions on yet another Chinese firm which it said had imported "tens of millions of barrels" of Iranian crude oil, generating billions of dollars in revenue for Tehran. The firm, Qingdao Haiye Oil Terminal Co., Ltd., was not mentioned in the commerce ministry's injunction. The latest sanctions come as Washington and Tehran have been locked in a diplomatic standstill, with no permanent resolution in sight for the conflict that erupted with US-Israeli strikes on Iran in late February. US President Donald Trump is due to visit China for talks with leader Xi Jinping later this month.

Khalistani extremists pose ongoing national security threat: Canadian Intel report

CHANDIGARH: The Canadian Security Intelligence Service (CSIS) has flagged Canada-based Khalistani extremists as an ongoing national security threat, and the activities of these elements continue to promote a violent extremist agenda. It was also noted that no attacks linked to such elements took place in the country last year, as only a 'small group' of individuals who use Canada as a base to promote, fundraise, or plan violence primarily in India. The Canadian Security Intelligence Service (CSIS) in public report 2025, tabled in the Canadian Parliament, stated that activities of Canada-based Khalistani elements continue to promote a violent extremist agenda, and their continued involvement in violent extremist activities posed a threat to Canada and to Canadian interests. The report marks the first time CSIS has publicly used the term 'Canada-based Khalistani extremist (CBKE)' in this context, while drawing a distinction between violent extremism and peaceful political advocacy for Khalistan. The group was named under the category of politically motivated violent extremism (PMVE), which CSIS noted 'encourages the use of violence to establish new political



systems, or new structures or norms within existing systems." "Politically motivated violent extremism (PMVE) encourages the use of violence to establish new political systems, or new structures or norms within existing systems. PMVE actors engage in the planning, financing, and facilitating of attacks globally to establish new political systems or entities. This past year marked the 40th anniversary of the bombing of Air India Flight 182, whose suspects were members of Canada-based Khalistani extremist (CBKE) groups. It remains to this day the deadliest terrorist attack in Canadian history, with 329 people killed, most of them Canadians. There were no CBKE-related attacks in Canada in 2025," the report read. It noted that ongoing involvement in violent extremist activities by CBKEs continues to pose a national security threat to Canada and to Canadian interests. Some

CBKEs are well-connected to Canadian citizens who leverage Canadian institutions to promote their violent extremist agenda and collect funds from unsuspecting community members.

Japan Contains One of its Biggest Wildfires in Decades After 11-Day Battle

TOKYO: Wildfires that scorched forests in northern Japan, reportedly the second biggest in over 30 years, have been brought under control after 11 days, officials have said. Hundreds of firefighters and more than 1,000 military personnel had battled the blazes since late April, as they burned around 1,600 hectares (4,000 acres) across the mountainous Iwate region. The affected area is almost five times the size of New York City's Central Park. At least eight buildings were damaged and two people suffered minor injuries, according to the Fire and Disaster Management Agency. Thousands of people were evacuated, as fires picked up. Otsuchi town mayor Kozo Hirano told reporters on Saturday that he had been "informed that... the fire had been brought under control" after visiting the area with fire officials. He credited aerial and ground firefighting operations as well as heavy rain-



fall, for containing the flames. But Hirano said authorities would remain vigilant as there was a possibility that smoldering embers remain. Kyodo News described the blaze as Japan's second-largest wildfire in over 30 years. Increasingly dry winters have raised the risk of wildfires.

VOICE OF WORDS

BUSINESS

Centre notifies 100% FDI in insurance sector

New Delhi: The Finance Ministry on Saturday notified 100 per cent foreign direct investment (FDI) in the insurance sector under the automatic route. While 100 per cent foreign investment will be allowed in insurance companies and intermediaries, including brokers, under the automatic route, the cap is 20 per cent for Life Insurance Corporation (LIC), said the Foreign Exchange Management (Non-debt Instruments) (Second Amendment) Rules, 2026. The Parliament had passed the Sabka Bima Sabki Raksha (amendment of insurance laws) Bill, 2025, in December, 2025, paving the way for hiking the FDI cap in the insurance sector to 100 per cent under the automatic route, from 74 per cent earlier. Subsequently, after the President's assent, the Bill became law. Thereafter in February, 2026, the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) under the Commerce and Industry Ministry had notified 100 per cent FDI in the insurance sector. Meanwhile, the decision to allow overseas companies with Chinese shareholding of up to 10 per cent to invest in India under the automatic route has come into effect from May 1, as the Finance Ministry has notified the changes under FEMA. In March, the Union Cabinet approved amendments in the press note (PN) 3 of 2020 of the DPIIT. As per the amendments, foreign companies having a Chinese/Hong Kong



shareholding of up to 10 per cent will be eligible to invest in India in sectors where FDI is permitted under the automatic route, subject to sectoral conditions. However, these relaxed FDI rules will not apply to entities registered in China or Hong Kong or other countries sharing land borders with India



MF Investors Diversifying Investments With Commodity ETFs

Mumbai : Indian Exchange Traded Funds (ETFs) recorded net inflows of more than Rs1.8 lakh crore in FY26 - the highest figure for any single financial year on record, and more than double the previous best of Rs 83,390 crore in FY22. Commodity ETFs (Gold and Silver combined) attracted more net flows than equity ETFs, with over half of all ETF inflows during the year going into these two categories. The single largest monthly flows was in January 2026, with more than Rs 39,000 crore in net inflows, as activity in Gold and Silver ETFs ran high against the backdrop of global market uncertainty. Gold and Silver ETFs together drew Rs 99,280 crore in net inflows - 55 per cent of the FY26 total. Equity ETFs received more than Rs 77,000 crore, or 43 per cent. "As recently as FY24, commodity ETFs accounted for less than 17 per cent of total ETF flows. The FY26 data points to a shift in how investors are using the ETF structure," said a report by Zerodha Fund House. "What stands out in FY26 is not just the size of the inflows, but where they came from. For years, ETFs in India were largely an equity story. The fact that Gold and Silver ETFs together attracted more inflows than equity ETFs suggests that investors are beginning to use the ETF structure to build more diversified portfolios, which is heartening to see," said Vishal Jain, CEO, Zerodha Fund House. Here's What Happens to Sensex and Nifty "Gold ETF AUM grew from about Rs 59,000 crore in March 2025 to more than Rs 1.71 lakh crore in March 2026 - a 191 per cent increase. This includes both the impact of rising gold prices and new investor inflows. One of the factors that may have contributed to investor preference for the ETF route over physical gold is tax efficiency: Gold and Silver ETFs qualify for LTCG at 12.5 per cent after 12 months, compared to 24 months for the physical metal," Zerodha Fund House said. Silver ETFs, launched in 2022, received more than Rs 30,000 crore in net inflows in FY26, more than the category's entire AUM at the start of the year (Rs 15,339 crore in March 2025). Silver prices also rose significantly over the period, which may have attracted investor attention to the category.

Bajaj Finance Hikes FD Rates For Select Senior Citizen Schemes



Non-banking financial company Bajaj Finance has raised interest rates on its fixed deposit (FD) schemes, offering up to 7.75 percent returns for senior citizens. The move comes amid rising demand for fixed-income instruments. The company has increased FD rates by up to 45 basis points on select tenures, particularly in the 31 to 60 month category. Following the revision, regular investors can now earn up to 7.40 percent interest, while senior citizens are eligible for a higher rate of up to 7.75 percent. The revised rates came into effect from May 1, 2026, and are part of a broader recalibration of deposit offerings by NBFCs as they compete with banks for retail savings. Bajaj Finance has also adjusted rates across other tenures, with returns ranging from about 6.60 percent for shorter durations to 7.40 percent for longer-term deposits for general investors. For senior citizens, the corresponding rates are higher across tenures, typically offering an additional premium over regular FD rates. This aligns with the broader trend in the market, where finan-

cial institutions offer extra returns to attract elderly investors seeking stable income options. The move comes at a time when fixed deposits are regaining traction among investors due to volatility in equity markets and global uncertainties. NBFCs, in particular, have been actively revising deposit rates to remain competitive with banks and small finance institutions that are offering relatively higher yields in certain tenures. While Bajaj Finance's revised rates place it among the higher-yielding NBFC options in the long-term segment, other institutions, such as small finance banks, continue to offer even higher returns in select cases. However, investors often weigh factors such as credit rating, liquidity, and safety alongside returns while choosing FD instruments.



Building trades unions emerge as a key ally of tech giants in push for AI data centers

HARRISBURG, Pa.: Building trades unions — long fashioned as the voice of the American worker — are now intertwined with the richest companies in the world as they create America's artificial intelligence economy. Unionized workers are employed on a huge number of massive data center projects and scrambling to recruit new apprentices to feed the explosive demand. They've also become an ally of tech giants and tech-friendly government officials, echoing the talking point that the United States is in a critical national security race with China for AI superiority. Unions are a visible force in helping counter fierce opposition in communities and hostile legislation in Congress and legislatures, often aligning with traditional Republican pro-business constituencies and forcing Democrats to choose between them and progressives who want to take a harder line. Unions have aggressively answered complaints about data centers in ways that executives at tech giants and the development firms rarely do, unafraid to bluntly confront concerns about energy and water shortages, rising electric and water bills, or noise and quality-of-life objections. "When people say, you know, 'data centers are the root of all evil,' we're just saying, 'look, they do create a hell of a lot of construction jobs, which we live and work in your communities,'" said Rob Bair, president of the Pennsylvania Building and Construction Trades Council. Instead of "being just a blunt 'no,'" Bair said, communities should figure out what they need and ask the tech companies for it — such as improvements to the project's plans or millions of dollars for local schools. "If you don't ask, you're never gonna get," he said. With data center construction accelerating, unions are expanding training centers and seeing their ranks grow faster than many union leaders have ever seen. Unions in a number of states are reporting skyrocketing man hours, apprentice classes doubling in size and training centers undergoing expansions in anticipation of more work coming. Data centers consume at least 40% of work hours done by members of the Columbus-Central Ohio Building and Construction Trades Council, a top official, Dorsey Hager, estimated.

Avenue Supermarts Profit Rises 17% To ₹725 Crore In Q4, Revenue Jumps To Rs 17,204 Crore

Mumbai: Avenue Supermarts Ltd reported a 16.9 percent year-on-year increase in standalone net profit to Rupees 724.60 crore for the quarter ended March 31, 2026, compared to Rupees 619.71 crore in the same period last year, as per its audited results. However, on a sequential basis, profit declined from Rupees 923.05 crore in Q3 FY26, indicating a moderation in quarterly performance. Revenue from operations rose to Rupees 17,204.50 crore, up from Rupees 14,462.39 crore a year ago, though slightly lower than Rupees 17,612.62 crore reported in the previous quarter. Total income stood at Rupees 17,235.20 crore in Q4 FY26, compared to Rupees 17,642.89 crore in Q3 FY26 and Rupees 14,501.52 crore in Q4 FY25. Total expenses increased to Rupees 16,267.09 crore from Rupees 13,713.00 crore a year ago, reflecting higher procurement and operating costs, though they declined

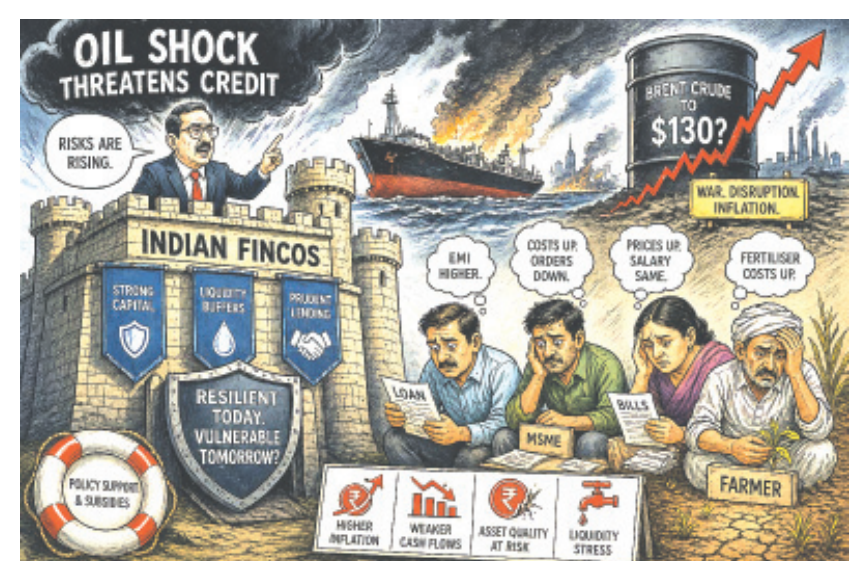


marginally from the previous quarter. Profit before tax came in at Rupees 968.11 crore, up 22.8 percent year-on-year but down 21.7 percent sequentially. Sequential performance was impacted by higher inventory adjustments and operating costs. Purchases of stock-in-trade rose to Rupees 15,269.94 crore compared to Rupees 12,800.42 crore in the year-ago quarter, while employee benefit expenses increased to Rupees 369.09 crore. Finance

costs also rose to Rupees 37.68 crore, reflecting higher borrowing or lease-related expenses. Despite this, cost control measures were visible in inventory changes and a marginal decline in total expenses compared to Q3. For the full financial year ended March 31, 2026, the company reported revenue from operations of Rupees 66,968.03 crore, up from Rupees 57,789.81 crore in FY25. Net profit for the year stood at Rupees 3,223.93 crore compared to Rupees 2,927.18 crore in the previous year. Earnings per share (EPS) for Q4 FY26 stood at Rupees 11.13 versus Rupees 9.52 in Q4 FY25. The company continues to operate primarily in the retail segment through offline channels, with no separate reportable segments. Its audited results reflect stable growth momentum despite quarterly fluctuations, supported by consistent demand trends and operational scale expansion.

Fragility Beneath Strength, Credit Under Siege: India's NBFCs Enter A New Oil Shock Phase

Mumbai: India's vast shadow banking network is staring at a gathering storm, as war-driven oil shocks ripple through the economy, threatening to expose hidden fractures beneath years of carefully built financial resilience. A sharply worded assessment by S&P Global Ratings warns that while India's non-bank finance companies (NBFCs) appear well capitalised on the surface, a prolonged surge in energy prices could trigger a chain reaction—weakening borrowers, tightening liquidity, and ultimately testing the system's endurance. At the heart of the risk lies oil. Disruptions in the Strait of Hormuz—artery to nearly a third of global crude flows—have already unsettled markets. S&P's base case assumes partial normalisation by late May. But in a darker scenario, Brent crude could surge to an average \$130 a barrel in 2026, unleashing sustained pressure across credit markets. The tremors would be felt first by borrowers. Micro, small and medium enterprises, already operating on thin margins, face rising input costs and shrinking cash flows, sources at S&P told The FPJ Money. As repayment capacity erodes, delinquency risks could climb, feeding stress directly into lenders' balance sheets. Households are no less exposed. Higher fuel and food costs are steadily draining disposable incomes, with early warning signs expected in unsecured retail loans, microfinance and commercial vehicle financing. While relatively safer segments such as housing and gold-backed loans provide a buffer, they are unlikely to fully offset broader stress if inflation persists. Elevated natural gas prices are inflating fertiliser costs, threatening farm economics and liquidity cycles. Although inventories remain adequate for now, a prolonged disruption could tighten supplies and strain the next sowing season, amplifying risks across agricultural lending. S&P, however, said the energy price shock won't last forever and that NBFCs should generally be able to withstand the stress. Policy intervention may offer temporary relief. Subsidies, targeted credit guarantees and potential regulatory forbearance from the RBI could help contain immediate fallout. Yet such measures carry their own risks—delaying the recognition of stress rather than resolving it. More critically, fincos remain uniquely exposed to shifts in market sentiment. Unlike banks, their dependence on wholesale funding leaves them vulnerable to sudden liquidity squeezes.



VOICE OF WORDS

SPORTS



India's Women's T20 world cup squad announced

Hyderabad: The Women's Selection Committee met at the BCCI HQ on Saturday 2nd May, 2026, in Mumbai to select India's squads for the ICC Women's T20 World Cup 2026, the three-match T20I series against England, and the Test against England. The England tour will commence with a three-match T20I series against the hosts. India will then compete in the ICC Women's T20 World Cup 2026. The team will begin their World Cup campaign against Pakistan in Birmingham on June 14, 2026 and then face the Netherlands in Leeds on June 17, followed by South Africa in Manchester on June 21. India will next take on Bangladesh at the same venue on June 25 before moving to Lord's for their final group-stage match against Australia on June 28. Amanjot Kaur and Kashvee Gautam were not available for selection due to injury. India will also play a Test against England at the Lord's Cricket Ground starting July 10. India's squad for ICC Women's T20 World Cup 2026 and T20I series against England: Harmanpreet Kaur (C), Smriti Mandhana (VC), Shafali Verma, Jemimah Rodrigues, Bharti Fulmali, Deepti Sharma, Richa Ghosh (WK), Sree Charani, Yastika Bhatia (WK), Nandni Sharma, Arundhati Reddy, Renuka Thakur, Kranti Gaud, Shreyanka Patil, Radha Yadav.

India Go Down 0-3 to France in Thomas Cup Semifinal, Settle for Bronze



Horsens (Denmark): India's hopes of reclaiming the title ended in disappointment as they went down 0-3 to France in the semifinals of the Thomas Cup Finals, settling for a bronze medal here on Saturday. The absence of Lakshya Sen proved costly as HS Prannoy joined Ayush Shetty and Kidambi Srikanth in defeat, losing 19-21, 16-21 to world No. 17 Toma Junior Popov, as India failed to win a single game in a completely one-sided

contest. India, champions in 2022, had already assured themselves of a medal by reaching the semifinals, adding to their bronze finishes in 1952, 1955 and 1979. With the win, France became only the second European nation to reach the final after Denmark's maiden title in 2016. Ayush, drafted into the opening singles with Lakshya nursing a swollen right elbow, went down 11-21, 9-21 in 39 minutes to world No. 4 Christo Popov. Also Read

- Superhuman or Supernatural? : Vaibhav Sooryavanshi's Meteoric Rise Meets Media Storm All eyes were on Srikanth to restore parity, but the former world No. 1 went down fighting 16-21, 18-21 to world No. 10 Alex Lanier in the second singles. The onus was then on Prannoy to keep India alive, and though the 2023 World Championships bronze medallist put up a better fight, he could not get past world No. 17 Popov.

Indian Deaf cricket team sweep South Africa 3-0 in T20Is, 2-0 in ODIs

New Delhi: Indian Deaf Cricket Team completed a dominant tour of South Africa, winning all three T20Is and both ODIs against the hosts. The matches were played at Sinoville Cricket Club, where the visitors consistently outperformed South Africa in all departments. The IDCA, supported by the BCCI and recognised by the Deaf International Cricket Council and Asian Deaf Cricket Association, organised the series. In the T20I series, India chased down 108 in the opening match to win by three wickets, followed by an eight-wicket victory in the second game after chasing 109. In the third T20I, India posted 157/3 and bowled South Africa out for 85 to seal a commanding 72-run win. The ODI series saw India continue their strong run. They comfortably chased 118 in the first ODI to win by seven wickets. In the second ODI, India edged out South Africa in a close contest, chasing 203 and winning by one wicket to complete the 2-0 sweep. Virender Singh was the standout performer of the series. He was named Player of the Series in both formats and also finished as the best batsman and bowler in the T20Is, while picking up the best bowler award in ODIs. Sai Akash was named the best batsman in the



ODI series. The closing ceremony was attended by IDCA officials, support partners and both teams. In a special moment, team representatives including captain Virender Singh and IDCA President Sumit Jain presented Acting High Commissioner Banu Prakash with a signed jersey and cap as a symbol of respect and unity. Reflecting on the win, Sumit Jain, President, IDCA said, "Our players were well-prepared and excited for the championship. They were ready to showcase their skills and compete for the prestigious title. Their dominating performance in the series shows that

the team left no stones unturned to make sure the trophy comes to India. While, Roma Balwani, CEO, IDCA said, "Hosting the series in Pretoria further strengthens the relationship between India and South Africa, while also recognizing deaf cricket as a competitive and inspiring sport. Events like this go beyond the sport itself—they build connections through sport and celebrate shared values." The association also expressed gratitude to Jay Shah, Chairman of the ICC and the Board of Control for Cricket in India, for supporting disability cricket initiatives.

Kostyuk of Ukraine Beats Russia's Andreeva to Win Madrid Open Title



MADRID: Marta Kostyuk of Ukraine beat Mirra Andreeva of Russia 7-5, 6-3 to win the Madrid Open title on Saturday. The two players, whose countries have been at war since Russia's invasion in 2022, did not shake hands at the net after the match or pose together at the awards ceremony. The 23rd-ranked Kostyuk collapsed back onto the clay court and held her hands over her face after converting match point when Andreeva's final shot flew long. After getting to her feet, she did an acrobatic backflip while the crowd cheered. Andreeva, meanwhile, slumped into her court-side seat and wept into a towel. Kostyuk finished her victory speech with "glory to God and glory to Ukraine." The win was Kostyuk's third WTA title, but her second in as many tournaments after she won at Rouen last weekend. The eighth-ranked Andreeva, who turned 19 on Wednesday, congratulated Kostyuk when she spoke to the audience after being awarded her runner-up trophy. "I would like to congratulate Marta and her team for the win today and for her season," Andreeva said, while Kostyuk clapped. "You have won two tournaments in a row, so congrats." Kostyuk beat the fifth-ranked Jessica Pegula and 13th-ranked Linda Noskova en route to the final, her first for a WTA 1000 tournament. Against Andreeva, who was playing her third WTA 1000 final, Kostyuk converted all four of her break chances and saved four of six break chances for her opponent. "It feels unbelievable to stand her right now," Kostyuk said.



Lakshya's absence was 'certainly felt', France completely overwhelmed India: Vimal Kumar

New Delhi: Former chief coach Vimal Kumar opined that Indian star shuttle Lakshya Sen's absence was felt in India's 3-0 loss in the Thomas Cup semifinal while also lauding France for their dominant show against former champions to make it to their maiden title clash. Paris 2024 semi-finalist Sen was forced to sit out for the semi-final tie after suffering an impact injury to his elbow during quarter-final clash against Chinese Taipei on Friday. Just as in their quarterfinals against Japan, France were clinical against India. France's top three singles players once again delivered, preventing India from leveraging the strength of their top doubles combination. "France completely overwhelmed India today, and Lakshya's absence was certainly felt at crucial moments. That said, this result also highlights just how much France has grown as a badminton nation—they're progressing rapidly and competing with real authority at the highest level," Vimal shared on X. Christo Popov once again showed the way, this time against the in-form Ayush Shetty, whose devastating at-

tack has been the fulcrum of the Indian campaign. Then it was Alex Lanier against the experienced Kidambi Srikanth— young star against seasoned campaigner. Much the same happened in the third singles between Toma Junior Popov and HS Prannoy. Meanwhile, awaiting them in the final are China, looking for their 12th title. "Looking ahead, they will carry strong belief into the final, especially if it's against China. With the form they're in, they have every chance of making it a closely fought contest. Christo Popov continues to be a standout performer. Winning the year-end Finals last season and delivering such dominant performances—like his exceptional display against Indonesia, where he convincingly beat Jonatan Christie—shows the level of confidence and quality he's bringing to the court," he added. The former coach further said for the 2022 champions India have unquestionable potential, and they will regroup and come back stronger. "For India, this is a moment to regroup and come back stronger. The potential in this team is unquestionable," he concluded.

Miami Grand Prix: Lando Norris on sprint pole as McLaren shine again



MIAMI: World champion Lando Norris ended Mercedes' early-season supremacy by steering his upgraded McLaren to pole position on Friday for Saturday's sprint race at the Miami Grand Prix. The 26-year-old Briton outpaced championship-leading Italian teenager Kimi Antonelli, in his Mercedes, by 0.222 seconds with McLaren team-mate Oscar Piastri third, adrift by a further 0.239 seconds. The two McLarens, equipped with a successful upgrade package during F1's five-week hiatus due to the conflict in the Middle East, shone in the Florida heat to finish ahead of their main rivals. "It was great, a perfect result for us and a nice way to reward the team," said Norris. "We've got some new upgrades so it's nice for me to feel some grip again. We've known that this track has always been good for us. "But we knew, too, that what we were bringing would make a good step and it has and our estimations have been correct." It was the first time this year that Mercedes had been outqualified after dominating the three previous Grands Prix. McLaren's British driver Lando Norris holds his Pirelli Sprint Pole award after winning the pole position during Sprint qualifying ahead of the 2026 Miami Formula One Grand Prix at Miami International Autodrome in Miami Gardens, Florida, on May 1, 2026. Ferrari also impressed, but were less competitive than they had been earlier in practice with their heavily revised car. Charles Leclerc was fourth for Ferrari ahead of a revitalised four-time champion Max Verstappen in his revised Red Bull, Mercedes' George Russell and seven-time champion Lewis Hamilton in the second Ferrari. Franco Colapinto was eighth for an improved Alpine ahead of Isack Hadjar in the second Red Bull and Pierre Gasly in the second Alpine. In hot conditions in the Sunshine State, Valtteri Bottas led out in his Cadillac with all 22 cars joining the fray immediately at the Miami International Autodrome. Leclerc, who was quickest in practice earlier, was soon on top ahead of Antonelli by 0.022 with Hamilton third, three-tenths adrift ahead of Verstappen and Gasly. Russell struggled to keep pace before Norris and Piastri grabbed the initiative. Norris, clearly in the mood, clocked 1:28.723 to top Piastri by four-tenths until Leclerc split the two McLarens ahead of Hamilton and the Mercedes pair, leaving Verstappen down in seventh in SQ1.



Anupama's Village Belle Look In Sharwa's Bhogi

Charming Star Sharwa, known for his easy charisma, takes on a completely rugged role in *Bhogi*, directed by Sampath Nandi. The first-look poster and the birthday special poster have already grabbed attention. Today, the team introduced Anupama Parameswaran's character as Kandula Sulochana Rani. Anupama's first-look design embraces realism. She appears as a village belle, carrying a woven basket filled with Moduga leaves on her head. She holds another bunch of leaves in one hand and a lunch box in the other, dressed in a simple half-saree. The poster places her against a rustic rural backdrop of mud houses and cattle, capturing a raw slice of life. Sulochana's world is simple yet demanding. Her livelihood depends on crafting plates from forest leaves, and the quiet determination on her face hints at a woman who shoulders far more than her daily chores. Anupama has invested deeply in mastering the dialect and behavioural nuances to ensure the character reflects the ruggedness and authenticity of the film's setting. The production team is gearing up for the next schedule in Hyderabad, planned for the first



week of May. Dimple Hayathi plays the other female lead in this film set in the early 1960s along the Telangana-Maharashtra border. Backed by KK Radhamohan and presented by Lakshmi Radhamohan under the Sri Sathya Sai Arts banner, the project is slated for a

Another Surprising Hit Loading At The B-town Box Office?



Raja Shivaji appears to be off to a promising start at the box office. Despite carrying only moderate pre-release expectations, the film has opened well at ticket counters and is also showing encouraging trends online. Early booking patterns and social media discussions indicate growing curiosity among audiences. The timing also seems to be working in the film's favor. With *Dhurandhar 2* nearing the end of its theatrical run and *Bhoot Bangla* slowing down, the path looks relatively clear for Raja Shivaji to capitalize on audience attention. Initial reactions from viewers have been positive, especially regarding the film's entertainment quotient. However, the real test will depend on strong and consistent word-of-mouth over the weekend. If the film manages to earn unanimous support from audiences, trade experts believe it has the potential to post impressive box office numbers. The project is particularly important for Riteish Deshmukh and Genelia, both of whom have faced struggles in recent years when it comes to delivering major theatrical successes. A solid run for Raja Shivaji could provide much-needed momentum and mark a significant comeback moment for the duo. For now, the signs are encouraging, and all eyes are on whether Raja Shivaji can convert its positive start into a full-fledged box office success.



Ek Din brings Sai Pallavi into Bollywood for the first time, with a Telugu version released as *Oka Roju*. But the start has been quite dull. Bookings were slow and openings are not impressive. Even with promotions, the film did not create

What's The Talk Of Sai Pallavi's Hindi Film?

strong buzz. The team focused mainly on Mumbai and the reach did not expand much beyond that. Junaid Khan plays the lead, but the film has not got the attention expected for a debut project linked to Aamir Khan. The main issue seems to be the story. Sai Pallavi plays a girl who loses memory of a single day after an accident. The idea may sound emotional, but it feels very familiar. Audience has already seen similar memory loss love stories many times. Because of this, *Ek Din* fails to offer anything fresh. The emotional angle, the love story setup, and the conflict all feel predictable. This seems to be one of the main reasons for the weak talk. Another problem is reach. Even after dubbing, the film has not got proper release in many smaller centers. That further limits its chances.

Old-School Genius: Singeetam Finishes Film in 4 Months

Sing Geetham is already turning heads in the industry, not just because of its teaser but also due to the incredible speed at which the film has been completed. Directed by legendary filmmaker Singeetam Srinivasa Rao, who is now over 90 years old, the film was officially announced only in February this year. In a surprising achievement, the veteran director wrapped up the entire process, including shooting and post-production, within just three to four months. The film is now gearing up for a theatrical release on June 11, showcasing the remarkable discipline and efficiency Singeetam is known for even at this stage of his career. The recently released teaser has generated curiosity for its musical backdrop and unique visual tone. More than the content itself, many in the industry are now discussing Singeetam's old-school filmmaking style, where productions moved with precision and clarity rather than endless delays. Interestingly, several of his classic films like *Aditya 369*, in the past, were also completed within just 40 to 60 days, a rarity in today's filmmaking environment where productions often stretch for years. With *Sing Geetham*, the legendary director seems to have once again demonstrated a masterclass in efficient filmmaking. The film has now



become a talking point among cinema lovers, with many eagerly waiting to see what the veteran filmmaker delivers on the big screen. Produced and supervised by Nag Ashwin under Swapna Cinema and Vyjayanth Movies and Music by Rockstar DSP, the film is all set to hit theatres on June 11.

Teaser Report Card: EPIC, First Semester Scores High



The teaser of *EPIC - First Semester* arrives with impressive momentum, building on the blockbuster reception of the "Sancharame" track. Set against a lively London backdrop, it offers a refreshing glimpse into a

modern love story shaped by contrasting personalities. The visuals feel vibrant and immersive, while the narrative hints at a heartfelt exploration of relationships that feels both contemporary and relatable. The fun quotient and youthful elements will impress everyone for sure. At the heart of the film are Anand Deverakonda and Vaishnavi Chaitanya, whose popular pairing returns with a renewed dynamic. This time, their characters reflect deeper emotional layers, one introverted, the other extroverted, creating an engaging contrast that drives curiosity about how their relationship evolves. Their chemistry, already a known strength, appears more nuanced and mature in this outing. Marking his transition from web content to cinema, director Aditya Haasan shows promising clarity in storytelling and visual presentation. Complemented by the soulful music of Hesham Abdul Wahab, the teaser successfully heightens anticipation. Backed by producers Naga Vamsi and Sai Soujanya under Sithara Entertainments and Fortune Four Cinemas, the film positions itself as a charming, emotionally resonant entertainer that's already winning full marks from audiences.



Which Star Lady Will Grab the Golden Chance in Cult Sequel?

In 2018, Bollywood audiences experienced a one-of-its kind folklore thriller for the first time with '*Tumbbad*', which was directed by Rahi Anil Barve and Anand Gandhi. The critically acclaimed horror fantasy didn't gain much box office traction at that time but later emerged as a sensational hit when it returned to theatres in 2024 and punched solid revenues. Now, the makers are gearing up to bring a sequel to this village drama and the anticipation keeps building even before the regular shooting gets underway because of its star-studded casting and huge canvas. Already, versatile Hindi actor Nawazuddin Siddiqui has joined the sequel and sparked strong buzz on the sequel. The team has also announced that *Tumbbad 2* will hit the screens on December 3rd 2027. While the first part was made with relatively new faces, the team seems to be rising the stakes by bringing more prominent and top league actors on board, only for the hype to shoot up exponentially just before commencing the shoot. As per the latest buzz in the media, the makers are considering big names like Priyanka Chopra, Katrina Kaif, Alia Bhatt and Nayantara for a pivotal role in the sequel. They believe that signing up an A-lister could expand the prospects of the sequel beyond Bollywood and generate ample hype in trade circles as well. But, it is unclear if any of these big-ticket artists signs the dotted line and adjust their dates to shoot for *Tumbbad 2*. *Tumbbad 2* will be helmed by writer and director Adesh Prasad, who worked on the script of the original along with other writers. He confirmed that the core plot and soul of the first installment will be retained for the sequel. He promised that the second part will be more immersive and haunting than the predecessor.