



Social Welfare Department



**"IN THE PROGRESS OF THE COUNTRY LIES OUR PROGRESS;
IN ITS SALVATION, OUR SALVATION AND IN ITS EMANCIPATION, OUR EMANCIPATION"**
- Dr. Babu Jagjivan Ram

119th BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS

Garlanding the Statue of

Messiah of Green Revolution, National Leader, Former Deputy Prime Minister of India

Dr. BABU JAGJIVAN RAM

April 5, 2026, Sunday at 10.00 AM
West Gate of Vidhana Soudha, Bengaluru

Stage Event

Time - 10.30 AM
Venue - Grand Steps of Vidhana Soudha



As is enshrined in our constitution, "to value and preserve the rich heritage of our composite culture" - is the fundamental duty of every citizen of the country.

Commissioner
Social Welfare Department

Secretary to Government
Social Welfare Department

 **@SWDGok**



QUICK READ

**Mangaluru school chairman, three others get bail****Mangaluru**

A court in Mangaluru granted anticipatory bail to the chairman and three members of the Infinity Learning Foundation in Guruvayanakere, Belthangady taluk, in a forgery case. Judge V. N. Jagadeesh granted relief to chairman B. Sumanth Kumar Jain and members B. Sahana Jain, Satish Kumar Jain, and Shubhalatha. They must execute a personal bond of ₹50,000 each if arrested. The court directed them to cooperate with investigators, avoid influencing witnesses, refrain from similar offences, and appear regularly before the court. The case follows a complaint filed on Belthangady Police Station by G. S. Shashidhara. Authorities alleged the foundation submitted a forged fire safety clearance while seeking school approval. A case has been registered under the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, and investigation is ongoing.

Kadaba police rescue 20 cattle, book 3**Mangaluru**

Kadaba police rescued 20 cattle allegedly being transported illegally and registered a case against three individuals. Acting on a tip-off early in the morning, a team led by Police Sub-Inspector Jamburaj Mahajan intercepted a container lorry near Kanvare in Nooljibalthila village. The vehicle was reportedly travelling from Periyasanthi towards Mardhala. During inspection, police found the cattle tightly packed under poor conditions. The driver, Irfan, 26, from Belur, failed to produce valid transport permits and admitted the animals were being transported from Hassan to Kerala. The vehicle and cattle were seized. A case has been registered at Kadaba Police Station under relevant sections of the Karnataka Prevention of Slaughter and Preservation of Cattle Act, 2020, and the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act, 1960. Investigation is ongoing.

Ex-armed forces man arrested, ganja seized**Udupi**

In Udupi, police arrested an ex-armed forces personnel for violating a government order, recovering ganja from his abandoned vehicle. Acting on intelligence, the police intercepted the suspect after noticing suspicious behavior near a public area. The man allegedly attempted to flee, leaving his car behind. Upon inspection, authorities found a significant quantity of ganja stored inside the vehicle. The suspect has been taken into custody and a case registered under relevant sections of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act. Investigation is ongoing to trace the source and distribution network linked to the seized contraband.

Middle East conflict disrupts South India egg exports

Middle East tensions have sharply reduced egg exports, forcing South Indian farmers to sell locally at lower prices.

MANGALURU

The ongoing conflict in the Middle East has significantly impacted egg exports from South India, affecting Tamil Nadu's Namakkal region and parts of Karnataka, major poultry-producing areas. These regions, often called India's "egg basket," used to export millions of eggs monthly to Gulf countries such as Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and the UAE. On average, 5–6 crore eggs were shipped every month.

Due to the war, maritime transport has been disrupted, and many shipping orders



have been canceled. This has caused egg exports to drop by 25–30 percent. Eggs originally intended for Gulf countries are now flooding the domestic market, sharply reducing wholesale prices. Previously, an egg sold for over ₹6, but

now prices have fallen to ₹4.60–4.70. Farmers, whose production costs range from ₹4.50 to ₹5 per egg, are facing losses.

The situation is further compounded by increased feed costs and higher trans-

port and insurance charges due to extended shipping routes around Africa. Eggs are highly perishable, and many farmers struggle to maintain cold storage, forcing them to sell at lower prices locally.

Exporters are exploring alternative markets such as Sri Lanka, Malaysia, and Africa, but competition limits immediate solutions. The crisis highlights how distant geopolitical conflicts can directly affect local farmers' incomes and domestic market dynamics, demonstrating the global "butterfly effect" on everyday livelihoods in South India.

Merchant Navy Week began at NMPA with a flag-pinning ceremony honoring seafarers' vital contributions to India's trade

Merchant Navy week begins with flag pinning ceremony at NMPA

MANGALURU

Merchant Navy Week commenced at the New Mangalore Port Authority with a flag pinning ceremony, recognising the contribution of seafarers to India's trade and economic growth.

The inaugural ceremony saw the first Merchant Navy flag being pinned on Brijesh Chowta, Member of Parliament from Dakshina Kannada, as a mark of respect to maritime professionals.

The lapel was presented by Capt. Manoj Joshi, Deputy Conservator at NMPA, along with Rehman, Deputy Director (Technical), Directorate General of Shipping. The gesture symbolised appreciation for the maritime sector and its critical role in sustaining global trade and logistics.

Officials highlighted that seafarers form the backbone of international commerce, ensuring the uninterrupted movement of cargo across



continents. The ceremony also aimed to raise awareness about the Merchant Navy's contribution to the nation's economy.

Merchant Navy Week is observed annually to honour the dedication, resilience and professionalism of seafarers and maritime personnel. Speakers at the event emphasised the need to recognise their efforts, especially given the demanding nature of their work and the challenges faced at sea.

The event brought together officials from the port authority and representatives of maritime institutions, underlining the importance of col-

laboration among stakeholders to strengthen the sector.

The organisers noted that India's maritime industry continues to play a pivotal role in global supply chains, with ports like NMPA serving as key gateways for trade. The ceremony reaffirmed the commitment of authorities to promote awareness about maritime careers and acknowledge the contributions of seafarers.

The week-long observance will include various programmes aimed at highlighting the significance of maritime services and encouraging greater public engagement with the sector.

Mangaluru Bishop urges peace, reconciliation in Easter message

MANGALURU

The Bishop of the Diocese of Mangalore, Peter Paul Saldanha, called for peace, dialogue, and reconciliation in his Easter 2026 message, emphasizing the enduring relevance of the Resurrection of Jesus Christ in today's conflict-ridden world. Extending Easter greetings to the community, he described the resurrection not merely as a historical event but as a powerful symbol of hope, renewal, and spiritual victory over despair.

Bishop Saldanha expressed concern over rising violence and bloodshed globally, noting that humanity faces conflicts at multiple levels. In this context, he urged people to embrace the Easter message as a guide for promoting dialogue over discord and peace over hostility. He stressed that reconciliation must begin within individuals, extend to families and communities,

and include interfaith understanding, fostering harmony across religious and social divides.

Highlighting the spiritual significance of Easter, the Bishop said the resurrection embodies triumph over darkness and provides renewed hope for a better future. He encouraged individuals to practice compassion, forgiveness, and respect, emphasizing that true peace can only be achieved through mutual understanding and constructive engagement.

Concluding his message, Bishop Saldanha appealed for active efforts to end hatred and mistrust and called upon all people to work towards unity. He invoked God's blessings on the community and wished everyone a grace-filled, joyful, and hopeful Easter, urging the faithful to embrace the spirit of compassion, reconciliation, and lasting peace in their daily lives.

Blueprint for Eco-Friendly tourism development in Udupi district

UDUPI

The Udupi District Commissioner, Swaroop T.K., has directed all stakeholders to prepare a comprehensive blueprint for eco-friendly tourism development in the district and submit it promptly. Speaking at a meeting with tourism partners at the District Commissioner's office in Manipal, he emphasized sustainable growth while preserving the district's natural beauty.

Udupi, known for its pristine beaches, scenic Western Ghats, forests, waterfalls, and religious sites, attracts thousands of visitors annually. Commissioner Swaroop noted that any tourism development activity must prioritize basic amenities such as drinking water, sanitation, parking, and accommodation at tourist sites. A designated partner team has been tasked with submitting a

SCDCC Bank sets new benchmarks in cooperative growth

MANGALURU

The South Canara District Central Cooperative Bank (SCDCC Bank) has posted a landmark performance for FY 2025–26, highlighting the growing strength of cooperative banking in India.

The Mangaluru-based bank reported a record total business of ₹20,226.19 crore, reflecting a 16.47% growth over the previous year. Profit surged to ₹131.14 crore, an 18.78% increase, setting a new benchmark among district co-operative banks in Karnataka.

A key driver of growth has been the bank's strong deposit mobilization, which rose 17.53% to ₹9,264.64 crore—achieved without depending on government deposits. Advances reached ₹9,766.75 crore, with a significant share directed toward agriculture and allied activities.

The bank extended ₹2,340.05 crore in agricultural loans and ₹7,426.70 crore to non-agricultural sectors, supporting both rural and urban economies. Its consistent 100% recovery of agricultural loans for 31 consecutive years stands out as a rare achievement.

Asset quality also improved, with NPAs declining to 2.21%. The bank's working capital rose to ₹15,027.66 crore, while its cooperative network expanded to include

**Record business, rising profits and strong rural credit underline the bank's expanding footprint**

1,104 member societies.

SCDCC Bank has embraced digital transformation, offering UPI, IMPS, mobile banking, and tab-based account services. Over 1.44 lakh Rupay Kisan Credit Cards have been issued to farmers, enhancing financial inclusion.

The bank's outreach extends to self-help groups, with more than 34,765 groups supported, making it a leader in the segment.

Looking ahead, SCDCC Bank plans to open 10 new branches and has set a target of ₹22,500 crore in business for the next financial year. With multiple awards from NABARD, Apex Bank, and the Government of India, the institution continues to set standards in cooperative banking efficiency and rural development.

Southern Railway runs special trains for Vishu festival

MANGALURU

To manage the extra passenger rush during the Vishu festival, Southern Railway has announced special trains between Mangaluru Central and Chennai Egmore. Train No. 06126 will depart Mangaluru Central at 4 pm on April 6 and 13, reaching Chennai Egmore at 10:30 am the next day. The return train, No. 06125, leaves Chennai Egmore at 2 pm on April 7 and 14, arriving at Mangaluru Central at 6:50 am.



The train features AC two-tier, AC three-tier, sleeper, general coaches, a Divyangjan-friendly coach, and a luggage-cum-brake van.

Additionally, a special Bengaluru Cantonment–Chennai Central service (Train No. 06545/06546) will operate on April 9 to ease festival travel.

RIVER WATER POLLUTION

Mangaluru Rivers turning toxic; aquatic life faces danger

MANGALURU

Rivers surrounding Mangalore are increasingly becoming toxic, posing a severe threat to humans, animals, and aquatic life. Rising temperatures and prolonged water shortages have intensified the crisis, causing borewells and wells to dry up and water levels in rivers, lakes, and dams to fall significantly. This has raised serious concerns over the safety and quality of drinking water.

The Netravati, Phalguni, Shambhavi, Nandini, and Kumaradhara rivers, which flow freely from the Western Ghats to urban areas, are heavily polluted as they pass through towns and cities. Untreated municipal sewage, industrial effluents, medical waste, and drainage runoff are discharged directly into these rivers, changing their color and contaminating water that sustains fish, turtles, and other aquatic organisms.



In Mangaluru and Buntwal, the Netravati river, which supplies drinking water, has

been contaminated by domestic and industrial waste from surrounding areas, making it

unsafe even after treatment. The Payaswini, Nandini, and Shambhavi rivers face similar challenges, with pollutants from urban settlements and private hospitals harming local ecosystems.

The primary causes of river pollution include industrial chemical discharge, untreated sewage, waste dumping, illegal animal waste disposal, and inadequate purification measures. As a result, aquatic life is dying, and the water reaching humans is increas-

ingly unsafe.

Immediate intervention is needed through strict waste management, water purification, and awareness campaigns. Restoring these rivers is crucial to protect both the environment and public health, ensuring safe and clean water for future generations.

This crisis highlights the urgent need for sustainable water management and stricter regulation of urban and industrial waste.



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Tax burdens
drive Pakistan
fuel prices
skyward

P10
Rizvi's brilliance
powers Delhi to
second straight
IPL win



BEWARE OF RUMOURS!

Fuel supplies adequate, avoid panic buying: Govt

NEW DELHI

The government on Saturday asked citizens to avoid panic purchases of petrol, diesel and booking of LPG, assuring that supplies are adequate to meet demands despite disruptions linked to the closure of the Strait of Hormuz.

"Beware of rumours and rely on official sources for correct information," said the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas in a statement.

It further stated the government is taking proactive steps to ensure the uninterrupted availability of petroleum products and cooking gas and urged people to rely only on official information and conserve energy. There is pressure from the geopolitical situation but maintained that there are no reports of LPG shortages at distributor points, adding that about 51 lakh cylinders were delivered on Friday and online bookings accounted for 95%.

"All refineries are operating at high capacity, with adequate crude inventories in place. The country is also maintaining sufficient stocks of petrol and diesel," it stated.

On panic buying, the govt said, "There were certain rumours which led to panic buying at some retail outlets in a few states, resulting in unusually high sales and heavy crowding at retail outlets. However, it is informed that there are adequate stocks of petrol and diesel available at all Petrol Pumps in the country."

'Importing Iranian crude, LPG'

New Delhi: India has confirmed it is sourcing crude oil and LPG from Iran amid the ongoing energy supply disruptions in West Asia caused by war in the region. The Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas issued a statement on Saturday addressing rumours of supply problems. "Amid Middle East supply disruptions, Indian refiners have secured their crude oil requirements, including from Iran; and there is no payment hurdle for Iranian crude imports," it said. It rejected reports and social media claims that an Iranian crude cargo had been diverted from Vadinar port in Gujarat to China due to "payment issues". "The news reports and social media posts of an Iranian crude cargo being diverted from Vadinar, India to China due to 'payment issues' are factually incorrect," the ministry stated.

'48 hrs before all hell rains down' Trump warns Iran if it won't open Hormuz

Trump's threat came as Iranian media reported US-Israeli attacks targeting key sites in the country, including a nuclear plant, a petrochemical hub, a trade terminal and a cement factory.

WASHINGTON

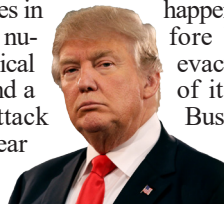
US President Donald Trump on Saturday re-upped a previous April 6 deadline for Iran to open up the shipping channel or face devastating consequences.

"Remember when I gave Iran ten days to MAKE A DEAL or OPEN UP THE HORMUZ STRAIT," Trump wrote on his social media account Saturday.

"Time is running out — 48 hours before all Hell will reign down on them. Glory be to GOD!"

Trump's threat came as Iranian media reported US-Israeli attacks targeting key sites in the country, including a nuclear plant, a petrochemical hub, a trade terminal and a cement factory. An attack near the Bushehr nuclear power station killed one

of the facility's guards but caused no damage, the official IRNA news agency said. The UN's IAEA nuclear watchdog said no increased radiation levels had been detected. The strike happened just minutes before Russia started the evacuation of 198 more of its workers from the Bushehr plant, which it helped build and assists in operating.



India tops ship movement via war-hit Hormuz

NEW DELHI

Amid the ongoing West Asia crisis, eight India-flagged vessels have managed to cross the Strait of Hormuz, a critical waterway for global oil and gas transport.

Iran has tightened its grip on the Strait of Hormuz, disrupting global fuel supplies and causing turmoil in energy markets in response to US-Israeli strikes on February 28.

According to maritime data, 60% of commodity-bearing

8 Indian vessels bypassed Hormuz

Shivalik, Nanda Devi, Jag Laadki, Pine Gas, Jag Vasant, BW Tyr, BW Elm, and Green Sanvi.

ships crossing the key shipping lane have either come from Iran or were heading there.

However, despite the blockade, India has emerged as one of the countries with the highest number of ships passing through this route. At

least eight Indian vessels have passed through the Strait of Hormuz since the conflict started.

Among these are two LPG carriers that safely transited the war zone, BW TYR and BW ELM, carrying LPG cargo of about 94,000 tonnes.

Tanker crosses Hormuz

An Indian-flagged LPG carrier 'Green Sanvi' has safely passed through the Strait of Hormuz, India's government said on Saturday.



BUSHEHR NUKE PLANT HIT, AGAIN

TEHRAN

A projectile from a US-Israeli strike hit near the Bushehr nuclear power plant in southern Iran on Saturday, killing one person, state media reported.

Iran's official news agency IRNA said, "Following the US-Zionist criminal attacks, this Saturday morning, around 8:30 am, a projectile hit the area near the Bushehr nuclear power plant in the southwest." It added that one of the building's guards was killed but that there was no damage to the nuclear plant's facilities.

The Atomic Energy Organisation of Iran also confirmed in a social media post that the airstrike damaged a support building.

US agents arrest niece of Iran's Qassem Soleimani

US federal agents have arrested the niece and grandniece of late Iranian military commander Qassem Soleimani after Secretary of State Marco Rubio revoked their lawful permanent resident status, the State Department said on Saturday. "Hamideh Soleimani Afshar and her daughter are now in the custody of US Immigration and Customs Enforcement," the State Department said in a statement after Rubio revoked their green cards.

9 OF FAMILY KILLED AS CAR FALLS INTO WELL IN NASHIK

NASHIK

In a devastating incident, nine members of a family, including six children, were killed after the multi-utility vehicle they were travelling in plunged into an open well in Dindori tehsil of Nashik district late Friday night.

According to reports, the accident occurred when the Dargade family was returning home after a students' reunion programme at Raj Banquet Hall in Shivajinagar of Dindori in Nashik district, which concluded around 10 pm, in an Maruti Suzuki Ertiga. The accident occurred at Shivajinagar, about 225 km from Mumbai.

Rescue and relief operations continued until the early hours of Saturday, but authorities confirmed there were no survivors.

The deceased were identified as Sunil Dattu Dargade (32), Reshma Sunil Dargade (27), Asha Anil Dargade (32), Khushi Anil Dargade (14), Madhuri Anil Dargade (13), Shreyas Anil Dargade (11),



Rakhi Sunil Dargade (11), Shravani Anil Dargade (11) and Samruddhi Rajendra Dargade (7). All victims were residents of Indore village in Dindori. According to preliminary reports, Sunil Dargade, who was driving the vehicle, lost control while negotiating a stretch near the well. The vehicle veered off the road and fell directly into the uncovered well, giving the occupants little chance to escape.

Locals were the first to respond, rushing to the spot upon hearing a loud crash.

However, the depth of the well and darkness hampered immediate rescue efforts. Fire brigade personnel and disaster response teams later joined the operation, using cranes to retrieve the submerged Maruti Ertiga, and the bodies.

Teams of Nashik district police, administrative staff, SDRF and NDRF rushed to the spot overnight.

Eyewitnesses said the absence of protective barriers or warning signs around the well significantly contributed to the tragedy.

Goods vehicles hike rental rates by 10-25% in state

BENGALURU

The conflict in Gulf nations is affecting state transport, with lorries and mini goods vehicles joining autos in limited operation. This has led to a 10-25% increase in goods vehicle rental rates.

The shortage of LPG and CNG is being felt across the

state, with diesel scarcity at the district level and on highways. Around 10-12 per cent of vehicles, including lorries and mini goods vehicles are CNG/LNG-based, and their operation is being hit.

About five lakh vehicles, including lorries, goods, passenger, and commercial vehicles, are on the state's roads.

Cops serve notice to auto gas station over traffic snarls

BENGALURU: Autorickshaws are queuing up on the city's roads for auto LPG, causing traffic congestion. The Seshadripuram police have now issued a notice to the Krishna Auto Gas Station on Platform Road in Seshadripuram, instructing them to make arrangements for autos to park without obstructing traffic. The notice states that autos queuing up on the road are causing inconvenience to locals and pedestrians. The gas station is required to provide a separate parking area for autos and ensure they don't park on the road. The police have warned that if the situation persists, the gas station will be closed from 8 am to 11 am and 5 pm to 8 pm.

'Ghayal hoon...': Chadha's 'Dhurandhar' dig at AAP

NEW DELHI

The spat between the Aam Aadmi Party and its Rajya Sabha MP Raghav Chadha intensified on Saturday with the sidelined leader dismissing AAP's allegation against him as "lies" and asserting that he went to Parliament to raise people's issues and not to create ruckus.

"All these lies will be unmasked. Kyunki mai ghayal hoon isiliye ghatkak hoon" (I am wounded, therefore I am dangerous)," the MP said in

a video statement, quoting from the movie 'Dhurandhar', and alleged that there was a coordinated campaign to target him.

His reaction came a day after the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) launched an all-out attack, accusing him of shying away from raising his voice against Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the Centre in Parliament and instead engaging in "soft PR". AAP had removed him as its

deputy leader in Rajya Sabha on Thursday, after which the MP had said he had been "silenced, not defeated".

Chadha on Saturday also countered claims by AAP leaders that he did not join opposition walkouts and had refused to sign the notice for a motion to remove the Chief Election Commissioner.

He said that he did not want to

respond, but if lies are repeated consistently, they may seem to appear true.

"The first allegation they put against me was that I did not walk out with the opposition. This is a white lie, and I challenge you (AAP) to give me one example, one incident, where opposition walked out and I didn't support them," Chadha said. "There are CCTV cameras everywhere in the parliament. Show me footage and it will become clear," he said.



QUICK READ

TN-born Rini in race for Washington DC mayor

WASHINGTON
Tamil Nadu-born Rini Sampath has become the first South Asian candidate to be on the ballot for the primary for the election for the mayor of Washington DC. The 31-year-old government contractor from the Democratic Party has based her election campaign on the theme 'Fix the Basics' and the promise of "A new DC". "I'm not a politician. I don't owe any special interest groups. It's time for an outsider who is relentlessly focused on fixing our basic city services," she says on her campaign website. She came to the US as a seven-year-old and has been a resident of Washington DC for more than a decade. "It's clear we have a real path to victory. In just four weeks, we made the mayoral ballot as the first South Asian candidate in DC history to do it."

272 illegal Bangla immigrants deported

BENGALURU
A total of 272 illegal Bangladeshi migrants, including 178 men, 94 women, and 12 children, have been deported from Bengaluru. The Central Crime Branch police are investigating the agents who brought these migrants into the country. The agents, also known as 'thekedars', facilitate the migrants' illegal entry into India and help them find work. The thekedars operate in three stages: one brings the migrants from Bangladesh to the Indian border, another helps them cross the border, and the third helps them find work in India. Two thekedars have been arrested in Bengaluru so far. The deportation is part of a nationwide operation following a central government directive.

MADE IN INDIA

INDIA'S DEFENCE EXPORTS AT ALL-TIME HIGH

NEW DELHI

India's defence exports have touched an all-time high, underlining the country's growing footprint in the global arms market.

The defence ministry data shows India's defence exports surged to Rs 38,424 crore in 2025-26, marking the highest level ever recorded. This is a nearly 25-fold increase from Rs 1,522 crore in 2016-17, highlighting a sharp expansion over the past decade.

The export trajectory shows a steady upward trend despite minor fluctuations. Defence exports crossed Rs 10,000 crore for the first time in 2018-19, dipped slightly during the pandemic years, and then accelerated sharply from 2021-22 onwards. Between 2023-24 and 2025-26 alone, exports rose from Rs 21,083 crore to Rs 38,424 crore, reflecting increased

demand for Indian-made defence equipment and systems.

WHO BUYS INDIA'S DEFENCE EQUIPMENT?

India's defence exports during 2016-2025 were largely concentrated among a few key buyers. Myanmar emerged as the largest destination, accounting for 28% of India's total defence exports. It was followed by the Philippines (19%) and Armenia (15%), together making up more than 60% of India's export destinations.

Neighbouring and regional countries also featured prominently. Sri Lanka accounted for 13% of total exports, while island nations in the Indian Ocean region such as Mauritius (8.3%) and Seychelles (6%) were significant buyers. Vietnam accounted for 5.5%, highlighting India's growing defence ties with Southeast Asia. Other coun-



tries like Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Morocco and Maldives collectively made up around 5% of exports.

WHAT DOES INDIA EXPORT IN DEFENCE?

Naval platforms dominate India's defence export basket. Ships accounted for 55% of the total defence exports between 2016 and 2025, far ahead of all other categories. Artillery systems formed the second-largest category at 13 per cent, followed

closely by missiles at 12 per cent. Sensors and surveillance systems accounted for nine per cent, while aircraft made up six per cent of the total exports. Air-defence systems contributed 5.3% and armoured vehicles formed a marginal share of 0.3%.

With a strong focus on naval systems and steady demand from regional partners, India's defence exports are not only rising rapidly but are also becoming more diversified.

India's defence exports hit record high
Export value: Rs 38,424 cr ((\$4.15 billion) in FY26 (Nearly 25 times higher than 2016-17 levels)

GROWTH RATE	JUMP
62.66% increase compared to ₹23,622 crore of FY25	25-fold surge from ₹1,522 cr in 2016-17.

TOP BUYERS OF INDIA'S DEFENCE EXPORTS

Myanmar (28%)	Philippines (19%)
America (15%)	Sri Lanka (13%)
Mauritius (8.3%)	Seychelles (6%)
Vietnam (5.5%)	Others (5%)

(These 3 countries together account for over 60% of India's defence export between 2016 and 2025).

What India exports in defence (2026-2025 period)

1 Ships account for 55%	2 Artillery (13%)
3 Missiles (12%)	4 Sensors (9%)
5 Aircraft (6%)	6 Air defence systems (5%)
OTHERS - 0.3%	

QUICK READ

Outrage as MLA aides queue for IPL tickets amid LPG crisis

CH NEWS, BENGALURU
A fresh wave of criticism has emerged in Bengaluru as reports reveal that aides of legislators queued up at Vidhana Soudha to collect IPL match tickets, even as citizens across the state struggle to access cooking gas. The contrasting scenes have sparked public anger over the priorities of elected representatives during a time of hardship. The controversy comes ahead of the high-voltage IPL match between Royal Challengers Bangalore and Chennai Super Kings scheduled for Sunday. With demand for tickets soaring, personal assistants of several MLAs were seen lining up at Vidhana Soudha to secure passes allocated to legislators. As per existing provisions, each legislator is entitled to three complimentary tickets for IPL matches. These tickets are being distributed through the office of the Speaker's close aide, Mahesh Karjagi, within the Vidhana Soudha premises. The heavy rush for tickets has resulted in long queues of aides waiting to collect them, highlighting the popularity of the match.

Plaint against self-styled godman after man dies of fever

CH NEWS, BENGALURU
A self-syled godman and priest at the Male Mahadeshwara Swami temple in Devalamaradahaggu village, who claims to have the power of Lord Mahadeshwara, has been accused of cheating people in villages around Anekal. He allegedly tricked people into believing that he is curing their illnesses and possesses supernatural powers. Guru Mahadev would give people a box, claiming it's a remedy for their problems.

Row erupts over SSLC Hindi grading policy

BENGALURU
The state government had recently decided that marks obtained in the third language, Hindi, in the SSLC examination would not be included in the overall result. Instead, students would be assessed through a grading system. The move was aimed at reducing academic pressure and revising evaluation methods. However, the decision did not sit well with the Governor, who formally wrote to Chief Secretary Shalini Rajneesh urging a reconsideration of the policy. The Governor's intervention reportedly came following a petition submitted by an organization advocating for the protection of local languages in Bengaluru. The letter has now triggered a political and cultural debate, with several groups questioning the Governor's role in administrative decisions. The Karnataka Rakshana Vedike (Karave) has strongly condemned the Governor's

BABU CULTURE!

Lawmakers criticised as aides queue up for IPL tickets

BENGALURU
Amid growing public distress over essential shortages, a controversy has erupted after aides of legislators were seen queuing outside the Speaker's office to secure tickets for a high-profile IPL match. The incident has drawn sharp criticism, with many questioning the priorities of elected representatives during a time of crisis. The controversy comes ahead of the much-anticipated clash between Royal Chal-



Report child pregnancies or face action: Govt to hospitals

To strengthen child protection measures, Health Dept issued guidelines to private hospitals to report pregnancy cases of girls below 18 years of age

CH NEWS, BENGALURU
According to the newly issued guidelines, any instance of pregnancy in a minor is considered a serious legal matter under the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act, 2012. The law mandates that such cases must be reported without delay, as they are treated as potential offences involving sexual exploitation of minors. Under Section 19(1) of the Act, any individual who has knowledge or even suspicion of such an offence is legally bound to inform the authorities immediately. This in-



cludes notifying the Special Juvenile Police Unit or the nearest police station. Additionally, citizens and medical professionals are encouraged to report such cases through the child helpline number 1098 to ensure timely intervention, protection, and rehabilitation of the affected minor. The department has made it clear that failure to comply with the reporting require-

ments will invite strict legal action. As per Section 21(2) of the Act, doctors, hospital authorities, or any responsible personnel who neglect to report such cases can face imprisonment of up to one year, along with financial penalties. The guidelines also outline specific responsibilities for private hospitals. These include maintaining accurate and detailed records of such cases, securely preserving medical documentation in accordance with legal standards, and ensuring that patient confidentiality is not violated under any circumstances. Hospitals are also required to fully cooperate with investigating authorities

during inquiries and legal proceedings. Furthermore, all medical staff and hospital personnel must be adequately informed and trained regarding the provisions of the law to ensure proper implementation. The Health Department has directed district health officers to disseminate this information widely among private hospitals, medical colleges, and professional bodies to ensure strict adherence. Officials have reiterated that any violation of these guidelines will be dealt with firmly, underscoring the government's commitment to safeguarding minors and ensuring accountability within the healthcare system.

Suraksha-75: Road markings done at SV Road Jn

BENGALURU
As part of the Suraksha-75 initiative aimed at improving road safety, new road markings have been successfully completed at SV Road – Suranjan Das Junction, with officials reviewing the site for further enhancements. The road marking work at the busy SV Road – Suranjan Das Junction marks a significant step toward enhancing traffic discipline and ensuring safer road usage for commuters. The initiative focuses on improving visibility, regulating vehicle movement, and reducing the risk of accidents at key intersections. Following the completion of the markings, a joint inspection was carried out by the GBA Urban Design Cell and the BCCC engineering team. During the visit, officials closely examined the quality and effectiveness of the work and provided directions for necessary adjustments to optimize traffic flow.



Mideast war triggers LPG shortage in B'luru, autos hit hard

BENGALURU
The crisis has led to a sharp rise in LPG prices, further aggravating the situation for drivers and commuters alike. Before the conflict, LPG was priced at around ₹58 per litre. However, in the wake of supply disruptions, prices at private fuel stations have surged to between ₹120 and ₹125 per litre. Government-run outlets continue to offer relatively lower prices, averaging around ₹85 per litre, but availability remains limited. Fuel supply to private LPG stations has been severely affected. Station managers report that the daily supply, which previously stood at approximately four tonnes, has now come to a complete halt. This disruption has forced many stations to temporarily shut operations, intensifying the crisis across the city. Auto drivers are among the worst affected by the shortage. Long queues of autos can be seen lined up outside the few operational fuel stations as early as 5 a.m. Despite waiting for hours, many drivers are unable to refill their tanks, leading to loss of income and reduced availability of transport services. Several drivers have expressed frustration, stating that the situation has made it difficult to sustain their daily earnings. One auto driver, Shank-

‘Begging’: DVS slams MLAs over IPL ticket demand

BENGALURU
Former Chief Minister D. V. Sadananda Gowda has strongly criticized legislators for seeking IPL tickets, calling their actions inappropriate and undignified. His remarks come amid reports of MLAs raising demands inside the and their personal assistants queuing outside the Speaker's office to secure tickets. Speaking to reporters in Bengaluru, Sadananda Gowda expressed deep disappointment over the conduct of elected representatives. He said that no MLA should beg for IPL tickets, especially when they hold positions of responsibility and public trust. According to him, it is unacceptable that individuals who spend massive amounts during elections are now seen seeking favors for something as trivial as match tickets. He described the situation as embarrassing and said it lowers the dignity of public office. Such behavior does not reflect the values expected from people's representatives, he remarked, adding that leaders must maintain

Cleanliness drive held at Ullalu Main Road under civic initiative

BENGALURU
The Bengaluru West City Corporation carried out a special cleanliness drive in Ward 130, Ullalu area, focusing on removing black spots and maintaining hygiene in public spaces. The operation was conducted along Ullalu Main Road near the AGS Bus Stop, where accumulated garbage and waste had created a black spot, affecting both the environment and public convenience. Civic workers undertook an intensive cleanup activity to clear the waste and restore cleanliness in the area. Officials stated that such drives are part of ongoing efforts to improve sanitation standards and ensure that public places remain clean and safe for residents. The removal of black spots is considered a priority, as these areas often become recurring dumping zones if not addressed promptly. The sanitation team deployed for the drive worked to collect and dispose of waste in a systematic manner.



QUICK READ



Leopard killed in road accident near Vijayanagar

VIJAYANAGAR
A male leopard, about three years old, died after being hit by an unknown vehicle on National Highway 50 near Timmalapura Toll Plaza in Hospet taluk. Forest officials from the Chikanahatti branch discovered the injured animal, which succumbed on the spot. A case has been registered under the Wildlife Protection Act, 1972, and a post-mortem will be conducted to determine the exact cause of death. The carcass was later disposed of in the forest following legal procedures. Assistant Conservator of Forests T. Bhaskar and Zonal Forest Officer Kaushik Dalwai inspected the site to ensure proper handling of the incident.

Deputy Speaker's escort vehicle collides with bus

HAVERI
An escort vehicle of Deputy Speaker Rudrappa Lamani collided with a government bus near Valmiki Circle in Haveri, damaging the front of the escort car and the rear of the bus. The incident occurred while the bus was traveling towards Hosamani Siddappa Circle from Haveri to Gadag. Reports indicate the escort driver, Channabasappa Archak, was speeding at the time of the crash. No injuries were reported. A case has been registered at Haveri Traffic Police Station, and authorities are investigating the circumstances of the accident to determine accountability and ensure road safety in the city.

Direct interviews scheduled in Gadag for job seekers

GADAG
The District Employment Exchange Office, Gadag, announced a direct interview on April 7 at 10:00 AM at Annapura Finance Pvt. Ltd., Mundaragi Road, Gadag. The company is hiring for positions including Executive, Senior Executive, and Assistant Branch Manager for SSLC, PUC, ITI, and degree holders aged 18 to 32. Work locations include Gadag, Hubli, Gangavathi, and Koppal. Candidates must bring Xerox copies of educational certificates, two resumes, and Aadhaar card copies. Registration is mandatory on the interview day. Yuvanidhi Yojana beneficiaries are specially requested to attend. For details, contact 6363330688, 9901748668, or 8093077441.

SANSKARA SCHOOL PROMOTES PATRIOTISM THROUGH EDUCATION

BHALKI
Yoga expert Gurunath Rajagira said that Sanskara Public School is playing an important role in building patriotism among students along with providing quality education. He was speaking after inaugurating the Vashikotsava and Sanskara Camp organized at the school in Bhalki town. Rajagira appreciated the institution for focusing not only on academic excellence but also on moral values and national spirit. He said such efforts help students grow into responsible citizens in a competitive world. Mehkar PSI

Use social media to promote CFTRI innovations: Jitendra

The minister urged creating digital content and promoting nutritious ready-to-eat foods for working and pregnant women's convenience

MYSURU

Union Minister of State for Science and Technology Dr. Jitendra Singh has urged effective use of social media to spread awareness about new technologies developed by CFTRI in Mysuru. Speaking at the closing ceremony of the Amrutha Mahotsav held at the CFTRI IF-TTC Hall, he said that a large section of India's population is young and active on digital platforms. He stressed that these platforms should be used to connect with them and share useful innovations. The minister said that instead of limiting information



to books and reports, short videos and digital content should be created to explain technologies. This will help reach common people easily and quickly. He highlighted the importance of promoting ready-to-eat and nutritious food innovations, especially for working women and pregnant women who need simple and healthy food options. He said awareness about such products can improve daily life. Dr. Singh also encouraged CFTRI to combine traditional food knowledge with modern technology to attract the younger generation. He suggested developing new meth-

ods to preserve food items like cheese for longer periods. He further advised organizing meetings with farmers to understand their needs and improve food technology accordingly. On the occasion, he released a special postage stamp and commemorative publications marking CFTRI's 75th year celebrations. Several officials, including BIRAC Managing Director Dr. Jitendra Kumar and CFTRI Director Dr. Giridhar Parvatham, were present at the event. Officials said such initiatives will help bring scientific innovations closer to people and support better use of technology in daily life.

Students from 23 districts showcased 188 innovative projects, including eco-friendly road pavers, smart traffic systems, and solar-powered solutions

Students showcase future tech at Davanagere Festival

DAVANAGERE

G.M. University students amazed everyone at Techno-vation 2026, a special festival for diploma students, by showing smart and useful inventions. The event highlighted ideas that solve real-life problems and improve daily life. Civil, mechanical, robotics, electrical, electronics, IoT, and biotechnology students from 23 districts participated, making the event lively and colorful. A total of 188 teams displayed their projects, showing creativity and technical skills. One of the main attractions was road pavers made from recycled plastic and steel mesh, which can reduce pollution. Another popular project was smart traffic control for ambulances, which automatically clears traffic signals to save lives. Students also presented solar-powered



street lights that turn on automatically at night and solar panels that rotate with the sun to produce more electricity. Other interesting projects included a Bluetooth-controlled floor cleaning robot, low-cost 3D printed industrial nuts, and a smart cover for electric vehicles that detects fire and monitors battery health. NTTF Bangalore students introduced a digital security box using biometrics and smartphone NFC. BVVS Polytechnic showcased a smart doctor appointment and

OPD management system to reduce patient waiting time in hospitals. The event also featured fun challenges like the ChatGPT Prompt Challenge and Video Generation Challenge, encouraging young engineers to think creatively. Organizers said the festival is meant to inspire students to use their skills for society. Teachers, coordinators, and students worked together to make it a memorable experience, highlighting talent, innovation, and teamwork.

Basava Darshan discourse inspires peaceful living

BHALKI

The Basava Darshan Pravachana discourse was inaugurated with devotion and enthusiasm at Channabasavashrama in Bhalki, marking the occasion of Basava Jayanti and other spiritual commemorations. The event was organized by Hiremath Sansthan and Abhinandana Samiti. Dr. Shailaja Talawade, a gynecologist, inaugurated the program and said that listening to spiritual discourses helps purify thoughts and brings mental peace. She advised people to take a break from their stressful routines and attend such sessions to improve their quality of life. Speakers highlighted that the teachings and vachanas of Basavanna hold deep meaning and offer guidance for leading a meaningful life. Young leader Prasanna Khandre said that these val-



ues remain relevant even today. Presiding priest Guru Basava Pattaddeva stated that discourses help in developing the mind and achieving peace and clarity in life. Shivananda Swamiji urged people to follow the ideals of Basavanna, who worked for social equality and upliftment. The event was held in the presence of Basavalinga

Road widening work planned for city development

CHIKKABALLAPURA

District Collector G. Prabhu announced that widening and development works of Bazaar Road and Gangammagudi Road will be taken up soon in the interest of the public and smooth traffic movement. After visiting both roads on Saturday, the Collector interacted with local residents and businessmen and later addressed the media. He said that the government has already released funds for the project and necessary steps will be taken with the support of the district in-charge minister and local MLAs. G. Prabhu emphasized that the development of these key roads is essential to improve traffic flow, public convenience, and overall urban growth.



MLA helps worker stuck in Qatar return

BIDAR

A worker from Bidar district stranded in Qatar due to the ongoing war situation is set to return home soon after timely help from local MLA Dr. Shailendra Beldale.

Amar Bhavikatti, a resident of Bachchaudi village in Bidar South constituency, had gone to Qatar for work. However, due to rising tensions linked to the war, the situation there became difficult, leaving him struggling to return to India. Facing financial problems and lack of support, Amar's family and village leaders approached the MLA for help. Responding quickly, Dr. Beldale assured assistance and took immediate steps to resolve the issue. He contacted BJP State President B.Y. Vijayendra and requested support. Following this, efforts were made to coordinate with the Union Ministry of External Affairs to ensure Amar's safe return. Sources said Vijayendra

Amar Bhavikatti faced difficulties in Qatar due to war tensions; Dr. Beldale coordinated with BJP leaders and the External Affairs Ministry for his safe return

also spoke to Amar over the phone and assured him that necessary arrangements would be made soon. Amar's family, including his mother Shanthabai and son Adarsh, expressed relief and happiness after receiving support. The MLA also provided financial help to the family to manage expenses. Villagers said this gesture reflects the MLA's concern for people and his commitment to public service. They expressed pride and appreciation for his quick response. Officials indicated that further arrangements are being made to bring Amar back safely at the earliest. The incident has brought relief to the family, who are now eagerly waiting to welcome him back home.



Meaningful Women's Day celebration planned in district

MANDYA

District Chief Executive Officer K. R. Nandini has called for a meaningful celebration of International Women's Day, stressing the need to recognize women's achievements and promote gender equality. Presiding over a preliminary meeting held via video conference at the Zilla Panchayat Mini Hall, Nandini said the event should highlight the social, economic, cultural, and political contributions of women. She emphasized remembering the struggles faced by women and encouraging their empowerment across all sections of society. Officials were instructed to invite dignitaries and ensure participation from ASHA workers, self-help groups, and women's organizations. Nandini also directed that certificates and prizes be distributed to

winners of the recently conducted district-level sports meet. She suggested organizing various activities such as quizzes, sports events, debates, cultural programs, and painting competitions at the district level to engage participants and spread awareness. As part of the celebrations, around 15 stalls will be set up at the Dr. B. R. Ambedkar Bhavan premises, showcasing initiatives and products related to women's development. Benefits and vehicles will also be distributed to eligible women under the Swavalambi Sarathi scheme. Deputy Executive Officer Shivalingaiah, Women and Child Development Director Asha, Devaraj Urs Development Corporation Manager Boregowda, and Agriculture Officer Harsha attended the meeting. The district administration aims to make the celebration.

HOPE THROUGH COURTS

Speedy justice essential in modern judicial system

KOPPAL

Hanchate Sanjeevkumar, Judge of the Karnataka High Court, emphasized the need for speedy and fair justice, stating that a change in mindset is essential to deliver timely justice to people. He was speaking at the inauguration of a new court complex in Yelburga town. The judge said delays in justice should not be tolerated and urged lawyers and the judiciary to adopt faster and more effective processes. He added that people still have



strong faith in the judicial system and see courts as a

source of hope. Justice Sanjeevkumar pointed out that

many courts lack basic infrastructure, especially in taluk areas, which leads to delays in delivering justice. He stressed that governments must focus more on improving facilities and increasing the number of judges to match the growing population. Highlighting the long-term importance of judicial infrastructure, he said a court building should serve society for generations and must be strengthened accordingly. He also suggested constructing an advocates' building and a well-equipped li-

brary in Yelburga to support legal professionals. During his speech, he appreciated the development efforts in the region and encouraged creating awareness among farmers about modern agricultural practices and opportunities. The judge expressed satisfaction that he had witnessed the foundation laying ceremony three years ago and was now inaugurating the completed court complex, calling it a significant step toward strengthening the judicial system in the region.

QUICK READ

Bike rider dies in Tumkur road accident**Tumkur**

A 24-year-old bike rider, Vijay Kumar of Basaveswara Nagar, Arasikere taluk, died after a car hit his bike near Bidiregudi, Kasaba Hobli, Tiptur. Vijay Kumar, who worked at a welding shop in Tiptur, was returning home when the accident occurred. Locals expressed anger over the lack of proper signboards and safety measures on the four-lane national highway under construction, citing frequent accidents in the area. Authorities reportedly held a meeting under the MLA, but highway officials were absent. Residents are demanding action against responsible officials to improve road safety and prevent further accidents in the construction zones.

9-year-old girl dies in Chikkaballapura car crash**Chikkaballapura**

A 9-year-old girl, Ankita, died on the spot when a car overturned near Kothanur village in Chikkaballapura taluk. Ankita, daughter of Rajendra and Bhagyamma from Kalaburagi district, was traveling with her family in a Swift Dzire car owned by a relative. The accident occurred when the driver lost control while overtaking a lorry, causing the vehicle to hit a divider and overturn. Fortunately, the other passengers escaped without injuries. Police have registered a case at Chikkaballapur Traffic Police Station and are investigating the incident. Authorities urged drivers to exercise caution on highways to prevent similar tragedies.

NAME CHANGE

I, MUBEENA TAJ, W/o.

Noorulla Kannamangal, Residing at No.114, 14th Cross, Opposite AI Kareem Masjid Fathima Layout, Govindapura, Bengaluru-560045, have changed my name to **MUBEEN TAJ**, vide affidavit dated: 04.04.2026 before notary V. RAJASHEKHARA, Bengaluru.

NAME CHANGE

I, AKTHARUNNISA,

Resident of No.14/18, Door No.003, 2nd Main Opp to 10th Cross, Someshwara Nagar, Jayanagar 1st Block, Bengaluru-560011, have changed my name to **JABEENA BEGUM**, vide affidavit dated: 04.04.2026 before notary V. RAJASHEKHARA, Bengaluru.

NAME CHANGE

I, Khateja Tul Kubra D/o Mohammed Ismail and W/o Altamash Pasha, residing at: 19/1/98, MOHAMMED Mahaboobnagar, Ramanagara Town-571511, presently residing at No. 2903, 16th Ward, 2nd Cross, Near Anganavadi, Moltinganar, Ramanagara -562159, Ramanagara District, do hereby solemnly affirm and state on oath as follows:

1. I am residing at in the above given address. I declare that my father's name is MOHAMMED ISMAIL the said name is entered in my Passport document bearing Reg. No. L8398160.
2. I further declare that in my educational document my father's name is entered as MOHAMMED ISMAIL PASHA. Hence I am swearing to this affidavit to prove that both the name entered in my father's Aadhaar Card, Passport and educational document are one and the same. My father presently uses his name as MOHAMMED ISMAIL in all official documents.
3. I am swearing this affidavit require to produce before the concerned Passport authority to prove the same. This affidavit Sworn before Notary B.M. Srivastha, Ramanagara. Date: 04-04-2025

Siddaramaiah targets BJP seeks votes for Congress

The Chief Minister said Congress prioritized welfare and livelihoods, criticizing the central government for favoring corporates and breaking promises

BAGALKOT

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah criticized the BJP government, saying the gap between the rich and poor has widened, and appealed to voters to support Congress candidate Umesh Meti in the by-election. Addressing a campaign meeting in Bagalkot, he urged people to elect Umesh Meti with a large majority, recalling the contributions of his father, late H.Y. Meti, who served the region in various roles.

The Chief Minister said the Congress government has focused on the welfare of weaker sections, including women, Dalits, backward classes, and minorities. He stated that in



the past three years, the government has spent ₹1.31 lakh crore on guarantee schemes aimed at improving livelihoods.

He accused the central government of favoring corporate

interests and failing to reduce inequality. He also questioned unfulfilled promises such as job creation, doubling farmers' income, and bringing back black money.

Siddaramaiah said the state

government is committed to social justice and equal protection for all sections of society. He added that steps have been taken to ensure safety and support for vulnerable groups.

Highlighting development works, he mentioned the foundation of a medical college in Bagalkot, a long-cherished dream of H.Y. Meti.

He said Congress has a history of working for the poor and strengthening the country, and called upon voters to support the party again.

The Chief Minister emphasized that true progress depends on social and economic equality, urging people to stand with Congress in the upcoming election.

Youth arrested for cheating minor, stealing gold**MANDYA**

Police have arrested a youth for cheating a minor girl by promising love and stealing gold ornaments from her house in Mandya district.

The complaint was filed by Rajanna from Hombalegowdanadoddi village, stating that the accused misled his granddaughter and took away gold items from their home. The stolen ornaments included earrings, a chain, rings, and other items weighing about 40.24 grams in total.

Based on the complaint, Besagarahalli Police registered a case under relevant sections and the POC SO Act. Acting under the guidance of district police officials, a special team was formed to investigate the matter. The accused, identified as 23-year-old Rajat Murthy from Mandya city, was taken into custody on February 21, 2026. He was later produced before the court, which remanded him to judicial custody.

Ashoka slams Cong over cuts and corruption

BAGALKOT

Leader of Opposition R. Ashoka strongly criticized the Congress government, alleging cuts in funds meant for backward classes and Scheduled Castes corporations and questioning its moral right to seek votes.

Speaking at a press conference along with MP Basavaraj Bommai, Ashoka said that during the previous BJP government, higher grants were given to several corporations. He claimed that allocations have now been reduced under the present administration, affecting welfare programs.

He alleged that funds for Amedkar, Bhovi, Tanda Development, Devaraju Arasu, and other corporations have been significantly cut. According to him, the total allocation for backward classes has also decreased compared to the earlier government.

Ashoka accused the Congress government of focusing more on politics than development. He claimed that several scams and internal conflicts have weakened governance over the past three years.

He also criticized the state's financial management, alleg-

Ashoka, with MP Bommai, alleged Congress reduced grants for corporations, mismanaged finances, delayed welfare payments, and prioritized politics over development, weakening governance and backward class support

ing increased borrowing without corresponding development work. He questioned the implementation of welfare schemes and delays in payments under some programs.

The opposition leader further said that farmers and weaker sections have been neglected, citing concerns over rising debt and farmer distress. He urged the government to present a clear report on its achievements. Taking aim at election campaigning, Ashoka said promises made earlier have not been fulfilled, and people should evaluate performance before voting.

Several BJP leaders, including Veeranna Charantimath and Govind Karjol, were present at the press meet.

Vatal Nagaraj protested LPG shortages in Ramanagara, criticizing governments for hardships faced by auto drivers and hotel owners

Vatal Nagaraj protests gas crisis in Ramanagara

RAMANAGARA

Senior pro-Kannada activist Vatal Nagaraj staged a "timate" protest in Aizuru Circle of Ramanagara, criticizing both the central and state governments for failing to resolve the ongoing LPG gas shortage affecting auto drivers and hotel owners.

Speaking during the protest, Nagaraj said auto drivers are forced to wait in long queues every day at gas bunkers, making it difficult to earn a livelihood. Hotel owners are also struggling due to rising fuel costs and irregular supply. He criticized the government for remaining inactive while citizens face daily hardships.

Nagaraj warned that he would join hands with auto



drivers if the gas problem is not addressed immediately. He also expressed concern over the organization of the IPL tournament amid the ongoing crisis. He said holding the tournament while people suffer from price hikes and scarcity of essential goods shows misplaced priorities.

He further highlighted that 11 people have died during IPL victory celebrations and no compensation has been provided to their families. Nagaraj demanded an immediate halt to

the IPL matches, arguing that public welfare should take precedence over entertainment and corporate interests. The protest drew attention from local media and residents, who voiced support for Nagaraj's demand for urgent action on gas supply. Activists emphasized that the government must respond quickly to ease the struggles of common people.

The movement continues to gain momentum as citizens call for accountability and immediate solutions.

FID mandatory for urea purchase from monsoon

CHITRADURGA

The Agriculture Department has made it mandatory for farmers to use their FID number while purchasing urea fertilizer from the 2026-27 monsoon season. The move aims to ensure proper distribution and prevent misuse of fertilizers.

Officials said a new system using the K-Kisan software will regulate urea sales based on the size of farm-

land and the type of crop grown. This will help supply only the required quantity to each farmer and avoid excess usage.

The initiative has been introduced to stop illegal purchases in farmers' names and prevent black marketing. Authorities believe it will also encourage farmers to use fertilizers more efficiently and maintain transparency in sales.

Farmers who do not have

an FID number have been advised to register immediately by visiting Raitha Samrak Kendra, Horticulture Department offices, Revenue Department centers, or Grama One service centers with necessary documents such as Aadhaar card, bank passbook, and land details. Those who already have an FID must link all their survey numbers to it.

Fertilizer dealers have

been instructed to record the FID details in the software before selling urea. Officials warned that strict action will be taken against those violating rules under the Fertilizers Control Act, 1985, and the Essential Commodities Act, 1955.

Meanwhile, a team led by Joint Director of Agriculture C. Vidhyanananda inspected fertilizer stocks in various godowns across the district to ensure compliance.

Thousands attend Sriranganathaswamy Jasmine Pallaki Festival

MAGADI

The annual Jasmine Pallaki Festival of the famous Sriranganathaswamy Temple in Magadi was celebrated with grandeur, drawing thousands of devotees from the taluk and surrounding areas. The festival began Friday night and continued through Saturday, filling the town with devotion and festivity.

The celebrations included Purnabhishekam at the temple at noon, Tirthasana at 7 PM, and Tepotsava at the Kere at 10 PM, followed by Purnahuti and Flag Hoisting. The highlight of the festival was the Jasmine Pallaki procession, where the deity was adorned with a diamond-studded gold crown and carried through the town streets on a beautifully decorated palanquin.

The streets around the temple came alive with cultural performances, fireworks, and colorful displays. Devotees gathered in large numbers to witness the Rathabadi, Tepotsava, and other rituals, creating a vibrant and spiritual atmosphere. Police and temple staff ensured smooth conduct of the events.

The festival is considered

highly auspicious, with devotees offering prayers for prosperity, good harvests, and overall well-being. Sub-Inspector Manoj, ASIs Krishnappa, Manjunath, constables Beerappa, Munindra, Pramoda, Dayananda, Dinesh, and temple priest Venkatesh Iyengar, along with other temple staff, coordinated the successful celebration.

Sasikumar birthday marked by social service activities**MANDYA**

Social worker Sasikumar celebrated his birthday by organizing various social service activities across the city, reflecting a spirit of compassion and community service.

The celebrations began with special prayers at a Ganapati temple, where well-wishers gathered to seek blessings for his good health and continued service to society. Following this, saplings were planted at the premises of Hombale Education Trust, promoting environmental awareness and greenery.

As part of the day's initiatives, fruits were distributed to patients at the district hospital, bringing comfort and support to those undergoing treatment. Bedsheets were also given to senior citizens at the Sevakerana Old Age Home, ensuring care and dignity for the elderly.

Food donation was organized at Mamata's Madilu Annadasoha in the MIMS premises, where patients and their relatives were served meals. The event highlighted the importance of helping those in need during difficult times.

HOUSING JUSTICE ACHIEVED

Kandaya Gram Abhiyan brings hope to residents

CHIKKABALLAPUR

The Kandaya Gram Abhiyan in Chikkaballapur district is bringing new hope to thousands of residents living without proper land and housing documents.

Under the guidance of District In-charge Minister Dr. M.C. Sudhakar and Revenue Minister Krishna Byre Gowda, the district administration has taken steps to provide legal ownership documents to eligible families. So far, around 2,000 beneficiaries have received claim papers for their homes.

Officials said many families living in areas like tanda, hat-



ti, hadi, palya, colonies, and camps have been without proper documents for years. Due to this, they were unable to access basic government facilities.

The initiative aims to identify such settlements and declare them as revenue villages. This will help residents gain legal rights and become

part of the mainstream.

District authorities plan to extend the benefit to a larger group. Around 86,652 undocumented houses have been identified, and survey work is being carried out to issue ownership documents step by step within the next eight months.

Village accountants, reve-

nue inspectors, surveyors, and panchayat officials are working together to implement the program effectively. District Collector G. Prabhu is leading the effort with coordination among various departments.

He said teams will soon visit villages to conduct surveys and requested full cooperation from the public.

Officials believe this initiative will improve the lives of thousands of families by giving them security and access to welfare schemes. Residents who received claim papers expressed happiness, calling it a long-awaited step towards dignity and stability in their lives.

QUICK READ



Wild elephant kills elderly woman in Tripura's Khowai

Agartala
An elderly woman was trampled to death by a wild elephant in Tripura's Khowai district early on Saturday, sparking unrest in the affected area. The incident took place at Jumbari village under Teliumura subdivision when the victim, identified as Manimala Debbarma, 70, was attacked in the courtyard of her house in the early hours of the day, officials said. The victim's son, Ajit Debbarma, said the elephant suddenly attacked his mother early on Saturday, fatally injuring her. The killing of the woman by the wild elephant triggered widespread anger among local residents, leading to a volatile situation in the area.

ECI sends Kolkata ex-CP on deputation to TN as police observer

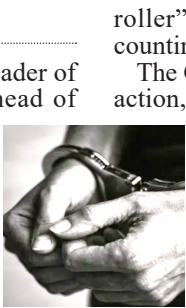
Kolkata
The Election Commission of India (ECI) on Saturday directed the former commissioner of Kolkata Police, Supratim Sarkar, to go on deputation as police observer in Tamil Nadu, which is also going to polls like West Bengal later this month. However, Sarkar had pleaded to the Commission for relief from this deputation to Tamil Nadu on medical grounds, as confirmed by an insider from the office of the Chief Electoral Officer (CEO), West Bengal. Just a few days before the announcement of polling dates for West Bengal, Sarkar was appointed as the Kolkata Police Commissioner by the West Bengal Government, replacing his predecessor, Manoj Kumar Verma.

Congress acting as ruling party's 'B-team': BJP

NEW DELHI
Amid the ongoing electoral battle in West Bengal, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and Trinamool Congress, on Saturday, hit out at the Congress, with the BJP alleging that Congress is acting as the ruling party's 'B-team'.
The Trinamool Congress hit out at Congress leader Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury for his remarks against Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee.
The Assembly election in West Bengal is scheduled to be held in two phases, April 23 and 29.
BJP Spokesperson Pratul Shah Deo alleged that Chowdhury told Muslim voters to support Trinamool Congress because Congress is not in a position to win anywhere in the country.
Congress is acting as Trinamool Congress' 'B team'. In the 2021 Assembly elections, Congress didn't even secure a single seat, and in the by-elections, maybe (they) won one or two seats, he told IANS.
Deo claimed that senior Congress leaders are effectively asking voters to support the Trinamool Congress where the grand old party cannot win.
Congress is not going to win anywhere. Veteran Congress leader Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury is himself saying

TMC leader arrested for ‘threatening’ voters ahead of Bengal polls

KOLKATA
In Kolkata, Hafizul Mollah, a leader of the Trinamool Congress and head of Deuli-1 Gram Panchayat, was arrested in Canning following directions from the Election Commission of India. Officials said he allegedly made threatening remarks during a party meeting, warning voters of consequences if they did not support his party. A viral video purportedly shows him referring to using a “steam



roller” against dissenters after vote counting.
The Commission ordered immediate action, citing concerns over voter intimidation, and police took him into custody. Earlier, another TMC leader, Raju Mandal, was also arrested on similar charges. The Bharatiya Janata Party criticised the incidents, alleging erosion of democratic norms, while authorities assured strict enforcement of free and fair election practices.

PUDUCHERRY

With polling for the 30-member Puducherry Assembly scheduled for April 9, campaigning has entered its final phase, witnessing heightened political activity across the Union Territory.
Vijay addressed a large public gathering at the That-tanchavadi market area, attracting a sizeable turnout of supporters. Prior to the rally, he conducted an extensive roadshow that reportedly continued beyond the time permitted by the police, reflecting the growing enthusiasm among his followers.
During his address, Vijay highlighted that this is the first time his party is contesting elections in Puducherry. He stressed that candidate selection was based on grassroots engagement and public service rather than political lineage, presenting TVK as a fresh alternative to established parties.

MOTIHARI

Vice-President CP Radhakrishnan on Saturday encouraged students to use technology responsibly for nation-building and lifelong learning.
Addressing the 3rd convocation of Mahatma Gandhi Central University in Motihari of East Champaran district, he emphasised that graduation is not the end of education but the beginning of a continuous journey of learning and growth.
He highlighted the rapidly evolving global landscape shaped by technological advancements and noted that fields such as Artificial Intelligence and Data Science are opening new avenues for innovation and development. He urged students to harness these tools with responsibility and ethical awareness to contribute meaningfully to the nation.
Radhakrishnan also expressed pride in the academic achievements of the university, particularly noting that women students secured top positions in both undergraduate and postgraduate programmes. He described this as a strong indicator of the country's

Vijay ramps up campaign in Puducherry, targets rival alliances

The actor-turned-politician claimed his party, Tamilaga Vetti Kazhagam, has fielded candidates who are closely connected with people

Launching a sharp attack on rival alliances, Vijay criticised both the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam-Congress combine and the All India NR Congress-Bharatiya Janata Party alliance. He alleged that the DMK-Congress alliance, despite having governed Puducherry multiple times, currently exists only nominally and is plagued by internal contradictions. According to him, leaders within the alliance have failed both the public and their own leadership, reducing the coalition to a subject of criticism.
Turning his focus to the NR Congress-BJP alliance, Vijay described it as weak and opportunistic. He accused both alliances of prioritising political gains over public welfare and questioned their credibility in addressing the needs of the people.
Vijay also raised the long-standing issue of state-



hood for Puducherry, questioning why neither Congress nor the BJP had fulfilled the demand despite being in power at the national level at different times. He assured voters that his party would make every possible effort to secure full statehood if elected.
Outlining his party's agenda, Vijay promised that a TVK government would conduct pending local body elections, fill government job vacancies, and provide insurance coverage of Rs 25 lakh for every family. Framing the election as a choice between

what he termed deceptive alliances and people-focused governance, he urged voters to support his party.
Emphasising the need for change, Vijay appealed to the

electorate to give TVK an opportunity to govern, assuring that his party would remain committed to public welfare and transparent administration.

Poll war deepens in TN as Vaiko, Veerapandian target Palaniswami

CHENNAI

A political confrontation has intensified in Tamil Nadu, with Vaiko and M Veerapandian launching sharp attacks on Edappadi K Palaniswami over his remarks against Chief Minister M K Stalin. The exchange has escalated ahead of elections, with accusations of deteriorating political discourse. Vaiko criticised the All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam for relying on personal attacks rather than policy debates to regain lost ground. He alleged Palaniswami's alignment with the Bharatiya Janata Party was driven by pressure from central agencies. Defending Stalin, Vaiko highlighted his decades-long political career and administrative experience. Veerapandian echoed these concerns, calling the AIADMK-BJP relationship opportunistic and harmful to the party's internal strength, as political tensions continue to rise in the state.



Indian Railways to lay 1,929 km optical fibre cable in Gujarat

NEW DELHI

The government has sanctioned a Rs 398.36 crore project to lay optical fibre cable across 1,929 route kilometres in the Ahmedabad and Ratlam divisions of Western Railway, strengthening the communication backbone needed for the rollout of its automatic train protection system Kavach, the Ministry of Railways said on Saturday. According to the government, the project involves laying 2x48 fibre optical fibre cable across 1,456 route kilometres in Ahmedabad division and 473 route kilometres in Ratlam division. The work has been approved under a broader Rs 27,693 crore umbrella project for provision of Kavach with Long Term Evolution-based communication backbone across Indian Railways under the Works Programme 2024-25.

V-P calls for responsible use of technology



‘Graduation is not the end of education but the beginning of a continuous journey of learning and growth’

progress towards women-led development and empowerment.
reflecting on the historical significance of the region, he pointed out that Champaran holds a special place in India's freedom movement. It was here that Mahatma Gandhi emerged as a mass leader rooted in rural India during the Champaran Satyagraha, which awakened the nation through the principles of truth, courage, and justice.
Highlighting Bihar's rich intellectual and

spiritual heritage, the Vice-President referred to Gautama Buddha attaining enlightenment in the region and the legacy of Nalanda University as a global hub of knowledge. He also mentioned the contributions of Chanakya, underscoring the state's longstanding tradition of scholarship and wisdom.
He said the naming of the university after Mahatma Gandhi symbolises a commitment to values such as social justice, rural upliftment, and ethical leadership. The Vice-President also acknowledged the contributions of Maharani Janaki Kunwar, whose philanthropic efforts and land donations significantly supported the establishment of educational institutions in the region.
Radhakrishnan appreciated the university's implementation of the National Education Policy 2020 and the introduction of integrated courses aligned with modern educational needs. He also praised initiatives such as the Indian Knowledge Systems Centre and the institution's focus on sports and fitness under the Fit India Movement, highlighting their role in holistic student development.

Government of Karnataka

Ayanur Sub Forest Division, Shivamogga

No.: ACF/Tender-CAMPA/CR-3/2025-26 Date: 27.03.2026

Short-Term e-Tender Notice

(Through e-Procurement Portal)

Short-Term Tenders are invited through e-procurement portal as per Karnataka Transparency in Public Procurement Act 2000 from interested Forest contractors registered in Forest Department as Forest contractors for the year 2026-27 and having experience of growing saplings of various sizes, plantation advance works and having experience of carrying out similar works as put to tender in the Forest Department and having necessary facility for growing of saplings in the limits of the zone where works have to be carried out for implementation of "Formation of Plantation and Maintenance" mentioned in the annexure, under CAMPA Head of Account, in forest areas coming in the limits of various Forest Zones of Shivamogga Regional Forest Division for the year 2026-27. For further information this office can be contacted during office hours and details of the tender can be obtained through the official website <http://kppp.karnataka.gov.in>

1. Date of Pre-Bid Meeting: 09.04.2026 at 3.00 PM

2. Last date for submission of e-Tenders: 11.04.2026 up to 4.00 PM

3. Date of opening the Tender: 13.04.2026 at 4.30 PM

Sd/- Assistant Conservator of Forests Ayanur Forest Sub-Division, Shivamogga

DIPR/smg/ksmca/26-27/22/D4/28

MINORITY WELFARE DEPARTMENT

District Officer, Belagavi. Phone : 0831-2950349.

No. : DOM/Outsource.Tender/CR-76/2025-26

Date : 04-04-2026

TENDER NOTIFICATION

(E-Procurement Through Only)

For the year 2026-27 Tenders are invited through E-procurement to select agencies separately for the supply of **Manpower to Residential Schools / Colleges and Post-Metric Boys / Girls Hostels Running under the Belagavi Sub Division Minority Welfare Department for a Period of One Year or till further orders.** Applicants can apply through <https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in> from Date : 02-04-2026 to 04-05-2026.

Section : Belagavi Sub Division. Tender Amount (in Lakh) : 191.09, Tender E.M.D. Amount (in Lakh) : 2.87, Submission of Tender Date : 02-04-2026, Submission of Tender Last Date : 04-05-2026 at 5.30.

For more information Phone : 0831-2950349.

Sd/- District Officer,
Minority Welfare Department,
Belagavi.

DIPR/Belagavi/28/Manipa/2026-27

Karnataka Public works Department.

Tumkur Division, Karnataka Telephone: 0816-2272479,

No:EE/KPWD/Tmk/JE.1/T.No.01/2026-27 Dt: 01.04.2026

Invitation For Tenders (IFT) KW-3&4

E-TENDER NOTIFICATION

On behalf of Government of Karnataka tenders are invited in Two cover system for Class-3 & above Contractors registered in PWD for 05 work under 5054 KRDC Bridge and 8443 Deposit Contribution Head of account in the jurisdiction of Tumkur Division through KPPP-Portal (<https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in>). The dates are published as below.

(Maximum amount Put to Tender Rs.195.63 Lakhs and Minimum amount put to Tender Rs.93.13 Lakhs Maximum EMD Amount Rs.293452/- and Minimum EMD Amount Rs.186261/-)

1. Last date for tender information enquiries : 17-04-2026 : 17.00.

2. Last date for submission of tender: 18-04-2026 : 16.00

3. Date of opening the Technical bid: 21-04-2026 : 11.00.

4. Date of opening the Financial bid: 22-04-2026 : 17.00.

Note: Turnover Certificate without UDI Number will not be considered. Here after Changes with Reference to This Notification will be Notified in E-Portal Only

Sd/- EXECUTIVE ENGINEER,

PWD DIVISION, TUMKUR.

DIPR/TUM/08/KSMCA/2026-27

बैंक ऑफ बड़ोदा

Bank of Baroda

Regional Office, Bengaluru North

No 41/2, 4th Floor, Vijaya Towers, Trinity Circle, M G Road, Bengaluru 560001,

Tel: 080-25011567, e-Mail: sarben@bankofbaroda.com, Web: www.bankofbaroda.com

ABRIDGED VEHICLE E-AUCTION NOTICE

PUBLIC NOTICE FOR E-AUCTION FOR SALE OF MOVABLE ASSETS/VEHICLES

Notice is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the Borrower (s) and Guarantor (s) that Bank has repossessed/seized the Hypothecated Motor Vehicle mentioned below in exercise of the powers conferred under Hypothecation/Loan Agreement executed by the parties and Vehicle will be sold on "As is where is", "As is what is", and "Whatever there is" basis for recovery of dues in below mentioned account/s. The details of Borrower/s/Guarantor/s/Vehicle/Total Dues/Reserve Price/e-Auction date & Time, EMD and Bid Increase Amount are mentioned below -

Sr No	Name & address of Borrower/s / Guarantor. Loan Account No Total Dues	Vehicle Make & Model RTO Regd No/Engine No/Chassis No.	1.Reserve Price-2.Earliest Money Deposit (EMD)-3.Bid Increase Amount	1. Date of e-Auction Time of E-auction - Start Time to End Time. 2. Last date and time of submission of Bid. 3.Vehicle / Movable Asset Inspection date & Time
1	C GANGADHAR No 5 Ellumada Layout, Ramachandra puram, Jalahalli, Bangalore 560013 89590600003610 Rs 23,74,670.04	2021/TATA ULTRA 1918 T 5L BSVI TEMP REG NO. T0422KA7311X/ MAT790213N7B03949/ 5LNGDICR21BX504565	1.Rs 7,40,000/- 2.Rs 74,000/- 3.Rs 5,000/-	
2	SURESH M No 5 Ellumada Layout, Near Nalanda theatre, Ramachandra puram, Jalahalli Bangalore 560013 89590600003605 Rs 26,04,679.84	2021/TATA ULTRA 1918 T 5L BSVI TEMP REG NO. T0222KA33002/MAT790213M7K17147/5LNGDICR21KYX520358	1.Rs 7,40,000/- 2.Rs 74,000/- 3.Rs 5,000/-	1. Date of e-Auction 21.04.2026
3	VASANTH.S No 63 C Lane Anjanappa Garden, Mysore Road, Chamaraipet, Bangalore 560018 89590600003432 Rs 25,27,911.61	2021/TATA ULTRA 1918 T 5L BSVI TEMP REG NO/ MAT790213M7J16050/5LNGDIC R21JXY518867	1.Rs 7,40,000/- 2.Rs 74,000/- 3.Rs 5,000/-	Time of E-auction - Start Time 02:00 PM to End Time 06:00 PM.
4	RAVINDRA A No 43 2nd Floor 4TH Cross Near Nandini Theatre, Flower Garden, Mysore Road, Bangalore 560018 89590600003713 Rs 26,14,558.78	2021/TATA ULTRA 1918 T 5L BSVI TEMP REG NO/ MAT790213N7C07240/5JNGDIC R21CXX508514	1.Rs 7,40,000/- 2.Rs 74,000/- 3.Rs 5,000/-	2. Last date and time of submission of Bid. 21.04.2026 02:00 PM.
5	VENKATESH No 38/3 Muneswara Block, 1st Main Road, Nagashettihalli, Bangalore 560094 89590600003714 Rs 26,36,830.49	2021/TATA ULTRA 1918 T 5L BSVI TEMP REG NO. T0422KA7309X/ MAT790213N7C07711/5LNGDIC R21CXY507693	1.Rs 7,40,000/- 2.Rs 74,000/- 3.Rs 5,000/-	3. Inspection : With prior permission from authorised officer
6	LOKANATH C No 8 Queens Road, Rajeev Gandhi Colony, Near Veterinary Hospital, Shivajinagar Bangalore 560051 89590600003519 Rs 25,26,857.43	2021/TATA ULTRA 1918 T 5L BSVI TEMP REG NO/ MAT790213M7J16044/ 5LNGDICR21JYX519196	1.Rs 7,40,000/- 2.Rs 74,000/- 3.Rs 5,000/-	(All vehicles are at Bhiwadi, Rajasthan)

For detailed terms and conditions of sale, please refer/visit to the website link <https://baanknet.com> .Prospective bidders may contact to Mr. PRABEESH N K on Tel.No. 08025584066, Mobile 8866556911

Date : 04.04.2026

Place : Bangalore

Sd/- Authorized Officer

Bank of Baroda

CH CLASSIFIEDS

To place a classified ad contact: 080-41209042



Use ECINET platform to access candidates' details ahead of polls

The ECI has encouraged citizens to make informed choices in the upcoming Assembly elections and by-elections by making use of ECINET platform

NEW DELHI

In an official statement issued on Saturday, the Election Commission of India emphasized the importance of transparency and voter awareness in a democratic process.

The Commission urged voters to access the Know Your Candidates module available on ECINET to gather comprehensive information about candidates contesting in the elections.

The ECI had earlier announced the election schedule on March 15 for Assembly polls in the states of Assam, Kerala, Tamil Nadu, and West Bengal, along with the Union Territory of Puducherry. Additionally, by-elections will be held in eight Assembly constituencies across Goa, Gujarat, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Nagaland, and Tripura.

According to the Commis-



sion, a total of 1,955 candidates are contesting the elections in Assam, Kerala, Puducherry, and the by-elections in four states, with polling scheduled for April 9. Meanwhile, the process of filing nominations has already begun for Assembly elections in West Bengal (Phase I and II) and Tamil Nadu. The last date for withdrawal of candidature is April 9 for Tamil Nadu and West Bengal (Phase I), and April 13 for West Ben-

gal (Phase II).

Through the ECINET platform, voters can access a wide range of verified details about candidates, including pending criminal cases, assets and liabilities, educational qualifications, and official social media accounts. The system also allows users to download the complete affidavit submitted by candidates, ensuring full transparency.

Describing ECINET as the world's largest electoral ser-

vice platform, the ECI stated that it integrates more than 40 applications and services into a single interface, making it easier for citizens to interact with the electoral system.

Apart from candidate information, ECINET offers services such as voter registration, electoral roll search, application tracking, communication with election officials, booking appointments with Booth Level Officers, downloading digital voter ID cards, monitoring polling trends, and resolving grievances.

The platform also includes specialized tools like eVIGIL for reporting violations and Saksham to ensure accessibility for persons with disabilities. The Commission reiterated that such digital initiatives are aimed at strengthening democratic participation by empowering voters with accurate and timely information.

Legislators from the ruling NC & Congress raised serious concerns over a recent encounter in Ganderbal, where a person allegedly identified as a civilian was killed

J&K MLAs demand judicial probe into Ganderbal encounter

JAMMU

Members of the Jammu and Kashmir National Conference and the Indian National Congress voiced their objections during the Question Hour, alleging that the encounter was staged and resulted in the death of an innocent civilian.

The issue triggered a heated discussion in the Assembly, with several lawmakers demanding accountability and transparency.

National Conference MLA Mubarak Gul stated that such incidents should not occur, especially in a sensitive region like Jammu and Kashmir. He acknowledged that the Lieutenant Governor had already ordered an inquiry but stressed that the Home Department must ensure that innocent civilians are not targeted. He emphasized the need to clearly distinguish between militants and civilians during security operations.

Responding to the concerns, Speaker Abdul Rahim Rather informed the House that an in-



quiry into the incident had already been initiated. However, opposition members insisted that a more robust investigation was necessary.

Congress MLA Irfan Hafiz Lone staged a protest by waving a placard in the Assembly, demanding justice for the victim's family. Meanwhile, National Conference MLA Justice Hasnain Masoodi (retired) raised concerns over the handling of the victim's body, claiming it had not been handed over to the family. He highlighted that the right to a dignified burial is a constitutionally recognized right.

Another Congress MLA, Nizamuddin Bhat, argued that a magisterial inquiry would not be sufficient and called for a judicial probe to ensure swift and fair justice. He emphasized the importance of timely resolution in such sensitive cases.

National Conference MLA Tanvir Sadiq supported the demand, noting that the Chief Minister had already acknowledged the need to consider the family's perspective. He urged authorities to conduct a thorough investigation to uncover the exact circumstances of the encounter.

Govt slams reports of Iran oil cargo diversion

➤ *Continued from page 1*

The government on Saturday dismissed reports and social media claims that an Iranian crude oil cargo was diverted from Vadinar in India to China due to payment issues, calling them factually incorrect and misleading.

The Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas has clarified that recent reports suggesting India lost an Iranian oil shipment due to payment problems are not true.

The government said India imports crude oil from more than 40 countries, and oil com-

panies have full flexibility to choose suppliers based on commercial

The news reports and social media posts of an Iranian crude cargo being diverted from Vadinar, India to China due to 'payment issues' are factually incorrect, the ministry said in a post on X.

India imports crude oil from over 40 countries, with companies having full flexibility to source oil from different sources and geographies based on commercial considerations, it added.

The clarification comes after reports claimed that a US-sanctioned tanker carrying Iranian

crude, named Ping Shun, changed its route from Vadinar in Gujarat to Dongying in China.

According to ship tracking data, the vessel was initially headed towards India but later altered its destination, sparking speculation that payment issues may have caused the diversion.

Market analysts had suggested that stricter payment terms from sellers could be behind the sudden change in route.

However, the government has rejected this claim, stating that there is no payment hurdle for importing crude oil from Iran and that such rumours are misleading.

India withstands global shocks amid war with resilience: EAM

NEW DELHI

India has successfully navigated recent global disruptions, including geopolitical conflicts and economic challenges, External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar said on Saturday, highlighting the country's resilience in an increasingly uncertain global environment.

Addressing the convocation ceremony at Indian Institute of Management Raipur, External Affairs Minister Subramanyam Jaishankar emphasized that India has managed both domestic and international challenges fairly successfully despite a series of global shocks. He pointed out that the interconnected nature of today's world means that conflicts in one region can have far-reaching economic consequences across the globe.

Referring to the ongoing tensions in West Asia, Jaishankar noted that the crisis, which escalated following strikes involving the United States and Israel on Iran, has disrupted global fuel supply chains and contributed to hydrocarbon shortages. These developments, he said, underline the vulnera-



bility of global systems to geopolitical instability.

Highlighting India's response, Jaishankar stressed the importance of strengthening domestic capabilities as a key strategy to reduce risks and enhance national resilience. He argued that building internal strengths enables countries to better withstand external shocks while maintaining strategic autonomy.

The minister also spoke about the evolving global order, describing the current phase of turbulence as structural rather than temporary. He observed that rapid advancements in areas such as technology, energy, military capability, connectivity, and resource management have intensified competition among nations.

Everything today is being leveraged, if not weaponised, Jaishankar remarked, pointing to a growing trend where eco-

'The interconnected nature of today's world means that conflicts in one region can have far-reaching economic consequences across the globe'

nomics and technological tools are increasingly used for strategic advantage. This shift, he said, has prompted countries to adopt strategies focused on risk management, diversification, and resilience in both economic planning and foreign policy.

Jaishankar identified major challenges shaping the current decade, including the COVID-19 pandemic, ongoing geopolitical conflicts, and climate change. He added that India's focus on inclusive growth, representative governance, and decisive leadership has helped lay a strong foundation to tackle these challenges effectively.

Concluding his address, the minister expressed confidence that India's adaptive approach and emphasis on resilience would continue to help the country navigate an increasingly complex global landscape.

Rift deepens in AAP as Punjab min accuses Chadha of betrayal

CHANDIGARH

The controversy comes amid growing tensions within the Aam Aadmi Party, following the decision to replace Raghav Chadha with Ashok Mittal as the Deputy Leader in the Rajya Sabha.

Punjab Finance Minister Harpal Singh Cheema alleged that Chadha neglected crucial issues affecting Punjab despite being elected to represent the state.

Echoing earlier remarks made by Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann, Cheema claimed that Chadha had been compromised and failed to fulfill his responsibilities as a Member of Parliament. He pointed out that Chadha did not raise concerns regarding Goods and Services Tax revenue losses or the financial challenges faced by Punjab in Parliament.

Cheema further criticized



Chadha's silence during the devastating floods in Punjab, stating that despite announcements of financial aid by senior leaders of the Bharatiya Janata Party, including Prime Minister Narendra Modi, no funds were reportedly disbursed to the state. He alleged that Chadha failed to bring this issue to the Prime Minister's attention, calling it a betrayal of the people.

The minister also accused Chadha of not addressing

concerns related to the Rural Development Fund and questioned why he remained silent on issues that directly impacted Punjab's economy. According to Cheema, Chadha's inaction raised doubts about his loyalty to the party and its principles.

In addition, Cheema claimed that Chadha did not stand by the party during critical moments, including when the BJP allegedly targeted AAP and its leadership. He referred to legal troubles faced by AAP chief Arvind Kejriwal, asserting that Chadha failed to support the party and instead chose to travel abroad during that period.

The sharp remarks highlight an escalating internal conflict within AAP, raising questions about unity and leadership dynamics within the party as it navigates political challenges in Punjab and at the national level.

Chadha rebuts 'coordinated' allegations against him by AAP leaders

NEW DELHI

Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) Rajya Sabha member Raghav Chadha on Saturday rebutted false and coordinated allegations levelled against him by fellow party leaders, asserting that the accusations were aimed at silencing his voice in the Parliament.

In a video on X, a defiant Chadha claimed that a scripted campaign had been launched against him, with repeated and identical accusations being circulated.

From yesterday, a scripted campaign is working against me. The same language and the same accusations are being used. This is not a coincidence, but a coordinated attack, he added.

The AAP leader said that he initially chose not to respond but felt compelled to speak out.

I thought I should not respond, but when lies are repeated 100 times, people may

begin to believe them as truth. Therefore, I am responding now, he noted.

He also claimed that the allegations were being used as a pretext to prevent him from speaking in Parliament. AAP leaders have said that with these accusations, they will not allow me to speak in Parliament. I want to address these three allegations one by one, he said.

Addressing the first allegation, Chadha said claims that he remained seated when the Opposition staged walkouts were completely false and challenged his critics to produce evidence.

There are CCTV cameras in Parliament. They can check the footage, and everything will be crystal clear, he said.

On the second allegation, concerning his alleged refusal to sign an impeachment motion against the Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar, Chadha dismissed the claim as baseless.



Railways, stakeholders join hands to boost Kashmir cargo connectivity

JAMMU

In a major effort to link Kashmir Valley's fruit industry and parcel trade with national markets, the Northern Railway held a stakeholders meeting to boost rail-based parcel movement from the Valley, officials said on Saturday.

Railway officials said that in order to improve the economic landscape of the Valley by linking its fruit industry and parcel trade with national markets, Northern Railway's Jammu Division held a stakeholder meeting to boost rail-

based parcel movement from the Valley.

The meeting, held in Srinagar on Friday, aimed at formulating a roadmap to augment parcel traffic from the Kashmir region by positioning rail as a reliable, time-bound and cost-effective alternative to road transport.

It was chaired by an Additional Member (Commercial) of the Railway Board.

Jammu's Senior Divisional Commercial Manager, Uchit Singhal, along with parcel traders from Kashmir, prominent fruit growers, and key

cargo aggregators attended the meeting.

Officials said the main objective of the meeting was to formulate a robust roadmap for increasing parcel traffic originating from the Valley.

These discussions were held, specifically focusing on establishing the rail route as a more reliable, time-bound, and cost-effective alternative to road transport for the movement of cherries and other fruit produce.

Key points and strategic decisions were deliberated upon, including strategies to in-



crease the occupancy of the JPP-RCS (Joint Parcel Product-Rapid Cargo Service) parcel train, officials added.

This train departs from Badgam in Central Kashmir

at 6.15 a.m., travelling via Bari Brahmana and Ambala Cantonment before reaching Adarsh Nagar in Delhi at 5:30 a.m. the following day, ensuring traders receive timely de-

livery of goods.

A consensus was reached to collaborate with cargo aggregators to facilitate small-scale traders and producers.

This collaboration will en-

able the seamless consolidation of smaller parcel loads, allowing them to be transported efficiently via trains.

During the meeting, plans were shared regarding the upgradation of loading facilities at the Badgam, Srinagar, and Pampore railway stations.

To further boost parcel traffic, the Railway administration discussed proposals for offering competitive freight rates and introducing special concession schemes for aggregators undertaking bulk bookings, officials said.

QUICK READ

Drone strikes hit Iraq oilfield, workers injured

Basra

Two drones struck the North Rumaila oilfield in southern Iraq, injuring three workers, according to security and energy sources. The field, operated by BP, was targeted along with nearby storage facilities used by foreign oil companies near Basra. Officials said the attacks damaged equipment areas but did not disrupt production at the massive oilfield. The incident follows earlier drone threats that led to the evacuation of foreign staff last month. Authorities are investigating the attacks, which raise fresh concerns over security risks to Iraq's vital energy sector and ongoing safety of workers.

Cuba begins largest prisoner release in decade

Havana

Cuba started releasing over 2,000 prisoners under its largest amnesty in ten years according to reports. The government described the move as a "sovereign and humanitarian" gesture, while U.S. officials and rights groups closely watch whether political prisoners are among those freed. Many released were convicted of theft or bribery, though none identified as political activists. Families welcomed the freed inmates with hugs and tears outside La Lima prison. Human rights organizations noted the lack of official lists complicates verification. The amnesty coincides with ongoing dialogue between Havana and Washington amid long-standing disputes over political detainees.

Australians urged to keep Easter travel plans

Sydney

Australians were advised to continue their Easter travel plans despite hundreds of rural petrol stations running dry amid global fuel strains from the Iran war. Energy Minister Chris Bowen encouraged citizens to buy only what they need and enjoy family time. The nation imports around 90% of its fuel and currently has 39 days' petrol, 29 days' diesel, and 30 days' jet fuel. About 312 of 8,000 stations, mainly in country areas, lacked diesel. Prime Minister Anthony Albanese warned of ongoing economic impacts and urged the use of public transport to ease pressure.

SU DO KU

Brain-Bender: Can You Solve It?

	5		3		1		4	6
6		2		5		9		
1		3	4		6		8	5
	2			8		7		
9		4	7		5		6	8
5		7		1		4		
	7		5		1		3	2
2		5		4		6		
8		1	2		7		9	4

Fill a 9×9 grid with numbers so that each row, column and 3×3 section contain all of the digits between 1 and 9.

7	2	3	4	6	9	8	5	1
6	5	1	2	3	8	7	9	4
8	9	4	7	1	5	6	3	2
3	7	5	6	9	1	4	2	8
9	1	2	8	7	3	3	6	5
4	8	6	5	2	3	9	1	7
2	4	8	3	5	6	1	7	9
1	3	7	9	8	2	5	4	6
5	6	9	1	4	7	2	8	3

Solutions to Yesterday's puzzle

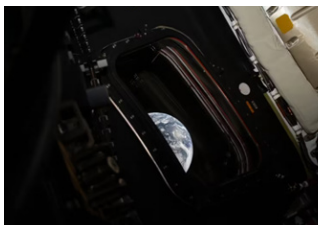
Artemis II crew sends stunning Earth photos

Artemis II astronauts captured historic deep-space images of Earth while traveling 180,000 kilometers toward the Moon.

USA

Astronauts aboard NASA's Artemis II mission have captured breathtaking new images of Earth as they race toward the moon. These historic photographs downlinked, mark the first time humans have captured such views from deep space in more than fifty years.

Commander Reid Wiseman shared a striking image showing a curved slice of the "blue marble" framed perfectly by the Orion capsule's window. Another photo revealed the entire globe, with vast oceans topped by swirling white clouds and a glowing green aurora dancing over the poles.



NASA described the moment the crew saw the planet from 180,000 kilometers away as "spectacular," stopping all four astronauts in their tracks.

The mission, which launched on April 1, features a diverse crew of three Americans and one Canadian. They are the first lunar travelers since the Apollo 17 mission in 1972. While they will not land on the moon, they are

currently executing a ten-day "U-turn" mission to test life-support systems for future landings. Recently the spacecraft had traveled nearly halfway to its destination, with the moon flyby expected soon.

NASA officials highlighted that the images represent almost all of humanity, reminding the world that "we are all one people." The mission is progressing perfectly, with the crew testing manual controls and scientific tools. As Orion continues its high-speed journey, these photos serve as a powerful reminder of Earth's beauty and the brave steps being taken to return humans to the lunar surface.

India and Bangladesh set new cooperation roadmap

NEW DELHI

Relations between India and Bangladesh are entering a high-powered "reset" phase as both nations prepare for a series of landmark diplomatic talks. Following the election of Prime Minister Tarique Rahman, the two neighbors are moving quickly to strengthen ties. The upcoming two-day visit of Bangladesh Foreign Minister Khalilur Rahman to New Delhi is being viewed as the foundation for a long-term strategic partnership.

Minister Rahman is scheduled for critical one-on-one meetings with India's External Affairs Minister, Dr. S. Jaishankar, and National Security Advisor, Ajit Doval. The agenda is packed with urgent issues, including counter-terrorism, border management, and intelligence



sharing to stop illegal activities like smuggling and infiltration.

Beyond security, the talks will focus on boosting the regional economy. Both nations are exploring ways to secure the Bay of Bengal as a vital trade route, especially given recent global energy disruptions. Discussion points include granting Dhaka better access to Indian markets and ensuring smoother transit for Indian goods moving through Bangladesh to the Northeast.

This diplomatic push follows eighteen months of volatility after the ouster of the previous government. Indian officials emphasize that a stable, peaceful Bangladesh is essential for regional security. By addressing long-standing concerns like water sharing and trade imbalances, both sides hope to build lasting trust. This visit marks a significant shift toward a modern, cooperative era for these two influential South Asian neighbors.

Falling debris hits buildings in busy Dubai

DUBAI

Emergency teams in Dubai responded to two unusual incidents after debris from aerial interceptions struck buildings in the city. According to research, falling metal fragments hit the facade of the Oracle Building located in the high-tech hub of Dubai Internet City. Fortunately, officials confirmed that no one was injured, and the situation was brought under control almost immediately.

In a separate but similar event earlier that morning, debris also fell on a residential tower in the popu-

lar Dubai Marina district. This area is a major center for both local residents and international tourists. Despite the potential for danger in such a crowded neighborhood, authorities reported that there were no injuries, and no fires were sparked by the falling objects.

Experts believe these incidents are linked to ongoing military interceptions caused by rising regional tensions. The situation follows a period of increased military activity across West Asia involving the United States, Israel, and Iran. While Dubai is far

from the heart of the fighting, these events highlight how international conflicts can occasionally impact civilian areas.

City officials have urged the public to remain calm, stating that advanced safety measures are already in place to handle such emergencies. While the physical damage to the buildings was described as minor, the city remains on high alert. Authorities continue to monitor the skies closely, reiterating that the safety of all residents and visitors remains their top priority during this period of regional instability.

Tax burdens drive Pakistan fuel prices skyward

ISLAMABAD

Pakistani citizens are now paying nearly half the retail price of petrol in taxes and profit margins, according to a leaked government document. This revelation follows a staggering price hike announced by the Ministry of Energy, which has pushed fuel costs to record-breaking levels across the country.

Petroleum Minister Ali Perwaiz Malik confirmed that petrol prices have jumped by Rs 137.23, bringing the new rate to Rs 458.41 per litre. High-speed diesel saw an even more dramatic increase of Rs 184.49, now costing consumers Rs 520.35 per litre. Officials blamed these spikes on global supply chain disruptions caused by the ongoing conflict in the Middle East.

The internal data shows a startling breakdown, the actual cost of petrol at the refinery is only Rs 247.15 per litre. However, an additional Rs 211.26 is added through various levies and margins. The largest chunk comes from a petroleum levy of over Rs 160, followed by customs duties, climate support fees, and commissions for oil companies and pump dealers. Interestingly, while petrol is heavily taxed, diesel currently carries no petroleum levy,



A leaked document reveals Pakistani citizens pay nearly half the retail petrol price in taxes, following massive price hikes fueled by global Middle East tensions.

making its tax share significantly lower despite the higher pump price.

Public outcry has intensified as the document highlights the government's heavy reliance on fuel taxes to bolster its budget. With petrol taxes now four times higher than those on diesel, many are questioning the fairness of the current fiscal strategy. As families struggle with the rising cost of living, these record fuel prices are expected to drive up the cost of transport and essential goods nationwide.

War triggers Pakistan LNG crisis amid shortage

NEW DELHI:

Pakistan's energy sector has faced a sudden crisis as its liquefied natural gas (LNG) supply shifted from surplus to shortage within weeks. Earlier this year, the country had excess LNG due to falling demand, which dropped from 8.2 million tonnes in 2021 to about 6.1 million tonnes in 2025. The decline was driven by rising solar energy use and reduced industrial activity. To manage the surplus, Pakistan diverted extra LNG to global markets and even shut some gas wells.

However, the situation changed after a major conflict in West Asia disrupted global energy supplies. Military tensions involving the United States, Israel, and Iran led to attacks on key energy facilities and blocked routes like the Strait of Hormuz. Qatar, a major LNG supplier, was forced to cut production after strikes damaged its infrastructure. These developments caused a sharp supply shock, leaving Pakistan struggling to meet its energy needs.

China's digital governance uses the "50 Cent Party" and censorship to drown out criticism, manufacturing consensus and suppressing dissent.

China uses digital tools to silence dissent

BEIJING

A startling new study has revealed how China is using a massive digital governance system to control what people say online.

Over the last twenty years, the country has built an ecosystem that does more than just delete negative comments. Instead, it uses a sophisticated network of millions of paid commentators, known as the "50 Cent Party," to flood the internet with pro-government stories and distract from any criticism.

Authorities use "distraction and redirection" by filling social media with positive or irrelevant content. This creates a fake sense of agreement among the public while pushing opposing views to the margins. The "Great Firewall" further isolates Chinese citizens by blocking global apps like X and YouTube, replacing them with state-controlled alternatives like WeChat and Weibo.



On these platforms, sensitive topics like Tibet, Hong Kong, and Xinjiang are strictly censored. Users who cross these "red lines" face serious risks, including losing their accounts or facing police surveillance. While some citizens try to use "coded speech" or satire to bypass the rules, the government quickly adapts its monitoring technology to stop them.

The report warns that this model of "manufactured consensus" is spreading. By framing all criticism as "foreign interference," the state delegitimizes real concerns. As other world actors begin to copy these digital tactics, the line between honest public opinion and government-made propaganda continues to blur, threatening free speech everywhere.

Cyprus President set for landmark India visit

NICOSIA

High-level preparations are officially underway for a historic diplomatic meeting between India and Cyprus. Indian High Commissioner Manish met Cypriot President Nikos Christodoulides at the Presidential Palace in Nicosia to finalize details for the President's upcoming visit to India in May 2026. The trip comes at the personal invitation of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, following his successful visit to Cyprus last year.

The meeting focused on the "India-Cyprus Joint Action Plan", a strategic roadmap to deepen bilateral ties. Key discussions included boosting trade, increasing investment, and enhancing maritime security. Both leaders also emphasized cooperation in digital transformation, renewable energy, and fintech, alongside strengthening academic and cultural exchanges to promote people-to-people connections.

A major highlight was the India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor (IMEC), viewed as vital for connectivity, peace, and economic growth. The upcoming summit is expected to deliver significant agreements.

White House proposes record military budget boost

WASHINGTON

In a historic shift in national priorities, the White House has proposed a massive \$1.5 trillion defense budget for the 2027 fiscal year.

This proposal, led by President Donald Trump, represents the highest military spending plan in modern history. The move marks a 40% increase over last year's budget, a decision driven largely by the escalating conflict between the United States and Iran and a renewed focus on global military readiness.

The ambitious plan aims to revolutionize American defense capabilities by significantly increasing weapons production and expanding the naval fleet. A centerpiece of the proposal is the development of a sophisticated new missile defense system dubbed the "Golden Dome." To address modern recruitment challenges, the administration has also included a 5% to 7% pay raise for all mil-

itary personnel to improve retention within the armed forces.

To fund this \$445 billion spending surge, the administration is proposing deep cuts elsewhere. The plan suggests a 10% reduction in non-defense spending, which would strip approximately \$73 billion from essential sectors like healthcare and social services. Programs providing energy assistance and support for low-income families are expected to face significant hits, alongside major funding cuts for the Environmental Protection Agency and various research initiatives.

While Republican lawmakers plan to use a simple majority in the Senate to pass the measure, the proposal remains a preliminary blueprint. Under the U.S. Constitution, Congress holds the final authority over all spending. Experts expect intense debate as lawmakers weigh the administration's focus on military strength against the survival of domestic social programs.

PORCUPINE DEFENSE

Taiwan must build defense to stop China

TAIWAN

Taiwan faces a critical challenge as it works to protect its democratic way of life against increasing threats from the Chinese Communist Party. A new study argues that the island nation must focus on "self-deterrence."

This means making any potential military attack so expensive and difficult for Beijing that they decide it is simply not worth the massive risk.

The study highlights that China's threats are no longer just talk. Taiwan deals with military intimidation, cyberattacks, and fake news designed to weaken public trust almost every day. Chinese fighter jets frequently cross boundaries to make this pressure feel normal. Beijing's goal is to convince the world that Taiwan's takeover is unavoidable. To counter this, the study in-



sists that Taiwan cannot rely only on international sympathy, it must be ready to resist on its own.

Because Taiwan cannot match China's massive military size, it must use "asymmetric" tactics. The island's high mountains and crowded cities are perfect for defense. By investing in small, mobile missile systems and training citizens for civil defense, Taiwan can create a "porcupine" effect. These resilient systems are

designed to survive initial strikes and keep fighting back, making an invasion a gamble too dangerous for any leader to take.

Ultimately, Taiwan's struggle is about more than just a piece of land. It is a fight for the universal values of freedom and self-determination. By building a strong, clever defense, Taiwan proves that its vibrant democracy is a reality worth defending with both ideals and strength.

Rizvi's brilliance powers Delhi to second straight IPL win

Young batter Sameer Rizvi starred with a match-winning knock as Delhi Capitals defeated Mumbai Indians convincingly in IPL 2026 clash

NEW DELHI

In an exciting encounter of the Indian Premier League 2026 season, Delhi Capitals secured their second consecutive victory on Saturday with a six-wicket win over Mumbai Indians. The chase was headlined by a sensational innings from Sameer Rizvi, who scored a crucial 90 runs and steered his team to victory.

Mumbai Indians, led by Suryakumar Yadav, posted a competitive total of 162/6 in their 20 overs. Contributions came from Suryakumar and

Rohit Sharma, but regular wickets prevented them from building a bigger total. Delhi's bowlers, including T Natarajan, maintained pressure during key phases, especially in the death overs.

In reply, Delhi Capitals had an early setback as KL Rahul was dismissed cheaply. However, Pathum Nissanka and Rizvi rebuilt the innings with a steady partnership. Nissanka played a supportive role, while Rizvi gradually took control of the chase.

Rizvi's aggressive stroke play turned the match decisively in Delhi's favour. He

dominated the Mumbai bowlers, smashing boundaries and sixes with ease.

Although he fell short of a century by just 10 runs, his innings had already sealed the outcome.

After his dismissal, David Miller and Tristan Stubbs calmly finished the chase, guiding Delhi to victory with two overs to spare.

With this win, Delhi Capitals have made a strong start to their IPL 2026 campaign, winning both their opening matches and emerging as early contenders for the title.

Siddi wrestlers shine at Khelo India Tribal Games

AMBIKAPUR

At the Khelo India Tribal Games 2026, the Siddi community from Karnataka and Gujarat made a remarkable impact through their wrestlers, showcasing both skill and determination. Traditionally underrepresented in mainstream sports, the Siddi wrestlers' performance highlighted the growing presence of tribal communities in competitive arenas. Their strong showing across multiple wrestling categories drew attention from sports enthusiasts, media, and talent scouts.

The athletes, hailing from remote regions, trained under challenging conditions, often with limited resources. Despite this, their technique, stamina, and strategic acumen allowed them to compete with established wrestlers from other states. Organizers noted that their participation not only brought medals but also inspired younger tribal members to consider sports as a



viable career path.

Coaches emphasized that the Siddi wrestlers' rise is emblematic of a larger trend: the empowerment of marginalized communities through sports programs like Khelo India. Such initiatives provide access to training facilities, nutrition, and mentorship, leveling the playing field for athletes from underprivileged backgrounds.

The event also featured cultural showcases, allowing participants to share their heritage alongside athletic achievements. For the Siddi

community, the games were more than just a competition—they were a platform to assert identity, pride, and potential.

Experts suggest that with continued support, Siddi wrestlers could emerge as a powerhouse in national-level wrestling, challenging stereotypes and broadening India's sports talent pool. The 2026 edition of the Khelo India Tribal Games thus marked a turning point for the community, signaling a promising future for tribal athletes in the country.



Saba Karim Praises Shreyas Iyer's dominance against spin

NEW DELHI

Former India cricketer Saba Karim has lauded Punjab Kings (PBKS) captain Shreyas Iyer for his match-winning performance against Chennai Super Kings (CSK). Iyer's fluent 50 off 29 balls was instrumental in PBKS successfully chasing a steep target of 210 at the MA Chidambaram Stadium.

Karim emphasized that Iyer remains one of the most underrated batters in the circuit despite his consistent output. Karim described Iyer as arguably the No. 1 batter against spin in white-ball cricket. He noted that Iyer's technical evolution—specifically his improved "trigger movement" and ability to play square shots on the on-side—has made him a far more rounded player who is difficult for pace bowlers to contain.

The statistics back Karim's praise. Since IPL 2024, Iyer's T20 strike rate has surged to 129.51. After contributing 351 runs to KKR's 2024 campaign, he moved to PBKS and finished as their leading run-scorer in 2025 with 604 runs.

PBKS skipper Iyer fined ₹24 lakh for slow over rate

CHENNAI

Punjab Kings captain Shreyas Iyer has been fined Rs 24 lakh after his team maintained a slow over-rate during their IPL 2026 match against Chennai Super Kings at the MA Chidambaram Stadium. This penalty follows the team's second violation of the season under Article 2.22 of the IPL Code of Conduct, which governs minimum over-rate requirements.

The sanctions extended beyond the captain; each member of the playing XI, including the Impact Player, was also penalized. These players will be fined either Rs 6 lakh or 25 percent of their respective fees, whichever is lesser. The fine for Iyer reflects the curring nature of the offense for the Punjab squad this season.

Despite the disciplinary setback, Punjab Kings delivered a stellar performance on the field. Chasing a formidable target of 210 set by Chennai, Punjab reached the mark in just 18.4 overs to secure a five-wicket victory. The chase was fueled by a rapid start from Priyansh Arya (39 off 11) and Prabhsimran Singh (43 off 34), followed by a crucial half-century from Iyer (50 off 29) and a quick cameo from Cooper Connolly (36 off 22).

Earlier, CSK had posted 209/5 behind Ayush Mhatre's 73 and Shivam Dube's unbeaten 45. The win marks the second consecutive victory for Punjab Kings, moving them up the table, while Chennai Super Kings suffered their second loss of the tournament. While the victory is a significant boost for the team's momentum, the repeated over-rate issues remain a point of concern for the team management moving forward in the competi-



BCB reaches out to BCCI to strengthen ties

DHAKA

The Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) has formally approached the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) to strengthen bilateral cricket ties and explore new areas of cooperation. According to BCB Director of Cricket Operations, Nazmul Abedin Fahim, the board sent a letter outlining upcoming scheduled tours and requesting additional collaborative initiatives between the two boards.

The current schedule includes a visit by the Indian men's national team to Bangladesh in September, followed by a tour of India by the Bangladesh women's team. This proactive outreach reflects an effort to repair relations that were recently strained.

Tensions escalated after the BCCI denied permission for Mustafizur Rahman to play for the Kolkata Knight Riders in IPL 2026 due to local political objections, prompting Bangladesh to boycott the T20 World Cup hosted in India.



Knicks dominate Bulls, Anunoby scores 31 points

NEW YORK

The New York Knicks delivered a dominating performance against the Chicago Bulls, cruising to a 136-96 victory at Madison Square Garden. OG Anunoby was the star of the night, hitting 70% from beyond the arc and scoring a game-high 31 points. Mitchell Robinson contributed a double-double with 17 points and 11 rebounds, helping the Knicks jump to an early 20-1 lead and never look back.

Jalen Brunson returned to the lineup after missing the previous game, adding 17 points and 10 assists. The Knicks shot an impressive 52.7% from the field and 89.2% from

New Zealand women clinch odi series with 66 run win

WELLINGTON

New Zealand's women's cricket team secured a hard-fought 2-1 series victory over South Africa after clinching a 66-run win in the deciding ODI at the Basin Reserve in Wellington. The match showcased New Zealand's resilience and individual brilliance, allowing them to overcome a shaky start and secure vital points in the ICC Women's Championship 2025-2029.

After being put in to bat, the White Ferns faced an early collapse that threatened to derail their innings. However, Maddy Green produced a masterclass in middle-order batting, remaining unbeaten on 141. Her innings, combined with a crucial partnership with Brooke Halliday—who narrowly missed out on her own hundred—pushed the hosts to



a commanding total of 306/7. The pair's ability to stabilize the innings under pressure turned the momentum firmly back in New Zealand's favor.

South Africa's pursuit of the 307-run target struggled to gain significant traction. While their batters made starts, they were unable to build the high-scoring partnerships necessary to challenge the total. The bowling pressure from the White Ferns remained relentless throughout the second innings. Rosemary Mair was the architect of the Proteas' downfall, delivering a career-best performance with figures of 5/50. Her five-wicket haul ensured that the visitors were bowled out for 240, well short

Maddy Green's masterclass and Rosemary Mair's five-wicket haul lead New Zealand to a 2-1 series comeback against South Africa

of the target.

The series victory is particularly significant for New Zealand, as they had to come from behind after losing the opening match. This performance reinforces their standing as a rising power in the women's game, blending veteran composure with the emergence of match-winning talent like Green and Mair.

Blue Colts lose to Bangladesh in penalty shootout

MALVIES

In a dramatic finale to the SAFF U20 Championship 2026, the India U20 national football team—popularly known as the Blue Colts—suffered a heartbreaking 4-3 defeat to Bangladesh U20 national football team in a penalty shootout after a goalless draw in regulation time at the National Stadium in Malé.

Both sides struggled to break the deadlock during the 90 minutes, with chances at a premium as they adopted cautious tactics in the high stakes final. India, the defending champions and favorites, came close on a few occasions but couldn't convert their opportunities, leaving the outcome to be decided from the spot.

In the ensuing shootout, Bangladesh held their nerve, converting four penalties to India's three. India saw Rishi



Singh Ningthoukhongjam's effort saved and Omang Dodum's kick sail over the bar, contributing to their narrow loss. Bangladesh's Ronan Sullivan calmly slotted home the decisive penalty, securing his team's second SAFF U20 title.

Despite the disappointment,

India's campaign featured strong performances, including topping their group and progressing through the knockout stages.

The Blue Colts will take valuable lessons from this close final as they look to bounce back in future tournaments.

Ricky Ponting praises PBKS young indian top-order talent

CHENNAI

Punjab Kings (PBKS) head coach Ricky Ponting has lauded the franchise's young Indian talent at the top of the batting order, calling them "special" and central to the team's rebuilding strategy ahead of IPL 2026. PBKS retained only Prabhsimran Singh and Shashank Singh from last season and entered the auction with a substantial purse of ₹110.5 crore.

The franchise invested in marquee players such as Shreyas Iyer, Yuzvendra Chahal, and Arshdeep Singh, blending experienced performers with promising young talent. Ponting emphasized that the emerging Indian batters provide both consistency and flair at the top, which allows the team to build strong innings and set or chase competitive totals.

He highlighted that nurturing these young players is crucial for long-term success and for creating depth in the squad. The coach also expressed confidence in their ability to handle pressure situations, citing their performances in domestic and previous IPL matches as proof of their potential.

PBKS aims to leverage this mix of youth and experience to become a consistent con-

tender in IPL 2026, balancing high-profile signings with local talent development. Ponting's strategy reflects a focus on building a team that can compete at the highest level while maintaining a strong pipeline of emerging Indian players.

The emphasis on young Indian talent is expected to strengthen PBKS' core, making them a formidable side throughout the season and beyond.



QUICK READ

EU-India FTA set to boost competitiveness

New Delhi

India is likely to gain competitiveness in sectors such as textiles under the recently announced EU-India Free Trade Agreement, according to recent studies. While Europe faces slow growth due to U.S. tariffs, Middle East tensions, and aging populations, India could benefit from deeper trade ties and improved market access. The report notes that European industries may face increased pressure in some sectors, but minerals and technology could gain from the agreement. Investments in AI may boost productivity in Europe, though risks remain from potential disruptions like a blockade of the Strait of Hormuz.

India drives E20 ethanol for energy independence

New Delhi

India's push for 20% ethanol blending in petrol (E20) is aimed at long-term energy self-reliance, not the ongoing Middle East conflict, said CK Jain, President of the Grains Ethanol Manufacturers Association. With surplus grains and ethanol production capacity of 2,000 crore litres, blending levels could rise to 25-27%. Current ethanol plants operate at 40-50% capacity, and the initiative has saved India around ₹40,000 crore in crude imports, benefiting rural economies. Grain-based ethanol contributes 70% of supply, sugarcane 30%. Jain also suggested exploring ethanol for cook stoves and highlighted minor vehicle impact.

India eases rules, boosts medical device industry

New Delhi

The Association of Indian Medical Devices Industry (AIMeD) praised Niti Aayog and DPIIT for helping pass the Jan Vishwas (Amendment) Bill, 2026, which decriminalises minor violations in the medical devices sector. Under the law, imprisonment for procedural errors under the Drugs & Cosmetics Act is replaced with graded fines, reducing compliance burdens and litigation. Coordinated across 23 ministries, the reforms foster innovation, global competitiveness, and patient safety. AIMeD hailed the move as a shift toward governance-focused regulation, promoting ease of doing business while empowering India's medical devices sector to grow responsibly under international best practices.

EU-India FTA could boost India competitiveness

New Delhi

A new report says Europe's fragile economy and global trade tensions may benefit India through the recently announced EU-India Free Trade Agreement (FTA). While the macro impact on Europe is minimal, sector-specific effects could be significant. Indian textiles may face opportunities, whereas European clothing industries could see heightened competition. Minerals sectors may gain from better input access. Recent reports also warned that U.S. tariffs, Middle East tensions, and ageing workforces could slow European growth, while AI investments could boost productivity. Overall, the FTA positions India to strengthen its competitiveness amid global uncertainties.

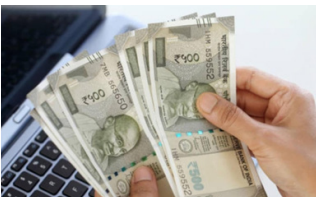
New labour codes slash gratuity wait time for contract staff

India's 2025 labour codes now grant fixed-term employees gratuity after one year, while mandate that wages comprise 50% of CTC to boost final retirement payouts.

NEW DELHI

India's new labour codes, which were fully implemented in late 2025, have introduced a major shift in how retirement benefits are handled. In a move that benefits millions, certain workers are now eligible to claim gratuity after just one year of service, a sharp drop from the previous five-year requirement.

Under the new rules effective since November 21, 2025, the shortened time-frame specifically applies to fixed-term and contract employees. These workers, often hired for specific projects or set durations, can now receive gratuity on a pro rata basis. This means their payout will be calculated based on the exact length of their service,



even if they leave after only twelve months.

For permanent employees, the traditional five-year rule remains the standard, though exceptions still apply in cases of death or disability. The Labour Ministry clarified that this new one-year eligibility is not retroactive; it applies only to those who joined their respective companies on or after the November 2025 enforcement date.

Establishments have been advised to update their accounting norms to reflect these

KEY CHANGES TO PAYOUT CALCULATIONS

The new codes don't just change when you get paid, but also how much you receive. Here are the critical updates:

■ **The 50% Rule:** "Wages" must now make up at least 50% of an employee's total Cost-to-Company (CTC). Since gratuity is calculated based on wages, this shift is expected to significantly increase the final lump-sum amount for most workers.

■ **Definition of Wages:** The government now defines wages as all remuneration, including basic pay, dearness allowance, and retaining allowance.

■ **Broader Access:** By including contract and fixed-term staff, the government aims to provide a stronger safety net for the modern, flexible workforce.

changes. For many in the formal sector, these updates represent a long-awaited modernization of post-employment

benefits, ensuring that short-term professional commitments are rewarded just as fairly as long-term tenures.

Telegram ban sparks massive Russian banking crash

NEW DELHI

A government attempt to block the messaging app Telegram has backfired, causing a total collapse of Russia's digital banking system. Telegram founder Pavel Durov revealed that efforts to shut down the app and the private networks used to access it left the nation briefly dependent on cash only.

Despite the official ban, Telegram remains a powerhouse in the region. Durov stated that over 50 million Russians send messages on the platform every single day.

When the government tried to cut off access, the technical interference accidentally crippled the infrastructure used for modern payments. This failure highlights the struggle between state control and the digital tools that citizens rely on for daily life.

Durov described the situation as a "sad spectacle," suggesting that the government is simply afraid of its own people having private conversations. He noted that a similar scenario is playing out in Iran, where millions of users also bypass state restrictions. Together, these users form what he calls

a "Digital Resistance" against government surveillance.

While Russia tries to push citizens toward state-approved apps, Durov argues that this strategy is doomed to fail. He pointed out that successful apps in other countries grew through fair competition, not by banning rivals. Meanwhile, Russian authorities have opened a criminal case against Durov, which he claims is a fake excuse to silence free speech. For now, the battle continues as millions of people keep using the app despite the government's best efforts to pull the plug.

US proposes total ban on Chinese technology

NEW DELHI

The United States is moving to tighten its grip on foreign technology by proposing a total ban on equipment from several major Chinese companies. The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) announced plans to stop all imports of telecommunications and security gear from firms it considers national security risks, including giants like Huawei and ZTE.

While the U.S. had already stopped approving new models from these companies back in 2022, this latest move goes much further. If the propo-

posal is finalized, even older devices that were previously allowed into the country could be blocked from being marketed or imported. The goal is to close any remaining loopholes that might allow risky technology to stay with in American borders.

The government believes these strict measures are essential to protecting the nation's communication networks. This proposal follows a series of recent crackdowns, including new bans on Chinese-made drones and internet routers. Officials are also considering an immediate halt to imports once the order is

signed to prevent a "last-minute rush" of companies trying to flood the market with inventory.

Not everyone is staying quiet about these changes. Hikvision, a major security camera manufacturer, has fought the restrictions in court, claiming the government is overstepping its legal authority. However, a U.S. court recently rejected their attempt to lift the existing bans. As tensions rise, the battle over tech safety continues to grow, leaving many wondering how these global trade fights will eventually impact the gadgets we use every day.

India becomes a global giant in seafood

NEW DELHI

India has emerged as a powerhouse in the global seafood market, becoming the world's second-largest fish producer. Following a massive government investment of nearly 40,000 crore rupees, the fisheries sector is now a major engine for jobs and food security. It currently supports 30 million workers directly while providing about 8 percent of the entire world's fish supply.

The growth is reflected in the numbers. Over the last decade, seafood exports have doubled, reaching a staggering 62,408 crore rupees in the most recent financial year. While shrimp remains the favorite item for international buyers, India is also shipping frozen fish, squid, and seaweed to 130 different countries. The United States stands as the biggest customer, followed closely by China and Europe.

To stay ahead, the government is diversifying beyond just shrimp. New projects are focusing on high-value species like Tuna and mud crabs. By using advanced technology and better disease management, officials aim to make Indian seafood more premium and reliable. There is also a strong push for "value-added" products—items that are processed and ready to cook—which fetch higher prices abroad.

New rail cables boost safety in 2 states

NEW DELHI

Traveling by train in Gujarat and Madhya Pradesh is about to become much safer. The Indian government has just greenlit a massive project to lay 1,929 kilometers of high-tech optical fibre cables.

This nearly 400 crore rupee plan focuses on the Ahmedabad and Ratlam rail divisions to modernize how trains talk to each other.

The move is a critical step in launching "Kavach," India's homegrown safety system. Think of Kavach as a digital guardian for trains. It is designed to stop accidents before they happen by automatically applying brakes if a driver misses a signal or if two trains are heading toward each other. To work properly, Kavach needs a strong communication backbone, which is exactly what these new underground cables provide.

This project is part of a much larger national goal to upgrade the entire railway network. Beyond just safety, the new infrastructure will allow for faster data sharing and more reliable daily oper-



The Indian government is laying 1,929 km of optical fiber to implement the Kavach safety system across two states.

ations. It means fewer delays and a smoother journey for the millions of people who rely on these tracks.

While safety is the priority, the government is also looking at the passenger experience. Over the last three years, billions have been spent on making stations less crowded and more comfortable. From new waiting areas in Madhya Pradesh to better crowd control, the focus is shifting toward a modern, high-tech travel era. For the common commuter, this means a future where train journeys are not just faster, but significantly more secure.

Agri students find success with record placements

NEW DELHI

Agriculture education in India is undergoing a massive transformation, turning farming studies into a high-growth career path. A new report from the World Bank highlights that job placement rates for agriculture graduates jumped from 41 percent to 67 percent over the last five years, thanks to better industry links.

The change is driven by the National Agriculture Higher Education Project, a joint effort between the Indian government and the World Bank. By signing over 800 agreements with private companies, universities have moved away from old-school textbooks and toward hands-on training. This shift is paying off financially, as many graduates now earn significantly higher salaries than those in other sectors.

Innovation is also blooming on campus. University incubators have helped launch over 120 new start-ups, encouraging students to become bosses rather than just em-



ployees. For example, at Assam Agricultural University, private-sector jobs for students skyrocketed from a tiny 5 percent to over half of the graduating class. To support this, hundreds of smart classrooms and high-tech labs have been built nationwide.

Diversity is another winning factor in this agricultural boom. Applications for these courses have more than doubled, and women are leading the way with an impressive 71 percent placement rate this year. Scholarships are also ensuring that students from all backgrounds can attend top-tier colleges. Moving forward, the focus will stay on "climate-smart" technology and digital farming, ensuring that India's future farmers and scientists are ready for a modern, high-tech world.

HDFC bank loans grow faster than deposits

MUMBAI

HDFC Bank, India's largest private lender, is facing a growing gap between the money it lends and the money it collects. In a recent report, the bank revealed that while people are rushing to take out loans, the growth of savings and deposits is not keeping pace.

By the end of March, the bank's total loans jumped by 17 percent, reaching nearly

Rs 25 lakh crore. Most of this demand came from regular individuals and small businesses. However, total deposits stood at a lower Rs 23.5 lakh crore. This imbalance has pushed the bank's "credit-deposit ratio" higher than usual. Essentially, for every 100 rupees the bank holds in deposits, it has lent out over 106 rupees, which is a tight position for any lender.

The bank is also seeing a slight dip in "CASA" accounts—the low-cost savings and current accounts that help banks stay profitable. As people look for better returns elsewhere, the bank is finding it harder to attract these cheaper funds. Experts say the bank's big challenge now is to speed up deposit collection to balance the scales.

Beyond the numbers, the



EASIER LPG ACCESS

Easy gas access for migrants without documents

NEW DELHI

Getting cooking gas just became much easier for people living away from home. The government announced that small five-kilogram LPG cylinders are now available at local distributors without the need for any address proof. To buy one, a person only needs to show a valid photo identity card.

This move comes at a vital time as global tensions in West Asia raise concerns about energy supplies. By removing the paperwork barrier, the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas hopes to help migrant workers and students



who often struggle to provide local residency papers. The response has been massive, with over five lakh cylinders already sold in recent weeks.

Despite some rumors causing crowds at fuel stations,

officials are clear, there is no shortage of petrol, diesel, or gas in India. The government has increased local production and ensured that refineries are working at full capacity. Retail outlets are operat-

ing as usual, and there is enough stock to meet everyone's needs across the country.

To keep things fair, authorities are cracking down on anyone trying to hide stock or sell gas illegally. More than 3,700 raids have been conducted to stop black marketing, leading to the suspension of several licenses. While the government monitors the global situation, it is also encouraging people to try piped gas or electric cooking. For now, the message to the public is simple, stay calm, avoid panic buying, and take advantage of the easier rules for smaller cylinders.

A pink note touches every Indian heart

In a cinematic journey that mirrors the pulse of the common man, the new film *Aa Ondu Notu* has arrived to tell a deeply moving story centered around a single 2000-rupee note. Directed by the skillful Ratnatnay Patil, this movie captures the emotional and chaotic life of a pink currency note as it travels through various layers of society, eventually coming full circle in a way that leaves the audience teary-eyed.

The story begins with a desperate mother, played brilliantly by Akshata, who



pawns her earrings to save her son at a government hos-

pital. When a thief snatches her only 2000-rupee note, the currency begins a wild journey. It passes through the hands of a casino owner, a vegetable vendor, a hard-working farmer, a policeman, and even criminals. Each transition is linked seamlessly, showing how one piece of paper connects the lives of strangers, from the wealthy to the struggling working class.

Producers Jagadeesh M.K. and Premnath G. have ensured the film remains grounded and realistic. The cast, including Gopalakrishna

Deshpande and Balrajawadi, deliver performances that feel incredibly human. Accompanied by the soulful music of Veera Samarth and Kaushik, the film avoids unnecessary drama to focus on pure storytelling.

Ultimately, the note finds its way back to the mother who first lost it, providing a powerful conclusion. *Aa Ondu Notu* is more than just a thriller, it is a "paisa va-sool" entertainer that proves even a small piece of paper can carry the weight of a hundred human stories.****

INSIDE THE BEAUTIFUL HOME OF AINDRITA RAY



In the heart of the prestigious Ideal Homes neighborhood in RR Nagar, Karnataka cinema superstar Aindrita Ray has created more than just a house, she has built a serene sanctuary. Living with her husband, fellow actor Diganth Manchale, since 2018, the actress has mastered the art of balancing modern style with cozy, natural living.

The residence is defined by its clever use of space and light. Throughout the home, massive windows replace standard walls, ensuring every room is bathed in golden sunshine and fresh air. The living room serves as the heart of the home, featuring a stylish beige brick accent wall that con-

trasts beautifully with clean white surfaces. A plush, L-shaped sofa offers plenty of room for relaxation, making it the perfect spot for the couple to unwind after a busy day on set.

Outside, the aesthetic shifts to a rustic charm with red brick walls draped in crawling green vines. This outdoor area serves double duty as a workout space and a peaceful lounge. However, the true highlight is the balcony, which is overflowing with a vibrant collection of plants and colorful flowers.

Ray, who moved frequently as a child due to her father's service in the Air Force, has finally found a permanent anchor in Bangalore.

Mammootty Dhanush Cop Thriller

Mammootty joins Dhanush in Rajkumar Periyasamy's *D55*, playing a grey-shaded cop opposite Dhanush. Shot across Chennai industrial zones, the thriller also stars Sai Pallavi and Sreeleela. The intense cop drama promises gripping action, layered charac-

ters, and a high-stakes face-off. With production underway, expectations soar for this ambitious multilingual collaboration slated for completion by late 2026. Fans eagerly await updates as filming moves to scenic lakeside action sequences soon across locations.

Allu Arjun fans support smart birthday move

Icon Star Allu Arjun's fans are celebrating a surprising but wise decision from the team behind his next massive project. As the superstar prepares to celebrate his birthday on April 8, the crew of his film with director Atlee has decided to skip releasing any video footage. Instead, they will only unveil the official title and a first-look poster for the highly anticipated movie.

While fans are usually hungry for teasers, this cautious approach is being hailed as a brilliant move. The decision comes shortly after the teaser for another big-budget film, *Ramayana*, faced heavy social media



criticism for unfinished visual effects. By choosing to wait, Atlee is ensuring that the first moving images the world sees of Allu Arjun in this new avatar are nothing short of perfect.

Currently referred to as *AA22 x A6*, the film is still in its early production stages. Experts note that rushing a "glimpse" video with unpolished CGI could have hurt the film's high-stakes momentum. Backed by Sun Pictures and starring Deepika Padukone as the leading lady, the project is one of the most expensive ventures in Indian cinema.

Supporters are now praising the production team for prioritizing quality over social media hype. By focusing on a stunning poster rather than a half-baked video, the makers are protecting the film's brand. Fans agree it is better to wait for a masterpiece than to see a rushed preview that doesn't do the Icon Star justice.

Sreeleela aims to become a fashion icon

Sreeleela has already conquered the silver screen with fifteen films and a medical degree, but she is now setting her sights on a new territory, the world of high fashion. Despite being a household name across India, the young star believes her journey into personal style and global trends has only just begun. After five years in the limelight, Sreeleela is undergoing a significant professional and physical transformation. Recently, the actress debuted a more slender physique, signaling a fresh chapter as she prepares for her much-anticipated Bollywood debut later this year. In a candid interview, she shared that she is now paying closer attention to her wardrobe, moving away from simple looks to explore modern, signature styles. Her ultimate goal is to evolve into a major fashion inspiration for young girls.

The timing of her style makeover aligns perfectly with her expanding career horizons. While she continues to be a force in South Indian cinema, she is currently gearing up for a massive Tamil project starring alongside Dhanush. Furthermore, she is set to make waves in Mumbai, joining forces with director Anurag Basu and actor Kartik Aaryan for an upcoming Hindi film.

For Sreeleela, balancing her MBBS studies with a hectic filming schedule was her primary focus until now. However, with her education complete and her career going global, she is finally ready to embrace the spotlight as a trendsetter. Fans are eagerly watching as she trades her scrubs for couture on this exciting new path.



Nagarjuna rejects key villain role in Dhurandhar

Legendary actor Nagarjuna Akkineni is making headlines after reportedly turning down a major villainous role in the Bollywood film *Dhurandhar*. While the star recently surprised fans by playing an antagonist in Rajinikanth's upcoming movie *Coolie*, he chose to pass on the role of the fierce Rehman Dakait in this Hindi action thriller.

Casting director Mukesh Chhabra recently confirmed that the production team, led by director Aditya Dhar, initially sought a massive South Indian superstar to play the lead villain. Although Chhabra did not mention Nagarjuna by name, industry insiders have confirmed that the Manmadhudu star was indeed the first choice. Following his refusal, the makers approached several prominent Bollywood actors, but they also declined the challenging part.

The role eventually went to Akshaye Khanna, whose sharp and intense performance has since become a major highlight of the film. Critics and audiences alike have praised Khanna's portrayal, making the



character one of the most talked-about aspects of the project.

Nagarjuna's decision to skip *Dhurandhar* while accepting a negative role in *Coolie* has sparked significant curiosity among cinema enthusiasts. Some speculate the decision was based on the script's depth, while others believe it was a matter of scheduling. Regardless of the reason, the actor has kept his motives private. For now, fans are eager to see his villainous side in *Coolie*, even as they wonder what his version of Rehman Dakait might have looked like on the big screen.

Rashmika Mandanna MAKES HISTORY AT GLOBAL AWARDS

Indian cinema's beloved star Rashmika Mandanna has once again proven her status as a global icon. Currently in Japan, the actress has scripted a new chapter of history by representing India at the prestigious 2026 Crunchyroll Anime Awards. This milestone makes her the only Indian personality to receive this honor twice, following her groundbreaking appearance at the same ceremony back in 2024.

Rashmika's presence on this international stage highlights her immense popularity that transcends borders and languages. Known for her vibrant energy and love for animation, she was invited back to the awards ceremony to celebrate the best in global anime. No other Indian actor has achieved this specific recognition twice, solidifying her legacy as a true cultural ambassador for the nation.

This professional achievement comes during a n

incredibly special time in her personal life. The actress recently made headlines for her beautiful wedding to her long-term boyfriend and fellow superstar, Vijay Deverakonda. Despite the excitement surrounding her recent marriage, Rashmika continues to focus on her career and her role as a representative of Indian talent on the world stage.

Fans across India are celebrating her success, noting that her consistent presence at such high-profile international events inspires young artists. By captivating audiences from Hyderabad to Tokyo, Rashmika is bridging the gap between Indian cinema and global pop culture. As she takes the stage in Japan, she continues to break barriers, proving that her charm and talent truly have no limits.



Survival thriller Tu Yaa Main hits Netflix

Fans of high-stakes cinema have a new date to circle on their calendars. The intense survival thriller *Tu Yaa Main*, starring Adarsh Gourav and Shanaya Kapoor, has officially locked its digital premiere. After a theatrical run that earned positive critical reviews for its unique premise, the film is set to begin streaming on Netflix starting April 10, 2026.

Directed by the visionary Bejoy Nambiar, the story offers a terrifying twist on modern influencer culture. The plot follows two popular content creators from



vastly different social backgrounds who meet for a collaborative getaway at a luxury estate. However, the

dream vacation quickly turns into a living nightmare when the duo becomes trapped inside a massive, deep swimming pool. To make matters worse, they aren't alone, they must outsmart a deadly crocodile sharing the water.

The film explores the desperate struggle for survival as the characters use their wits to stay alive against impossible odds. While the movie faced stiff competition at the box office, its arrival on streaming is expected to find a massive audience. Produced by a powerhouse team includ-

ing Aanand L Rai and Vinod Bhanushali, the project also features strong supporting performances from Parul Gulati and Sanjay Appan. For those who enjoy psychological tension mixed with creature-feature horror, this release provides the perfect weekend watch. With its sharp direction and talented young leads, *Tu Yaa Main* is ready to bring the chills of the deep end directly to living rooms across the country.